Data Preparation

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This script prepares the data for analysis and creates objects for the visualisation and cross-validation.

### 0.1 Load Required Packages

# Load necessary R packages  
library(foreign) # For reading SPSS files  
library(tidyverse) # For data manipulation and cleaning

### 0.2 Download Data

Create folders to organise the data files.

dir.create("data")  
dir.create("data/back") #For the monthly background variables  
dir.create("data/pers") #For the personality questionnaires

Download the monthly background variables files (‘avars\_(…).sav’) from 2007 to 2023 from the LISS website and save them in the folder data/back. Download the personality questionnaires (‘cp\_(…).sav’) from 2008 to 2023 from LISS and save them in the folder data/pers.

### 0.3 Load and Clean Data

Load these files in R.

# List all .sav files in the 'data/back' directory  
files <- list.files(path = "data/back/", pattern = "\*.sav", full.names = TRUE)  
  
# Combine all the files into one dataset 'back.all'  
back.all <- do.call('bind\_rows', lapply(files, function(x) read.spss(x, use.value.labels = FALSE, to.data.frame = TRUE)))

# Load personality data for each wave (2008 to 2023)  
pe08 <- read.spss('data/pers/cp08a\_1p\_EN.sav', use.value.labels=F, to.data.frame=T)  
pe09 <- read.spss('data/pers/cp09b\_1.0p\_EN.sav', use.value.labels=F, to.data.frame=T)  
pe10 <- read.spss('data/pers/cp10c\_1.0p\_EN.sav', use.value.labels=F, to.data.frame=T)  
pe11 <- read.spss('data/pers/cp11d\_1.0p\_EN.sav', use.value.labels=F, to.data.frame=T)  
pe12 <- read.spss('data/pers/cp12e\_1.0p\_EN.sav', use.value.labels=F, to.data.frame=T)  
pe13 <- read.spss('data/pers/cp13f\_EN\_1.0p.sav', use.value.labels=F, to.data.frame=T)  
pe14 <- read.spss('data/pers/cp14g\_EN\_1.0p.sav', use.value.labels=F, to.data.frame=T)  
pe15 <- read.spss('data/pers/cp15h\_EN\_1.0p.sav', use.value.labels=F, to.data.frame=T)  
pe17 <- read.spss('data/pers/cp17i\_EN\_1.0p.sav', use.value.labels=F, to.data.frame=T)  
pe18 <- read.spss('data/pers/cp18j\_EN\_1.0p.sav', use.value.labels=F, to.data.frame=T)  
pe19 <- read.spss('data/pers/cp19k\_EN\_1.0p.sav', use.value.labels=F, to.data.frame=T)  
pe20 <- read.spss('data/pers/cp20l\_EN\_1.0p.sav', use.value.labels=F, to.data.frame=T)  
pe21 <- read.spss('data/pers/cp21m\_EN\_1.0p.sav', use.value.labels=F, to.data.frame=T)  
pe22 <- read.spss('data/pers/cp22n\_EN\_1.0p.sav', use.value.labels=F, to.data.frame=T)  
pe23 <- read.spss('data/pers/cp23o\_EN\_1.0p.sav', use.value.labels=F, to.data.frame=T)

Prepare the personality questionnaires for merging by renaming them consistently and removing unnecessary columns.

# Make the names uniform by removing the wave qualifier (e.g., "08a")  
names(pe08) <- gsub("08a", "", names(pe08))  
names(pe09) <- gsub("09b", "", names(pe09))  
names(pe10) <- gsub("10c", "", names(pe10))  
names(pe11) <- gsub("11d", "", names(pe11))  
names(pe12) <- gsub("12e", "", names(pe12))  
names(pe13) <- gsub("13f", "", names(pe13))  
names(pe14) <- gsub("14g", "", names(pe14))  
names(pe15) <- gsub("15h", "", names(pe15))  
names(pe17) <- gsub("17i", "", names(pe17))  
names(pe18) <- gsub("18j", "", names(pe18))  
names(pe19) <- gsub("19k", "", names(pe19))  
names(pe20) <- gsub("20l", "", names(pe20))  
names(pe21) <- gsub("21m", "", names(pe21))  
names(pe22) <- gsub("22n", "", names(pe22))  
names(pe23) <- gsub("23o", "", names(pe23))  
  
