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**SOCIAL SUPPORT IN LATER LIFE:  
The influence of retirement and  
marital status**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment for the  
requirements for the degree of  
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**Laura Majella Crowe**

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## ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: Social support in later life: The influence of retirement and marital status

Laura M. Crowe, Master of Science, 2009

Thesis Directed by: Associate Professor Dr Fiona M. Alpass  
School of Psychology

The study explored the relationship between retirement and marital status and objective and subjective measures of social support. A secondary analysis was conducted on a sample of 6,662 men and women aged 55-70 years of age. Results of a series of 2-way ANOVAs revealed greater interaction with friends amongst retired individuals than those who were employed. Marital status was shown to be associated with interaction with family and levels of perceived social support. An interaction between retirement and marital status was also shown to influence levels of perceived social support. The results reveal that retirement and marital status have an individual and interaction effect on various measures of social support and indicate the importance of considering marital status when researching, educating and working with issues regarding retirement and social support.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Abstract .....</b>	<b>ii</b>
<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Table of Contents.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>List of Tables and Figures.....</b>	<b>vi</b>
<b>Chapter I: Introduction .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Statement of the problem .....	7
Aim of study .....	8
<b>Chapter II: Background .....</b>	<b>10</b>
Social Support.....	10
Defining social support .....	10
Measuring social support .....	10
The importance of social support .....	11
Theories of social support.....	13
The effect of different sources of support.....	14
Retirement Status .....	16
Defining retirement .....	16
Theoretical framework .....	17
The influence of retirement status on social support .....	18
Marital Status.....	20
The influence of marital status on social support.....	21
<b>Chapter III: Research Design.....</b>	<b>24</b>
Hypotheses .....	25
Method selection .....	25
<b>Chapter IV: Method .....</b>	<b>28</b>
Sample and Procedure .....	28
Measures .....	29
Independent variables.....	29
Dependent variables .....	30
Assumptions .....	30
Post-hoc tests .....	32
<b>Chapter V:Results .....</b>	<b>34</b>

<b>Chapter VI: Discussion .....</b>	<b>38</b>
Summary of results .....	38
Explanation of findings .....	39
Limitations and future research.....	45
Theoretical and practical implications .....	48
Conclusions .....	50
<b>Appendix A .....</b>	<b>52</b>
<b>References .....</b>	<b>53</b>

## LIST OF TABLES AND FIGURES

1. Analysis of variance for interaction with friends, interaction with family, social provisions as a function of retirement status and marital status .....	36
2. The influence marital status has on interaction with family .....	37
3. The effect of marital and retirement status on Social Provision scores .....	37