

**Stress and Co-Parenting Relationships: Using Language Style Matching as an Indicator of  
Extra-Dyadic Stress and Team Problem-Solving**

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### Abstract

Language style matching (LSM), or the degree of similarity in dyads' use of function words (e.g., prepositions, negations, or personal pronouns), has been linked with psychological and behavioral outcomes at both the individual and group levels (e.g., relationship intimacy, engagement, and team performance). The aim of this study was to examine how stress affects LSM in romantic couples and whether LSM predicts performance in a problem-solving task. Cohabiting, opposite-sex couples were randomly assigned to one of four stress conditions—both partners stressed, neither partner stressed, only male partner stressed, or only female partner stressed. Upon completion of the stress manipulation, the couples discussed their experiences, engaged in a caregiving task with an infant simulator, and expressed gratitude for each other. Conversations from 62 couples were audio-recorded, transcribed by a team of research assistants, and run through Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC) software to calculate LSM scores. Success scores, measured as the percentage of the infant's fusses that were adequately satisfied, were automatically generated in reports from the infant simulator and checked by a research assistant. ANOVA output indicated that LSM did not significantly differ by stress condition ( $F(3,58) = 0.628, p = 0.599$ ), and a linear regression showed that LSM scores did not significantly predict caregiving success ( $p = 0.299$ ). In sum, LSM did not significantly differ by stress condition, nor was it indicative of success in a caregiving task. Thus, LSM may be more closely associated with more general indicators of relationship status, such as relationship duration and time spent living together, rather than context-dependent factors.

*Keywords:* Close relationships, language style matching, co-parenting, stress, dyads

## **Stress and Co-Parenting Relationships: Using Language Style Matching as an Indicator of Extra-Dyadic Stress and Team Problem-Solving**

People's use of language offers a window into the associations between linguistic and psychological processes, as well as the nature of dyadic relationships. Language style matching (LSM), which reflects the degree to which people subtly match each other's speaking style, may provide some further insight into both individuals' and couples' experiences of stress and teamwork (Ireland et al., 2011). High LSM is thought to reflect psychological factors and positive behavioral outcomes at both the individual and group level. Moreover, LSM has been shown to be a positive context-dependent index of couples' engagement in interactions, as well as a mediator of team problem-solving. However, there is little to no research on how stress, an experience common to both individuals and groups that can be adaptive or maladaptive, impacts LSM in couples. The present study aims to (1) examine how stress impacts language style matching in couples and (2) analyze whether language style matching predicts performance in an infant simulator caregiving task. Given that language style matching is linked with couples' relationship quality, conflict, and groups' problem-solving abilities, this study aims to examine whether LSM contributes to more successful co-parenting outcomes in the presence of external stressors.

Language style matching refers to the similarity in dyads' use of function words, which signal grammatical relations rather than lexical meaning, in conversation or writing. For example, the sentence "the dog barked for toys and treats" can be broken down into content words ("dog," "barked," "toys," "treats") which have lexical meaning, as well as the function words that help determine structural relationships between other words in the sentence: "the" (article), "for" (preposition), "and" (conjunction). Without the presence of function words, the

aforementioned sentence would make little sense. Due to the need for context when using function words, similar use of function words may reflect the extent to which dyads are attuned to each other and share common ground. Therefore, LSM may reflect interpersonal coordination and have an important role in dyadic tasks.

High LSM has been associated with favorable outcomes across many contexts, including reaching agreement in diplomatic relations (Bayram & Ta, 2018), better working alliance between clinical therapists and patients with eating disorders leading to reduction in symptoms (Albano et al., 2022), and greater social support among individuals coping with illness engaged on blogging websites (Rains, 2016). Overall, however, most studies have examined the role of language style matching in romantic and working relationships.

For example, one study found that LSM significantly predicted relationship initiation, as speed daters were more than three times as likely to match with their date for every standard-deviation increase in LSM (Ireland et al., 2011). In a second study with already-committed couples, Ireland et al. (2011) found that for every standard-deviation increase in LSM, couples were approximately twice as likely to be together three months later. Together, these results suggest a correlational relationship between language style matching and underlying psychological processes that facilitate relationship outcomes, such as attraction and intimacy maintenance (Ireland et al., 2011).

