

# The Social Determinants of Healthy Aging

David A. Sbarra, Ph.D.  
Department of Psychology  
University of Arizona

Ninth Annual McKnight Inter-Institutional Meeting  
April 29, 2016



# The SHARE Dataset

- Survey of Health, Ageing, and Retirement in Europe (SHARE Study) has over 80,000 participants across four panel assessments
- 19,832 participants ( $M$  age = 64.5 yrs,  $SD$  = 10.1 yrs) had two or more assessments and were split into two independent subsamples



# Measures



- Primary outcome: Cognition functioning over time
  - Executive fx: animal naming category fluency
  - Memory: immediate and delayed recall



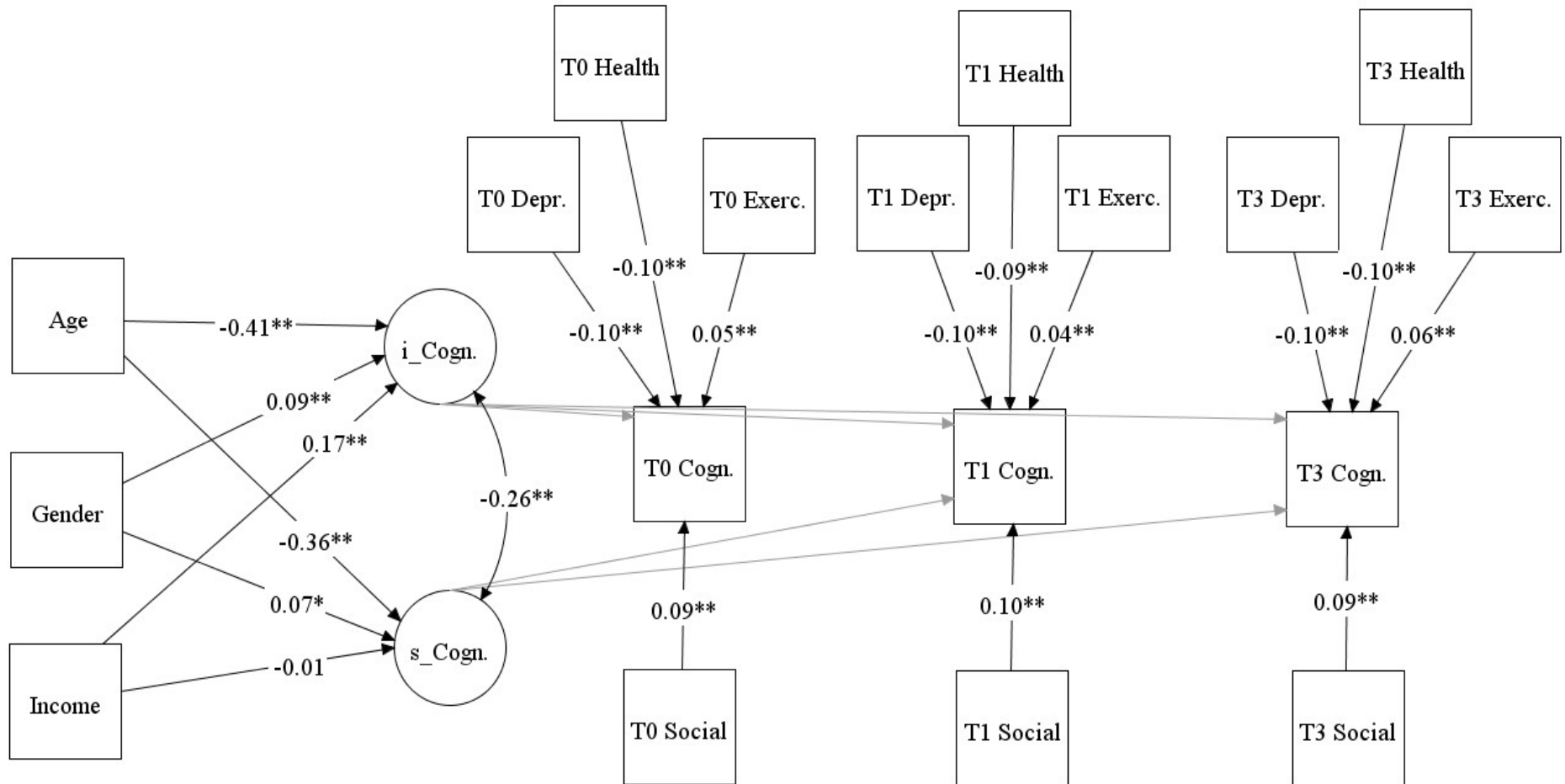
- Key predictor: Social participation
  - Frequency of engagement/participation in four types of social activities (voluntary/charity work, sport/social club, a religious organization, and a political community organization)



