

Introduction

Newfoundland as an Island Case-Study

- NL has a high percentage of mobile workers, who work in areas away from home for an extended period.
- Mothers are often forced to head lone parent families while their partners are away.¹
- Partner absence has been shown to have detrimental effects on mothers.
- Some studies have linked mobile work to increased maternal stress and household workload, conflictual couple relationships, and an expectation for mothers to complete all of the parenting duties.²

Parenting Sense of Competence

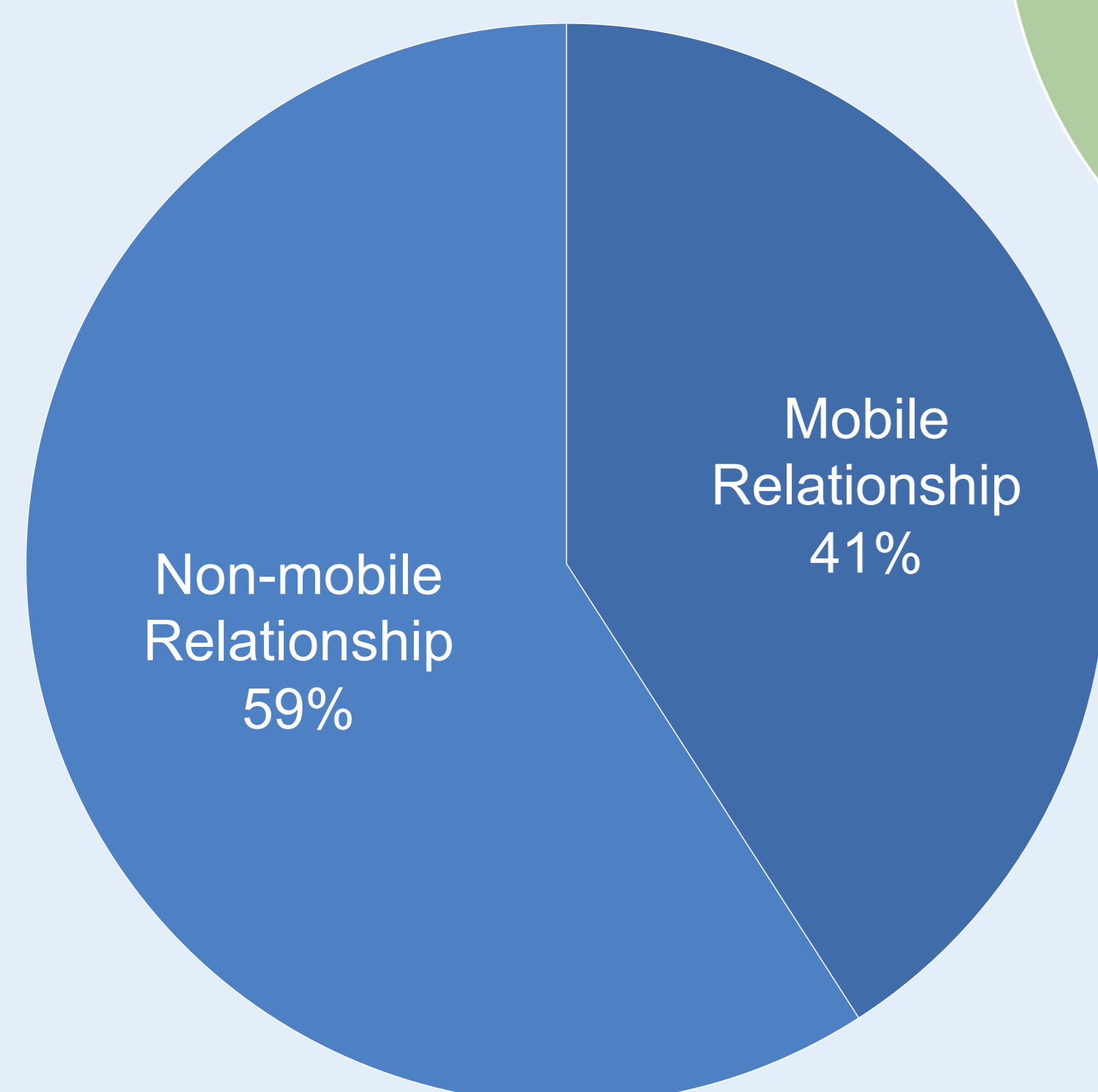
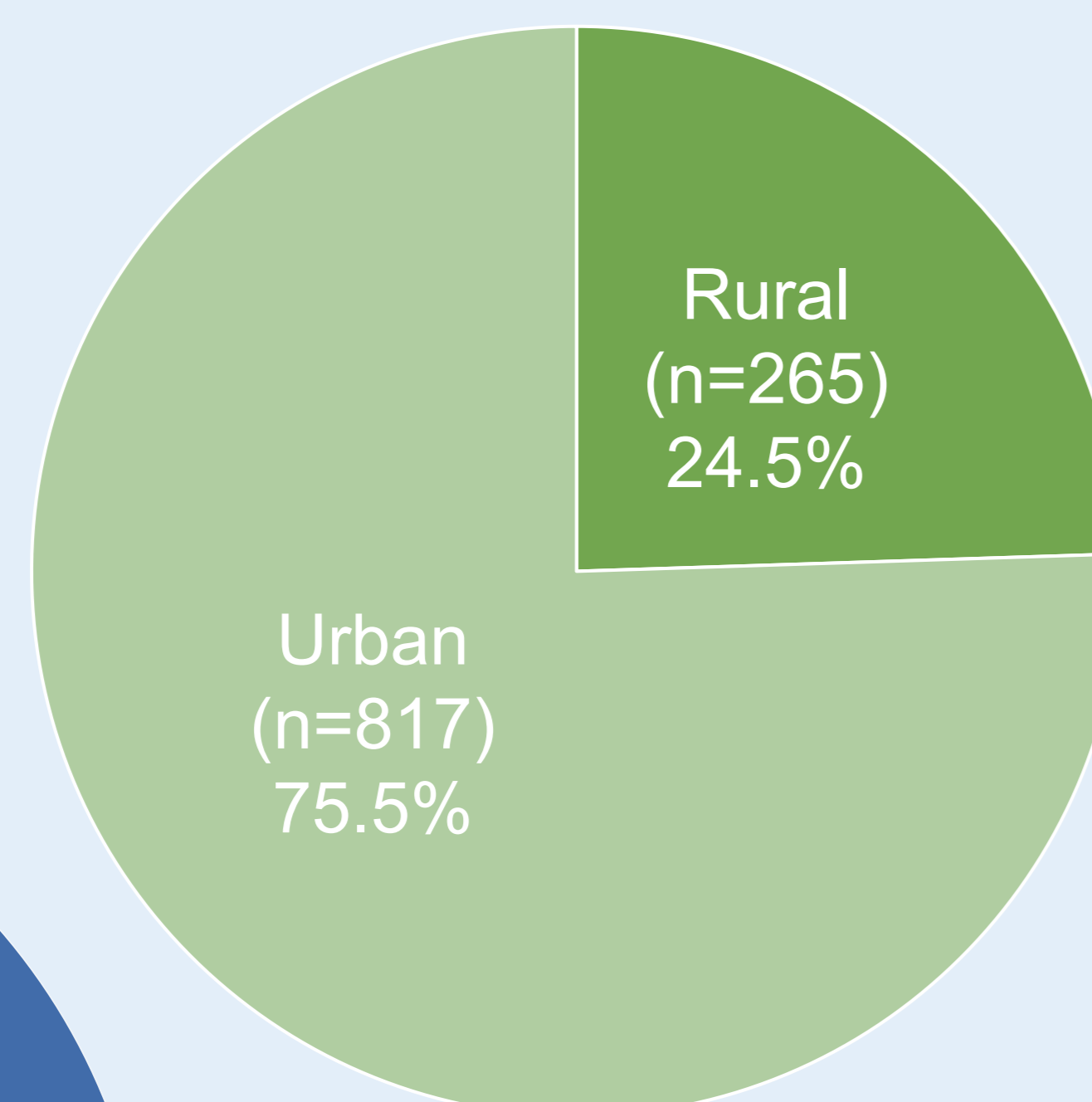
- Parenting sense of competence is intertwined with parenting satisfaction, skill, and overall outcome for the family.^{3,4}

Objectives

- Identify and quantify demographic differences between mothers with and without a partner involved in mobile work.
- Predict parenting sense of competence (satisfaction) with demographics, mental health, and family variables as predictors.