In another study, Bowen et al. (2017) examined the relationships between LSM, perceptions of interaction quality, and partner behavior in two communicative settings—discussions of relationship conflict and social support. Mean levels of LSM did not differ between conflict and support conversations, and LSM was not significantly associated with either partner's relationship satisfaction (Bowen et al., 2017). Moreover, although LSM was not

associated with a partner's negative feelings during conversations, greater LSM was associated with more negative behavior overall, which was most present in the conflict conversations (Bowen et al., 2017). Together, these findings suggest that while LSM may not necessarily indicate affiliation or rapport, it may serve as a context-sensitive marker of engagement in couples' interactions.

Lastly, many studies have looked at the role of LSM in group performance, cohesion, and dynamics. Carmody et al. (2017) conducted a study in which participants were arranged into groups of three and asked to act as intelligence analysts to solve a fake terrorist attack. They found that while LSM wasn't directly related to team performance, it was positively related to assessment stubbornness, which is thought to increase linguistic coordination in order to resolve halts in performance, when trust was high. Their findings suggest that linguistic coordination is likely one of many possible features of bottom-up team interactions that can produce varying levels of performance, which may be moderated by trust (Carmody et al., 2017). In another study, Gonzales et al. (2010) created teams of 4-6 individuals to work together on a problem-solving task, either face-to-face or via online chat technology. They found that LSM predicted group cohesiveness regardless of communication medium, the number of individuals in a group, or the gender composition of the individuals in the group (Gonzales et al., 2010). Moreover, Gonzales et al. found a positive relationship between LSM and task performance in the face-to-face condition, suggesting that LSM plays a role in group problem-solving.

There is little to no research on how differing levels of stress impact language style matching in couples. However, given that Bowen et al. (2017) found that LSM may be a context-dependent index of couples' engagement in interactions, I posit that shared experiences of stress may positively predict LSM. My analyses aim to fill this gap in the existing literature.

The present study aims to (1) examine how stress impacts language style matching in couples and (2) analyze whether language style matching predicts accuracy in an infant simulator caregiving task. Given that LSM is linked with couples' relationship quality, conflict, and groups' problem-solving abilities, this analysis aims to examine whether LSM contributes to more successful co-parenting outcomes in the presence of external stressors. I hypothesize that couples in the concurrent (both partners experience stressor) and placebo (neither partner experiences stressor) conditions will display greater language style matching than those in the non-concurrent conditions (only one partner experiences stressor; Hypothesis 1). Participants in the concurrent and placebo groups will have just gone through the same stress (or placebo) manipulation as their partner, whereas those in the non-concurrent conditions will have undergone different stress manipulations. Given that LSM may serve as a context-sensitive marker of engagement in couples' interactions, specifically negative ones, I theorize that couples who experienced the same stress manipulation will converse more similarly. I also hypothesize that couples with greater LSM will more successfully respond to the infant simulator's fussing in the caregiving task (Hypothesis 2). LSM has been linked to improved performance on group tasks; thus, I anticipate a positive association between LSM and the percentage of the infant simulator's fusses that are satisfied by the couple.

## **Methods**

### **Participants**

All study procedures were approved by IRB00000245 and HUM00200860. Study participants were prescreened and recruited if they met the following criteria: being between 20 and 40 years of age, being fluent in English, not being pregnant or already having any children, and currently being in a mixed-sex, cohabiting, and committed relationship. Sixty-four couples

completed the study between October 2021 and April 2022; sixty-two consented to both audio and video recording release of their conversation tasks. The mean age of individuals in this sample was 26.30 years ( $SD = 4.72$ , range = 20-40); 76.6% of participants were White; 75% had graduated college or had attained more advanced degrees; and 45.4% were married or engaged (the rest identified as “committed”). The average relationship duration was 54.11 months ( $SD = 45.77$  months, range = 2-242 months) and the average time living together as a couple was 36.36 months ( $SD = 40.20$  months, range = 4-190 months).

