Vulnerability in Later Life

Cross-sectional and Longitudinal Analysis of Partnership Status and Physical Difficulties (ADLs& IADLs) of Older Adults in England

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Dataset

The English Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ELSA) Wave 1 2002-2003 -- Wave 7 2014-2015
Harmonized version data of ELSA wave 7 was used in cross- sectional analysis (Valid N= 8152). And the longitudinal analysis focused on the changes from wave 1 to wave 7 (Valid N=4,062). The initial sample of ELSA wave 1 included 11,050 respondents aged 50 and over on March 1, 2002. The seventh wave was conducted between June 2014 and May 2015 and included a refreshment sample selected from HSE 2011-2012. The refreshment sample consisted of individuals aged between 50 and 51 year and their partners.

Partnership Status

Ageing can be associated with losses in partners. Our study distinguishes four possible states (partnered/separated/never married/widowed) based on the partnership variables in Harmonised ELSA.
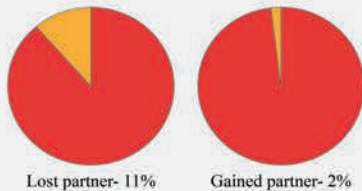
Through longitudinal analysis, we could see how respondents' partnership changed over time in their later life. The two pie chart give **the Percentages of Partnership Changes in Total Longitudinal Sample Population From Wave 1 to Wave 7.**

There are 11% respondents lost their partners in research period, while only a very small group of people gained new partners as they getting older.

Lost partner- 11%   Gained partner- 2%

Physical Difficulties (ADLs& IADLs)

Physical health of the elderly could be reflected by their difficulty with activities of daily living (ADLs) and difficulty with instrumental activities of daily living (IADLs).
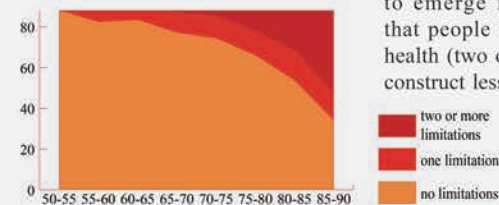
Ageing can be associated with losses in health. The figure shows the **Physical Difficulties in Age Group Categories of Wave 7**.

One noteworthy observation to emerge from the graph is that people with poor physical health (two or more limitations) construct less than 30% of their age group, for those under 80 years old.

Gender

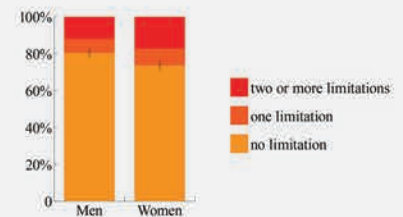The pie charts show the **differences between men and women in partnership status in Wave 7.**
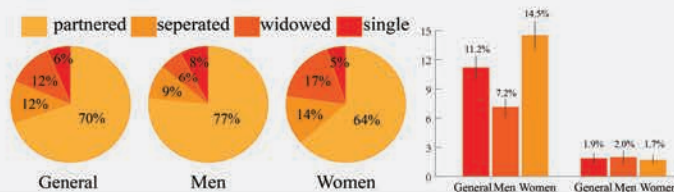
As can be seen in the pie chart of women, there are more than a quarter of female respondents who are widowed or separated from their partners, which number is only 15% for man. Accordingly, man have a higher proportion of partnered.

The first bar chart shows the **Partnership Change in Gender Categories (Wave1- Wave 7)**. The bar chart of loss in partners presents that men have significantly lower possibilities of losing their partner under 95% confidence interval. However there is no significant gender difference in gaining partners.

There are also certain differences in physical health in gender categories.

The second bar chart shows **Physical Difficulties inGender Categories (Wave 7)**. We can see that the male respondents get a significantly higher percentage of having no physical health limitations than the female, under 95% confidence interval.

partnered seperated widowed single

General   Men   Women

two or more limitations
one limitation
no limitation

Men   Women

Wealth

The stacked bar chart on the left is **Partnership of Household Wealth Quintiles Categories (Wave 7)**
It shows that wealthier respondents have higher percentages of having partners. And people from the bottom 20% of wealth get the highest percentage of separating from partners

*Pearson's chi square (N=9416, df=12) = 596.89 Pr= 0.000 The p value from chi- square test is .000, less than .05. This suggests that partnership status do have a significant relationship with household wealth.
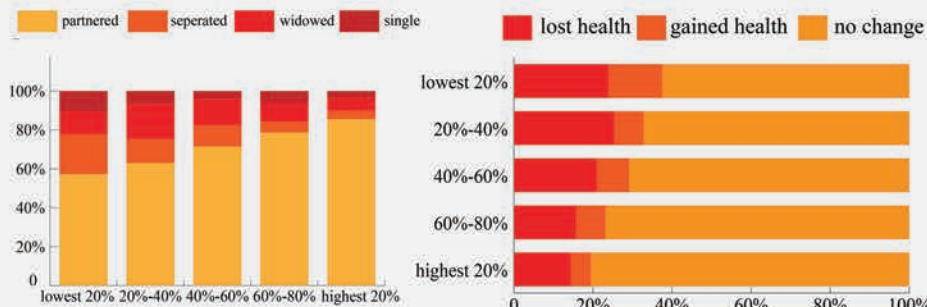
The other chart shows the **Physical Health Changes of Household Wealth Quintiles Categories (Wave 1- 7)** As can be seen in the figure people of the bottom 40% of household wealth are more likely to experience deterioration in physical health in contrast to the wealthier groups.

partnered seperated widowed single

lowest 20% 20%-40% 40%-60% 60%-80% highest 20%

lost health gained health no change

lowest 20%
20%-40%
40%-60%
60%-80%
highest 20%