Participants

N = 1082
Mean age = 34.66 (8.06)
95 % Caucasian
81.4% Married or Cohabiting
94.9% Heterosexual
88.4% Biological children only
40.9% in Mobile Relationship



Methods/Measures

- Measures included: A socio-demographic questionnaire, the Outcome Questionnaire- 45 (OQ-45), the Child-Parent Relationship Scale (CPRS), Quality of Co-Parental Communication Scale (QCPC), and Parental Sense of Competence Scale (PSOC).

Chi-Square test of Independence compared mothers with/without a partner involved in mobile work on key variables.

Stepwise Multiple Regression was used to predict PSOC-Satisfaction with the following blocks:

- Demographics (only those with significant correlation to PSOC): Mothers age, Education, Household Income, Maternal Health, and Child Health.
- Mental Health: OQ-45 Total Score
- Family Characteristics: CPRS (conflict and closeness subscales), QCPC (conflict and closeness subscales).

Results

Location

- Significant difference between mobile and non-mobile mothers
 $\chi^2 (1, N = 1082) = 37.36, p < .001$

Urban

- Non-mobile mothers were **2.42x** more likely urban

Rural

- Mobile relationship mothers **4.93x** more likely rural

Employment

- Significant difference in employment status
 $\chi^2 (1, N = 1082) = 7.16, p = .007$

Mobile vs. Non-mobile

- Mothers in a mobile relationship were 1.41x more likely to be not working outside the home.

	β	t	β	t	β	t
Age	-0.076	1.370	0.074	2.284*	0.063	2.003*
Household Income	0.097	2.343*	-0.020	-0.569	-0.013	-0.404
Education	-0.540	-1.398	0.009	0.286	0.013	0.423
Maternal Health	0.231	5.887***	-0.032	-0.917	-0.036	-1.073
Child Health	0.182	4.232***	0.126	3.436***	0.101	2.945**
OQ-45			-0.596	-19.514***	-0.498	-15.156***
QCPC Closeness					0.017	0.474
QCPC Conflict					0.005	0.135
CPRS Closeness					0.114	3.744***
CPRS Conflict					-0.254	-8.381***

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .0005$

	Mobile Relationship			No Mobile Relationship			t
	M	SD	n	M	SD	n	
Child Health	4.38	0.84	437	4.37	0.89	632	0.26
Personal Health	3.63	0.87	437	3.70	0.92	632	-1.16
Produce	2.72	0.57	437	2.68	0.61	632	1.05
Exercise	3.65	1.98	437	3.51	1.98	632	1.11
Sleep	3.12	1.04	437	3.06	1.03	632	0.94
Social Support	3.51	1.11	437	3.64	1.11	632	-1.91*

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .0005$

Discussion

Mobile vs. Non-Mobile

- Mobile work has a long history in NL, which may explain some of the non-significant in social variables (social support, OQ-45, CPRS).
- Urban/Rural: History of fishing in rural communities
- Employment: There is some literature to suggest that mothers in a mobile relationship may have to stop their employment to support their family in their partner's absence.
- Health: Significant difference in self-reported satisfaction with social support. No other health differences.

Next Steps

- See if differences exist outside of the dominant discourse.
- Consider the assumptions typically placed on these populations (differences between urban/rural and prevalence of mobile work in NL compared to other places).

Parental Sense of Competence (Satisfaction)

- Child health, mental health (OQ-45), and quality of relationship with (biological) child predicted parental sense of self-competence (satisfaction).
- Model explains 45.3% of the variance with a large effect size (Adjusted $R^2 = .446$).
- Parenting sense of competence satisfaction was higher in:
 - Older mothers
 - Mothers with healthier children
 - Mothers with better mental health (low score on OQ-45)
 - Better child-parent relationships (low conflict, high closeness)

Next Steps: See if relationship persists across different family structures and investigate ways to increase competence.

References

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