### **Procedure**

Couples were assigned to one of four stress conditions—both partners stressed (concurrent stress), neither partner stressed (placebo), only female partner stressed (non-concurrent female stress), or only male partner stressed (non-concurrent male stress). Individuals in the stressor conditions partook in the Trier Social Stress Test (TSST), a reliable method of inducing stress in participants, in which the person must deliver a job interview speech (Supplementary Material 1) and complete difficult mental math calculations in front of two professional interviewers (Kirschbaum et al., 1993). Regardless of the participant’s performance, the interviewers provide no positive feedback (i.e., no smiling or nodding). Individuals not completing the stress task partook in a neutral task, which involved preparing for a job interview using notecards (knowing that they will not actually give a speech) and completing a much simpler math task with pencil and paper. These participants were given instructions by the interviewers, but completed the tasks in an isolated space.

Upon completion of the stressful or neutral tasks, couples were given three minutes to discuss their experiences in the lab. Couples were then given fifteen minutes to complete a caregiving task, during which they were given an infant simulator—a lifelike electronic baby

doll that is programmed to simulate a baby's behaviors. The experimenter instructed couples to tend to the baby's fussing by utilizing pacifying behaviors, such as burping, rocking, feeding, changing, or attending to her needs in any form. The infant simulator was programmed to fuss four times throughout the caregiving task, requiring the following order of behaviors: feeding, burping, changing diaper, and changing clothes. If the couple did not satisfy the infant's needs, the fussing stopped after 90 seconds. The infant simulator also responds to mishandling (i.e., not supporting the neck or shaking the baby), causing the infant to cry louder and for longer. Couples were also tasked with building a three-dimensional structure out of magnetic tiles (i.e., MagnaTiles) during this time to mimic an actual co-parenting situation in which parents are often forced to multitask. After, participants were instructed to engage in another three-minute conversation where they expressed gratitude for each other. The gratitude task aimed to bring the participants' levels of stress back down to baseline and end the study on a positive note. Participants were provided with instructions throughout the process for completing surveys about their feelings during the tasks and taking blood pressure measurements and saliva samples (which are not relevant to the current research). At the end of the study, the experimenter reassured participants who completed the TSST that the interviewers' responses were unrelated to the participants' performance, and participants were thanked and awarded compensation for their time.

## **Measures**

### ***Caregiving Success***

Success in the caregiving task was determined by calculating the percentage of the infant's fusses that were appropriately satisfied by the couple. The infant simulator automatically



generates reports of the number of fusses that were tended to, and these scores were confirmed to be consistent by a team of behavioral coders.

### ***Language Style Matching***

Three videotaped conversations from the study were transcribed by a team of research assistants—the reflection, caregiving, and gratitude tasks. LSM scores were computed for the conversations from each of these tasks using LIWC-22 software. Individual LSM scores are calculated for each of the following function word categories: personal pronouns (e.g. “I” or “she”), impersonal pronouns (e.g. “one” or “you”), articles (e.g. “the” or “a”), conjunctions (e.g. “because” or “but”), prepositions (e.g. “under” or “through”), auxiliary verbs (e.g. “be” or “have”), high-frequency adverbs (e.g. “always” or “normally”), and negations (e.g. “not” or “nor”). The individual LSM scores are then averaged together to yield a composite LSM score between 0 and 1, with higher values representing greater stylistic similarity between the two speakers. We generated task-specific LSM scores (i.e., discussion task, caregiving task, and gratitude task), as well as an overall LSM score encompassing the conversations from all three tasks. References to LSM scores in the results section will refer to the overall LSM score, unless otherwise indicated.

## **Results**

### **Effects of Stress on LSM**

To test the hypothesis that couples who have just experienced the same stress manipulation would display greater language style matching, we analyzed differences in couples' overall LSM scores by stress condition. Results from a one-way ANOVA suggested that mean overall LSM scores did not significantly differ between conditions [ $F(3,58) = 0.628, p = 0.599$ ] (Table 1). Means and medians for overall LSM scores by condition are presented below in Table

2 and Figure 1. ANOVAs were also run to test for significant differences in mean LSM scores across tasks (LSM from Reflection Task, LSM from Caregiving Task, and LSM from Gratitude Task) and between conditions, but all tests were non-significant, yielding  $p$ -values between 0.455 and 0.975 (Tables 3-5).

