

Factors affecting repartnering in Australia and the UK

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Introduction

Repartnering has become increasingly important in recent years as a result of a rise in divorce rates coupled with an increase in rates of cohabitation, a union type which research has demonstrated to be more unstable than marriage. Although a large body of literature exists on the study of remarriage, there is far less research which has investigated repartnering in the form of a cohabiting union. Further, much of this work focuses those who have been previously married, with far less attention paid to repartnering after the breakdown of a cohabiting relationship (Wu and Schimmele 2005). With a decline in first marriage rates and rising rates of cohabitation for the never-married and for those who have been previously married, it has become important to account for the type of union which was dissolved when analysing partnership formation after the breakdown of a union. This paper seeks to contribute to our understanding of repartnering by examining the impact of previous children and relationship histories on the timing and rate of repartnering. We compare the UK and Australia, two countries with similar policy and legislative frameworks.

Background

Previous research has found that the probability of repartnering after the dissolution of a relationship is affected by a range of factors relating to an individual's demographic and socio-economic characteristics. Important demographic characteristics include an individual's age and gender as well as their fertility and relationship history. With respect to socio-economic factors, employment, social background as represented by education and social class, financial situation, health, religion and geography have also been found to influence the formation of a new relationship. These variables may influence repartnering by affecting a person's own behaviour or attitudes towards forming a new union, or by affecting their attractiveness as a potential partner for others.

Existing studies suggest that gender is a key determinant of repartnering behaviour, with women being less likely to repartner after a relationship dissolution than men (Wu and Schimelle 2005; Portland 2007). The reasons behind this gender difference are likely to be complex, but they are hypothesized to be related to the fact that women receive fewer benefits from being in a partnership compared with men (Poortman 2007). The gender differences in repartnering may also be related to women taking a longer time to recover from the negative mental health consequences of separation, either from a previous cohabitation or a marriage, compared to men (Willits *et al.* 2004). There are also important gender differences in the way that other individual characteristics such as age, prior fertility and previous relationship history relate to repartnering. For example, whereas increasing age has been consistently identified to be associated with lower repartnering rates for both men and women, the effect of age may be particularly strong

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for women. Men tend to partner with women younger than themselves, so as they grow older, women's pool of potential available partners diminishes faster than men's (Dean and Gurak 1978).

The role of children in repartnering has been examined in many studies, although it is the specific focus of only a few studies (e.g. Koo *et al.* 1984; Teachman and Heckert 1985; Lampard and Peggs 1999; Stewart *et al.* 2003). Further, with the exception of the study by Stewart *et al.* (2003), the samples only include women.³ Overall findings indicate that the presence of children from a prior relationship have a negative effect on the chance of remarriage or repartnering.⁴ The chance of re-forming a union decreases as the number of children increases. Having children from a previous partnership may decrease one's attractiveness as a partner due to its association with various costs, both direct financial ones and indirect ones associated with the complexities of step-families (Bumpass *et al.* 1990). The presence of children has also been hypothesized to lessen the need to repartner, as children may provide company and be a source of emotional support (Hughes 2000). Finally the presence of children may also act as a barrier to repartnering by decreasing the chance for social interaction and the possibility of finding a new partner (Wallerstein and Blakeslee 1989; Ermish *et al.* 1990).

The effect of prior fertility is also likely to differ by the gender of an individual. Whereas the presence of children is consistently found to be associated with lowering repartnering rates for women, for men the effect is more mixed and not always significant (see De Graaf and Kalmijn 2003). However, there is a strong interrelationship between the gender of an individual and the presence of children in the household, with dependent children more often residing with their mother. Whether or not the gender difference is largely a result of the higher proportions of women with children present in the household has not been fully determined due to different analytical approaches yielding different results. Racial differences in the effect of numbers of children have been noted by a couple of studies but with contrasting results (Koo, *et al.* 1984; Smock 1990).

