

# Does your partner's personality affect your health?

Lynn Williams, Sarah Ashford-Smith, Laura Cobban, Rebecca Fitzsimmons, Vedika Sukhatme, Simon Hunter

School of Psychological Sciences & Health, University of Strathclyde, Scotland



## Having a conscientious partner is good for your quality of life.

### INTRODUCTION

- An individual's own personality traits are powerful predictors of their health outcomes (Strickhouser, Zell, & Krizan, 2017).
- Few studies have addressed partner effects of personality on health, whereby the personalities of people close to us affect our health.
- We aim to (i) replicate previous findings of beneficial partner effects of conscientiousness (Roberts et al., 2009; Nickel, Iveniuk, & Roberts, 2017) and, (ii) examine partner effects of Type D (joint effects of negative affect and social inhibition) (Denollet, 2005) for the first time.

### METHOD

- Cross-sectional sample of 364 participants (182 romantic couples). Mean age =35.7, SD=12.79, mean length of relationship was 10 years, 9 months.
- Measures of the Big Five, Type D personality, quality of life, health behavior and mood completed by each couple member independently.
- Data analysed using the Actor-Partner Interdependence Model (APIM).

### RESULTS

- Significant male and female partner effects of conscientiousness on QoL.
- No other partner effects of the Big Five were found.
- No actor or partner effects of Type D construct overall, but there were actor effects of negative affect for both males and females on depression and quality of life, a male actor effect of social inhibition on quality of life, and a female partner effect of social inhibition on depression.

### DISCUSSION

- These findings suggest that there are partner effects of conscientiousness on health, but not for the other Big Five traits or Type D.
- Extends evidence on the compensatory effects of conscientiousness to quality of life.
- Partners high in conscientiousness may provide their partners with useful health-related reminders (e.g. to take medication) and be reliable and consistent providers of social support.