Even though the omnibus ANOVA test was not significant, we also used 3 planned contrasts to test whether there was (1) a difference between the concurrent stress condition versus the other three conditions, (2) a difference between the placebo condition versus the other three conditions, and (3) a difference between the concurrent stress and placebo combined versus the nonconcurrent conditions. These tests yielded nonsignificant results (predictor  $p$ -values ranged from 0.620 to 0.885). We additionally conducted pairwise comparisons across the conditions, using the minimum  $p$ -value obtained from multiple comparisons as the test statistics in a randomization test (known as the adjusted Rand index). We chose to use this method, rather than other corrections, because it maintains higher power and controls the family wise error rate. All six pairwise comparisons across the conditions were non-significant.

### **Effects of LSM on Caregiving Success**

To test the second hypothesis that couples with greater LSM would achieve greater success in the caregiving task, we planned to run a linear regression to analyze the relationship between overall LSM and caregiving success. The distribution of success scores was heavily skewed left, with the majority of couples achieving success scores greater than 80% (Figure 2). Even after dichotomizing the success variable (100% success vs. not-100% success) and applying various transformations (e.g., square root transformation), we were unable to meet the assumptions of Ordinary Least Squares, as the residuals were not normally distributed.

Regardless, results from linear regressions between overall LSM scores and various transformations of the success variable were all nonsignificant (Tables 6-8).

### **Exploratory Analyses**

We then ran additional exploratory analyses to examine the relationship between LSM and more general relationship characteristics. In a linear regression predicting overall LSM from relationship duration (in months), the overall regression was statistically significant (multiple  $R^2 = 0.07162$ ,  $F(1, 60) = 4.629$ ,  $r = -0.268$ ,  $p = 0.036$ ) and relationship duration significantly predicted overall LSM scores (Table 9). Results from a linear regression predicting overall LSM from duration living together (in months) showed a negative association, although the overall regression did not reach statistical significance (multiple  $R^2 = 0.0485$ ,  $F(1,60) = 3.058$ ,  $r = -0.220$ ,  $p = 0.0854$ ), suggesting that couples who had lived together for longer had lower overall LSM (Table 10). These results must still be interpreted with caution, given that the distributions of relationship duration and time spent living together were not normally distributed (Figures 3 and 4). Adding log transformations only slightly changed the distributions and regression output. Moreover, the distribution of relationship duration may have been heavily skewed by two couples who had been together for about 20 years, while the average relationship duration was only about 4.5 years.

### **Discussion**

This is the first study to our knowledge that examines associations between language style matching, stress, and co-parenting outcomes. Our first hypothesis was that couples in the concurrent and placebo conditions would display higher language style matching than those in the non-concurrent conditions. With respect to Hypothesis 1, our study shows that couples' LSM scores did not differ significantly based on their assigned stress condition. Given that stress was

induced through a short version of the Trier Social Stress Test, encompassing five minutes of public speaking and one minute of complex mental math, it's possible that short-term stress may not be associated with LSM. Future studies should evaluate the relationship between longer exposures to stress and couples' LSM scores. Moreover, it is possible that partners in the noncurrent conditions (i.e., conditions where only the female or male partner was stressed) experienced similar levels of stress to one another, despite completing different tasks. A few participants in the nonconcurrent conditions who completed the neutral control task expressed anxiety about having to complete the public speaking exercise after the infant simulator task—although we had told them they wouldn't have to do so—and this fear may have evoked stress. Additionally, other studies demonstrate the existence of stress contagion, a phenomenon in which one partner's acute stress, induced via a modified version of the Trier Social Stress Test, elicits physiological changes mimicking stress in a close observer (Waters et al., 2014). It is possible that in the nonconcurrent conditions, the stressed partner's affect was perceived and embraced by the other partner. In future analyses, it may also be helpful to operationalize stress through self-reports and assessments of stress hormones such as cortisol, to examine the extent to which different measures of stress align.