An important factor, particularly in relation to repartnering for men, is whether or not the children are resident in the household (De Graaf and Kalmijn 2003; Stewart *et al.* 2003). Only two studies have been able to control for this, since information on the residence of children is not always available, and findings are again mixed. De Graaf and Kalmijn (2003) find a negative effect for both resident and non-resident children for men, however with respect to women this negative effect is only found for those with resident children. In contrast, while Stewart *et al.* (2003) find no difference for men in the odds of forming a marriage or a cohabitation relative to staying single (no matter whether they have resident children or no children at all), they find a positive effect of non-resident children on the chance of forming a cohabiting union.

Few studies have considered the age of youngest child (Koo *et al.* 1984; Bumpass *et al.* 1990; Poortman 2007), and results from these are mixed. Both Bumpass *et al.* (1990) and Koo *et al.* (1984) find no effect of the age of youngest child on repartnering in the US. However, Poortman (2007) finds that having children aged 12 or under has a

³ Lampard and Peggs (1999) examine repartnering of men and women, but are only able to investigate the effect of prior fertility for women since this is not collected for men in the GHS data used in their analysis.

⁴ All but one of these studies looks at remarriage as opposed to repartnering.

highly significant negative effect on the likelihood of repartnering for women. Moreover, the effect is not confined to women, with children aged between zero and six or between 13 and 18 significantly reducing the chance of repartnering for men.

Related to the prior fertility of an individual is their relationship history. As highlighted by Poortman (2007), there is little research that focuses on the 'relationship career' and how this affects repartnering prospects. Prior union duration has been the most commonly used measure of relationship history and while studies conducted in the early eighties finding no significant effects of duration (Mott and Moore 1983; Koo *et al.* 1984), more recent studies point to a positive effect of longer durations on repartnering (Wu and Balakrishnan 1994; De Graaf and Kalmijn 2003; Wu and Schimmele 2005; Poortman 2007). The number of previous unions has rarely been considered in the repartnering literature however. Nevertheless, the number of previous unions could have a considerable affect on the chance of repartnering given the fact that these previous relationships are likely to shape an individuals attitude on entering into future unions. The number of previous unions may also be associated with their social networks or affect the networks to which they belong, and may also be used by potential partners in their partnership selection (Poortman 2007). However, the number of past relationships was not associated with the chance of repartnering in research conducted by Poortman (2007). She found no significant difference between those who had one prior union compared to those who had several prior unions. However a significant difference in the odds of partnering is found between those with one prior union compared to those with none, reflecting that the 'first cut is the deepest' (Poortman 2007). Furthermore, results indicate that those who have ever married have lower odds of repartnering than those who have only cohabited.

While the demographic variables outlined above are likely to be the strongest determinants of repartnering behaviour, theory suggests that various socio-economic variables such as employment and income might also be important. With regards to such socio-economic variables however, empirical evidence is less conclusive.

When it comes to socio-economic factors such as income, employment and education several possibilities have been suggested regarding their effect on repartnering. Economic theory suggests that factors such as employment which are associated with economic independence would have a negative effect on repartnering for women, but not men. Based on a traditional view of relationships where the man is the breadwinner and the woman the homemaker (Hughes 2000), it is argued that the more economically independent the woman is, the less need she has to partner (Becker *et al.* 1977). For men the situation is thought to be more straightforward with employed men on high incomes being more attractive as potential partners and therefore having higher repartnering rates.

Others have argued that in current times changing gender roles and changing labour markets mean that two incomes are increasingly seen as necessary to maintain a good standard of living (Hughes 2000), and that women with a higher earning potential might in fact be even more attractive in the partner market (Payne and Range 1998; Mott and Moore 1983). Furthermore there may also be a positive effect of employment as being employed provides a good opportunity for social interaction and the potential to meet partners through the work environment (Hughes 2000; De Graaf and Kalmijn 2003).

The arguments with regard to related socio-economic indicators such as education are closely related to the arguments outlined above relating to employment. Whereas more highly educated women have higher earning potential potentially making them more attractive partners, the more highly educated a woman is the more restricted will be her potential pool of men with similar education levels (Goldman *et al.* 1984).

Another socio-economic factor which has been found to be associated with repartnering behaviour is religion. Most religions tend to have specific prescriptions regarding appropriate partnering behaviour for example discouraging pre-marital sex and cohabitation (Thornton *et al.* 1992). The social acceptance of repartnering is therefore likely to be lower among those who are religious. On the other hand, religious people who repartner may be more likely to marry than cohabit.

