SOCIAL SUPPORT AND STRAIN AS PREDICTORS OF MULTIMORBIDITY FOLLOWING A MARITAL TRANSITION

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Marital transitions (MTs; widowhood or divorce) are stressful events that impact the health of older adults. This study examined the impact of social support and social strain on multimorbidity trajectories using data from the Health and Retirement Study (HRS). Participants were 377 adults age 50+ with a single MT between years 2006 and 2016. We used piecewise growth curve modeling to investigate whether social support and strain from one's spouse, children, family, or friends, measured prior to transition, predicted trajectories of chronic conditions (count of 8 conditions: hypertension, diabetes, cancer, lung disease, heart disease, stroke, arthritis, and cognitive impairment) following MT. Covariates included sex, age, education, race/ethnicity, and wealth. On average, chronic conditions were increasing before MT, B = .172, SE = .021, p < .001, and after MT, B = .211, SE = .031, p <.001. Participants had an average of 2.2 chronic conditions at MT. Spousal support prior to MT was associated with fewer chronic conditions at MT, B = -.863, SE = .427, p = .043, whereas support and social strain from friends were each associated with more chronic conditions at MT (support: B = .772, SE = .354, p = .025; strain: B = 1.288, SE = .387, p = .001). Support from children was positively associated with more chronic conditions following MT, B = .212, SE = .084, p = .011, which may reflect adult children providing support in response to parental health decline.

CHANGES IN LIFE-SPACE WITH LOSS OF RELATIVES AND FRIENDS AMONG OLDER ADULTS: RESULTS FROM THE UAB STUDY OF AGING

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Increasing age brings greater risk of the death of friends and family (hereafter referred to as loss). Loss may impact individuals' life-space mobility (LSM); however, no research has explored relationships between loss and LSM trajectories. Using the UAB Study of Aging, we examined differences in LSM trajectories of 1000 community-dwelling older Alabamians (65+years) with and without loss during the study period. We assessed LSM using the UAB Life-Space Assessment (LSA), a validated instrument measuring individuals' ability to move through zones ranging from their bedroom to out of town. We assessed loss every 6 months using a standard bereavement questionnaire capturing spousal, other relative, or friend loss. We used piecewise linear mixed effects models to compare LSA

trajectories. Those who do not experience loss had a baseline mean LSA score of 49.5 and show a decline of 0.08 points per year (p < 0.001). Those that do experience loss had a baseline LSA score of 60 and decline by 1.0 point per year before the loss (p < 0.001), accelerating to 1.8 points per year after the loss (p < 0.001). Those with loss do not experience acute decline post loss but do have an acceleration of the pre-existing decline. More research is needed on this topic to better understand the impact of loss on LSM trajectories; but this finding suggests that more public health and clinical interventions may be needed for those who experience loss. Specifically, bereaved individuals may benefit from social, mental, or healthcare services for loss-related challenges.

THE RELATION BETWEEN DEATH PREPARATION AND LIFE SATISFACTION AMONG KOREAN OLDER ADULTS

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Objectives: There is a growing interest in death preparation as an important process to achieve ego integrity at the last stage of life. However, in South Korea, conversations about death remain taboo especially with older adults. Thus, this study aims to examine the association between preparation for one's death and life satisfaction among Korean older adults.

Methods: Data for this study were drawn from the 2020 National Survey of Older Koreans conducted by the Korean Ministry of Health and Welfare. The sample was limited to adults aged 65 and older (N=10,097). The survey measured preparation for death, life satisfaction, and various covariates (e.g., sociodemographic characteristics, physical conditions, psychological conditions). Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was used to examine whether death preparation influences life satisfaction among Korean older adults.

Results: Results from hierarchical multiple regression showed that after adjusting for covariates, those who reported more preparations for death mentally (B=.054, p<.001) and materially (B=.035, p<.001) were more likely to have greater satisfaction in life than their counterparts.

Conclusion: Findings suggest that it is necessary to generate proper information and recognition about death at the government level and activate discourses on death preparation in later life.

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HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH, AND SOCIAL SERVICE INTERVENTIONS

POETRY AND UNCOVERING THE MYSTERY OF SOCIAL PROBLEMS: AN ARTS-BASED INQUIRY TO AGING CARE

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This research focuses on a current social welfare problem: unemployment and the loss of employer-based health insurance among non-elderly adults aged 18 to 64. The literature covers this social problem in terms of health