Our second hypothesis was that couples with greater LSM will more successfully respond to the infant's fussing in the simulated caregiving task. For Hypothesis 2, we found that LSM did not predict success in an infant simulator caregiving task. This finding was initially surprising based on the relationships between LSM and favorable problem-solving outcomes in other studies (Carmody, 2017; Gonzalez, 2010). However, another study found that during an instant-messaging negotiation task, dyads with greater LSM were more socially engaged but also less focused on the task at hand, and thus more likely to reach an impasse (Ireland & Henderson,

2014). In line with Ireland and Henderson's (2014) work, it's conceivable that the couples in our study, who all demonstrated high levels of LSM (minimum LSM = .67), were very socially engaged but perhaps got distracted by each other during the caregiving task. Moreover, given that we defined success in the infant simulator caregiving task as the percentage of the infant's fusses that were adequately satisfied, it is possible that prior caregiving experience contributed to success scores. Although we attempted to minimize differences across participants' prior caregiving experiences by recruiting couples who did not have children, a few participants commented on previous experience with child care (e.g., caring for a nephew, babysitting, teaching elementary school children) during the caregiving and gratitude conversations. Further, the distribution of success scores was heavily skewed, with the majority of couples (81%) achieving scores between eighty and one-hundred percent. This concentration of high success scores could also indicate that the caregiving task wasn't difficult enough. Moreover, in some trials, one partner primarily took care of the infant simulator, while the other completed the MagnaTiles task. In these cases, caregiving success would be determined by one partner's efforts, rather than the couple's collaborative performance. Given that LSM is a dyad-level measure, future studies may want to define team success using other measures, such as the time each partner spent holding the infant simulator, the time it took each couple to adequately satisfy each of the infant simulator's fusses, or the proportion of the infant's fusses that were satisfied by each individual partner. Moreover, given the short duration of the caregiving task (fifteen minutes), couples' success may be better approximated over an extended period of time, where they're able to learn from the infant's behaviors and use that knowledge to subsequently help soothe the baby. Future studies could have the couples care for the baby over a weekend to assess how both LSM and team success vary with time and exposure to the baby.

Exploratory analyses revealed a negative statistically significant relationship between LSM and relationship length, as well as a negative (but not statistically significant) association between LSM and time spent living together ( $p = 0.08$ ). It is possible that LSM is more closely associated with relationship characteristics, such as duration spent together, rather than short-term, highly context-dependent measures like acute stress or infant caregiving. We were initially surprised to find that LSM was negatively correlated with both relationship length and time spent living together. Intuitively, one might think that couples who had been together for a longer period of time would converse more similarly. However, our results suggest the opposite. More research is needed to determine the relationship between LSM and time spent with another person. Perhaps LSM decreases as familiarity and confidence with one's partner increase and individuals feel it's less necessary to try and align with their partner.

Additionally, given the concentration of high LSM scores in our sample, it's possible that couples naturally have higher LSM than other kinds of dyads (e.g., mentor and mentee, two friends, or randomly assigned pairs), and there may be a higher-order measure of similarity that plays a role both in choosing one's partner and language usage. That being said, the relationship between LSM and time spent together may also be nonlinear. For instance, another study found that couples' syntactic alignment in text messages, as measured by daily LSM, displayed exponential growth over the first year of their relationship (Brinberg & Ram, 2021). Specifically, they found that LSM initially increased but later plateaued in these relationships. Our results may suggest that LSM further decreases after the plateau reported in the aforementioned study. Couples may display low LSM upon first meeting, begin to mimic each other and display greater LSM as they become more invested in their partner and the relationship, and then once they feel comfortable, divert slightly back into their old ways.

Strengths of this study include its experimental design, use of observational and dyad-level measures, and a novel, realistic coparenting task. Of course, our study also has some limitations. The sample contained only participants in opposite-sex relationships, in an effort to have greater statistical power for sex comparisons. As a result, our findings may not be generalizable to same-sex relationships or those of non-binary individuals. For instance, a previous study found that lesbian couples divided baby care more equally than heterosexual couples, which may in turn impact team performance (Ascigil et al., 2021). Further, while fluency in English was required for participants, some individuals had learned English as a second language. It's possible that LSM may be lower in couples where partners have different exposure to and comfortability with the English language. Moreover, the average relationship duration in our study was 4.5 years, so results may differ for couples who have been together for a shorter or longer period of time. Our sample was limited to individuals between 20 and 40 years of age due to concerns about hormone samples, so we couldn't examine older individuals or longer-term relationships. Lastly, our participants were primarily white (76.6%) and highly educated (75% graduated college or higher), so outcomes may vary outside of this more homogeneous population. McGorray et al. (2023) found that relationship science researchers tend to primarily report on White heterosexual couples, and often operationalize socioeconomic status through personal educational attainment. Samples that are more diverse in race and sexual orientation, and additionally consider multiple indicators of socioeconomic status, can increase generalizability by including underrepresented groups, contextualizing participants' unique experiences, and using more inclusive reporting practices (McGorray et al., 2023).