Geography may also affect repartnering because where one lives may affect the size of the available partner market and also the possibility of meeting a new partner. For example, in large cities the higher density and mobility of the population makes it easier to meet people (Payne and Range 1998). The territorial context could also be associated with repartnering because different areas may have different levels of modernization, social norms and attitudes towards repartnering (Wu and Balakrishnan 1994; Payne and Range 1998; Meggiolaro and Ongaro 2008).

This paper seeks to address the issue of repartnering in comparative perspective. We explore the impact of children and relationship histories on the repartnering patterns of men and women. The paper uses a longitudinal approach to compare Australia and the UK, countries with similar policy and legislative frameworks.

Data and method

Data

The data used in this study is based on waves one to six (2001–2006) of the Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey (HILDA) and waves nine to 15 (1999–2005) of the British Household Panel Survey (BHPS). Both surveys are large scale nationally representative surveys which are conducted annually and interview every adult member. The sample is around 7,000 households for HILDA and 5,000 households for BHPS. This equates to around 13,000 and 10,000 individual interviews respectively.

These data offer specific advantages for the study of repartnering because of the prospective longitudinal nature of the data. This allows individuals to be selected at the point of separation from a co-residential partner and subsequently followed over the waves of the panel. Details on the type of relationship are also available: we know whether people were legally married to their partner or whether they were in a cohabiting (*de facto*) relationship.

Individuals are selected by merging successive waves of each panel dataset and transitions into being single and ‘at risk’ of repartnering are determined by observing a change in marital status between two consecutive waves. A person-period file is constructed consisting of 924 individuals taken from HILDA and 768 from the BHPS⁵

⁵ Sample sizes before deletions due to item non-response.

(i.e. those who separated from a partner) for which the maximum number of years at risk of repartnering that can be observed is five years.

A dependent variable is created to indicate whether or not an individual had repartnered in each of the time periods for which they are at risk. The dataset includes a number of time-varying variables as well as standard fixed-time explanatory covariates. Key variables for analysis include a composite variable which indicates the age and presence of children in the household, the length of the most recent co-residential partnership, the number of previous partnerships, the type of previous partnership and the gender of the individual. Standard demographic and socio-economic variables are also included as controls. Fixed-time covariates are measured at the time of becoming single. Time-varying covariates are lagged by one year in order that they reflect an individual's circumstances prior to repartnering.

Method

A life table approach is used to provide descriptive statistics of the median duration spent single after the breakdown of a union in each country. This analysis also allows investigation of the baseline hazard of repartnering, the results of which are used to determine the treatment of time in the multivariate model. For the multivariate analysis a discrete time proportional hazard model is employed to investigate the impact of the key variables on the likelihood of repartnering in the two countries. The discrete-time hazard for a time interval t refers to the conditional probability of the event (in this case repartnering) occurring in the interval t , given that it has not already occurred in a previous time period. A logistic hazard model is fitted to estimate the response probability. Two models are estimated, the first one contains demographic variables, and the second combines both demographic and socio-economic characteristics.

Results

Life table survival curves

The life-table analysis reveals that nearly half (49 per cent) of the UK sample have repartnered within five years of becoming single (see Appendix 1). The corresponding rates for the Australian sample are slightly lower, with only 43 per cent repartnered after five years. Examining the rates of repartnering in each country by the type of most recent previous partnership indicates that in both countries the rate of repartnering is slower for those whose previous partnership was a marriage compared to those separating from a cohabiting union. Again, there are slight differences between the two countries, with 36 per cent of previously married Australians repartnering within five years compared with 43 per cent in the U.K. In terms of repartnering for those separated from a cohabiting union the difference in rates between the two countries is slightly larger. We estimate a median duration to repartnering of between four and five years for those separated from a cohabiting union in Australia and between three and four years for individuals in the UK.

For both countries the hazard of repartnering appears to decline as length of time spent single increases, however the shape of the hazard is different in each country. To fully capture the variation in the hazard over time dummy variables are created for each spell year at risk for inclusion in the discrete-time hazard model for each country.

