

Aggregation of Mental Disorders among Married Couples - Phenomena of Parallel Contagion

Jong-Yi Wang, PhD

China Medical University, Taiwan

Jen-De Chen, PhD

National Changhua University of Education, Taiwan

Introductions

- Mental illness is a growing global health issue, with 2013 prevalence 10.54% in Taiwan.
- Married couples might share risk of same disease (Hippisley-Cox et al., 2002).
- This study aimed to investigate the concordance of mental disorders among married couples.



couples was 20.22%, a ratio significantly higher than non-couples (Table 1).

- If one spouse was diagnosed with mood disorders, the other was significantly more likely to suffer the same mood disorders (OR=4.089); with the same phenomena found in anxiety disorders (OR=5.667) and other mental disorders (OR=2.672).

Table 1 Concordant mental disorders among couples versus non-couples (McNemar test, N=11,286 couples)

	Concordant mental disorders		No Concordant mental disorders		P-value
	N	%	N	%	
Study group (Married couples)	1141	20.22	4502	79.78	<.0001
Control group (Non couples)	954	16.91	4689	83.09	

Methods

- 5,643 married couples were identified from Taiwan National Health Insurance Databases from 2002 to 2013.
- The study and control groups were matched by identical gender and age.
- Mental disorders were defined by ICD-9-CM.
- McNemar test and multinomial logistic regression were performed in SAS 9.3.

Conclusions

- This study identified the family clustering of mental disorders among the couples, supported by Emotional Contagion Theory.
- The findings were named “the Phenomena of Parallel Contagion”.
- Healthcare organizations should utilize this “Parallel Contagion” in targeting the spouses of high risk for preventive interventions.



Results

- The Familial Proportion of mental disorders among the

Acknowledgements

This research was supported by Taiwan Ministry of Science and Technology Grant No. NSC 102-2410-H-039-006-SS2 and MOST 104-2410-H-039-006.