In sum, our findings demonstrate that couples' LSM is not correlated with either stress manipulation or success in an infant simulator caregiving task. However, small to moderate

correlations existed between LSM and relationship duration, as well as LSM and time spent living together. These results suggest that general, dyad-level relationship characteristics may be better associated with LSM, rather than short-term, highly context-dependent measures of stress and team performance. Future research is necessary to further illustrate factors that may contribute to synchrony in co-parenting couples.



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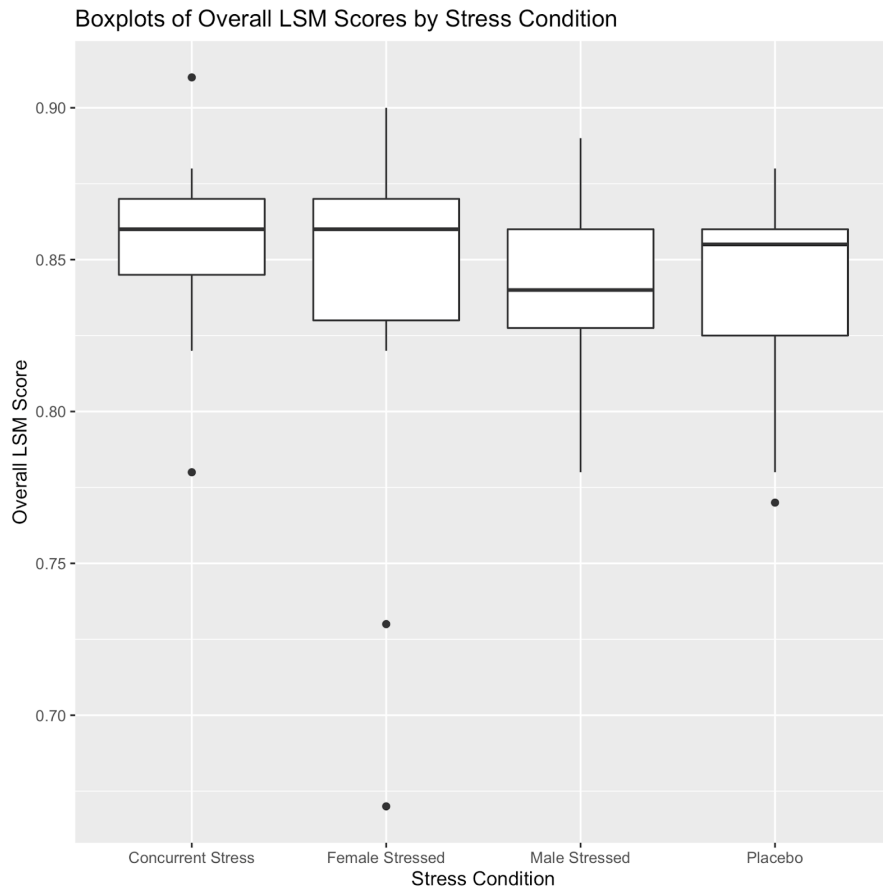
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<b>Table 1</b>					
<i>Overall LSM Scores by Stress Condition</i>					
	<i>df</i>	Sum Sq	Mean Sq	<i>F</i> value	Pr(>F)
Stress Condition	3	.003	.001	.628	.599
Residuals	58	.092	.002		

<b>Table 2</b>		
<i>Mean and Median Overall LSM Scores by Stress Condition</i>		
	Mean Overall LSM Score	Median Overall LSM Score
Concurrent Stress	.856	.860
Female Partner Stressed	.839	.860
Male Partner Stressed	.839	.840
Placebo	.840	.855