Multivariate event history analysis

United Kingdom

Table 1 presents the results of the odds of repartnering from the survival analysis of the United Kingdom. Model 1 which contains only the demographic variables indicates that as expected, the probability of repartnering is strongly related to an individual's age. Compared to the reference category of those aged 25 to 34, the odds of repartnering were considerably lower for those aged over 35, 45 or 55. For the other major demographic variable, sex, it is somewhat surprising that there did not appear to be any significant gender differences in repartnering in the United Kingdom.

Prior fertility however was related to the probability of repartnering. In contrast to the reference category of those with resident children aged less than five years, the odds of forming a new union in any one year were over two times higher for those with non-resident children of any age or non-dependent resident children. In terms of prior relationship history, the duration of the previous relationship or the number of partners ever had were not significant predictors of repartnering behaviour. However there was some effect of previous relationship type. Compared to those whose previous relationship was a direct marriage, the odds of repartnering were significantly lower for those whose previous partnership was a marriage preceded by a cohabitation.

The results of the demographic variables outlined above, remain very similar in Model 2 which also controls for socio-economic characteristics. In line with previous research, the socio-economic variables do not appear as strong predictors of repartnering compared to the demographic variables. There was some indication of possible social class differences with those who were involved in skilled agriculture/fish or craft related work having higher odds of repartnering compared to legislators, senior officials or managers. Those living in Scotland appear to be less likely to repartner than those living in England. Furthermore, those who were rated their health as good were slightly less likely to repartner compared to those who thought their health was excellent.

Table 1. Odds of repartnering, United Kingdom

	Model 1: Demographic variables			Model 2: Demographic & socioeconomic variables		
	Odds ratio	Std Error	P value	Odds ratio	Std Error	P value
Time						
0-1	1.00			1.00		
1-2	1.12	0.203	0.548	1.26	0.241	0.226
2-3	1.04	0.236	0.879	1.25	0.305	0.355
3-4	0.95	0.297	0.880	1.24	0.402	0.511
4-5	0.70	0.307	0.416	0.87	0.391	0.758
Age						
17-24 years	1.23	0.279	0.366	1.21	0.300	0.436
25-34 years	1.00			1.00		
35-44 years	0.60	0.123	0.013	0.53	0.118	0.004
45-54 years	0.38	0.116	0.002	0.36	0.117	0.002
55+ years	0.10	0.047	0.000	0.11	0.057	0.000
Gender						
Female	1.00			1.00		
Male	1.13	0.202	0.498	0.92	0.192	0.708
Children						
Resident children age <5 years	1.00			1.00		
Resident children age 5+ years	1.21	0.326	0.479	1.46	0.428	0.199
Non-resident children / non dependent resident children	2.34	0.805	0.013	2.58	1.011	0.015
No own children	1.40	0.342	0.166	1.60	0.476	0.115
Missing	0.97	0.512	0.953	1.09	0.608	0.873
Prior partnership duration						
Less than 5 years	1.00			1.00		
5-15 years	1.11	0.214	0.573	1.27	0.254	0.226
15+ years	0.84	0.249	0.563	0.86	0.269	0.639
Number of partners						
1 partner	1.00			1.00		
2 or more partners	1.17	0.203	0.378	1.09	0.198	0.642
Partnership type						
Direct marriage	1.00			1.00		
Marriage preceded by cohabitation	0.63	0.155	0.062	0.51	0.133	0.009
Cohabitation	0.84	0.167	0.377	0.74	0.159	0.163
Year						
2000	1.00			1.00		
2001	0.77	0.178	0.261	0.72	0.174	0.171
2002	0.98	0.203	0.937	1.11	0.243	0.648
2003	0.99	0.230	0.966	1.02	0.252	0.931
2004	0.85	0.249	0.568	1.02	0.317	0.943

Table 1 continues...