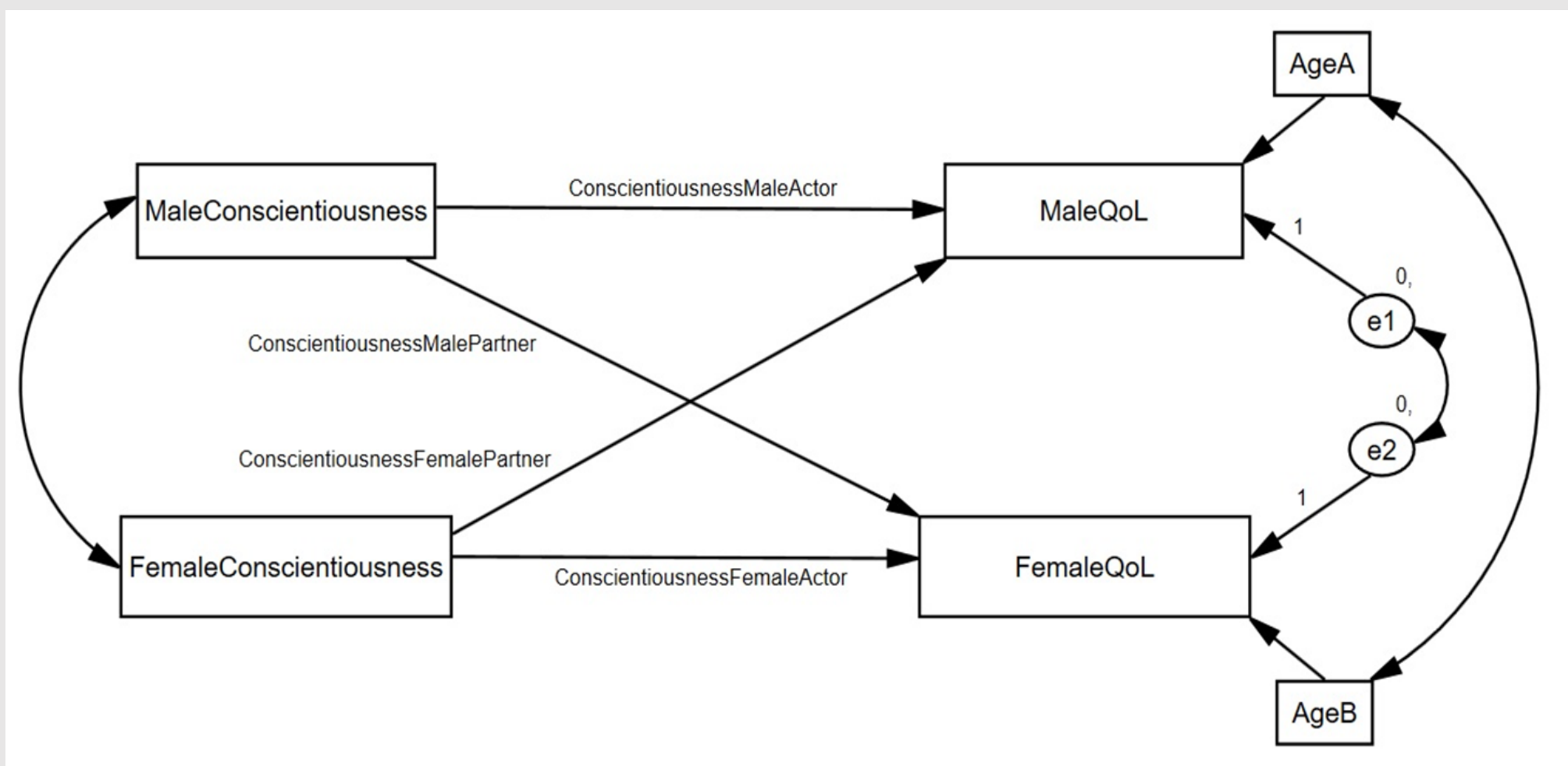


Figure 1. Example of APIM analysis testing the effects of conscientiousness on quality of life

Table 1. Actor and Partner Effects of Conscientiousness on health outcomes

| Effect   | Standardised Beta |
|--|-------------------|
| Conscientiousness → Quality of Life (Male Actor)       | .40**             |
| Conscientiousness → Quality of Life (Male Partner)     | .15*              |
| Conscientiousness → Quality of Life (Female Actor)     | .25**             |
| Conscientiousness → Quality of Life (Female Partner)   | .14*              |
| Conscientiousness → Health Behaviours (Male Actor)     | .34**             |
| Conscientiousness → Health Behaviours (Male Partner)   | .03               |
| Conscientiousness → Health Behaviours (Female Actor)   | .36**             |
| Conscientiousness → Health Behaviours (Female Partner) | .10               |

