

What is the National Center for Family & Marriage Research: Married and Cohabiting Couples?

In 2010, the National Center for Family & Marriage Research (NCFMR) provided an opportunity for researchers to field test new items using a large, web-based household survey (Knowledge Networks panel). Current data collections often rely on just one member of the couple; however, it is well known that relationship dynamics (e.g., relationship quality, relationship stability, role strain, work-family balance, family ties, social support, health decisions) are shaped by the characteristics, beliefs, and behaviors of *both* members of the couple. The goal for this web-based data collection effort was to facilitate new measurement development that would lead to innovative research contributing to theoretical, conceptual, methodological, or empirical advances about *couples*. Investigators were encouraged to explore innovative measures that will help to answer new research questions on married and cohabiting relationships.

Six pilot studies were sponsored by the NCFMR in 2010:

Measures of Cohabitation: A Binary Variable Problem?

Sarah Halpern-Meekin and Laura Tach, Co-PIs
Franklin and Marshall College, Department of Sociology
University of Pennsylvania, School of Medicine

Factors Affecting Adults' Knowledge of their Partner's Medical Treatment Preferences

Sara M. Moorman and Deborah Carr, Co-PIs
Boston College, Department of Sociology and Institute on Aging
Rutgers University, Department of Sociology

Proposal to Administer the Marital Disillusionment Scale in the Knowledge Networks Panel Survey

Sylvia Niehuis and Alan Reifman, Co-PIs
Texas Tech University, Department of Human Development and Family Studies

Gender, Beliefs about Spouses' Work-Family Conflict, and Relationship Quality

Kei Nomaguchi and Melissa Milkie, Co-PIs
Bowling Green State University, Department of Sociology
University of Maryland, Department of Sociology

How Couples Meet

Kelly Raley, PI
University of Texas, Department of Sociology

Parental Co-residence with Adult Children

Judith Seltzer and Suzanne Bianchi, Co-PIs
University of California Los Angeles, Department of Sociology

On the [Married and Cohabiting Couples Original Data](#) webpage, users will find the [Quick Download](#) link ([Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research](#)) Data Notes, Measures Snapshots, and the Codebook. A summary of the data, information on how to use and access the data and the related documentation, and a description of Knowledge Networks and the KnowledgePanel are presented below.

What does the *NCFMR Married and Cohabiting Couples* pilot data offer family researchers?

The *Married and Cohabiting Couples, 2010* NCFMR Pilot Data is a nationally representative sample of U.S. married and cohabiting adults aged 18-64. Data are available for 1,504 married individuals representing 752 married couples and 646 cohabiting individuals representing 323 couples.

- Basic demographic characteristics: age, income, educational attainment, gender, race, etc.
- Individual- and couple-level data

The *NCFMR Married and Cohabiting Couples* pilot data offers rich data concerning relationship dynamics, both at the individual- and couple-levels:

- Measures of relationship quality for both married and cohabiting individuals
- Measures of relationship stability, formation, and dissolution for married and cohabiting individuals
- Measures of role strain and conflict between work and family ties
- Measures concerning health decisions, power of attorney, and expected plan of care in later life
 - Detailed information on social support concerning each of these measures

What is Knowledge Networks?

Knowledge Networks (KN) is a company specializing in online research using their **KnowledgePanel**—the only nationally representative online panel of the U.S. population. Their reliance on address-based sampling avoids the problems associated with many typically difficult-to-survey populations (e.g., cell phone-only households, young adults, race/ethnic minorities). Households are not permitted to “self-select” into surveys but are randomly chosen by the KN patented sampling system. Additionally, because many household in the U.S. lack home internet access, KN provides their panel respondents with free netbook computers and internet service. For more information regarding sampling and methodology specific to the *NCFMR Married and Cohabiting Couples* pilot study, please see the project’s documentation pdf file via the **DSDR** webpage.

Using the *NCFMR Married and Cohabiting Couples* data

The description citation, file manifest codebook, and documentation for the *NCFMR Married and Cohabiting Couples* Pilot Data project are publically available through the **DSDR** website via the **ICPSR**. Links to the project’s **DSDR** page can be found in the project summary (above) and at the NCFMR **Original Data Married and Cohabiting Couples** webpage. In analyzing the NCFMR 2010 Pilot Data, researcher should take into account the complex sampling methods used for the individual level data and include the appropriate sampling and respondent weights. Please note: weights are not available for analysis at the couple-level.

How do I access the Data?

The NCFMR Pilot Data are publically available through the **DSDR** website via **ICPSR**. The data are available as SAS, Stata, SPSS, and tab delimited (.tsv) files (Note: Users must belong to member institutions to download data). For user support specific to the *NCFMR Married and Cohabiting Couples* data on the **DSDR** website, visit the **ICPSR-DSDR Help Page** at: <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/shared/DSDR/help/index>

For more information regarding the NCFMR **Married and Cohabiting Couples** project, please contact:

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