# Remove variables indicating date and duration of the questionnaire,   
# Because we don't need them and otherwise they cause trouble with merging as their variable type differs per wave   
pe08 <- pe08 %>% dplyr::select(-c(cp189, cp190, cp191, cp192, cp193))  
pe09 <- pe09 %>% dplyr::select(-c(cp189, cp190, cp191, cp192, cp193))  
pe10 <- pe10 %>% dplyr::select(-c(cp189, cp190, cp191, cp192, cp193))  
pe11 <- pe11 %>% dplyr::select(-c(cp189, cp190, cp191, cp192, cp193))  
pe12 <- pe12 %>% dplyr::select(-c(cp189, cp190, cp191, cp192, cp193))  
pe13 <- pe13 %>% dplyr::select(-c(cp189, cp190, cp191, cp192, cp193))  
pe14 <- pe14 %>% dplyr::select(-c(cp189, cp190, cp191, cp192, cp193))  
pe15 <- pe15 %>% dplyr::select(-c(cp189, cp190, cp191, cp192, cp193))  
pe17 <- pe17 %>% dplyr::select(-c(cp189, cp190, cp191, cp192, cp193))  
pe18 <- pe18 %>% dplyr::select(-c(cp189, cp190, cp191, cp192, cp193))  
pe19 <- pe19 %>% dplyr::select(-c(cp189, cp190, cp191, cp192, cp193))  
pe20 <- pe20 %>% dplyr::select(-c(cp189, cp190, cp191, cp192, cp193))  
pe21 <- pe21 %>% dplyr::select(-c(cp189, cp190, cp191, cp192, cp193))  
pe22 <- pe22 %>% dplyr::select(-c(cp189, cp190, cp191, cp192, cp193))  
pe23 <- pe23 %>% dplyr::select(-c(cp189, cp190, cp191, cp192, cp193))  
  
# Merge them all together  
# To receive one file including all waves for the personality data  
pe.all <- bind\_rows(pe08, pe09, pe10, pe11, pe12, pe13, pe14, pe15, pe17, pe18, pe19, pe20, pe21, pe22, pe23)  
  
# Rename "cp\_m" into "wave" to be consistent with "back.all"  
names(pe.all)[3] <- c("wave")  
  
# Remove everything besides of participant ID ("nomem\_encr"), Wave and Life Satisfaction items from data set  
pe.all <- pe.all %>% dplyr::select(c(nomem\_encr, wave, cp014, cp015, cp016, cp017, cp018))

### 0.4 Merge Background and Personality Data

Merge the background data (back.all) with the personality data (pe.all) on the nomem\_encr (participant ID) and wave variables.

# Merge background data and personality data  
data <- list(back.all, pe.all) %>% reduce(full\_join, by=c('nomem\_encr', 'wave'))

### 0.5 Compute Life Satisfaction Scores

Compute life satisfaction scores by averaging responses from its five items (cp014 to cp018). Higher scores indicate more life satisfaction.

# Compute mean life satisfaction for each row  
data <- data %>%  
 rowwise() %>%  
 mutate(lifesatisfaction = mean(c(cp014, cp015, cp016, cp017, cp018)))

### 0.6 Create Timeline Variable

Create variables for year and month of measurement, and a continuous timeline of measurements.

# Create year and month variables  
data$year <- as.numeric(substr(data$wave, 1,4))  
data$month <- as.numeric(substr(data$wave, 5,6))  
  
# Create a continuous time axis (timeline in months)  
# NOTE: as the survey started in november 2007, this timeline is not completely correct yet   
data$timeline <- (data$year-2008)\*12 + data$month  
  
# Adjust timeline to start from the correct point in time (November 2007)  
data$timeline <- data$timeline + 2  
data <- data[order(data$nomem\_encr, data$wave),]  
  
# Remove objects from environment we do not need anymore  
rm(list = setdiff(ls(), "data"))

### 0.7 Create Widowhood Transition Variable

Create a transition variable that indicates when a participant experienced widowhood, based on a marital status change (“burgstat”). To do so, first create a variable that indicates a person’s previous marital status (from the previous wave).

# Create a parallel dataset that consists of past data  
  
# Order data: rearrange data ascending based on nomem\_encr (=participant id)  
data <- data[order(data$nomem\_encr, data$wave),]  
  
# Create a variable that indicates the number of waves that a person has contributed (including current wave)  
data$k <- ave(data$wave, data$nomem\_encr, FUN = seq\_along)  
  
# Mirror the dataset  
pastdata <- data  
  
# Select the relevant variables  
pastdata <- pastdata[,c("nomem\_encr", "k", "burgstat")]  
  
# Add one to the wave number  
pastdata$k.pa <- pastdata$k  
  
# The following trick (+1) ensures that row k = 10 of "data" is combined with row 9 (k = 9 + 1 = 10) of "pastdata", which is therefore the "past"  
pastdata$k <- pastdata$k + 1   
  
# Rename the variables to indicate the past  
names(pastdata) <- c("nomem\_encr", "k", "burgstat.pa", "k.pa")  
  
# Create an additional "past id variable", as a check (to check whether there are no "nomadic" lags)  
pastdata$nomem\_encr.pa <- pastdata$nomem\_encr  
  
# Merge files, exclude the highest lag of the "pastdata" file via "all.x = T"   
# (because the last wave cannot be a lag)  
data <- merge(data, pastdata, by=c("nomem\_encr", "k"), all.x=T)  
  
# Remove pastdata, because we do not need it anymore  
rm(pastdata)

Create the widowhood transition variable.

