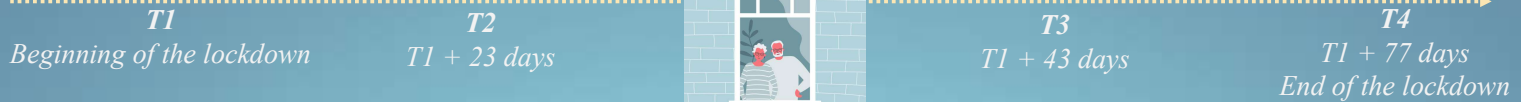


# Harmful stress-related couple processes during the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown: A longitudinal dyadic perspective

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## H1: Lower levels of intraindividual couple satisfaction with lockdown

**Costs** (stress, decrease in couple's external support, restricted leisure time activities) → **benefits** (proximity, time spent together)  
(e.g., Candel & Jitaru, 2021)



## H2: Time-invariant predictors of couple satisfaction trajectory during the lockdown

**H2a:** Duration of the relationship // **H2b:** Time spent together // **H2c:** Presence of children at home  
(e.g., Günther-Bel et al., 2020; Lee & McKinnish, 2017; Vagini & Widmer, 2018)



## H3: Dyadic trajectory of couple satisfaction over time

**Positive association** between one partner's couple satisfaction trajectory and that of the other partner within the same couple  
(e.g., Galdiolo et al., 2020; Keizer & Schenk, 2012)

## Methods:

**Sample:** 108 couples (55 parental vs. 53 non-parental couples) // Age: from 18 to 74 years old ( $M = 37.94$ ) // Duration of the relationship:  $M = 12$  years // Time spent together during the lockdown:  $M = 18.8$  hours a day

**Measures:** Couple satisfaction (MSI-R; Brodard et al., 2015) ( $\alpha > 0.70$ )

- Global Distress (general dissatisfaction with the couple relationship, 22 items)
- Difficulties in Problem-solving Communication (couple's ineffectiveness for resolving conflicts, 19 items)
- Aggression (physical and verbal aggression experienced by the partner, 10 item)
- Conflicts over Children Rearing (conflicts between partners relative to children's rearing, 10 items)

Perceived influence of the lockdown on *couple* (5 items) and *family* (5 items) relationships ( $\alpha > 0.78$ )

**Analytical Strategy:** Actor-partner interdependence model (Kenny et al., 2006) with a multilevel modeling framework (HLM 7.00)

## Results

	Global Distress	Difficulties in Problem-solving Communication	Aggression	Conflicts over Children Rearing	Perceived Influence of the Lockdown on Couple	Perceived Influence of the Lockdown on Family
** $p < .001$ , * $p < .05$						
Slope (weeks)	-0.09(.01)**	-0.13(.01)**	-0.12(.01)**	-0.09(.02)**	0.28(.03)**	0.26(.03)**
APIM	0.05(.00)**	0.05(.00)**	0.07(.01)**	0.06(.01)**	0.08(.01)**	0.07(.01)**
Duration of the relationship	-0.00(.00)	-0.00(.00)	-0.00(.00)	-0.00(.00)	0.002(.00)*	0.002(.00)*
Children at home	-0.00(.00)	-0.00(.00)	0.00(.00)	-	-0.00(.00)	-
Hours together	0.00(.00)	0.00(.00)	0.00(.00)	0.00(.00)	-0.003(.00)*	-0.00(.00)

## Discussion

### Positive intraindividual changes of couple satisfaction during the lockdown

- Lockdown perceived as more and more positive over time on couple and family functioning
- < Decrease in external stressors (e.g., social and family felt obligations)
- < More time together ( $M = 18$  hours a day)
- < More forgiveness and less blame of the partner's negative behaviors by attributing them less to the partner's internal characteristics and more to the stressful pandemic-related context

### Duration of the relationship, children at home, and hours spent together ≠ time-invariant predictors

#### APIM effects

- Partners' couple satisfaction changed in tandem during the lockdown
- Partners share the same perception of their couple and develop similarly
- Lockdown = Interdependent event (i.e., one partner's perception and experiences were related to the other partner's perception and experiences)

Galdiolo, S. et al. (2022). (a) Harmful stress-related couple processes during the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown: A longitudinal dyadic perspective. *Frontiers in Psychology*. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2022.819874; (b) How do we live together during a lockdown in Belgium? Study of couple and parental satisfaction. *Trends in Psychology*. doi: 10.1007/s43076-022-00146-x