Table 1. Odds of repartnering, United Kingdom (continued)

	Model 2: Demographic & socioeconomic variables		
	Odds ratio	Std Error	P value
Employment			
Employed	1.00		
Unemployed	0.88	0.326	0.722
Family care	1.60	0.535	0.156
Out of labour force	0.69	0.221	0.243
Education			
Degree/Teaching Qual	1.00		
Other qual (incl nursing, apprenticeship)	0.67	0.178	0.136
A level	0.64	0.210	0.178
O-level or equiv	1.02	0.302	0.935
No quals/still at school	0.68	0.256	0.309
Missing	0.83	0.450	0.735
Benefit receipt			
Receives a benefit	1.00		
Does not receive a benefit	0.85	0.195	0.465
Missing	5.15	7.708	0.273
Income quintile			
Bottom	0.75	0.231	0.348
2nd	0.85	0.248	0.574
3rd	0.65	0.189	0.136
4th	0.98	0.257	0.934
Top	1.00		
Missing	0.16	0.251	0.245
Social class			
Legislators, senior officials & manager	1.00		
Professionals	0.76	0.262	0.433
Technicians & associate professionals	0.93	0.311	0.833
Clerks	0.82	0.249	0.519
Service workers & shop & market sales	1.10	0.317	0.738
Skilled agri/fish & craft/related worker	1.80	0.621	0.090
Plant & machine operators & assemblers	1.20	0.401	0.580
Elementary occupations	1.03	0.396	0.941
Missing	0.44	0.227	0.111
Housing tenure			
Owner occupier	1.00		
L.A./H.A.	0.77	0.179	0.255
Other rented	1.34	0.271	0.147
Missing	1.06	0.583	0.917
Region			
England	1.00		
Wales	1.20	0.266	0.416
Scotland	0.65	0.145	0.052
Northern Ireland	0.94	0.604	0.920
Missing	0.53	0.271	0.214
Household move			
Yes	1.32	0.238	0.129
No	1.00		
Health			
Excellent	1.00		
Good	0.72	0.138	0.082
Fair	0.93	0.212	0.747
Poor/very poor	0.87	0.268	0.657

Australia

Table 2 presents the results for Australia. Again two models are presented, the first one with demographic information and the second one with both demographic and socio-economic variables. As for the United Kingdom we find that increasing age has a negative effect on the probability of repartnering. Those aged 35 and over had considerably lower odds of repartnering in any one year compared to those aged under 35. The effect of sex was in line with much of the previous literature with men being more likely to repartner than women. This gender effect was not significant in Model 1, but it was significant at $p=0.051$ in Model 2 which controls for socio-economic characteristics. Prior fertility and the living circumstances of any existing children was also an important predictor of new union formations. Compared to the reference category of those with resident children aged under 5, those with non resident children of any age or non-dependent resident children were significantly more likely to start a new relationship. In model 2, those with resident children aged 5 and over are also more likely to repartner compared to those with children aged less than 5. The type of relationship individuals had previously was also important. Those whose previous relationship was either a marriage which was preceded by a cohabitation or, a cohabitation, were significantly more likely to repartner compared to those who were coming out of a direct marriage.

In terms of socio-economic variables those in elementary occupations were significantly less likely to repartner compared to legislators, senior officials or managers. There were also some geographic differences with the odds of repartnering being lower in Victoria or Queensland compared to the New South Wales or Australian Capital Territory. Those who moved households were also more likely to repartner, however it is likely that this effect is picking up moving related to the formation of a new relationship. Self-rated health was also related to repartnering, with those who rated their health as fair being less likely to repartner compared to those whose health was rated as excellent.