# Create a variable indicating when a participant became widowed  
data <- data %>%  
 mutate(wido.ev = ifelse(  
 nomem\_encr == nomem\_encr.pa & burgstat == 4 & burgstat.pa == 1,  
 1,  
 0  
 ))

### 0.8 Create Time Relative To Transition Variable

Create a variable indicating the timing of measurements relative to the transition.

# Create variables for the exact time of widowhood event (year and month)  
data <- data %>%   
 group\_by(nomem\_encr) %>%   
 mutate(wido\_time = ifelse(wido.ev == 1, paste0(year, month), NA)) %>%  
 mutate(wido\_time = ifelse(any(!is.na(wido\_time)), max(wido\_time, na.rm = TRUE), NA))  
  
# Split 'wido\_time' into year and month components  
data$wido.year <- as.numeric(substr(data$wido\_time, 1,4))  
data$wido.month <- as.numeric(substr(data$wido\_time, 5,6))  
  
# Create variable indicating the timing of measurements relative to the widowhood transition  
# ("mnths" because it is the timing of measurements relative to widowhood in months)  
data$mnths <- (data$year - data$wido.year)\*12 + (data$month - data$wido.month)

### 0.9 Filter Participants for Analysis

Filter participants who have experienced widowhood, and for whom at least one observation before and after widowhood is available.

# Rename ID variable and recode into a factor  
data$id <- factor(data$nomem\_encr)  
  
# Select only participants who have experienced widowhood   
wido <- data %>%  
 group\_by(id) %>%  
 filter(any(wido.ev == 1)) %>%  
 filter(!is.na(lifesatisfaction))  
  
# Select participants with at least one observation before and one after widowhood  
wido <- wido %>%  
 group\_by(id) %>%  
 filter(any(mnths < 0) & any(mnths > 0))

### 0.10 Variable for Model Performance Indices

Create a variable for the model performance indices: the mean of life satisfaction per month, to compare the fixed effects trajectory as estimated by the models, with the observed mean life satisfaction trajectory.

# Create a variable for the model performance indices: the mean of life satisfaction per month  
wido <- wido %>%  
 group\_by(mnths) %>%  
 mutate(m\_lifesat\_per\_mnth = mean(lifesatisfaction, na.rm = TRUE)) %>%  
 ungroup()

### 0.11 Save Data

Select relevant variables, and save the data.

# Select only the variables we need  
wido <- wido %>% dplyr::select(c(id, lifesatisfaction, mnths, m\_lifesat\_per\_mnth))  
  
# Save data  
save(wido, file = "data/wido.rdata")

### 0.12 Create Objects for Visualisation and Cross-Validation

Create objects to use for visualisation and cross-validation. First create a folder to save these.

dir.create("objects")

Create a basic plot to visualise the model predictions, and save it in the folder.

# Create plot  
plot\_base <-  
 ggplot() + theme(  
 panel.grid.major = element\_blank(),  
 panel.grid.minor = element\_blank(),  
 panel.background = element\_blank(),  
 axis.line = element\_line(colour = "black")  
 ) +   
 labs(x = "Months from Widowhood", y = "Life Satisfaction") +   
 scale\_y\_continuous(breaks = seq(1, 7, by = 1), limits = c(1, 7)) +   
 scale\_x\_continuous(breaks = seq(-180, 180, by = 30),  
 limits = c(-180, 180)) +   
 theme(legend.position = "none") +   
 coord\_fixed(ratio = 45)  
  
# Save it  
saveRDS(plot\_base, file = "objects/plot\_base.rds")

Randomly distribute the participants in 5 groups, and create training and test data sets for cross-validation, by sampling from these groups. Save the lists of training and test data sets in the folder.

# Set seed for reproducibility  
set.seed(123)  
  
# Create a unique list of participants and assign them randomly to 5 groups  
group <- wido %>%   
 distinct(id) %>%   
 mutate(group = sample(1:5, size = n(), replace = TRUE)) %>%   
 ungroup()  
  
# Join this group information back to the original data  
wido <- wido %>% left\_join(group, by = "id")  
  
# Create training and test data sets  
training1 <- wido %>% filter(group != 1)   
test1 <- wido %>% filter(group == 1)  
  
training2 <- wido %>% filter(group != 2)   
test2 <- wido %>% filter(group == 2)  
  
training3 <- wido %>% filter(group != 3)   
test3 <- wido %>% filter(group == 3)  
  
training4 <- wido %>% filter(group != 4)   
test4 <- wido %>% filter(group == 4)  
  
training5 <- wido %>% filter(group != 5)   
test5 <- wido %>% filter(group == 5)  
  
# Create lists of these data sets  
training\_datasets <- list(training1, training2, training3, training4, training5)  
test\_datasets <- list(test1, test2, test3, test4, test5)  
  
# Save these lists  
saveRDS(training\_datasets, file = "objects/training\_datasets.rds")   
saveRDS(test\_datasets, file = "objects/test\_datasets.rds")

Done!