**Figure 1**

*Boxplots of Overall LSM Scores by Stress Condition*



**Table 3**

*Reflection Task LSM Scores by Stress Condition*

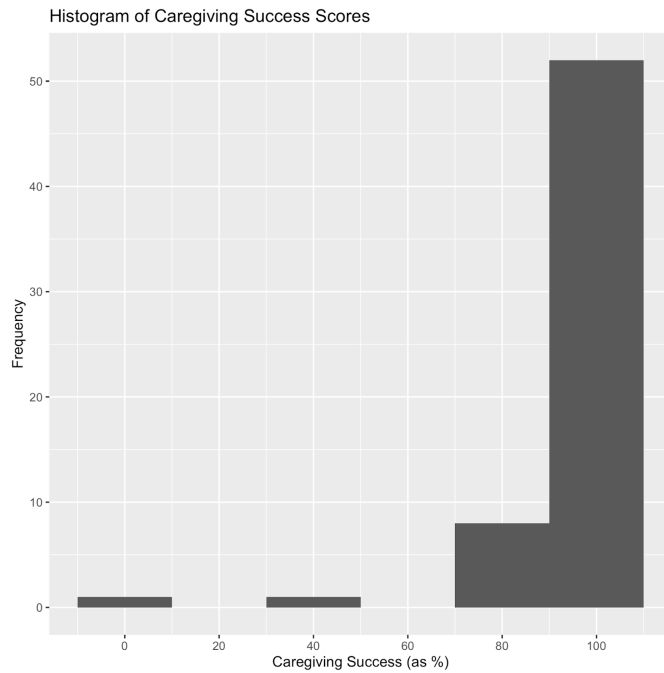
	<i>df</i>	Sum Sq	Mean Sq	<i>F</i> value	Pr(>F)
Stress Condition	3	.007	.002	.883	.455
Residuals	58	.147	.003		

<b>Table 4</b> <i>Caregiving Task LSM Scores by Stress Condition</i>					
	<i>df</i>	Sum Sq	Mean Sq	<i>F</i> value	Pr(>F)
Stress Condition	3	.003	.001	.262	.852
Residuals	55	.224	.004		

<b>Table 5</b> <i>Gratitude Task LSM Scores by Stress Condition</i>					
	<i>df</i>	Sum Sq	Mean Sq	<i>F</i> value	Pr(>F)
Stress Condition	3	.001	.000	.071	.975
Residuals	58	.181	.003		

**Figure 2**

*Distribution of Caregiving Success Scores*



**Table 6**

*Regression Table: Relationship Between Overall LSM and Caregiving Success*

	Estimate	Standard Error	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	140.79	44.60	.003**
Overall LSM	-55.32	52.85	.299

**Table 7**

*Regression Table: Relationship Between Overall LSM and Dichotomized Success*

	Estimate	Standard Error	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	9.935	9.277	.284
Overall LSM	-9.914	10.891	.363

<b>Table 8</b>			
<i>Regression Table: Relationship Between Overall LSM and Sqrt(Reversed Success)</i>			
	Estimate	Standard Error	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	8.239	1.937	<.001***
Overall LSM	2.402	2.295	.299

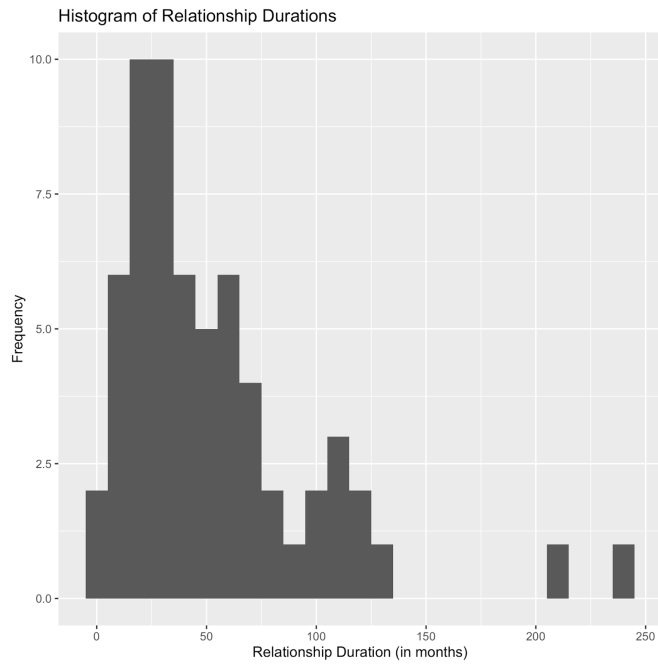
<b>Table 9</b>			
<i>Regression Table: Relationship Between Relationship Duration (in months) and Overall LSM</i>			
	Estimate	Standard Error	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	.855	.008	<.001***
Relationship Duration	-.000	.000	.036*