Table 2. Odds of repartnering, Australia

	Model 1: Demographic variables			Model 2: Demographic & socioeconomic variables		
	Odds ratio	Std Error	P value	Odds ratio	Std Error	P value
Time						
0-1						
1-2	0.93	0.149	0.642	0.98	0.180	0.918
2-3	0.73	0.146	0.113	0.80	0.179	0.315
3-4	0.66	0.167	0.098	0.74	0.208	0.282
4-5	0.67	0.233	0.248	0.72	0.273	0.388
Age						
17-24 years	1.12	0.234	0.603	1.15	0.252	0.512
25-34 years	1.00			1.00		
35-44 years	0.64	0.124	0.022	0.66	0.133	0.039
45-54 years	0.39	0.102	0.000	0.41	0.114	0.001
55+ years	0.26	0.095	0.000	0.30	0.116	0.002
Gender						
Female	1.00			1.00		
Male	1.26	0.182	0.114	1.38	0.232	0.051
Children						
Resident children age <5 years	1.00			1.00		
Resident children age 5+ years	1.53	0.409	0.111	1.63	0.452	0.076
Non-resident children any age / non depe	1.65	0.397	0.037	1.62	0.421	0.062
No own children	1.29	0.278	0.243	1.22	0.294	0.405
Prior partnership duration						
Less than 5 years	1.00			1.00		
5-15 years	1.17	0.215	0.391	1.19	0.226	0.359
15+ years	1.05	0.306	0.871	1.11	0.337	0.739
Number of partners						
1 partner	1.00			1.00		
2 or more partners	1.01	0.176	0.945	1.01	0.181	0.954
Partnership type						
Direct marriage	1.00			1.00		
Marriage preceded by cohabitation	1.52	0.322	0.049	1.62	0.351	0.025
Cohabitation	1.58	0.390	0.062	1.75	0.444	0.028
Year						
2001	1.00			1.00		
2002	1.03	0.180	0.877	1.06	0.225	0.797
2003	1.08	0.214	0.714	1.07	0.254	0.772
2004	1.15	0.258	0.524	1.21	0.317	0.457
2005	0.75	0.235	0.356	0.75	0.268	0.422

Table 2 continues...

Table 2. Odds of repartnering, Australia (continued)

	Model 2: Demographic & socioeconomic variables		
	Odds ratio	Std Error	P value
Employment			
Employed	1.00		
Unemployed	1.13	0.382	0.727
Out of labour force	1.25	0.290	0.328
Education			
Degree	1.00		
Adv diploma, diploma, cert	0.93	0.209	0.733
Year 12	1.23	0.301	0.405
Year 11 and below/undetermined	1.10	0.270	0.710
Benefit receipt			
Receives a benefit	1.00		
Does not receive a benefit	0.95	0.174	0.764
Income quintile			
Bottom	0.86	0.228	0.562
2nd	0.88	0.218	0.616
3rd	1.07	0.242	0.761
4th	0.75	0.173	0.209
Top	1.00		
Social class			
Legislators, senior officials & manager	1.00		
Professionals	0.66	0.210	0.193
Technicians & associate professionals	0.91	0.269	0.751
Clerks	0.88	0.281	0.699
Service workers & shop & market sales	0.74	0.238	0.350
Skilled agri/fish & craft/related worker	0.80	0.264	0.496
Plant & machine operators & assemblers	0.69	0.278	0.354
Elementary occupations	0.42	0.158	0.021
Missing	0.62	0.224	0.188
Housing tenure			
Owner occupier			
Rent/rent-buy scheme	1.19	0.176	0.234
Live rent free/life tenure	1.15	0.442	0.719
State			
NSW & ACT	1.00		
VIC	0.74	0.138	0.107
QLD	0.73	0.136	0.092
SA & NT	0.77	0.188	0.280
WA	0.70	0.185	0.182
TAS	0.85	0.317	0.658
Household move			
Yes	1.38	0.229	0.056
No	1.00		
Missing	1.17	0.319	0.561
Health			
Excellent	1.00		
Good	0.83	0.135	0.251
Fair	0.64	0.156	0.066
Poor/very poor	0.67	0.335	0.426
Missing	1.18	0.334	0.553

Discussion

Overall the results were very similar for both the United Kingdom and Australia, although there were some differences in the effect of key demographic variables. In both countries there was a negative relationship between age and the probability of repartnering. This is likely to be associated with both one's attitudes towards forming new unions at older ages, as well as one's attractiveness as a potential partner. In terms of gender differences an interesting difference between the United Kingdom and Australia was that there were not significant differences between the sexes in the U.K, but in Australia men were significantly more likely to form a new union compared to women (in Model 2). This difference is likely to be associated with differences in residential patterns for children in the two countries. We hope to explore this further. The effect of age and residence of any children also appears to be related to repartnering differently in the United Kingdom compared to in Australia. In the U.K only those who had non-dependent children (either resident or non-resident) had significantly higher odds of forming a new union compared to those who had resident children aged less than 5. In Australia, in addition to those with non-resident children, those with resident children aged 5 and over were also more likely to repartner compared to those with resident children aged less than 5. Again, further exploration is warranted.

