

Asymmetries and Relationship Functioning in Young Adulthood

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Background

- Homogamy perspective suggests that asymmetries signal differences in demographic characteristics, relationship views, and experiences that potentially lead to poorer outcomes.
- Previous research has focused on demographic asymmetries.
- We know little about the influence of couple-level relational and risk asymmetries on relationship functioning during young adulthood.

Current Investigation

- Assess effects of 3 types of asymmetries (demographic, relational, risk) on relationship functioning.
- Young adults in demographically and relationally asymmetric relationships will report poor relationship functioning.
- Either partner’s involvement in risk behaviors will be associated with poor relationship functioning.

Data and Sample

Toledo Adolescent Relationships Study

- Analyses relied on data from Wave V, collected in 2011, when respondents were aged 22-29

Dependent Variables

- 24-item scale of IPV (CTS2)
- Any sexual non-exclusivity
- 9-item scale of relationship satisfaction

Descriptive Statistics

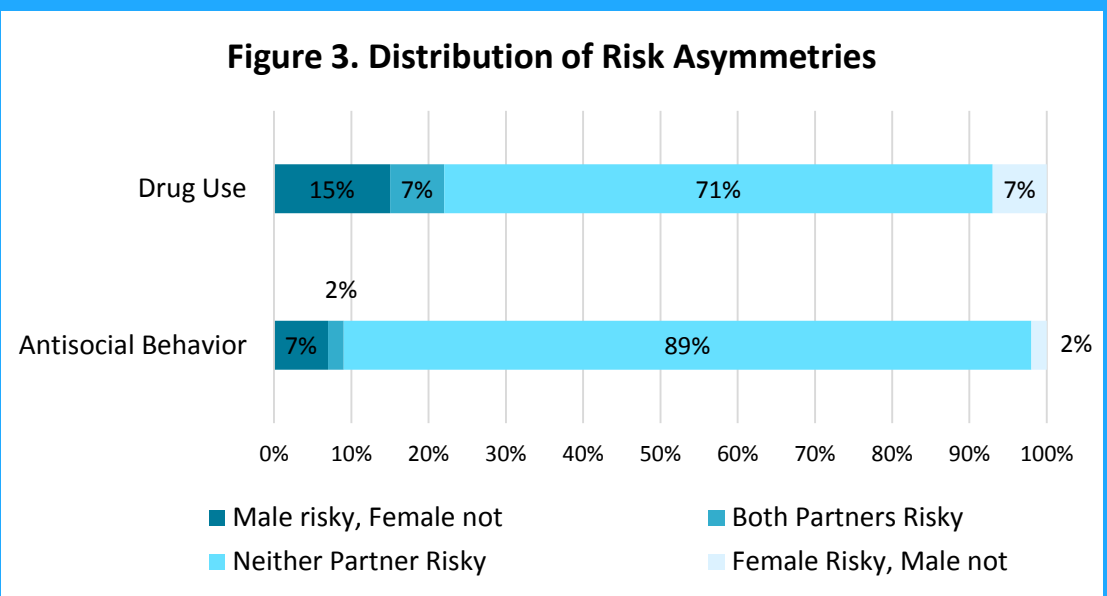
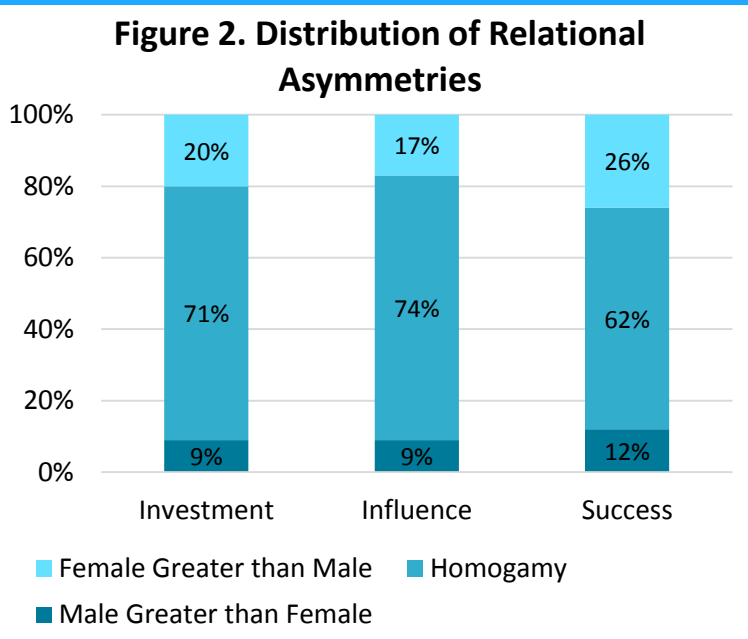
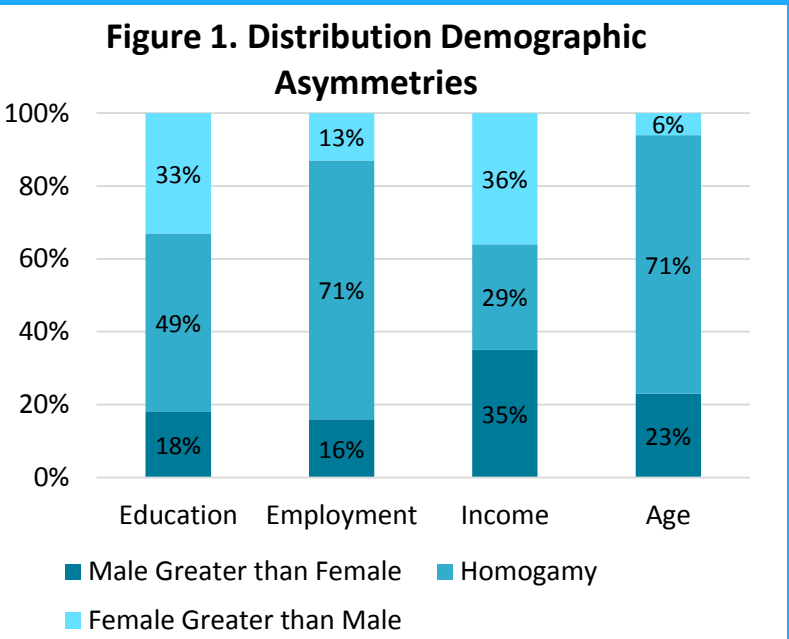