<b>Table 10</b>			
<i>Regression Table: Relationship Between Time Living Together (in months) and Overall LSM</i>			
	Estimate	Standard Error	<i>p</i>
(Intercept)	.851	.007	<.001***
Time Living Together	-.000	.000	.085



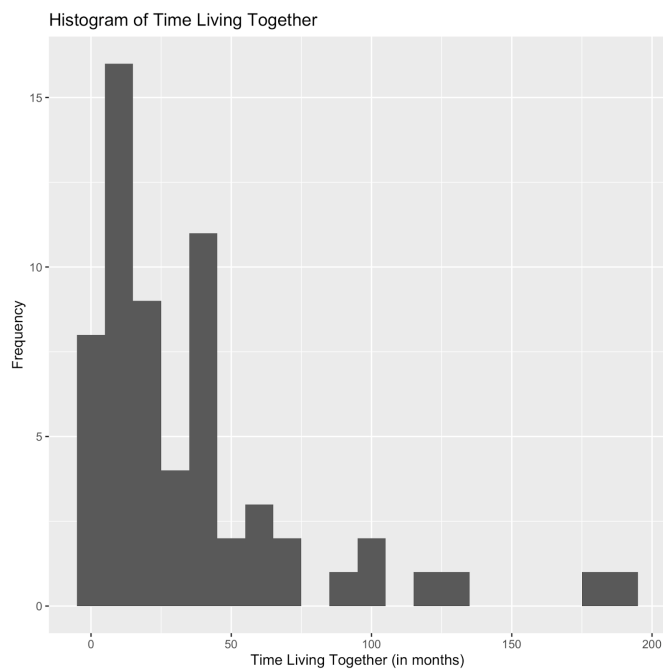
**Figure 3**

*Distribution of Couples' Relationship Durations*



**Figure 4**

*Distribution of Couples' Time Spent Living Together*



**Supplementary Material 1: Sample Job Description Interview Sheet for Partner A****Company: Venture Media Corporations**

*Venture Media Corporations is one of the world's most trusted providers of answers that help our clients make confident decisions. Our customers operate in many areas that help society continue to move forward and face increasing difficulty as regulations and technology play a role in every industry (tax, law, government, media, etc..) Since our founding in 2017, we have helped professionals advance their businesses and gain a competitive edge over their competitors with answers only we can think of.*

**Position: Client Service Manager**

*We are seeking applicants for the position of Client Service Manager in our Ann Arbor office. The ideal applicant will have prior experience with customer service or management. In addition, the applicant should be able to strive for customer retention, know how to provide efficient service, and have excellent communication skills. The basic duties of this position will be listed below.*

**Description:**

- Meet customer needs to build lasting relationships
- Account management and support
- Provide leadership and mentoring to other members
- Identify new opportunities and provide leads to Sales team
- Model exceptional and friendly customer service
- Maintain knowledge of products and related technology
- Reliable and consistent attendance
- Report accurate data back to team
- Perform other duties as assigned

**Instructions:**

You will give a speech for 5 minutes convincing the evaluators that you are the best candidate for the job. You will be recorded and your speech and non-verbal behavior may be analyzed by experts. In your speech, you should address the following four topics. Please use the note cards provided to prepare your responses.

- What can you bring to the company?
- How do your interests and values fit with the mission of this company?
- What are your strengths and weaknesses relevant to this position?
- Describe a time when you had to interact with a difficult client. What was the situation and how did you handle it?