SHBC1433

Authors
Y.D.Phay¹, B.J.Shen¹, H.Y.Tay², K.S.C.Lim²

Institutions
¹Nanyang Technological University, Singapore, ²Singapore Heart Foundation, Singapore

Background & Hypothesis
Marriage was often found to be a protective factor against depression which is prevalent among coronary heart disease (CHD) patients. This study examined whether the association between marital quality and depression was mediated by loneliness.

Methods
Participants were 183 married CHD patients (mean age = 62.81 years) from a community-based cardiac rehabilitation program in Singapore. They completed a packet of questionnaires that measured the variables analyzed in this study. Hierarchical regression analyses were conducted to test the mediation effect. All analyses were controlled for covariates, including gender, education, socio-economic status index, ethnicity, number of marriages, marriage duration, and relevant medical history.

Results
Results showed that poorer marital quality predicted higher depression (β = -.38, p < .001). After including loneliness into the model, there was a significant increase in variance accounted for in depression by 14% (ΔF(1, 166) = 41.41, p < .001). The coefficient of marital quality remained significant despite reducing to β = -.27 (p < .001), suggesting a potential mediation effect. Bootstrapping analysis with 5000 samples was conducted and results indicated that marital quality had a significant residual direct effect (DE = -.15, SE = .04, p < .001), and a significant indirect effect (IE = -.06, SE = .02, 95% CI = [-.11, -.02]). As marital quality remained significant after accounting for loneliness as a mediator, this suggested that loneliness partially mediated the relationship between marital quality and depression.

Discussion & Conclusion
Results supported the study's hypothesis. Mental health professionals should consider implementing marital interventions that reduce depression by addressing loneliness.