Data Expedition
Day 1
Marriage and Health

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Who Are We?

Ph.D. Candidates
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Studying health from a life course perspective

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Health Benefits of Marriage

- Less psychological distress
- Less often depressed
- Fewer physical health problems
- Better overall health
- Tend to live longer
Stress Proliferation

Stressors associated with one event or role lead to the accumulation of stressors in other aspects of life.
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Chronic illness
Stress Proliferation

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Chronic illness → Unable to work
Stress Proliferation

Stressors associated with one event or role lead to the accumulation of stressors in other aspects of life.

- Chronic illness
- Unable to work
- Financial strain
People are embedded in social networks, so stress not only impacts individuals, directly, but can also proliferate to people close to them.
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- Wife's disability
- Her own mental health
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- Wife's disability
- Her own mental health
- Her husband's mental health
Wife's physical health

Husband's physical health

Wife's mental health

Husband's mental health
Wife's physical health

Wife's mental health

Husband's physical health

Husband's mental health
Health Concordance

Shared environment, behaviors, experiences, & resources (e.g., information, money) + social control
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More similar health & health behaviors
Partners' health becomes more similar

- Stops smoking
- Reduces alcohol intake
- Joins a gym

- Likely to do the same
Partners' health becomes more similar

- Stops smoking
- Reduces alcohol intake
- Joins a gym

- Becomes depressed

- Likely to do the same
Gendered Expectations
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Men rely on wives for:

- Companionship
- Emotional support
- Caregiving

Women tend to:

- Find external support
- Provide support to husbands
Gendered Expectations
Most research focuses on heterosexual marriage because of the limited (if any) number of same-sex partners in datasets.
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Example

- Wife’s variable x
- Wife’s variable y
- Husband’s variable x
- Husband’s variable y
Example

Wife's hearing loss

Wife's depressive symptoms

Husband's hearing loss

Husband's depressive symptoms

Example

Wife’s insomnia → Wife’s incident heart disease

Husband’s insomnia → Husband’s incident heart disease

Select References