Table 1. OLS Regression of Intimate Partner Violence on Demographic, Relational, and Risk Asymmetries and Control Variables

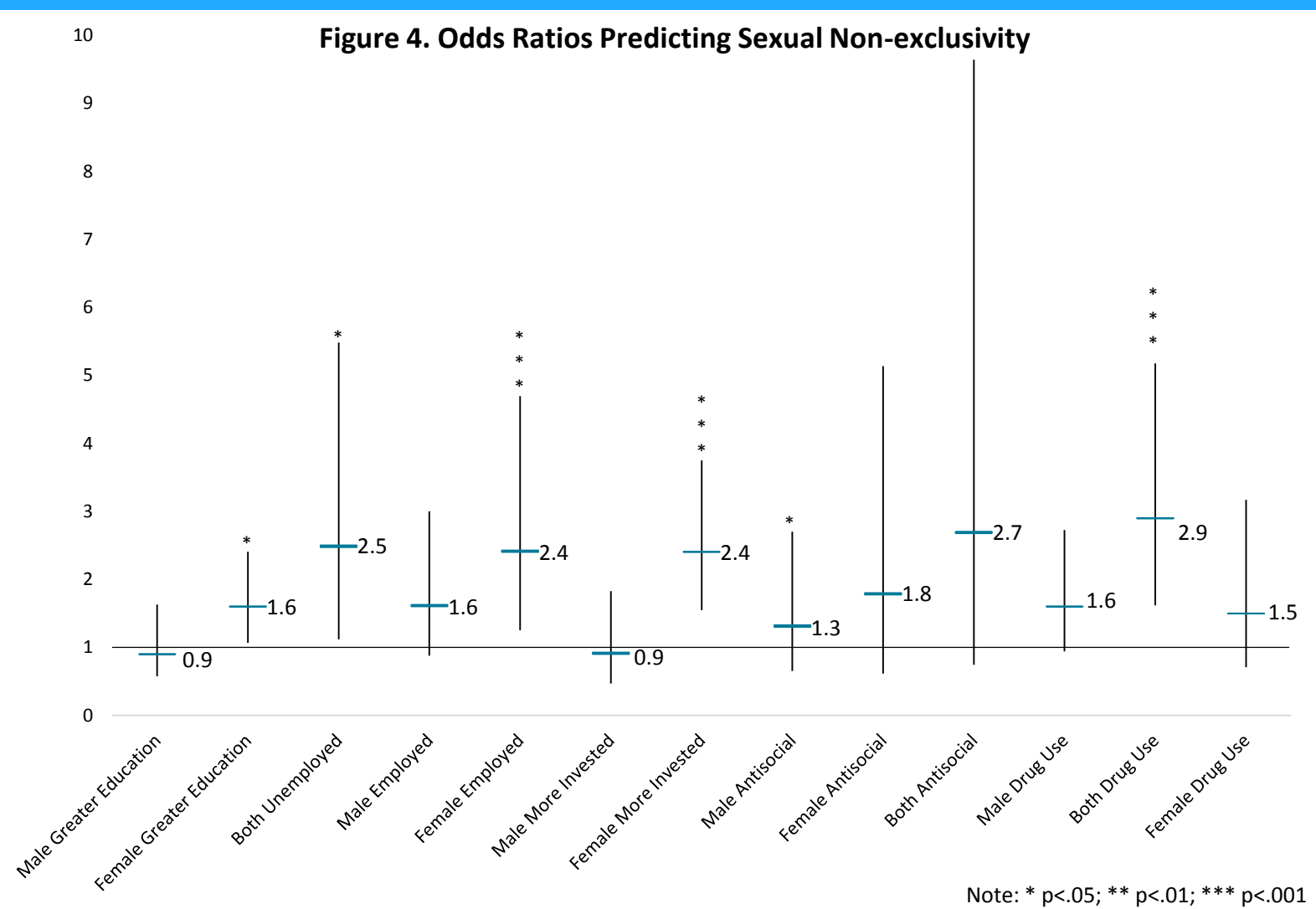
	Full Model	
	b	SE
Intercept	1.14 ***	0.37
Education (Ref=Educational homogamy)		
Male more educated	-0.01	0.07
Female more educated	-0.10	0.06
Employment (Ref=Both partners employed)		
Male employed, female unemployed	0.18 *	0.08
Both unemployed	0.33 **	0.11
Female employed, male unemployed	0.18	0.09
Income (Ref=Income homogamy)		
Male earned more	-0.05	0.07
Female earned more	-0.06	0.08
Race (Ref=Same-race)		
Interracial	0.18 *	0.06
Age (Ref= Age homogamy)		
Male older	0.11	0.06
Female older	-0.05	0.11
Investment (Ref=Investment homogamy)		
Male more invested	-0.24 *	0.10
Female more invested	0.12	0.07
Influence (Ref=Influence homogamy)		
Male more influence than female	0.29 **	0.10
Female more influence than male	0.19 **	0.07
Success (Ref=Success homogamy)		
Male more successful	0.01	0.09
Female more successful	0.12	0.06
Antisocial Behavior (Ref= Neither partner antisocial)		
Male, but not female, antisocial	0.46 ***	0.10
Both partners antisocial	0.82 ***	0.18
Female, but not male, antisocial	0.35 *	0.15
Drug Use (Ref= Neither partner used drugs)		
Male, but not female, used drugs	0.18 *	0.08
Both partners used drugs	0.14	0.08
Female, but not male, used drugs	0.00	0.07
R ²	0.32	