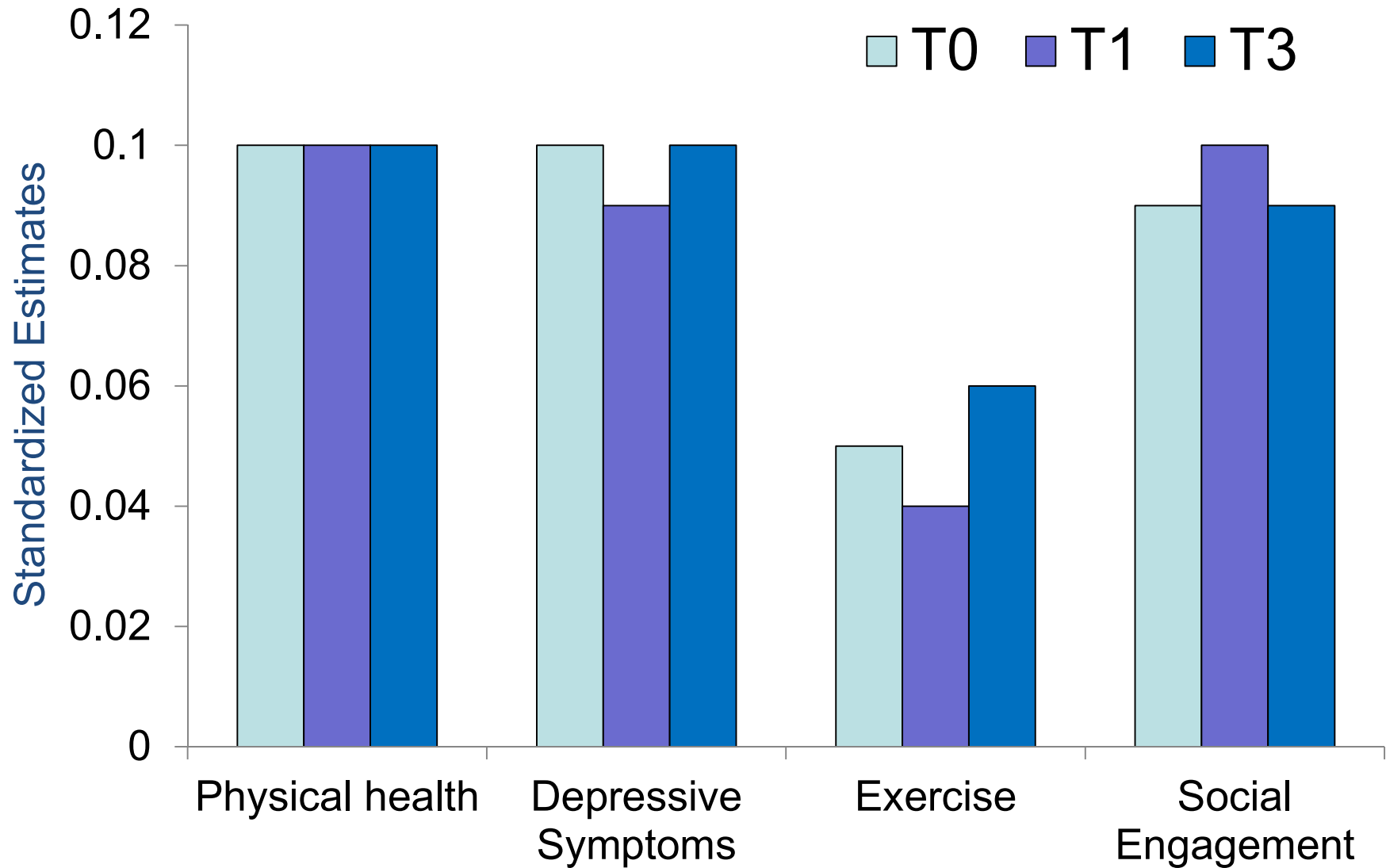
- Competing predictors: Self-rated physical health, self-reported physical activity, and depressive symptoms



# Latent Curve Growth Modeling



# Within-Occasion Effect Sizes



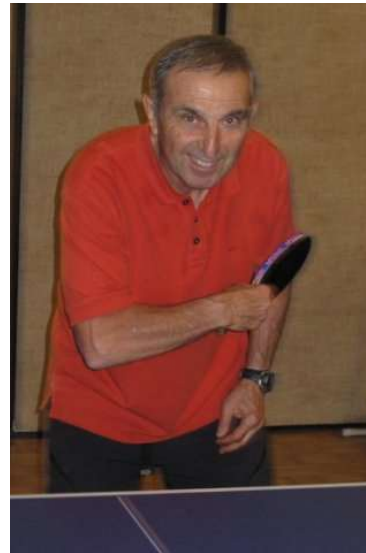
# Interpretation

- A one *SD* unit *difference* in participants' social engagement/participation was equivalent to the effect of 2.21 years of chronological age.
- Social engagement/participation (as well as physical health, depressive symptoms, and physical activity) is a unique predictor of cognitive functioning.



# A Provocative Hypothesis & A (Sort of Crazy) Study Idea

- Provocative Hypothesis: A strong version of cognitive enrichment privileges *social cognition* (Sbarra & Coan, 2016, NIA White Paper).
- Study Idea: Studying table tennis players.







# Thanks!



**Acknowledgements:** This paper used data from SHARE wave 4 release 1.1.1, as of March 28<sup>th</sup> 2013, and SHARE wave 1 and 2 release 2.6.0 as of November 29<sup>th</sup> 2013. The SHARE data collection has been primarily funded by the European Commission through the 5th Framework Programme (project QLK6-CT-2001-00360 in the thematic programme Quality of Life) through the 6th Framework Programme (projects SHARE-I3, RII-CT-2006-062193, COMPARE, CIT5-CT-2005-028857, and SHARELIFE CIT4-CT-2006-028812) and through the 7th Framework Programme (SHARE-PREP, N 211909, SHARE-LEAP, N 227822 and SHARE M4, N 261982). Additional funding from the U.S. National Institute on Aging (U01 AG09740-13S2, P01 AG005842, P01 AG08291, P30 AG12815, R21 AG025169, Y1-AG-4553-01, IAG BSR06- 1 and OGHA 04-064) and the German Ministry of Education and Research as well as from various national resources is gratefully acknowledged (see [www.share-project.org](http://www.share-project.org) for a full list of funding institutions).