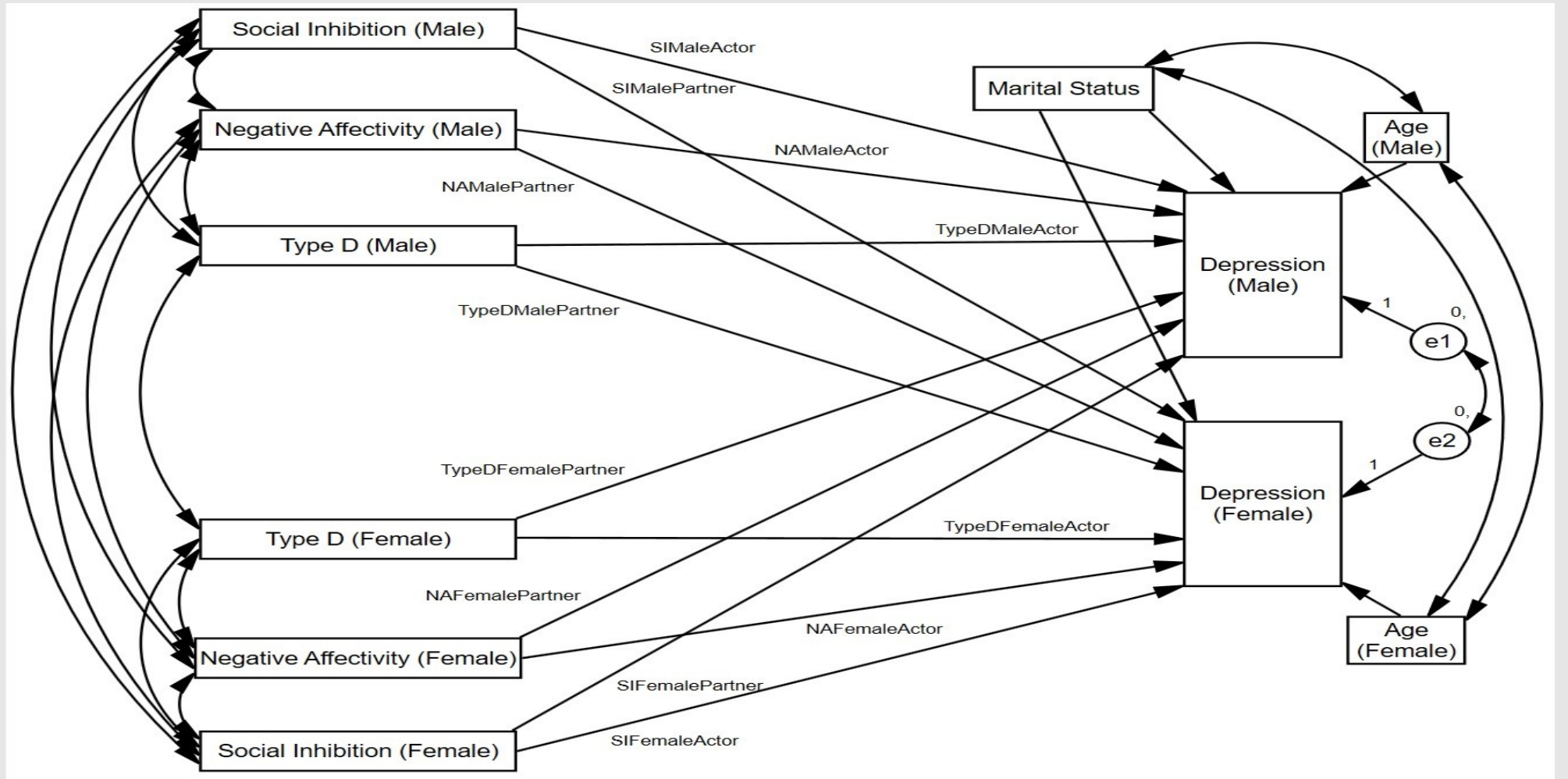


Figure 2. Example APIM analysis testing the effects of Type D on depression

Table 2. Actor and Partner Effects of Type D on health outcomes

| Effect                                    | Standardised Beta |
|---|-------------------|
| NA → Quality of Life (Male Actor)         | -.40**            |
| NA → Quality of Life (Female Actor)       | -.51**            |
| SI → Quality of Life (Male Actor)         | -.15*             |
| SI → Quality of Life (Female Actor)       | -.12              |
| Type D → Quality of Life (Male Actor)     | -.09              |
| Type D → Quality of Life (Female Actor)   | -.06              |
| NA → Quality of Life (Male Partner)       | .03               |
| NA → Quality of Life (Female Partner)     | -.14              |
| SI → Quality of Life (Male Partner)       | -.04              |
| SI → Quality of Life (Female Partner)     | -.05              |
| Type D → Quality of Life (Male Partner)   | -.03              |
| Type D → Quality of Life (Female Partner) | -.10              |
| Marital Status → Male Quality of Life     | -.17*             |
| Marital Status → Female Quality of Life   | .00               |
| NA → Depression (Male Actor)              | .61**             |
| NA → Depression (Female Actor)            | .47**             |
| SI → Depression (Male Actor)              | .04               |
| SI → Depression (Female Actor)            | .10               |
| Type D → Depression (Male Actor)          | -.02              |
| Type D → Depression (Female Actor)        | .04               |
| NA → Depression (Male Partner)            | .03               |
| NA → Depression (Female Partner)          | -.01              |
| SI → Depression (Male Partner)            | -.01              |
| SI → Depression (Female Partner)          | .15*              |
| Type D → Depression (Male Partner)        | .04               |
| Type D → Depression (Female Partner)      | .00               |
| Marital Status → Male Depression          | -.02              |
| Marital Status → Female Depression        | .16*              |

Contact Details:  
E: [lynn.williams@strath.ac.uk](mailto:lynn.williams@strath.ac.uk)

[@lynnwilliams\\_](https://twitter.com/lynnwilliams_)



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