

Discover your edge

Tuesday, 24 March 2015

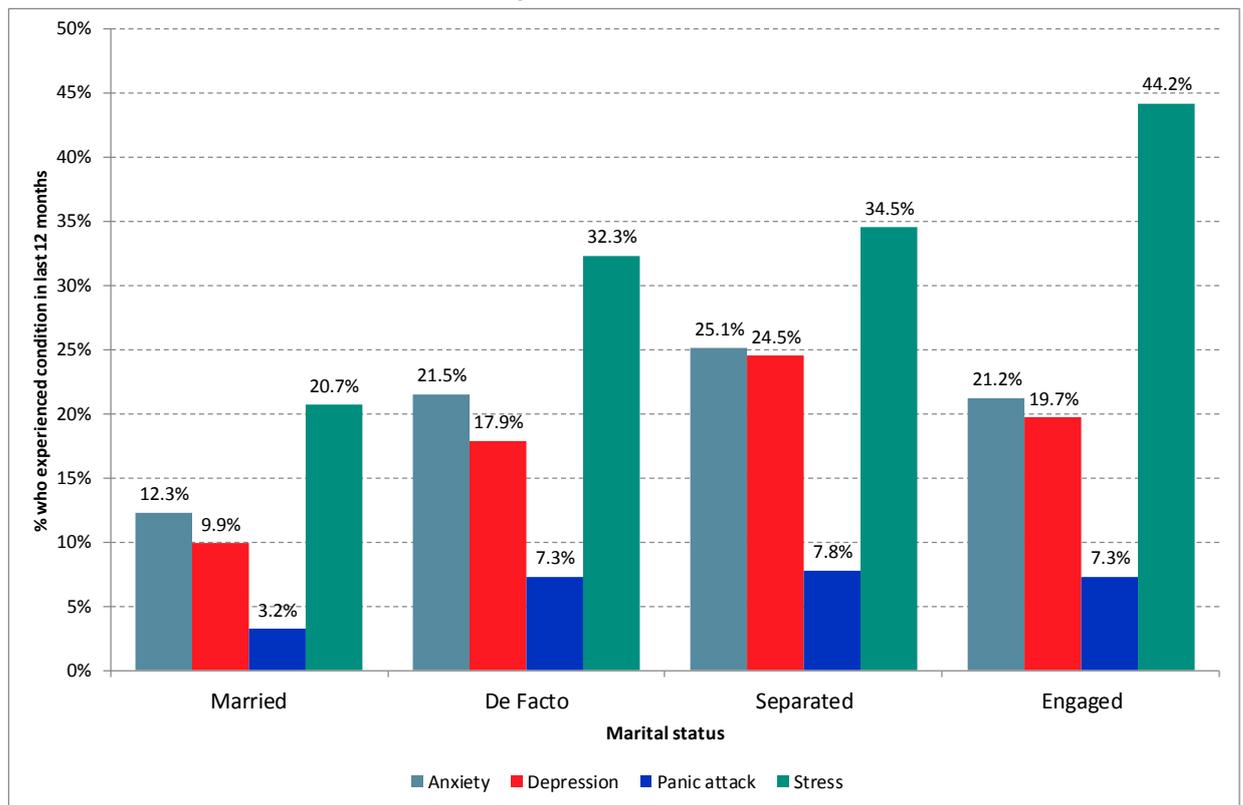
Married bliss more than a myth

Your spouse may drive you nuts sometimes, but the latest findings from Roy Morgan Research show that being married is actually better for your mental health than any other marital status!

Australia's married people are much less likely to experience anxiety, depression and panic attacks than those who are single, separated, divorced, widowed, engaged or de facto. Their stress levels are also dramatically lower, second only to widowed people.

But while few would be surprised that people going through a separation are more likely to experience stress, depression and other mental health conditions, the comparatively high rate of these illnesses among people in de facto relationships, and those who are engaged to be married, is not so immediately understandable.

Incidence of mental health conditions by marital status



Source: Roy Morgan Single Source (Australia), January– December 2014 (n=51,969).

Just like their married peers, de facto couples live together. They may own property together, have children together and/or share finances, and have much the same legal rights as married couples. And yet, people in de facto relationships are much more likely than married couples

to experience anxiety (21% vs 12%), depression (18% vs 10%), panic attacks (7% vs 3%) and stress (32% vs 21%).

People who are engaged to be married have a similarly high incidence of mental health issues: last year, 21% reported experiencing anxiety, 20% were affected by depression, and a hefty 44% suffered from stress.

Angela Smith, Group Account Director, Roy Morgan Research, says:

“Despite what comedians around the world may say, our findings show that marriage is more beneficial for a person’s mental health than any other marital status.

“It makes sense that separated and divorced people have higher rates of anxiety, stress, depression and panic attacks: the breakdown of a marriage is not pleasant at the best of times, and can be downright traumatic. But the elevated incidence of mental health conditions among people who are engaged and in de facto relationships raises a few questions.

“In theory, being engaged should be a blissfully happy and romantic time in someone’s life. But organising a wedding is extremely hard work, often subject to family politics, budget constraints, disagreements about everything from flower arrangements to what kind of music the DJ should play at the reception. No wonder some couples choose to elope!

“The reason for the increased likelihood of mental health problems among de factos is less obvious, but one thing is for sure: suddenly that old chestnut about marriage being ‘just a piece of paper’ no longer sounds quite as convincing...”

For comments or more information about Roy Morgan Research’s health and demographic data data, please contact:

Vaishali Nagaratnam

Office: +61 (3) 9224 5309

Vaishali.Nagaratnam@roymorgan.com

Related research findings

View our extensive range of [Health and Wellbeing profiles and reports](#), such as profiles of [People with Anxiety](#), [People with Depression](#), and [People with Stress](#).

These ready-made profiles provide a broad understanding of the target audience, in terms of demographics, attitudes, activities and media usage in Australia.

About Roy Morgan Research

Roy Morgan Research is the largest independent Australian research company, with offices in each state of Australia, as well as in the United States and the United Kingdom. A full service research organisation specialising in omnibus and syndicated data, Roy Morgan Research has over 70 years’ experience in collecting objective, independent information on consumers.

Margin of Error

The margin of error to be allowed for in any estimate depends mainly on the number of interviews on which it is based. Margin of error gives indications of the likely range within which estimates would be 95% likely to fall, expressed as the number of percentage points above or below the actual estimate. Allowance for design effects (such as stratification and weighting) should be made as appropriate.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Sample Size	Percentage Estimate			
	40%-60%	25% or 75%	10% or 90%	5% or 95%
5,000	±1.4	±1.2	±0.8	±0.6
7,500	±1.1	±1.0	±0.7	±0.5
10,000	±1.0	±0.9	±0.6	±0.4
20,000	±0.7	±0.6	±0.4	±0.3
50,000	±0.4	±0.4	±0.3	±0.2