In terms of previous relationship history, the length of the previous union or the number of partners ever had was not significant in either the U.K or Australia, but the type of previous union was an important predictor of repartnering in both countries. In Australia, those who were either coming out of a marriage preceded by a cohabitation, or from a straight cohabitation, were more likely to repartner compared to those coming out of a direct marriage. These results indicate that there may be some selection effects, with those who are coming out of a direct marriage perhaps also having more traditional or religious beliefs. Interestingly in the U.K there was also a difference in the repartnering behaviour of those coming from a direct marriage and those coming from a marriage which was preceded by a cohabitation, but the effect was in the opposite direction. If the previous marriage was preceded by a cohabitation individuals were *less* likely to repartner compared to those coming from a marriage with no previous cohabitation.

With respect to the socio-demographic characteristics the results were less conclusive. The key employment and education variables appeared not to have any significant effect on the probability of forming a higher order union, but there was some indication of minor social class differences in both the U.K and Australia. In both countries there were some differences by geography, with those living in Scotland having lower odds of repartnering compared to those living in England and similarly those living in Victoria or Queensland having lower odds of repartnering compared to those living in New South Wales or the Australian Capital Territory. It is possible that these geographical differences are related to socio-economic differences between these regions that have not been controlled for in the model.

Finally, health was related to repartnering in both countries. Those with good or fair health were less likely to repartner compared to those with excellent health, in the U.K and Australia, respectively. Health may be one criterion for choosing a new partner so poor health may make someone a less attractive partner, and being in less than

excellent health may also possibly limit opportunities for social interaction and meeting a new partner.

We are currently extending this model to examine the interrelationship between gender, previous relationship type and residence of children. We expect to find differences between Australia and the UK in the relationship between gender and repartnering experience where children are resident.

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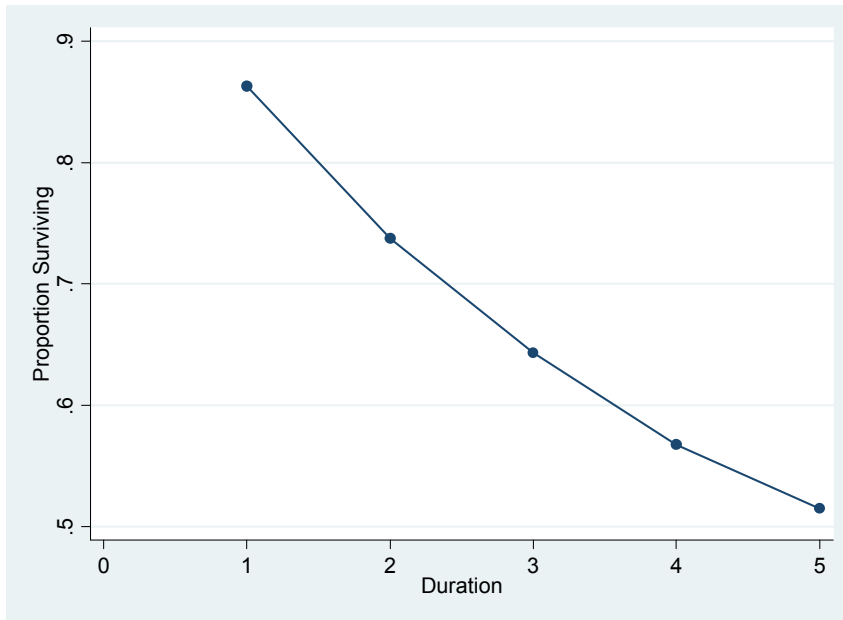
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Appendix 1