Note: * p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001

Table 2. OLS Regression of Relationship Satisfaction on Demographic, Relational, and Risk Asymmetries and Control Variables

	Full Model	
	b	SE
Intercept	21.78 ***	2.21
Education (Ref=Educational homogamy)		
Male more educated	-0.72	0.41
Female more educated	-0.18	0.34
Employment (Ref=Both partners employed)		
Male employed, female unemployed	0.52	0.49
Both unemployed	0.06	0.49
Female employed, male unemployed	0.98	0.56
Income (Ref=Income homogamy)		
Male earned more	-0.32	0.43
Female earned more	-0.37	0.46
Race (Ref=Same-race)		
Interracial	0.10	0.45
Age (Ref= Age homogamy)		
Male older	0.26	0.36
Female older	0.12	0.66
Investment (Ref=Investment homogamy)		
Male more invested	-2.76 ***	0.58
Female more invested	-3.17 ***	0.39
Influence (Ref=Influence homogamy)		
Male more influence than female	-1.83 **	0.59
Female more influence than male	-1.84 ***	0.41
Success (Ref=Success homogamy)		
Male more successful	-0.05	0.52
Female more successful	-0.66	0.38
Antisocial Behavior (Ref= Neither partner antisocial)		
Male, but not female, antisocial	-0.32	0.61
Both partners antisocial	0.94	1.11
Female, but not male, antisocial	-0.09	0.93
Drug Use (Ref= Neither partner used drugs)		
Male, but not female, used drugs	-0.57	0.46
Both partners used drugs	1.03 *	0.51
Female, but not male, used drugs	-1.47 *	0.64
R ²	0.47	

Note: * p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001



Results

- Demographic asymmetries are associated with greater frequency of IPV and higher odds of sexual non-exclusivity.
- Relational asymmetries are associated with IPV, sexual non-exclusivity, and relationship satisfaction.
- Risk behavior asymmetries are related to IPV, sexual non-exclusivity, and relationship satisfaction.

Conclusion

- Couple-level indicators, such as asymmetries, are important in understanding relationship functioning in young adulthood.
- Some asymmetries are more consequential to relationship functioning than others.
- Our future research will examine the underlying mechanisms through which asymmetries lead to IPV, sexual non-exclusivity, and relationship satisfaction.

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