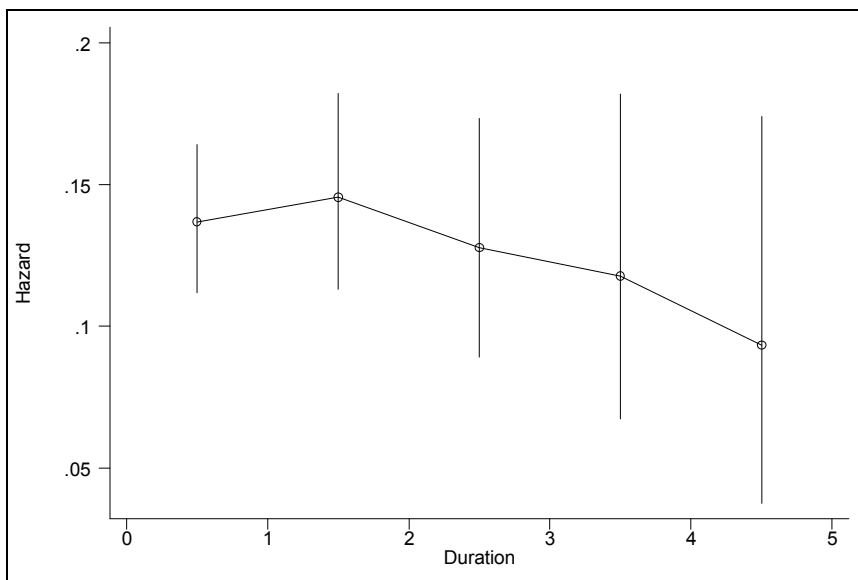
Survival curve UK



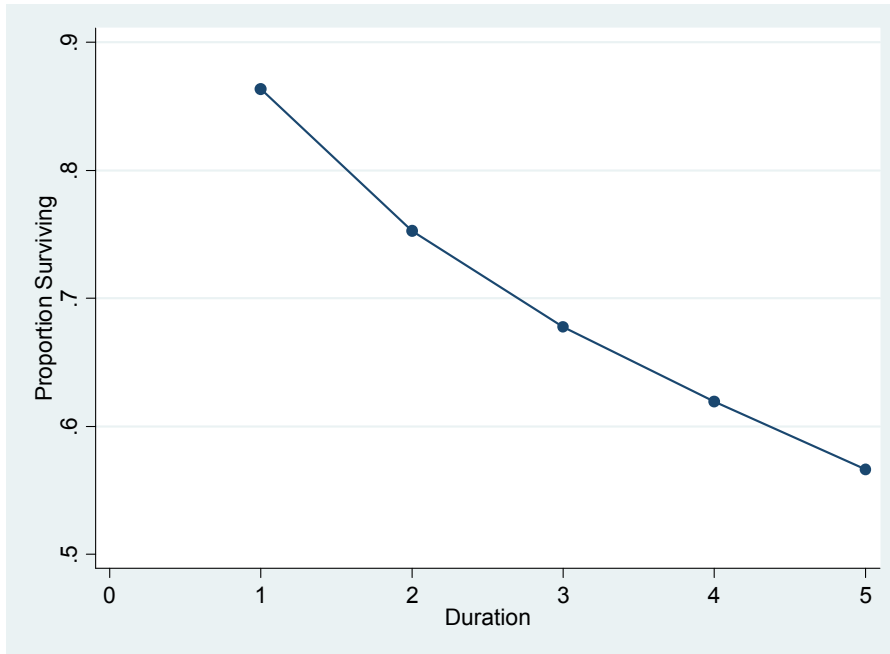
Life-table for repartnering in the UK

Duration (years)	Beginning Total	Repartner	Lost	Survival
0-1	768	105	196	0.8633
1-2	467	68	125	0.7376
2-3	274	35	103	0.6434
3-4	136	16	45	0.5677
4-5	75	7	68	0.5147

Hazard UK



Survival curve Australia



Life-table for repartnering in Australia

Duration (years)	Beginning Total	Repartner	Lost	Survival
0-1	924	126	176	0.8636
1-2	622	80	131	0.7526
2-3	411	41	113	0.6775
3-4	257	22	107	0.6195
4-5	128	11	117	0.5663

Hazard Australia:

