Orthogonal Sparse Subgraph Alignment for Structure-Function Coupling in Brain Networks

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Abstract

Characterizing the relationship between brain anatomical wiring and functional coordination remains a fundamental challenge in computational neuroscience. This difficulty primarily arises because structure-function coupling in the human brain is spatially heterogeneous, often localized to subnetworks, and inherently difficult to align across disparate representational modalities. To address this methodological gap, we introduce **O**rthogonal **S**parse **S**ubgraph **A**lignment (OSSA), a principled and interpretable framework designed to identify compact structural cliques that exhibit maximal concordance with functional connectivity (FC) across subjects. Within each FC-derived community, OSSA optimizes an alignment objective over an orthogonal transformation, which absorbs coordinate mismatch between the two connectivity modalities, and a sparse node-selection vector, which identifies the induced structural connectivity (SC) subgraph. Furthermore, for canonical OSSA within a fixed population community, we establish local statistical guarantees under the required assumptions. With high probability, an empirical local maximizer exists in a specified neighborhood of the population target, and every local maximizer in that neighborhood exactly recovers the active support and satisfies a nonasymptotic error bound for the aligned functional projector. Extensive empirical evaluations on simulated data, alongside analyses of the Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development (ABCD) baseline and longitudinal cohorts, demonstrate that OSSA successfully recovers aligned structural cliques under latent cross-modal rotations. Ultimately, the proposed methodology significantly improves out-of-sample SC–FC alignment over size-matched baselines and identifies compact structural supports with longitudinal consistency in node selection, while multi-support diagnostics suggest a dominant aligned core within the estimated FC communities.

1 Introduction

Understanding how anatomical wiring governs coordinated functional activity in the brain remains a fundamental problem in computational neuroscience. This objective naturally motivates the study of two complementary representations of the brain connectome. Specifically, structural connectivity (SC), inferred from diffusion imaging, charts the physical pathways along which regions communicate, whereas functional connectivity (FC), derived from correlated activity fluctuations, captures the statistical dependence between regional signals [16, 40]. Characterizing the relationship between SC and FC has emerged as a salient analytical task: it provides a principled framework to investigate

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how anatomy constrains function, how individual variability manifests across modalities, and which subnetworks offer the most robust structural support for observed functional coordination [22, 15].

Meanwhile, the SC-FC relationship is **intrinsically indirect and spatially heterogeneous** [41, 15]. An extensive body of literature demonstrates that functional connectivity is only partially constrained by direct anatomical pathways, and the cross-modal agreement varies systematically across cortical hierarchies, individuals, and developmental stages [22, 42, 4, 51, 17]. Specifically, while certain functional communities are anchored by a dense set of anatomical connections, others rely on diffuse or polysynaptic interactions [49, 19, 38, 51]. Consequently, the most pronounced cross-modal signals are concentrated within localized subnetworks rather than distributed uniformly across the connectome [42, 51, 17]. Existing analytical approaches often summarize SC–FC coupling using a single connectome-wide correlation or region-wise scalar scores [22, 42, 4]. Global correlations obscure spatial variation, whereas region-wise scores characterize such variation without directly identifying a compact node set whose induced structural subgraph maximizes cross-modal concordance. To move beyond global and region-wise scalar summaries, we therefore seek a framework that identifies structural subnetworks with maximal SC–FC concordance within functional communities.

Extensive prior research has sought to characterize the relationship between structural and functional connectivity (SC-FC). Global correlation approaches [22, 41, 15] reduce the connectome to a single summary statistic, thereby failing to identify localized subnetworks. Predictive SC-to-FC models [22, 1, 41] aim to explain functional connectivity from structural connectivity, while graph-theoretic summaries [5, 36] characterize network topology. These formulations do not directly target the joint estimation of a cross-modal alignment transformation and a sparse node set defining an induced structural subgraph. Subnetwork inference [50], functional parcellation [49, 10], and regional SC–FC analysis [51] provide complementary tools for characterizing localized network organization. Here, SC and FC share anatomical node labels, and alignment relates latent functional geometry to a selected structural subgraph while preserving the anatomical identities of its nodes. In practice, leading functional gradients are often rotated or otherwise transformed relative to the structural connectome [29, 42, 46, 17]. Consequently, a localized search that ignores this mismatch tends to recover the structurally densest subset rather than the subnetwork genuinely aligned with functional organization.

Our primary objective in this paper is to address this fundamental challenge: given paired SC and FC matrices across subjects, we aim to identify a sparse, interpretable set of brain regions whose induced structural subgraph is maximally concordant with the dominant functional organization. Specifically, the proposed methodology is designed to overcome the two primary limitations of existing SC-FC analyses. First, the relevant signal manifests at the subnetwork level. Concordance is an intrinsic property of a node set rather than of individual nodes. Consequently, a valid estimation procedure must jointly model the connection patterns of node sets instead of evaluating individual regions sequentially. Second, as FC and SC are typically embedded in disparate coordinate systems, the two modalities may differ by a nontrivial transformation that a purely localized search cannot adequately capture. Therefore, a rigorous methodological solution must explicitly account for this cross-modal mismatch to localize the target subnetwork, while simultaneously ensuring the statistical interpretability of the identified brain regions.

To address this methodological gap, we introduce **O**rthogonal **S**parse **S**ubgraph **A**lignment (**OSSA**), a novel framework that integrates these dual requirements into a unified variational problem. Specifically, OSSA couples an orthogonal transformation component with a sparse subgraph selection component (Figure 1). The method jointly estimates an orthogonal transformation of the functional connectivity and a sparse node-selection vector, thereby inducing a structural subgraph that maximizes cross-modal concordance. The transformation component serves as a structure-aware alignment mechanism, absorbing the global coordinate mismatch between modalities while preserving the intrinsic geometry of the functional data. Concurrently, the sparse selection component directly encodes the combinatorial subgraph structure within the continuous optimization space. Together, these components extend the classical orthogonal Procrustes problem [37] to a setting where the alignment target is itself an unknown, induced subgraph of the structural connectome. More generally, OSSA addresses the joint alignment and localization of paired similarity representations on a common index set when both the transformation and the informative subset are unknown. Related settings include comparing learned representations with localized shared information and aligning embedding spaces with only a subset of reliable anchors.

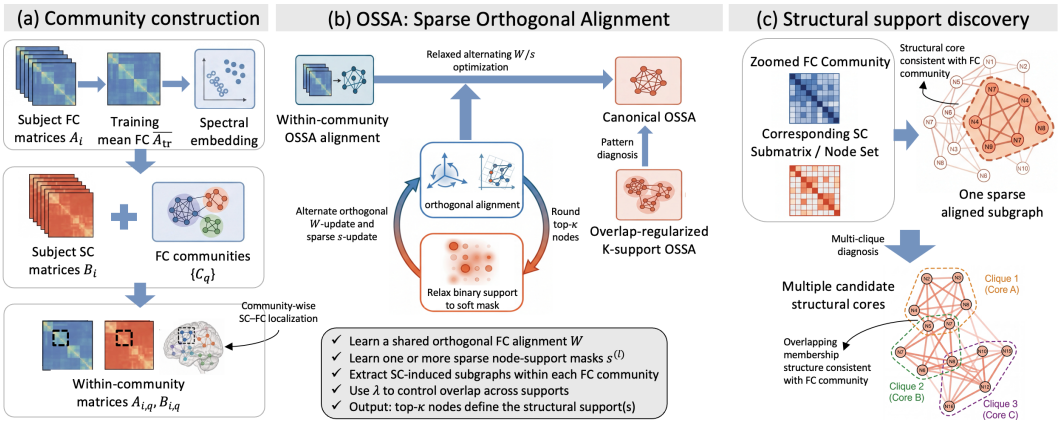


Figure 1: Overview of the OSSA. **(a)** SC and FC are restricted to functional communities obtained from a spectral clustering of population-averaged FC. **(b)** Within a community, OSSA jointly learns an orthogonal FC alignment W and K sparse node-support masks. **(c)** Rounding each mask gives an induced SC subgraph. An overlap penalty controls whether the K supports collapse or separate.

To the best of our knowledge, OSSA represents the first principled statistical formulation for the cross-modal subnetwork identification problem in SC-FC analysis. The problem can be solved by a computationally efficient algorithm that seamlessly integrates the orthogonal alignment and sparse selection components. Furthermore, we establish theoretical guarantees for canonical OSSA within a fixed population community. Under the required conditions, a local maximizer exists near the population target, and every local maximizer in the specified neighborhood achieves exact support recovery and the finite-sample aligned functional projector error bound with high probability. The empirical utility of the proposed methodology is evaluated through extensive simulation experiments, which highlight its superior accuracy and robustness compared to conventional baseline methods. Finally, we apply OSSA to analyze multi-modal brain connectome data from the Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development (ABCD) study. Our analysis successfully extracts highly interpretable structural modules that tightly couple with functional organization, yielding novel scientific insights into the anatomical constraints of the developing human brain. The identified supports also remain highly consistent across the baseline and Year-2 follow-up releases, indicating that the dominant aligned cores are stable under longitudinal neurodevelopmental variation.

2 Orthogonal sparse subgraph alignment

Consider a study comprising n subjects, indexed by $i \in \{1, \ldots, n\}$. For each subject i, we observe a paired set of $P \times P$ symmetric matrices, A_i and B_i, representing the functional connectivity (FC) and structural connectivity (SC) networks, respectively, defined on a common atlas of P brain regions. We assume that A_i and B_i have been preprocessed according to standard pipelines in brain connectome studies.

Communities. Let $\{\mathcal{C}_q\}_{q=1}^{Q}$ denote a partition of the atlas nodes derived from the training FC data. Each set $\mathcal{C}_q$ represents a module of brain regions, hereafter referred to as a functional community, which is assumed to be shared across all subjects. Such community structures are commonly studied in the context of functional connectivity patterns [18, 7]. Let $p_q = |\mathcal{C}_q|$ denote the size of community q. Under the assumption of a multiple degree-corrected block structure, the algorithm proposed by [3] exactly identifies the communities $\mathcal{C}_q$ with high probability. Consequently, we condition our subsequent analysis on the successful recovery of these communities, and we formulate the OSSA objective within each FC-derived community. In practice, the community detection algorithm of [3] is applied prior to OSSA. Define $A_{i,q}$ and $B_{i,q}$ as the principal submatrices of A_i and B_i, respectively, induced by the node set $\mathcal{C}_q$. For notational conciseness, when the context restricts focus to a single community, we suppress the subscript q and overload the notation, denoting the submatrices as A_i and B_i, and the community size as p.

Algorithm 1 Canonical OSSA

Require: Symmetric matrices $\{A_i, B_i\}_{i=1}^n$ in one community; budget κ; initial steps η_W, η_s; backtracking factor $\beta \in (0,1)$

Ensure: Alignment W, relaxed support s, and hard support $\widehat{\mathcal{V}}$

Initialize $W \leftarrow I_p$ or a random orthogonal matrix; initialize $s \in \mathcal{S}_\kappa$
repeat
  $S \leftarrow \mathrm{diag}(s)$ and $M_i \leftarrow SB_iS$ for $i = 1, \ldots, n$
  $G_W \leftarrow 2\sum_{i=1}^n A_i W M_i$ and $W^+(\eta) \leftarrow \Pi_{O(p)}(W + \eta G_W)$
  Choose the largest $\eta \in \{\eta_W \beta^m : m \geq 0\}$ satisfying $J(W^+(\eta), s) \geq J(W, s)$, and set $W \leftarrow W^+(\eta)$
  $D \leftarrow \mathrm{sym}\{\sum_{i=1}^n (W^\top A_i W) \circ B_i\}$
  $g_s \leftarrow 2Ds$ and $s^+(\eta) \leftarrow \Pi_{\mathcal{S}_\kappa}(s + \eta g_s)$
  Choose the largest $\eta \in \{\eta_s \beta^m : m \geq 0\}$ satisfying $J(W, s^+(\eta)) \geq J(W, s)$, and set $s \leftarrow s^+(\eta)$
until the objective and iterate changes satisfy the stopping tolerances
$\widehat{\mathcal{V}} \leftarrow \mathrm{Top}_\kappa(s)$
return W, s, $\widehat{\mathcal{V}}$

Fixing each community, our target is to recover a shared subset of brain regions $\mathcal{V} \subseteq \{1, \ldots, p\}$, where $|\mathcal{V}| \leq \kappa$, such that the $\mathcal{V}$-induced SC subgraph has maximal agreement with the FC geometry across subjects. This $\mathcal{V}$-induced SC subgraph thus serves as a structural backbone for the FC patterns.

2.1 The canonical OSSA

Let $O(p)$ be the set of all $p \times p$ orthogonal matrices, and write $S = \mathrm{diag}(s)$. Fixing one community, the OSSA problem is defined as the following optimization problem

$$\begin{aligned} \max_{W,s} \quad & J(W,s) = \sum_{i=1}^n \mathrm{Tr}\big[\big(W^\top A_i W\big)\,(SB_iS)\big] \\ \text{s.t.} \quad & W^\top W = I_p, \qquad s \in \{0,1\}^p, \qquad \mathbf{1}^\top s = \kappa. \end{aligned} \tag{1}$$

where Tr is the trace operator. Two parameters are introduced in the OSSA problem. The selection vector s identifies a subset of nodes from the SC, such that SB_iS represents the induced structural subgraph of B_i. Concurrently, the rotation matrix W captures a shared cross-modal transformation mapping. The objective function $J(W, s)$ explicitly evaluates the alignment between the transformed FC matrix and the corresponding induced SC subgraph. Because the induced matrix SB_iS is generally expected to form a locally dense structural module within the selected node set, it can be conceptualized as a structural clique of the SC network, a topological connectivity pattern widely documented in empirical connectome studies [34, 39, 33]. Both components are indispensable to this formulation: without the orthogonal transformation W, the model would impose an exact coordinate-level comparability between FC and SC, a restrictive assumption rarely supported by empirical connectome data. Conversely, without the sparse selection vector s, the objective degenerates into a global alignment metric, failing to achieve precise anatomical localization. As OSSA is formulated within individual functional communities, its integration with functional community detection establishes a hierarchical refinement of the cross-modal SC-FC relationship.

Directly optimizing the objective in (1) is NP-hard due to the combinatorial nature of the binary constraints. To circumvent these difficulties, we employ a continuous relaxation of the domain for s, formulating the following surrogate optimization problem.

$$\max_{W \in O(p),\ s \in \mathcal{S}_\kappa} J(W,s), \qquad \mathcal{S}_\kappa = \{s \in [0,1]^p : \mathbf{1}^\top s \leq \kappa\}. \tag{2}$$

Upon solving the relaxed formulation in (2), the final induced subnetwork is recovered via a hard thresholding procedure, $\widehat{\mathcal{V}} = \mathrm{Top}_\kappa(\widehat{s})$, where Top_κ extracts the indices corresponding to the κ largest entries. This continuous relaxation preserves the natural interpretation of s as a soft subgraph-membership indicator while simultaneously rendering the optimization computationally tractable. We solve (2) by a projected block-coordinate ascent procedure, outlined in Algorithm 1.

Theoretical properties. We study (2) within a fixed population community. The matrices restricted to that community satisfy the sampling conditions in Assumptions A1–A2. Define

$$\bar{J}_n(W, s) = \frac{J(W, s)}{n}, \qquad \mathcal{J}(W, s) = \mathbb{E}\bar{J}_n(W, s). \tag{3}$$

For $V \subseteq \{1, \ldots, p\}$, let $\mathbf{1}_V$ be its indicator vector and $P_V = \mathrm{diag}(\mathbf{1}_V)$. Fix $V^\star$ with $|V^\star| = \kappa$ and write $u^\star = \mathbf{1}_{V^\star}$. Assumption A3 specifies a compact smooth embedded submanifold $\mathcal{W}^\star \subset O(p)$ and a rank-κ orthogonal projector $\Pi^\star$ such that $\mathcal{J}(U, u^\star) = J^\star$, $\mathrm{grad}_W\, \mathcal{J}(U, u^\star) = 0$, and $UP_{V^\star}U^\top = \Pi^\star$ for every $U \in \mathcal{W}^\star$, where grad_W denotes the gradient for the Frobenius metric on $O(p)$. We let $J^\star$ denote the common value of the population alignment objective $\mathcal{J}(U, u^\star)$ for $U \in \mathcal{W}^\star$. Under the curvature condition in Assumption A4, each such alignment is a local maximizer of $\mathcal{J}(\,\cdot\,, u^\star)$. The matrices in $\mathcal{W}^\star$ are therefore stationary alignments whose columns indexed by $V^\star$ span the same subspace.

Theorem 1 establishes the existence of local maximizers satisfying (133) and proves $\widehat{s} = u^\star$ and the bound on $\|\widehat{W}P_{V^\star}\widehat{W}^\top - \Pi^\star\|_F$ in (4) for every such maximizer.

Theorem 1. *Suppose Assumptions A1–A5 hold. In addition, let $x > 0$ and $0 < r < r_0$ satisfy Assumption A6. With probability at least $1-2e^{-x}$, (2) has a local maximizer $(\widehat{W}, \widehat{s})$ in a neighborhood of $(\mathcal{W}^\star, u^\star)$ satisfying*

$$\widehat{s} = u^\star, \qquad \|\widehat{W}P_{V^\star}\widehat{W}^\top - \Pi^\star\|_F \le \frac{8(\kappa-1)\sqrt{\kappa}\,\eta_n(x)}{\alpha_n}. \tag{4}$$

Here $\eta_n(x)$, and α_n are specified in Section B.

Proof is given in Section B. In Theorem 1, $\eta_n(x)$ denote a high-probability bound on the operator-norm differences between sample and population averages of FC matrices weighted by SC edge values, uniformly over all edges. The constant α_n characterizes the lower bound of the magnitude of the negative curvature of the population objective in directions normal to the target alignment set $\mathcal{W}^\star$. The radius r_0 limits the size of the neighborhood in which the local recovery analysis applies. For every local maximizer covered by Theorem 1, the first conclusion of the support recovery yields $\widehat{V} = \mathrm{Top}_\kappa(\widehat{s}) = V^\star$. Consequently, $\widehat{W}P_{\widehat{V}}\widehat{W}^\top = \widehat{W}P_{V^\star}\widehat{W}^\top$ is the orthogonal projector onto the functional subspace spanned by the columns of $\widehat{W}$ indexed by the recovered SC support. The two conclusions therefore address both components of OSSA: identifying the structural node set and recovering its aligned functional subspace. Along any sequence satisfying the assumptions of Theorem 1 with $x = x_n \to \infty$, these estimated projectors are consistent in probability for $\Pi^\star$ if the right-hand side of (4) tends to zero. These guarantees concern local maximizers in the specified neighborhood. We do not claim that Algorithm 1, including its multi-restart selection rule below, reaches this neighborhood or returns one of these maximizers. The monotonicity of the objective values alone does not ensure this; see Appendix A.5 and Appendix G.

2.2 Extension to multiple cliques

The canonical OSSA framework identifies a single dominant clique within each functional community. This configuration is practically well-justified, as communities in functional connectivity networks are typically already restricted in scale (comprising approximately 10-30 nodes). Further partitioning these modules into multiple cliques is rarely necessary from a dimensionality reduction perspective. Indeed, as demonstrated in our analysis of the ABCD dataset (Section 4), empirical evidence strongly corroborates the prevalence of a single-clique structural topology within these localized functional modules. Nevertheless, for broader applicability, the OSSA formulation can be naturally extended to extract multiple cliques per community. Specifically, we generalize the method by introducing K to denote the predefined number of target cliques to be identified within a given community, as OSSA-K. Define

$$s^{(\ell)} \in \mathcal{S}_\kappa, \qquad S^{(\ell)} = \mathrm{diag}(s^{(\ell)}), \qquad \mathcal{S}_\kappa = \{s \in [0,1]^p \colon \mathbf{1}^\top s \le \kappa\}, \quad 1 \le \ell \le K.$$

The K-clique OSSA problem solves

$$\max_{W \in O(p),\, s^{(1)}, \ldots, s^{(K)} \in \mathcal{S}_\kappa} \sum_{\ell=1}^{K} \sum_{i=1}^{n} \mathrm{Tr}\Big[\big(W^\top A_i W\big)\Big(S^{(\ell)} B_i S^{(\ell)}\Big)\Big] - \lambda \sum_{\ell < \ell'} \Big\langle s^{(\ell)},\, s^{(\ell')} \Big\rangle. \tag{5}$$

This objective is a direct generalization of the canonical formulation, incorporating an explicit regularization term to penalize redundant or highly overlapping node memberships. Crucially, the orthogonal transformation matrix W is shared across all structural subgraphs. This shared rotation ensures that all candidate subnetworks are evaluated within a unified functional coordinate system, thereby preventing clique-specific transformations from artificially absorbing the underlying separation structure. We employ a similar projected block-coordinate ascent procedure. The complete optimization routine is detailed as Algorithm 2 in Appendix C.

Remark. We employ the K-clique extension primarily as a diagnostic tool. If multiple distinct cliques adequately explain the functional connectivity, the estimated supports should diverge at moderate values of the regularization parameter λ, while maintaining robust cross-modal alignment on held-out data. Conversely, if a given FC community contains only a single aligned clique, the supports would collapse into a unified structure at small values of λ. When artificially forced apart by increased penalization, the extraneous supports may capture generic correlation structures but will cease to remain competitive under the primary alignment objective.

3 Simulation experiments

We first evaluate OSSA in simulations with known target supports. These experiments isolate support recovery, the role of the orthogonal block, and whether the K-support extension separates repeated recovery from distinct cores. All simulation experiments use fixed train/validation/test splits. We use the $W = I_p$ ablation, OSSA-NOW, to isolate the learned rotation. Uncertainty is reported as standard error over simulation replicates.

3.1 Evaluation of the canonical OSSA

Experiment setup. We first test recovery of one planted clique under FC-SC coordinate mismatch. Each replicate contains $n = 30$ subjects in one community of size $p = 40$, with a planted support $\mathcal{V}^\star$ of size $\kappa^\star = 10$. For each subject i,

$$B_i = C_i + \zeta_i^B + \sigma_B E_i^B, \qquad A_i = W^\star C_i W^{\star\top} + \zeta_i^A + \sigma_A E_i^A,$$

with all matrices symmetrized and diagonal entries set to zero. The shared signal is $C_i = \mathrm{LR}_3(\mathcal{V}^\star, 1.5)$, where $\mathrm{LR}_r(D, c)$ denotes a symmetric mixed-sign block supported on $D \times D$, generated as $UU^\top \circ \Sigma$ with entries $U_{ab} \overset{\text{i.i.d.}}{\sim} \mathcal{N}(0, c^2/r)$ and a symmetric random sign matrix Σ. The additional terms ζ_i^A, ζ_i^B collect subject-level background and modality-specific nuisance variation, their exact construction is given in Appendix D.1. These terms are included to stress-test recovery under extra single-modality variation, not as part of the OSSA model itself. We control mismatch by $W^\star = \mathrm{polar}((1-\alpha)I_p + \alpha Q)$, where $Q \sim \mathrm{Haar}(O(p))$ and $\mathrm{polar}(X) = UV^\top$ for $X = U\Sigma V^\top$ is the orthogonal factor in the polar decomposition. Thus $\alpha = 0$ gives matched coordinates, and $\alpha = 1$ gives a random rotation.

We compare OSSA with size-matched baselines that select κ nodes by simple marginal or graph summaries: (1) Marginal degree: SC-DEGREE and FC-DEGREE take the top-κ nodes by row-sum of $\overline{|B|}$ and $\overline{|A|}$, respectively, where the average is over subjects. (2) Edgewise modality fusion: JOINT-SCXFC takes the top-κ nodes by row-sum of $\overline{|A_i \circ B_i|}$. (3) SC graph summary: COMMUNICABILITY [14] takes the top-κ nodes by column-sum of $\exp(\overline{B})$. (4) RANDOM samples a uniform κ-node subset as a control floor. We also include two OSSA controls: OSSA-NOW fixes $W = I_p$, and OSSA-ORACLE fixes $W = W^\star$ as an upper bound. All OSSA variants use eight restarts, and we keep the largest training objective. We report Jaccard similarity with the planted support and exact recovery rate, averaged over 10 independent replicates for each (α, σ, n) setting. Detailed setup is defined in appendix D.1.

Results. Among the tested methods, OSSA remains accurate under latent FC-SC rotation (Table 1; full rotation and noise sweeps are reported in Appendix D.2). In the full sweep, fixed-coordinate methods work at $\alpha = 0$ but fail as rotation increases. At full rotation, OSSA reaches Jaccard 0.861 ± 0.042 and exactly recovers $\mathcal{V}^\star$ in 40% of replicates, compared with 0.205 ± 0.045 for OSSA-NOW. The oracle run with $W = W^\star$ is nearly perfect, suggesting that the remaining gap comes

Table 1: Canonical OSSA clique support recovery on three diagnostic slices (mean $\pm$ s.e.). EXACT reports $\Pr(\widehat{\mathcal{V}} = \mathcal{V}^\star)$ at $\alpha = 1$. OSSA-ORACLE is reported separately as an upper bound.

Method	Rot. α=1		Noise σ=0.5	n=80 (α=1)
	Jaccard	Exact	Jaccard	Jaccard
OSSA	$\mathbf{0.861 \pm 0.042}$	0.40	$\mathbf{0.827 \pm 0.043}$	$\mathbf{0.894 \pm 0.038}$
RANDOM	0.162 ± 0.028	0.00	0.154 ± 0.025	0.219 ± 0.031
SC-DEGREE	0.203 ± 0.027	0.00	0.207 ± 0.034	0.174 ± 0.024
FC-DEGREE	0.037 ± 0.012	0.00	0.050 ± 0.018	0.045 ± 0.019
JOINT-SCXFC	0.157 ± 0.031	0.00	0.190 ± 0.028	0.263 ± 0.028
COMMUNICABILITY	0.179 ± 0.035	0.00	0.186 ± 0.035	0.162 ± 0.027
OSSA-NOW	0.205 ± 0.045	0.00	0.199 ± 0.033	0.240 ± 0.040
OSSA-ORACLE	1.000 ± 0.000	1.00	1.000 ± 0.000	0.982 ± 0.018

Table 2: Multi-support simulation summary (mean $\pm$ s.e.). The OSSA-K and best-baseline columns report best-match Jaccard. Fitted overlap is the mean pairwise support overlap. The full baseline table is in Appendix D.6.

Regime	Planted ovl.	OSSA-K Jacc.	Best base. Jacc. (SEQ.-OSSA)	OSSA-K ovl.
Disjoint $K = 2$	0	$\mathbf{0.945 \pm 0.023}$	0.710 ± 0.040	0.00 ± 0.00
Overlap $r = 4, K = 2$	4	$\mathbf{0.910 \pm 0.066}$	0.448 ± 0.026	$\mathbf{3.75 \pm 0.56}$
Disjoint $K = 3$	0	$\mathbf{0.975 \pm 0.016}$	0.744 ± 0.063	0.00 ± 0.00

from estimating W. OSSA also remains stable at $\sigma = 0.5$ (0.827 ± 0.043) and reaches 0.85-0.89 for $n \geq 30$, where baselines show little gain with larger n.

3.2 Multi-clique simulation

We further evaluate OSSA-K in a multi-clique setting. We use one community ($p = 50$, $n = 30$), a shared latent rotation $\alpha = 0.6$, and noise $\sigma = 0.4$, with either two disjoint supports, two supports sharing four nodes, or three disjoint supports. We compare against random, SC-spectral, communicability, and SEQUENTIAL-OSSA K-support baselines. SEQUENTIAL-OSSA is a greedy baseline that fits canonical OSSA, masks the selected nodes, and refits. Details of the generator, baselines, λ grid, and full results are in Appendices D.6-D.7.

Table 2 summarizes the diagnostic outcome. OSSA-K recovers all three regimes. In the overlap case, it estimates 3.75 ± 0.56 shared nodes for a planted overlap of four. The strongest baseline, SEQUENTIAL-OSSA, works mainly in disjoint regimes and degrades under planted overlap because its masking step enforces disjoint supports. Thus the shared-W objective in (5) recovers multi-clique structure while allowing controlled overlap.

3.3 Robustness

We run three robustness checks for choices that are usually unknown in practice, full results are in Appendix D. **(i) Sparsity-budget misspecification** (Appendix D.4): When κ is swept from 4 to 16 around $\kappa^\star = 10$ at $\alpha = 0.6$ and $\sigma = 0.4$, OSSA stays above all non-OSSA baselines. Smaller budgets favor precision and larger budgets favor recall. **(ii) Selection stability** (Appendix D.5): Bootstrap selection frequency is higher on planted than non-planted nodes (0.46 vs. 0.18), and per-restart pairwise Jaccard has median 0.43. The observed variation in selected supports across initializations indicates sensitivity to initialization in the joint nonconvex optimization problem. We therefore use multiple restarts in the main experiments and keep the run with the largest training objective. **(iii) Continuous λ-trajectory** (Appendix D.7): the dense λ grid spans four decades, and fitted overlap decreases from collapse, through the planted value, to full disjointness. These checks motivate the fixed-budget, multi-restart, and λ-diagnostic choices used for ABCD.

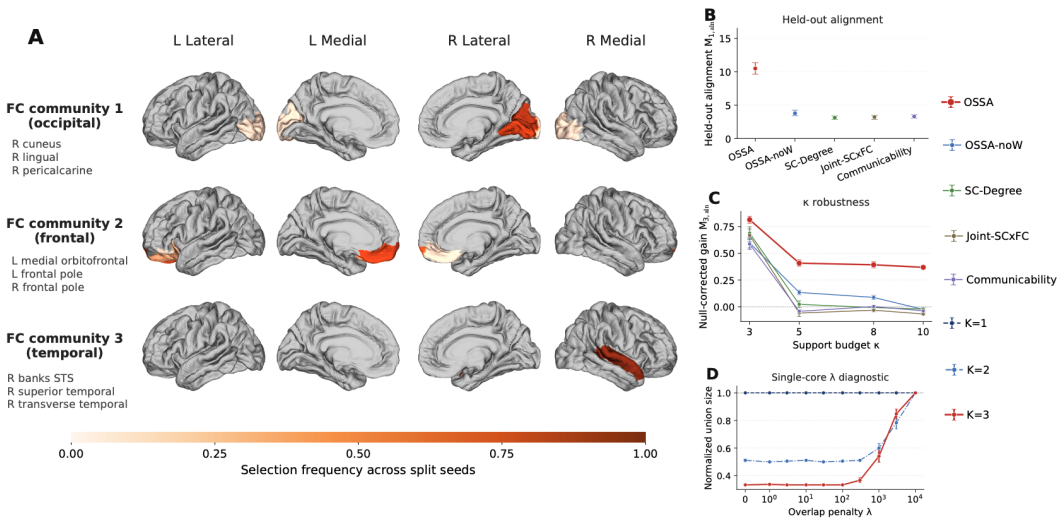


Figure 2: ABCD localization and diagnostics. (A) OSSA selection frequency for the three FC communities at $\kappa = 3$. Labels denote consensus supports. (B) Mean $\pm$ s.e. of held-out rotation-aware alignment $M_{1,\mathrm{aln}}$ for the five methods shown (Table 3). (C) Budget robustness: OSSA maintains positive SC-degree-quartile-matched gain $M_{3,\mathrm{aln}}$. (D) K-support λ diagnostic: supports collapse at small λ and separate only under large penalties.

4 Cross-modal analysis of adolescent brain connectome

We next evaluate OSSA on Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development (ABCD) study [6, 20], a large multi-site longitudinal neuroimaging study of adolescent brain development. We use ABCD structural and functional connectomes on the 68-region Desikan-Killiany atlas [11]. The main evaluation uses the baseline release: FC is signed Pearson correlation and SC is normalized streamline density. We symmetrize both modalities, ignore diagonals, Fisher-z transform FC, clip negative FC values, and apply $\log(1 + \cdot)$ to SC. A cohort-median 5σ QC rule on off-diagonal means removes 10 subjects, leaving $n_{\mathrm{ABCD}} = 2{,}350$. We use deterministic 60/20/20 train/validation/test splits over 10 seeds. Community count, sparsity budget, and baseline-side rotations are selected using only training/validation data. The test set is evaluated once after these choices are fixed.

Community partition and budget. Network cross-validation offers an alternative framework for selecting the number of communities under network models [8, 27]. Across all 10 split seeds, we select $Q = 3$ communities by jointly considering eigengap [45], Newman-Girvan modularity [30], and silhouette [35], with partitions stable up to label permutation. This stability is assessed under the same community-construction procedure; the identities of the regions selected by OSSA remain conditional on that procedure (see Appendix D.14). The training-only diagnostic curves are reported in Appendix D.3. The pooled community sizes are $(30, 23, 15)$. We set $\kappa = 3$ in each community, the smallest nontrivial induced SC subgraph after zeroing SC diagonals: $\kappa = 1$ gives zero objective, and $\kappa = 2$ selects one edge. This choice is also supported by the baseline validation curves: averaged across split seeds, alignment per selected node, $J_{\mathrm{val}}(\kappa)/\kappa$, is highest at $\kappa = 3$ among the tested budgets $\kappa \geq 3$ in each community. We also check $\kappa \in \{3, 5, 8, 10\}$ to test sensitivity to this scale (Appendix D.8).

Baselines and metrics. We compare OSSA with fourteen size-matched support-selection baselines and the OSSA-NOW ablation. (1) *Marginal degree* (SC-DEGREE, FC-DEGREE) rank nodes by row sums of the training means of $|B_i|$ and $|A_i|$, respectively. (2) *Cross-modal fusion* (JOINT-SCXFC) ranks row sums of the averaged $|A_i \circ B_i|$. (3) *SC graph summary* (COMMUNICABILITY [14]) uses column sums of $\exp(\bar{B})$. (4) SDI [32] ranks nodes by the high/low-frequency FC energy ratio on the normalized SC Laplacian. (5) *Deep learning* (BRAINGNN [28], BRAINNETCNN [23]) both provide learned node saliencies, with hyperparameters selected by validation loss under the same compute budget as one OSSA run. (6) RANDOM samples a uniform κ-node support. The ablation OSSA-NOW

runs Algorithm 1 with $W = I_p$ fixed. We additionally evaluate nonnegative matrix factorization (NMF) [24], sparse partial least squares (PLS) [9], path efficiency, mean first passage time, FAQ graph matching [44], and SC-to-FC ridge prediction as size-matched node-selection baselines. For fairness, each baseline support is refit with its own rotation. For a selected support $\widehat{\mathcal{V}}_{m,q}$ from method m in community q, we hold $s = \mathbf{1}_{\widehat{\mathcal{V}}_{m,q}}$ fixed (protocol detail in Appendix D.9) and fit a method-specific $\widehat{W}_{m,q}$ by running the OSSA W-block on training subjects. Thus the evaluator is the same across methods and only the support changes. Our primary metric is the out-of-sample OSSA objective evaluated on held-out test data, given by,

$$M_{1,\mathrm{aln}}(\widehat{\mathcal{V}}, W) = \frac{1}{n_{\mathrm{te}}} \sum_{i=1}^{n_{\mathrm{te}}} \mathrm{Tr}\left[\left(W^\top A_i^{\mathrm{te}} W\right) \left(S B_i^{\mathrm{te}} S\right) \right], \qquad S = \mathrm{diag}(\mathbf{1}_{\widehat{\mathcal{V}}}).$$

Let $\mathrm{vec}_>(\cdot)$ extract strictly upper-triangular entries and let $\rho(\cdot,\cdot)$ denote Pearson correlation. The scale-free, rotation-aware concordance is

$$M_{2,\mathrm{aln}}(\widehat{\mathcal{V}}, W) = \frac{1}{n_{\mathrm{te}}} \sum_i \rho\left(\mathrm{vec}_>\big((W^\top A_i^{\mathrm{te}} W)[\widehat{\mathcal{V}}, \widehat{\mathcal{V}}]\big),\ \mathrm{vec}_>(B_i^{\mathrm{te}}[\widehat{\mathcal{V}}, \widehat{\mathcal{V}}])\right),$$

with $M_{2,\mathrm{raw}} = M_{2,\mathrm{aln}}(\widehat{\mathcal{V}}, I_p)$ as a rotation-unaware control. To test whether a support merely selects structurally dense nodes, we use an SC-degree-quartile-matched null:

$$M_{3,\mathrm{aln}}(\widehat{\mathcal{V}}, W) = M_{2,\mathrm{aln}}(\widehat{\mathcal{V}}, W) - \frac{1}{N} \sum_{r=1}^{N} M_{2,\mathrm{aln}}(\widehat{\mathcal{V}}_r, W_r),$$

where each $\widehat{\mathcal{V}}^{(r)}$ matches the SC-degree-quartile profile of $\widehat{\mathcal{V}}$ within the same community and $\widehat{W}^{(r)}$ is refit by the same training-side W-block. We use $N = 1000$ null supports and report the one-sided permutation p-value as the fraction whose $M_{2,\mathrm{aln}}$ exceeds the observed value.

Canonical OSSA evaluation. At $\kappa = 3$, OSSA outperforms all size-matched baselines on held-out alignment (Table 3; Figure 2b). Across 30 seed-community units, OSSA attains $M_{1,\mathrm{aln}} = 10.55 \pm 0.85$; the closest competitors are NMF (9.96 ± 0.82) and sparse PLS (9.22 ± 1.10) (Tables 3 and 8). OSSA's improvement over OSSA-NOW (3.82 ± 0.42), which fixes $W = I_p$, points to the contribution of the learned orthogonal block. OSSA achieves higher held-out alignment in all 30 paired seed-community comparisons against each baseline in Table 3. These comparisons are descriptive, because the repeated splits reuse subjects from the same cohort. For held-out subjects from one split, OSSA's mean $M_{1,\mathrm{aln}}$ exceeds NMF's by 0.468 (paired subject-bootstrap 95% CI: $[0.400, 0.534]$; Appendix D.9). The recovered supports are compact and stable across split seeds. After aligning community labels to the pooled $Q = 3$ partition, the consensus supports localize to right occipital, fronto-orbitofrontal/frontal-pole, and right temporal regions, respectively (Figure 2a; see Table 4 for SC edge weights). Scale-free metrics suggest that the gain is not just a structural-density effect. In raw coordinates, SC-DEGREE slightly exceeds OSSA on $M_{2,\mathrm{raw}}$ ($+0.674$ vs. $+0.635$), consistent with its preference for dense SC nodes. After each support is evaluated with its own fitted rotation, OSSA leads on $M_{2,\mathrm{aln}}$ ($+0.821$ vs. $+0.695$) and on the SC-degree-quartile-matched gain $M_{3,\mathrm{aln}}$ ($+0.81$ vs. next-best $+0.69$). These aligned metrics quantify the concordance of the selected structural subgraph with the latent functional geometry represented by the fitted transformation (see Appendix D.13 for full empirical diagnostics); the selected SC nodes retain their anatomical identities. The κ sweep in Figure 2c keeps positive null-corrected gain for $\kappa \in \{3, 5, 8, 10\}$, full values are in Appendix D.8.

Structural and alignment interpretation. The occipital and temporal supports include primary visual and auditory regions, consistent with stronger SC–FC correspondence in unimodal cortex [42]. Table 4 reports subject-averaged $\log(1 + x)$ SC edge weights and mean-weight ratios to SC-degree-matched nulls.

For $\widehat{\Pi} = \widehat{W} P_{\widehat{V}} \widehat{W}^\top$, the community-mean normalized squared distance from $P_{\widehat{V}}$ is 0.54–0.67, versus 0.80–0.90 for dimension-matched Haar references. Loading participation ratios indicate 5–10 effective FC regions versus 10–19 under Haar. These characterize latent functional geometry; SC node identities remain unchanged. The diagnostics alone do not establish biological specificity (Appendix D.13).

Table 3: ABCD canonical OSSA evaluation, mean ± s.e. across 30 (seed, community) units, $\kappa = 3$. $M_{3,\mathrm{aln}}$ gain is the difference between the method's $M_{2,\mathrm{aln}}$ and the mean of $N = 1000$ SC-degree-quartile-matched random nulls. M_3 p is mean (median) over the 30 units.

Method	$M_{1,\mathrm{aln}}$	$M_{2,\mathrm{raw}}$	$M_{2,\mathrm{aln}}$	$M_{3,\mathrm{aln}}$ gain	M_3 p-value
OSSA	$\mathbf{10.55 \pm 0.85}$	$+0.635$	$\mathbf{+0.821}$	$\mathbf{+0.81}$	$\mathbf{0.080\,(0.059)}$
OSSA-NOW	3.82 ± 0.42	$+0.605$	$+0.605$	$+0.60$	$0.209\,(0.180)$
COMMUNICABILITY	3.31 ± 0.30	$+0.572$	$+0.594$	$+0.59$	$0.190\,(0.139)$
JOINT-SCXFC	3.19 ± 0.32	$+0.653$	$+0.675$	$+0.67$	$0.147\,(0.059)$
SC-DEGREE	3.14 ± 0.32	$\mathbf{+0.674}$	$+0.695$	$+0.69$	$0.138\,(0.028)$
FC-DEGREE	2.72 ± 0.32	$+0.066$	$+0.066$	$+0.06$	$0.433\,(0.598)$
BRAINNETCNN	0.56 ± 0.22	$+0.192$	$+0.283$	$+0.28$	$0.345\,(0.390)$
BRAINGNN	0.49 ± 0.08	$+0.336$	$+0.427$	$+0.42$	$0.275\,(0.196)$
SDI	0.31 ± 0.04	$+0.299$	$+0.389$	$+0.38$	$0.286\,(0.343)$
RANDOM	0.18 ± 0.04	$+0.397$	$+0.386$	$+0.38$	$0.300\,(0.218)$

Table 4: SC connectivity of the consensus supports. Ratios use SC-degree-matched null means.

Community	Three SC edge weights	Mean	SC/null ratio
Occipital	1.75, 2.62, 3.46	2.612	2.09×
Frontal	2.34, 3.11, 3.42	2.958	1.84×
Temporal	0.42, 1.24, 2.37	1.343	5.95×

Multi-clique sensitivity (λ-diagnostic). At $\kappa = 3$, the ABCD path shows collapse for $\lambda \leq 10^2$ (pairwise Jaccard 0.98, $|U|/\kappa \approx 1$) and separation only under large penalties. Forced separation at $\lambda = 10^4$ reduces the primary held-out objective from 10.42 to 6.42 ($K = 2$) and 4.60 ($K = 3$). Although $M_{2,\mathrm{aln}}$ and $M_{3,\mathrm{aln}}$ gain increase at high λ, these appear to reflect secondary correlation motifs rather than additional high-M_1 cores. These results support using $K > 1$ as a diagnostic rather than the default estimator. Full trajectories and baseline-extension checks are reported in Appendices D.10-D.11.

Second-visit replication. We apply the unchanged baseline protocol and QC to the ABCD Year-2 release, yielding $n_{\mathrm{ABCD2}} = 1{,}897$ subjects (Appendix E). The three-community structure is preserved, with cross-seed ARI 0.99 ± 0.01 and pooled sizes $(31, 23, 14)$, close to baseline $(30, 23, 15)$. The canonical ranking is also preserved: OSSA attains $M_{1,\mathrm{aln}} = 10.16 \pm 0.87$, compared with 3.23 ± 0.30 for OSSA-NOW and at most 3.19 for classical baselines. OSSA leads each Table 11 baseline in held-out alignment across all 30 paired seed-community comparisons; these are descriptive because splits reuse follow-up subjects. The λ diagnostic gives the same single-core pattern: collapse at small λ and forced separation only at large λ. OSSA's cross-visit support replication score (CVSR), measured by support-set Jaccard, is 0.928 ± 0.033, with mean overlap $2.86/3$ nodes. Graph-summary baselines also replicate well, whereas deep-learning baselines replicate less well. CVSR supports longitudinal stability, which alone does not establish biological specificity. Appendix E gives per-method results and the follow-up λ sweep.

5 Conclusion and discussion

OSSA jointly localizes structural subnetworks and aligns them with latent functional geometry. In ABCD, the selected supports are compact, stable, and longitudinally reproducible; the λ path suggests a dominant aligned core within each FC community. Our theoretical guarantees cover canonical OSSA within a fixed population community. Future work includes establishing that the current algorithm reaches the required neighborhood with sufficiently small stationarity residuals, or developing an algorithm with these guarantees, as well as extending the statistical guarantees to the multi-clique setting. Empirically, the analyses are restricted to the Desikan–Killiany parcellation and the ABCD cohort; the identities of the selected regions are conditional on the functional-community construction and the sparsity budget. Rigorous replication across parcellations, acquisition pipelines, and clinical cohorts is needed before assigning definitive biological significance to these supports.

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A Optimization details and derivations

This appendix gives the first-order quantities used in Algorithms 1 and 2. All derivations assume the matrices have been symmetrized. In implementation we use $X \leftarrow (X + X^\top)/2$ for numerical stability and ignore diagonal entries when evaluating inter-regional connectivity.

A.1 Gradient for the canonical OSSA clique W-block

Fix s and define $M_i = SB_iS$. For one subject,

$$f_i(W) = \mathrm{Tr}(W^\top A_i W M_i).$$

Taking differentials,

$$\begin{aligned} df_i &= \mathrm{Tr}(dW^\top A_i W M_i) + \mathrm{Tr}(W^\top A_i dW M_i) \\ &= \mathrm{Tr}\big((A_i W M_i)^\top dW\big) + \mathrm{Tr}\big((A_i^\top W M_i^\top)^\top dW\big)\,. \end{aligned}$$

Therefore

$$\nabla_W f_i(W) = A_i W M_i + A_i^\top W M_i^\top.$$

When A_i and M_i are symmetric, this simplifies to

$$\nabla_W J(W, s) = 2\sum_{i=1}^{n} A_i W (SB_iS). \tag{6}$$

A Euclidean ascent proposal $\widetilde{W} = W + \eta \nabla_W J$ is mapped back to the orthogonal group by the polar projection [21]

$$\Pi_{O(p)}(\widetilde{W}) = UV^\top, \qquad \widetilde{W} = U\Sigma V^\top, \tag{7}$$

which is the closest orthogonal matrix to $\widetilde{W}$ in Frobenius norm.

A.2 Reduction and gradient for the canonical OSSA clique s-block

Fix W and set $Q_i = W^\top A_i W$. Since $S = \mathrm{diag}(s)$,

$$(SB_iS)_{ab} = s_a (B_i)_{ab} s_b, \qquad SB_iS = (ss^\top) \circ B_i.$$

Using symmetry of Q_i and B_i,

$$\mathrm{Tr}(Q_i SB_i S) = \sum_{a,b} (Q_i)_{ab}(B_i)_{ab} s_a s_b = s^\top (Q_i \circ B_i) s.$$

Thus, with

$$D(W) = \sum_{i=1}^{n} (Q_i \circ B_i),$$

the fixed-W objective is $s^\top D(W) s$, and

$$\nabla_s J(W, s) = 2D(W)s. \tag{8}$$

A.3 Projection onto the capped simplex

The support update requires Euclidean projection [48, 12] onto

$$\mathcal{S}_\kappa = \{s \in \mathbb{R}^p : 0 \le s \le 1,\ \mathbf{1}^\top s \le \kappa\}.$$

For $y \in \mathbb{R}^p$, define $z_j(\tau) = \min\{1, \max\{0, y_j - \tau\}\}$ for $j = 1, \ldots, p$. If $\sum_j z_j(0) \le \kappa$, then $\Pi_{\mathcal{S}_\kappa}(y) = z(0)$. Otherwise, $\Pi_{\mathcal{S}_\kappa}(y) = z(\tau)$, where $\tau > 0$ is chosen so that $\sum_j z_j(\tau) = \kappa$. This scalar equation is monotone in τ and can be solved by bisection or a sorting-based capped-simplex projection method.

A.4 Multi-clique gradients

For the multi-clique objective (5), fix $\{s^{(\ell)}\}_{\ell=1}^{K}$ and define

$$M_i = \sum_{\ell=1}^{K} S^{(\ell)} B_i S^{(\ell)}.$$

The overlap penalty is constant in W, so the same calculation as Appendix A.1 gives

$$\nabla_W J_K(W, \{s^{(\ell)}\}) = 2 \sum_{i=1}^{n} A_i W M_i. \tag{9}$$

For fixed W, the objective is

$$J_K(\{s^{(\ell)}\} \mid W) = \sum_{\ell=1}^{K} {s^{(\ell)}}^{\top} D(W) s^{(\ell)} - \lambda \sum_{\ell<\ell'} \left\langle s^{(\ell)},\, s^{(\ell')} \right\rangle.$$

Holding all other supports fixed, the gradient with respect to $s^{(\ell)}$ is

$$\nabla_{s^{(\ell)}} J_K = 2 D(W) s^{(\ell)} - \lambda \sum_{r \neq \ell} s^{(r)}. \tag{10}$$

Each support is projected onto its own capped simplex $\mathcal{S}_\kappa$.

A.5 Monotonicity and nonconvexity

Algorithms 1 and 2 use backtracking steps that accept only updates that do not decrease the objective. Since $O(p) \times \mathcal{S}_\kappa$ and $O(p) \times \mathcal{S}_\kappa^K$ are compact, the corresponding objective sequences are bounded and therefore converge in value. The optimization problems remain nonconvex because of the orthogonality constraint and the quadratic support variables. We therefore treat the algorithms as first-order local solvers. In all experiments, we use multiple random restarts and retain the run with the largest training objective. This monotonicity and boundedness imply convergence of the objective values, but do not by themselves establish convergence of the iterates, vanishing stationarity residuals, or convergence to a global maximizer. The objective and iterate change tolerances are numerical stopping criteria and do not by themselves imply the residual bounds required in theory below.

B Technical details

For $W \in O(p)$, define

$$D_n(W) = \frac{1}{n} \sum_{i=1}^{n} \left\{ (W^{\top} A_i W) \circ B_i \right\}, \qquad D_0(W) = \mathbb{E} D_n(W). \tag{11}$$

Then

$$\bar{J}_n(W, s) = s^{\top} D_n(W) s, \qquad \mathcal{J}(W, s) = s^{\top} D_0(W) s. \tag{12}$$

For a vector v, write $\|v\|_1 = \sum_j |v_j|$, $\|v\|_2 = (\sum_j v_j^2)^{1/2}$, and $\|v\|_\infty = \max_j |v_j|$. For a matrix M, let $\|M\|_F = \{\mathrm{Tr}(M^{\top} M)\}^{1/2}$ and $\|M\|_{\mathrm{op}} = \sup_{\|v\|_2 = 1} \|Mv\|_2$. For a real random variable Z and $r \in \{1, 2\}$, define

$$\|Z\|_{\psi_r} = \inf \left\{ t > 0 : \mathbb{E} \exp\left(\frac{|Z|^r}{t^r} \right) \leq 2 \right\}. \tag{13}$$

The cases $r = 1$ and $r = 2$ are the sub-exponential and sub-Gaussian norms, respectively [47].

For matrices X, Y of the same size, write $\langle X,\, Y \rangle = \mathrm{Tr}(X^{\top} Y)$. We equip $O(p)$ with the Riemannian metric induced by this Frobenius inner product. For W, U in the same connected component, define

$$d_O(W, U) = \inf_{\substack{\gamma:[0,1] \to O(p) \text{ piecewise } C^1 \\ \gamma(0)=U,\ \gamma(1)=W}} \int_0^1 \|\dot{\gamma}(t)\|_F \, dt. \tag{14}$$

Set $d_O(W,U) = +\infty$ for points in different components. For every nonempty $\mathcal{W} \subset O(p)$, define

$$d_O(W,\mathcal{W}) = \inf_{U\in\mathcal{W}} d_O(W,U), \qquad d_V(W,\mathcal{W}) = \inf_{U\in\mathcal{W}} \|(W-U)P_V\|_F. \tag{15}$$

Differentiating $W^\top W = I_p$ along a differentiable curve gives

$$T_W O(p) = \left\{\xi \in \mathbb{R}^{p\times p} : W^\top\xi + \xi^\top W = 0\right\} = \left\{W\Omega : \Omega^\top = -\Omega\right\}. \tag{16}$$

For $U \in O(p)$ and $\xi \in T_U O(p)$, the Riemannian exponential for this metric is

$$\mathrm{Exp}_U(\xi) = U\exp(U^\top\xi), \qquad \exp(M) = \sum_{k=0}^{\infty}\frac{M^k}{k!}. \tag{17}$$

The curve $t \mapsto \mathrm{Exp}_U(t\xi)$ is the geodesic with initial position U and initial velocity ξ; see Edelman et al. [13, Section 2.2.2, Eq. (2.14)]. For $Z \in \mathbb{R}^{p\times p}$, note that

$$Z = \left\{Z - W\,\mathrm{sym}(W^\top Z)\right\} + W\,\mathrm{sym}(W^\top Z), \tag{18}$$

where $\mathrm{sym}(M) = (M+M^\top)/2$. The first term in (18) belongs to $T_W O(p)$, the second belongs to its orthogonal complement, and the two terms are orthogonal. Hence

$$\mathcal{P}_W(Z) = Z - W\,\mathrm{sym}(W^\top Z) \tag{19}$$

is the orthogonal projection onto $T_W O(p)$ (under the stated inner product) and satisfies

$$\|\mathcal{P}_W(Z)\|_F \le \|Z\|_F. \tag{20}$$

We remark that the disaplys (16) and (19) are the orthogonal-group specializations of Absil et al. [2, Examples 3.5.3 and 3.6.2]; see also Edelman et al. [13, Section 2.2.1].

For a differentiable function F on $O(p)$, $\mathrm{grad}_W F$ is the unique tangent vector satisfying

$$\langle \mathrm{grad}_W F,\, \xi\rangle = DF(W)[\xi], \qquad \xi \in T_W O(p). \tag{21}$$

If $\nabla_W F$ is the Euclidean gradient of any differentiable ambient extension of F, then

$$\mathrm{grad}_W F = \mathcal{P}_W(\nabla_W F) = \nabla_W F - W\,\mathrm{sym}(W^\top\nabla_W F). \tag{22}$$

The projected expression is independent of the chosen extension. For twice continuously differentiable F, the Riemannian Hessian is given by

$$\mathrm{Hess}_{WW} F(W)[\xi] = \mathcal{P}_W\left\{\frac{d}{dt}\,\mathrm{grad}_W F(\gamma(t))\Big|_{t=0}\right\}, \tag{23}$$

where γ is any smooth curve in $O(p)$ with $\gamma(0) = W$ and $\dot\gamma(0) = \xi$. This is the Riemannian covariant derivative of the gradient, which is further illustrated in Section 5 of Absil et al. [2].

We use the following conditions at the target $u^\star$.

Assumption A1. The pairs (A_i, B_i), $i = 1,\dots,n$, are independent and identically distributed, $A_i = A_i^\top$, $B_i = B_i^\top$, and $\mathrm{diag}(B_i) = 0$ almost surely. Moreover, $2 \le \kappa < p$.

Assumption A2. There exists $\nu_n > 0$ such that, for every $a, b \in \{1,\dots,p\}$ and every pair of unit vectors $x, y \in \mathbb{R}^p$,

$$\|B_{i,ab}x^\top A_i y\|_{\psi_1} \le \nu_n. \tag{24}$$

Assumption A3. There are a nonempty compact smooth embedded submanifold $\mathcal{W}^\star \subset O(p)$ and $J^\star \in \mathbb{R}$ such that

$$\mathcal{J}(U,u^\star) = J^\star, \qquad \mathrm{grad}_W\,\mathcal{J}(U,u^\star) = 0, \qquad U \in \mathcal{W}^\star. \tag{25}$$

There is also a rank-κ projector $\Pi^\star$ satisfying

$$UP_{V^\star}U^\top = \Pi^\star, \qquad U \in \mathcal{W}^\star. \tag{26}$$

The set contains every unselected-column completion: if $U \in \mathcal{W}^\star$, $R \in O(p)$, and $RP_{V^\star} = P_{V^\star}$, then $UR \in \mathcal{W}^\star$.

Assumption A4. There exists $\alpha_n > 0$ such that, for every $U \in \mathcal{W}^\star$ and every $\xi \in T_U O(p)$ orthogonal to $T_U \mathcal{W}^\star$,

$$-\langle \xi, \operatorname{Hess}_{WW} \mathcal{J}(U, u^\star)[\xi] \rangle \geq \alpha_n \|\xi\|_F^2. \tag{27}$$

Assumption A5. There exists $m_n > 0$ such that

$$\inf_{U \in \mathcal{W}^\star} \left[\min_{a \in V^\star} \{2D_0(U)u^\star\}_a - \max\left\{0, \max_{b \notin V^\star} \{2D_0(U)u^\star\}_b\right\}\right] \geq m_n. \tag{28}$$

The diagonal restriction in A1 applies only to B_i. In particular,

$$\{D_n(W)\}_{aa} = \{D_0(W)\}_{aa} = 0, \qquad a = 1, \ldots, p, \tag{29}$$

whereas a zero diagonal of A_i would not generally be preserved by the transformation $W^\top A_i W$.

The completion requirement in A3 ensures that the distance to $\mathcal{W}^\star$ is finite in both connected components of $O(p)$. Write e_j for the jth standard basis vector of $\mathbb{R}^p$. Choose $j \notin V^\star$ and set

$$R_j = I_p - 2e_j e_j^\top. \tag{30}$$

Then $R_j P_{V^\star} = P_{V^\star} R_j = P_{V^\star}$ and $\det(R_j) = -1$. Hence, for every $U \in \mathcal{W}^\star$,

$$(UR_j)P_{V^\star} = UP_{V^\star}, \qquad (UR_j)P_{V^\star}(UR_j)^\top = \Pi^\star, \tag{31}$$

but $\det(UR_j) = -\det(U)$. Thus $\mathcal{W}^\star$ intersects both components. For every $W \in O(p)$,

$$d_O(W, \mathcal{W}^\star) = \inf_{\substack{U \in \mathcal{W}^\star \\ \det(U) = \det(W)}} d_O(W, U), \tag{32}$$

and the infimum is finite and attained. If W_1 and W_2 lie in the same component, the triangle inequality gives

$$|d_O(W_1, \mathcal{W}^\star) - d_O(W_2, \mathcal{W}^\star)| \leq d_O(W_1, W_2). \tag{33}$$

Consequently, $W \mapsto d_O(W, \mathcal{W}^\star)$ is continuous on each component and hence on $O(p)$, because the two components are both open and closed.

Condition A4 permits directions tangent to $\mathcal{W}^\star$ to remain unidentified and requires curvature only in directions normal to the stationary manifold $\mathcal{W}^\star$. Condition A5 is the corresponding strict first-order requirement for the support block. To make the support requirement explicit, fix $U \in \mathcal{W}^\star$ and write

$$g(U) = \nabla_s \mathcal{J}(U, u^\star) = 2D_0(U)u^\star. \tag{34}$$

Equations (29) and (34) imply

$$g_a(U) = 2 \sum_{\ell \in V^\star \setminus \{a\}} \{D_0(U)\}_{a\ell}, \qquad a \in V^\star, \tag{35}$$

$$g_b(U) = 2 \sum_{\ell \in V^\star} \{D_0(U)\}_{b\ell}, \qquad b \notin V^\star, \tag{36}$$

where

$$\{D_0(U)\}_{a\ell} = \mathbb{E}\left[B_{i,a\ell}(Ue_a)^\top A_i (Ue_\ell)\right]. \tag{37}$$

Thus (28) compares every selected (active) coordinate's aggregate within-support SC–FC alignment with both zero and every outside (inactive) coordinate's aggregate alignment.

A vector d is a feasible first-order direction from $u^\star$ if and only if

$$d_a \leq 0 \quad (a \in V^\star), \qquad d_b \geq 0 \quad (b \notin V^\star), \qquad \mathbf{1}^\top d \leq 0. \tag{38}$$

The directions $-e_a$ and $e_b - e_a$ remove active mass and replace active mass by inactive mass, respectively; their directional derivatives are $-g_a(U)$ and $g_b(U) - g_a(U)$. The comparison with zero in (28) is therefore essential since (2) permits active mass to be removed without being reallocated.

More generally, for d satisfying (38), set

$$A_d = -\sum_{a \in V^\star} d_a, \qquad B_d = \sum_{b \notin V^\star} d_b, \qquad c(U) = \max\left\{0, \max_{b \notin V^\star} g_b(U)\right\}. \tag{39}$$

Then $0 \le B_d \le A_d$, and (28) implies

$$\begin{aligned}\langle g(U),\, d\rangle &= -\sum_{a \in V^\star} g_a(U)(-d_a) + \sum_{b \notin V^\star} g_b(U) d_b \\ &\le -\{c(U) + m_n\} A_d + c(U) B_d \le -m_n A_d \le -\frac{m_n}{2}\|d\|_1.\end{aligned} \tag{40}$$

Hence the directional derivative is uniformly negative along every nonzero feasible direction.

For $x > 0$, define

$$R_n(x) = 2\log p + p\log 9 + x, \qquad \eta_n(x) = C\nu_n\left\{\sqrt{\frac{R_n(x)}{n}} + \frac{R_n(x)}{n}\right\}, \tag{41}$$

where $C > 0$ is a universal constant. For $a, b \in \{1, \dots, p\}$, let

$$H_{ab} = \frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n} B_{i,ab} A_i - \mathbb{E}(B_{i,ab} A_i), \tag{42}$$

and define

$$\mathcal{G}_x = \left\{\max_{a,b} \|H_{ab}\|_{\mathrm{op}} \le \eta_n(x)\right\}. \tag{43}$$

Lemma 1 bounds $\max_{a,b} \|H_{ab}\|_{\mathrm{op}}$ and gives the probability of $\mathcal{G}_x$.

Lemma 1. *Under A1–A2, the universal constant in* (41) *can be chosen so that*

$$\mathbb{P}(\mathcal{G}_x) \ge 1 - 2e^{-x}. \tag{44}$$

Proof. Fix a, b and a unit vector $z \in \mathbb{R}^p$. The variables

$$Y_i = B_{i,ab} z^\top A_i z - \mathbb{E}(B_{i,ab} z^\top A_i z) \tag{45}$$

are independent and centered. By (24), Jensen's inequality, and the triangle inequality for the ψ_1 norm, $\|Y_i\|_{\psi_1} \le C_0\nu_n$ for a universal constant C_0. The sub-exponential Bernstein inequality [43] therefore yields

$$\mathbb{P}\big(|z^\top H_{ab} z| > t\big) \le 2\exp\left[-cn\min\left\{\frac{t^2}{\nu_n^2}, \frac{t}{\nu_n}\right\}\right], \qquad t > 0, \tag{46}$$

for a universal constant $c > 0$.

Let $\mathcal{N}$ be a $1/4$-net of the unit sphere in $\mathbb{R}^p$ with $|\mathcal{N}| \le 9^p$. Because H_{ab} is symmetric,

$$\|H_{ab}\|_{\mathrm{op}} \le 2\max_{z \in \mathcal{N}} |z^\top H_{ab} z|. \tag{47}$$

Indeed, for every unit vector v, choose $z \in \mathcal{N}$ such that $\|v - z\|_2 \le 1/4$. Then

$$|v^\top H_{ab} v| \le |z^\top H_{ab} z| + \frac{1}{2}\|H_{ab}\|_{\mathrm{op}}. \tag{48}$$

A union bound over at most $p^2 9^p$ pairs and net points yields

$$\mathbb{P}\left(\max_{a,b} \|H_{ab}\|_{\mathrm{op}} > 2t\right) \le 2\exp\left[2\log p + p\log 9 - cn\min\left\{\frac{t^2}{\nu_n^2}, \frac{t}{\nu_n}\right\}\right]. \tag{49}$$

Taking $t = C_1\nu_n\{\sqrt{R_n(x)/n} + R_n(x)/n\}$ with C_1 sufficiently large makes the exponent in (49) at most $-x$. Absorbing the fixed constants into C in (41) proves (44). □

Define

$$M_0 = \max_{a,b} \|\mathbb{E}(B_{i,ab}A_i)\|_{\mathrm{op}}. \tag{50}$$

This quantity is finite under A2. Indeed, symmetry and (24) imply

$$\|\mathbb{E}(B_{i,ab}A_i)\|_{\mathrm{op}} = \sup_{\|z\|_2=1} \left|\mathbb{E}(B_{i,ab}z^\top A_i z)\right| \le C_0\nu_n. \tag{51}$$

The possible dependence of M_0 on n and p is suppressed.

Lemma 2 bounds $(\bar{J}_n - \mathcal{J})(W,s)$ and $\nabla_s(\bar{J}_n - \mathcal{J})(W,s)$ uniformly on $O(p) \times \mathcal{S}_\kappa$ using $\mathcal{G}_x$.

Lemma 2. *Under A1–A2, on $\mathcal{G}_x$, uniformly over $W \in O(p)$ and $s \in \mathcal{S}_\kappa$,*

$$\text{(i)} \quad \left|(\bar{J}_n - \mathcal{J})(W,s)\right| \le \kappa^2\eta_n(x), \tag{52}$$

$$\text{(ii)} \quad \left\|\nabla_s(\bar{J}_n - \mathcal{J})(W,s)\right\|_\infty \le 2\kappa\eta_n(x). \tag{53}$$

Proof. Write w_a for column a of W. The symmetry in A1 gives $H_{ab} = H_{ba} = H_{ab}^\top$. Expanding $\bar{J}_n$ and (11) yields

$$(\bar{J}_n - \mathcal{J})(W,s) = \sum_{a,b=1}^{p} s_a s_b w_a^\top H_{ab} w_b. \tag{54}$$

Since $s \ge 0$, $\mathbf{1}^\top s \le \kappa$, and $\|w_a\|_2 = 1$, the event (43) implies

$$\left|(\bar{J}_n - \mathcal{J})(W,s)\right| \le \eta_n(x) \sum_{a,b=1}^{p} s_a s_b = \eta_n(x)(\mathbf{1}^\top s)^2 \le \kappa^2\eta_n(x), \tag{55}$$

which is (52). The ath coordinate of the support-gradient difference is

$$2\sum_{b=1}^{p} s_b w_a^\top H_{ab} w_b. \tag{56}$$

Equation (43) bounds the absolute value of (56) by $2\eta_n(x)\mathbf{1}^\top s \le 2\kappa\eta_n(x)$, proving (53). □

Lemma 3 bounds $\mathrm{grad}_W(\bar{J}_n - \mathcal{J})(W,u^\star)$ and the change in $\mathrm{grad}_W \bar{J}_n(W,s)$ when s is replaced by $u^\star$.

Lemma 3. *Under A1–A2, on $\mathcal{G}_x$, uniformly over $W \in O(p)$ and $s \in \mathcal{S}_\kappa$,*

$$\text{(i)} \quad \left\|\mathrm{grad}_W(\bar{J}_n - \mathcal{J})(W,u^\star)\right\|_F \le 2(\kappa-1)\sqrt{\kappa}\,\eta_n(x), \tag{57}$$

$$\text{(ii)} \quad \left\|\mathrm{grad}_W \bar{J}_n(W,s) - \mathrm{grad}_W \bar{J}_n(W,u^\star)\right\|_F \le 2(\kappa+\sqrt{\kappa})\{M_0 + \eta_n(x)\}\|s-u^\star\|_1. \tag{58}$$

Proof. Write w_a for column a of W. The Euclidean W-gradient of the stochastic difference at $u^\star$ has column a

$$2u_a^\star \sum_{b \in V^\star} H_{ab} w_b. \tag{59}$$

Equations A1 and (42) give $H_{aa} = 0$. Hence each of the at most κ possibly nonzero columns in (59) has norm at most $2(\kappa-1)\eta_n(x)$, and the Euclidean gradient has Frobenius norm at most $2(\kappa-1)\sqrt{\kappa}\,\eta_n(x)$. Applying (20) proves (57).

For (58), let

$$\widehat{M}_{ab} = \frac{1}{n}\sum_{i=1}^{n} B_{i,ab}A_i, \qquad h = s - u^\star. \tag{60}$$

Equations (43) and (50) imply

$$\max_{a,b} \|\widehat{M}_{ab}\|_{\mathrm{op}} \le M_0 + \eta_n(x). \tag{61}$$

The difference between column a of the two Euclidean gradients is

$$2h_a \sum_{b=1}^{p} s_b \widehat{M}_{ab} w_b + 2u_a^\star \sum_{b=1}^{p} h_b \widehat{M}_{ab} w_b. \tag{62}$$

By (61), the matrices formed by the first and second terms in (62) have Frobenius norms at most

$$2\kappa\{M_0 + \eta_n(x)\}\|h\|_2 \qquad \text{and} \qquad 2\sqrt{\kappa}\{M_0 + \eta_n(x)\}\|h\|_1, \tag{63}$$

respectively. Since $\|h\|_2 \le \|h\|_1$, the Euclidean-gradient difference is bounded by the right-hand side of (58). Both gradients are evaluated at the same W, so (22) applies the same linear map $\mathcal{P}_W$ to both. Equation (20) therefore proves (58) for the Riemannian gradients. □

B.1 Bounds near $\mathcal{W}^\star \times \{u^\star\}$

Lemma 4 relates the distance to $\mathcal{W}^\star$ to the population gradient norm and objective loss through (64) and (65) below.

Lemma 4. *Under Assumptions A1–A4, there exists $\rho_{2,n} > 0$ such that, for every $W \in O(p)$, $d_O(W, \mathcal{W}^\star) \le \rho_{2,n}$ implies*

$$\text{(i)} \quad \|\mathrm{grad}_W \mathcal{J}(W, u^\star)\|_F \ge \frac{\alpha_n}{2} d_O(W, \mathcal{W}^\star), \tag{64}$$

$$\text{(ii)} \quad J^\star - \mathcal{J}(W, u^\star) \ge \frac{\alpha_n}{4} d_O(W, \mathcal{W}^\star)^2. \tag{65}$$

Proof. Equation (24) implies that every coefficient defining $\mathcal{J}$ is finite. Since (12) is a finite polynomial in the entries of W and s, the map $(W, s) \mapsto \mathcal{J}(W, s)$ is smooth. By Lee [26, Theorem 5.25], the tubular-neighborhood theorem applied within each connected component of $O(p)$ gives a radius $\rho_{1,n} > 0$ on which the normal exponential map around $\mathcal{W}^\star$ is one-to-one. By Lee [26, Theorem 6.40], the radius can be chosen so that every W satisfying $d_O(W, \mathcal{W}^\star) < \rho_{1,n}$ has the unique representation

$$\begin{aligned} W &= \mathrm{Exp}_{U(W)}(\xi_W), \\ U(W) &\in \mathcal{W}^\star, \\ \xi_W &\in T_{U(W)}O(p), \qquad \xi_W \perp T_{U(W)}\mathcal{W}^\star, \\ \|\xi_W\|_F &= d_O(W, \mathcal{W}^\star). \end{aligned} \tag{66}$$

The same metric tubular-neighborhood result also gives the converse distance identity

$$d_O(\mathrm{Exp}_U(\zeta), \mathcal{W}^\star) = \|\zeta\|_F \tag{67}$$

for every $U \in \mathcal{W}^\star$ and every $\zeta \in T_U O(p)$ satisfying $\zeta \perp T_U\mathcal{W}^\star$ and $\|\zeta\|_F < \rho_{1,n}$. The two componentwise radii can be replaced by their minimum because $\mathcal{W}^\star$ intersects both components by (31).

We next extend the curvature in (27) uniformly to nearby points. Consider

$$\mathcal{K} = \left\{(U, \nu) \in \mathcal{W}^\star \times \mathbb{R}^{p\times p} : \nu \in T_U O(p),\ \nu \perp T_U\mathcal{W}^\star,\ \|\nu\|_F = 1\right\}. \tag{68}$$

The set $\mathcal{K}$ is compact. Indeed, take any sequence (U_j, ν_j) in $\mathcal{K}$. Compactness of $\mathcal{W}^\star$ and of the Euclidean unit sphere yields a subsequence converging to some (U, ν). The identities $U_j^\top \nu_j + \nu_j^\top U_j = 0$ pass to the limit, so $\nu \in T_U O(p)$ by (16). A smooth local parametrization of $\mathcal{W}^\star$ around U allows every vector in $T_U\mathcal{W}^\star$ to be approximated by vectors in $T_{U_j}\mathcal{W}^\star$. Passing to the limit in the corresponding inner products gives $\nu \perp T_U\mathcal{W}^\star$. Thus $(U, \nu) \in \mathcal{K}$, so $\mathcal{K}$ is a closed subset of a compact set.

For $(U, \nu) \in \mathcal{K}$, define

$$\gamma_{U,\nu}(r) = \mathrm{Exp}_U(r\nu), \qquad \zeta_{U,\nu}(r) = \frac{d}{dr}\gamma_{U,\nu}(r). \tag{69}$$

Lee [26, Proposition 5.19(b)–(c)] implies that (69) is a geodesic and depends smoothly on (U, ν, r). Therefore

$$\Phi(U, \nu, r) = \langle \zeta_{U,\nu}(r),\, \mathrm{Hess}_{WW}\, \mathcal{J}(\gamma_{U,\nu}(r), u^\star)[\zeta_{U,\nu}(r)] \rangle \tag{70}$$

is continuous. At $r = 0$, $\zeta_{U,\nu}(0) = \nu$, and (27) gives $\Phi(U, \nu, 0) \le -\alpha_n$ on $\mathcal{K}$. Compactness of (68) therefore yields a radius satisfying

$$0 < \rho_{2,n} < \rho_{1,n} \tag{71}$$

such that

$$\Phi(U, \nu, r) \le -\frac{\alpha_n}{2}, \qquad (U, \nu) \in \mathcal{K}, \quad 0 \le r \le \rho_{2,n}. \tag{72}$$

Fix W with $d_O(W, \mathcal{W}^\star) \le \rho_{2,n}$ and use (66). If $\xi_W \neq 0$, let

$$\nu_W = \frac{\xi_W}{\|\xi_W\|_F}, \qquad \gamma_W(t) = \mathrm{Exp}_{U(W)}(t\xi_W), \qquad q_W(t) = \mathcal{J}(\gamma_W(t), u^\star). \tag{73}$$

Then

$$\dot\gamma_W(t) = \|\xi_W\|_F \zeta_{U(W),\nu_W}(t\|\xi_W\|_F), \qquad \|\dot\gamma_W(t)\|_F = \|\xi_W\|_F. \tag{74}$$

Since γ_W is a geodesic, Absil et al. [2, Definition 5.5.1 and Proposition 5.5.2] yields

$$\begin{aligned} q_W''(t) &= \langle \dot\gamma_W(t), \mathrm{Hess}_{WW}\, \mathcal{J}(\gamma_W(t), u^\star)[\dot\gamma_W(t)] \rangle \\ &\le -\frac{\alpha_n}{2}\|\xi_W\|_F^2, \qquad 0 \le t \le 1, \end{aligned} \tag{75}$$

where the inequality follows from (72) and (74). Equation (25) gives

$$q_W'(0) = \langle \mathrm{grad}_W\, \mathcal{J}(U(W), u^\star),\, \xi_W \rangle = 0. \tag{76}$$

Integrating (75) once and using (74) yields

$$\frac{\alpha_n}{2}\|\xi_W\|_F^2 \le -q_W'(1) \le \|\mathrm{grad}_W\, \mathcal{J}(W, u^\star)\|_F\, \|\xi_W\|_F. \tag{77}$$

Equations (66) and (77) prove (64). Taylor's expansion, together with (76) and (75), yields

$$\mathcal{J}(W, u^\star) = J^\star + \int_0^1 (1-t) q_W''(t)\, dt \le J^\star - \frac{\alpha_n}{4}\|\xi_W\|_F^2. \tag{78}$$

Equations (66) and (78) prove (65). □

Lemma 5 shows that the selected-coordinate derivatives of $\mathcal{J}(W, s)$ remain positive and uniformly exceed the unselected-coordinate derivatives throughout (79) below.

Lemma 5. *Under Assumptions A1–A5, there is $r_0 \in (0, 1)$, possibly depending on n and p, such that every $(W, s) \in O(p) \times \mathcal{S}_\kappa$ satisfying*

$$d_O(W, \mathcal{W}^\star) \le r_0, \qquad \|s - u^\star\|_2 \le r_0 \tag{79}$$

also satisfies

$$\min_{a \in V^\star} \{2D_0(W)s\}_a - \max\left\{0, \max_{b \notin V^\star} \{2D_0(W)s\}_b\right\} \ge \frac{3m_n}{4}. \tag{80}$$

Proof. Define

$$\Delta(W, s) = \min_{a \in V^\star} \{2D_0(W)s\}_a - \max\left\{0, \max_{b \notin V^\star} \{2D_0(W)s\}_b\right\}. \tag{81}$$

The map in (81) is continuous. By (28) and compactness of $\mathcal{W}^\star$, there exists $\rho_{3,n} > 0$ such that

$$\Delta(W, s) \ge \frac{3m_n}{4} \tag{82}$$

whenever $d_O(W, \mathcal{W}^\star) \le \rho_{3,n}$ and $\|s - u^\star\|_2 \le \rho_{3,n}$. Let

$$L_{0,n} = \sup_{W \in O(p)} \|D_0(W)\|_{\mathrm{op}}. \tag{83}$$

Equations (11) and (50) imply $L_{0,n} \le pM_0 < \infty$. Choose r_0 so that

$$0 < r_0 \le \min\left\{\rho_{2,n}, \rho_{3,n}, \frac{1}{2}\right\}, \qquad r_0 L_{0,n} \le \frac{m_n}{8}. \tag{84}$$

The choice $r_0 \le \rho_{3,n}$ and (82) prove (80). □

Corollary 1 bounds $J^\star - \mathcal{J}(W,s)$ using $d_O(W,\mathcal{W}^\star)$ and $\|s-u^\star\|_1$.

Corollary 1. *Under Assumptions A1–A5, the radius r_0 satisfying* (84) *can be chosen so that every $(W,s)\in O(p)\times\mathcal{S}_\kappa$ satisfying* (79) *obeys*

$$J^\star - \mathcal{J}(W,s) \geq \frac{\alpha_n}{4} d_O(W,\mathcal{W}^\star)^2 + \frac{m_n}{4}\|s-u^\star\|_1. \tag{85}$$

Proof. Let

$$h = s-u^\star, \qquad A_s = \sum_{a\in V^\star}(1-s_a), \qquad B_s = \sum_{b\notin V^\star} s_b. \tag{86}$$

Feasibility in (2) gives $0\leq B_s\leq A_s$ and

$$\|h\|_1 = A_s + B_s \leq 2A_s. \tag{87}$$

Equations (79) and (84) give $d_O(W,\mathcal{W}^\star)\leq r_0\leq \rho_{3,n}$. Thus (82) applies with $s=u^\star$. Using $0\leq B_s\leq A_s$ and (82), we obtain

$$\begin{aligned}
\langle 2D_0(W)u^\star,\, u^\star - s\rangle &= \sum_{a\in V^\star}\{2D_0(W)u^\star\}_a(1-s_a) - \sum_{b\notin V^\star}\{2D_0(W)u^\star\}_b s_b \\
&\geq A_s \min_{a\in V^\star}\{2D_0(W)u^\star\}_a - B_s\max\left\{0, \max_{b\notin V^\star}\{2D_0(W)u^\star\}_b\right\} \\
&\geq A_s\left[\min_{a\in V^\star}\{2D_0(W)u^\star\}_a - \max\left\{0, \max_{b\notin V^\star}\{2D_0(W)u^\star\}_b\right\}\right] \\
&\geq \frac{3m_n}{4}A_s \geq \frac{3m_n}{8}\|s-u^\star\|_1.
\end{aligned} \tag{88}$$

The following identity

$$\mathcal{J}(W,u^\star) - \mathcal{J}(W,s) = \langle 2D_0(W)u^\star,\, u^\star - s\rangle - h^\top D_0(W)h \tag{89}$$

and (88) yield

$$\mathcal{J}(W,u^\star) - \mathcal{J}(W,s) \geq \frac{3m_n}{8}\|h\|_1 - \|D_0(W)\|_{\mathrm{op}}\|h\|_2^2. \tag{90}$$

If $\|h\|_2\leq r_0$, then $\|h\|_2^2\leq r_0\|h\|_1$. Equations (90) and (84) therefore give

$$\mathcal{J}(W,u^\star) - \mathcal{J}(W,s) \geq \frac{m_n}{4}\|s-u^\star\|_1. \tag{91}$$

Equations (79) and (84) give $d_O(W,\mathcal{W}^\star)\leq r_0\leq\rho_{2,n}$, so (65) applies. Combining (65) and (91) proves (85). □

For an empirical pair (W,s), define

$$r_W(W,s) = \|\operatorname{grad}_W \bar{J}_n(W,s)\|_F, \qquad r_s(W,s) = \sup_{v\in\mathcal{S}_\kappa}\left\langle \nabla_s \bar{J}_n(W,s),\, v-s\right\rangle. \tag{92}$$

The second residual is nonnegative because $v=s$ is feasible. It is the maximum of a linear function over the compact convex set in (2). Both residuals are zero at a local maximizer.

For rank-κ orthogonal projectors P and Q, $\Theta(P,Q)$ denotes the diagonal matrix of principal angles between their ranges.

Let $(\widehat{W},\widehat{s})\in O(p)\times\mathcal{S}_\kappa$ and $\varepsilon_W,\varepsilon_s\geq 0$ satisfy

$$d_O(\widehat{W},\mathcal{W}^\star) < r_0, \qquad \|\widehat{s}-u^\star\|_2 < r_0, \tag{93}$$

$$r_W(\widehat{W},\widehat{s})\leq\varepsilon_W, \qquad r_s(\widehat{W},\widehat{s})\leq\varepsilon_s. \tag{94}$$

For the following residual bounds, suppose that

$$\eta_n(x)\leq\frac{m_n}{16\kappa}. \tag{95}$$

Theorem 2 bounds $\|\widehat{s}-u^\star\|_1$ using $r_s(\widehat{W},\widehat{s})$.

Theorem 2. *Under Assumptions A1–A5, on $\mathcal{G}_x$, conditions* (93)–(95) *imply*

$$\text{(i)} \quad \|\widehat{s} - u^\star\|_1 \le \frac{4\varepsilon_s}{m_n}, \tag{96}$$

$$\text{(ii)} \quad \min_{a \in V^\star} \widehat{s}_a > \max_{b \notin V^\star} \widehat{s}_b, \quad \mathrm{Top}_\kappa(\widehat{s}) = V^\star \tag{97}$$

In particular, $\varepsilon_s = 0$ implies $\widehat{s} = u^\star$.

Proof. Equations (80) and (53) imply

$$\min_{a \in V^\star} \{\nabla_s \bar{J}_n(\widehat{W}, \widehat{s})\}_a - \max\left\{0, \max_{b \notin V^\star} \{\nabla_s \bar{J}_n(\widehat{W}, \widehat{s})\}_b\right\} \ge \frac{3m_n}{4} - 4\kappa\eta_n(x) \ge \frac{m_n}{2}, \tag{98}$$

where the last inequality uses (95).

Define

$$\widehat{A} = \sum_{a \in V^\star} (1 - \widehat{s}_a), \qquad \widehat{B} = \sum_{b \notin V^\star} \widehat{s}_b. \tag{99}$$

Feasibility gives $0 \le \widehat{B} \le \widehat{A}$. As in the mass comparison leading to (88), the empirical score gap in (98) yields

$$\begin{aligned} &\left\langle \nabla_s \bar{J}_n(\widehat{W}, \widehat{s}),\, u^\star - \widehat{s} \right\rangle \\ &\quad \ge \widehat{A}\left[\min_{a \in V^\star} \{\nabla_s \bar{J}_n(\widehat{W}, \widehat{s})\}_a - \max\left\{0, \max_{b \notin V^\star} \{\nabla_s \bar{J}_n(\widehat{W}, \widehat{s})\}_b\right\}\right] \\ &\quad \ge \frac{m_n}{2}\widehat{A}. \end{aligned} \tag{100}$$

Since $u^\star \in \mathcal{S}_\kappa$, (92) and (94) bound the left-hand side of (100) by ε_s. Thus

$$\widehat{A} \le \frac{2\varepsilon_s}{m_n}, \qquad \|\widehat{s} - u^\star\|_1 = \widehat{A} + \widehat{B} \le \frac{4\varepsilon_s}{m_n}, \tag{101}$$

which proves (96).

For every coordinate j, (93) and (84) give

$$|\widehat{s}_j - u^\star_j| \le \|\widehat{s} - u^\star\|_2 < r_0 \le \frac{1}{2}. \tag{102}$$

Consequently, $\widehat{s}_a > 1/2$ for $a \in V^\star$ and $\widehat{s}_b < 1/2$ for $b \notin V^\star$, which proves (97). The last assertion follows from (96) with $\varepsilon_s = 0$. □

We denote

$$b_n(x, \varepsilon_W, \varepsilon_s) = \frac{2}{\alpha_n}\left\{\varepsilon_W + 2(\kappa - 1)\sqrt{\kappa}\,\eta_n(x) + \frac{8(\kappa + \sqrt{\kappa})\{M_0 + \eta_n(x)\}\varepsilon_s}{m_n}\right\}. \tag{103}$$

Corollary 2 bounds $d_O(\widehat{W}, \mathcal{W}^\star)$ in terms of ε_W, ε_s, and $\eta_n(x)$.

Corollary 2. *Under Assumptions A1–A5, on $\mathcal{G}_x$, conditions* (93)–(95) *imply*

$$d_{V^\star}(\widehat{W}, \mathcal{W}^\star) \le d_O(\widehat{W}, \mathcal{W}^\star) \le b_n(x, \varepsilon_W, \varepsilon_s). \tag{104}$$

Proof. For the alignment bound, the triangle inequality, followed by (58), (57), (94), and (96), yields

$$\begin{aligned} &\left\|\mathrm{grad}_W\, \mathcal{J}(\widehat{W}, u^\star)\right\|_F \\ &\quad \le r_W(\widehat{W}, \widehat{s}) + \left\|\mathrm{grad}_W\, \bar{J}_n(\widehat{W}, \widehat{s}) - \mathrm{grad}_W\, \bar{J}_n(\widehat{W}, u^\star)\right\|_F + \left\|\mathrm{grad}_W(\bar{J}_n - \mathcal{J})(\widehat{W}, u^\star)\right\|_F \\ &\quad \le \varepsilon_W + \frac{8(\kappa + \sqrt{\kappa})\{M_0 + \eta_n(x)\}\varepsilon_s}{m_n} + 2(\kappa - 1)\sqrt{\kappa}\,\eta_n(x). \end{aligned}$$

Combining (64) and (105) gives the upper bound on d_O in (104).

For every $U \in \mathcal{W}^\star$, the chordal distance is no larger than the geodesic distance, so

$$\|(\widehat{W} - U)P_{V^\star}\|_F \le \|\widehat{W} - U\|_F \le d_O(\widehat{W}, U). \tag{105}$$

Taking the infimum in (105) proves $d_{V^\star} \le d_O$ in (104). □

Corollary 3 transfers (104) to $\widehat{W}P_{V^\star}\widehat{W}^\top - \Pi^\star$.

Corollary 3. *Under Assumptions A1–A5, on $\mathcal{G}_x$, conditions* (93)–(95) *imply*

$$\text{(i)} \quad \left\|\widehat{W}P_{V^\star}\widehat{W}^\top - \Pi^\star\right\|_F \le 2b_n(x, \varepsilon_W, \varepsilon_s), \tag{106}$$

$$\text{(ii)} \quad \left\|\sin\Theta\Big(\widehat{W}P_{V^\star}\widehat{W}^\top, \Pi^\star\Big)\right\|_F^2 \le 2b_n(x, \varepsilon_W, \varepsilon_s)^2. \tag{107}$$

Proof. For every $U \in \mathcal{W}^\star$, (26) gives

$$\widehat{W}P_{V^\star}\widehat{W}^\top - \Pi^\star = (\widehat{W} - U)P_{V^\star}\widehat{W}^\top + UP_{V^\star}(\widehat{W} - U)^\top. \tag{108}$$

The Frobenius norm of each term on the right-hand side of (108) is at most $\|(\widehat{W} - U)P_{V^\star}\|_F$. Taking the infimum over $U \in \mathcal{W}^\star$ yields

$$\left\|\widehat{W}P_{V^\star}\widehat{W}^\top - \Pi^\star\right\|_F \le 2d_{V^\star}(\widehat{W}, \mathcal{W}^\star), \tag{109}$$

which proves (106). Finally, rank-κ orthogonal projectors P and Q satisfy

$$\|P - Q\|_F^2 = 2\kappa - 2\,\mathrm{Tr}(PQ) = 2\|\sin\Theta(P, Q)\|_F^2. \tag{110}$$

Equations (106) and (110) prove (107). □

B.2 Existence of an empirical local maximizer

All interiors and boundaries in this section are taken relative to

$$\mathcal{X}_\kappa = O(p) \times \mathcal{S}_\kappa. \tag{111}$$

For $0 < r < r_0$, define

$$\overline{\mathcal{N}}_r = \{(W, s) \in \mathcal{X}_\kappa : d_O(W, \mathcal{W}^\star) \le r,\ \|s - u^\star\|_2 \le r\}, \tag{112}$$

and

$$\mathcal{N}_r = \{(W, s) \in \mathcal{X}_\kappa : d_O(W, \mathcal{W}^\star) < r,\ \|s - u^\star\|_2 < r\}. \tag{113}$$

The following lemma characterizes the relative boundary of the set above.

Lemma 6. *The relative boundary of* (112) *is*

$$\begin{aligned}\partial_{\mathcal{X}_\kappa}\overline{\mathcal{N}}_r = \mathcal{B}_r = {} & \{(W, s) \in \mathcal{X}_\kappa : d_O(W, \mathcal{W}^\star) = r,\ \|s - u^\star\|_2 \le r\} \\ & \cup \{(W, s) \in \mathcal{X}_\kappa : d_O(W, \mathcal{W}^\star) \le r,\ \|s - u^\star\|_2 = r\}.\end{aligned} \tag{114}$$

Proof. The continuity of the two distance maps shows that every point in (113) is in the relative interior of $\overline{\mathcal{N}}_r$. Conversely, suppose $(W, s) \in \overline{\mathcal{N}}_r$ and $d_O(W, \mathcal{W}^\star) = r$. Equation (66) gives $U \in \mathcal{W}^\star$ and $\xi \perp T_U\mathcal{W}^\star$ such that

$$W = \mathrm{Exp}_U(\xi), \qquad \|\xi\|_F = r. \tag{115}$$

For every sufficiently small $\delta > 0$,

$$W_\delta = \mathrm{Exp}_U\{(1 + \delta)\xi\}, \qquad d_O(W_\delta, \mathcal{W}^\star) = (1 + \delta)r > r, \qquad W_\delta \longrightarrow W. \tag{116}$$

Equations (84) and (71) give $r < r_0 \le \rho_{2,n} < \rho_{1,n}$. Hence δ can be chosen so that (116) remains in the tubular neighborhood; its asserted distance equality follows from (115) and (67). Thus (W, s) is not in the relative interior of $\overline{\mathcal{N}}_r$.

Now suppose $(W, s) \in \overline{\mathcal{N}}_r$ and $\|s - u^\star\|_2 = r$. Set $h = s - u^\star$. Feasibility gives

$$h_a \le 0 \quad (a \in V^\star), \qquad h_b \ge 0 \quad (b \notin V^\star), \qquad \mathbf{1}^\top h \le 0. \tag{117}$$

Since $r < r_0 < 1$, $\max_j |h_j| < 1$. Hence, for every sufficiently small $\delta > 0$,

$$s_\delta = u^\star + (1 + \delta)h \in \mathcal{S}_\kappa, \qquad \|s_\delta - u^\star\|_2 = (1 + \delta)r > r, \qquad s_\delta \longrightarrow s. \tag{118}$$

To verify the feasibility asserted in (118), choose δ small enough that every coordinate remains in $[0, 1]$; then

$$\mathbf{1}^\top s_\delta = \kappa + (1 + \delta)\mathbf{1}^\top h \le \kappa \tag{119}$$

by (117). Thus (W, s) is not in the relative interior of $\overline{\mathcal{N}}_r$. Since $\overline{\mathcal{N}}_r$ is relatively closed, these arguments prove (114). □

Assumption A6. For $0 < r < r_0$,

$$\eta_n(x) \le \frac{m_n}{16\kappa}, \tag{120a}$$

$$2\kappa^2\eta_n(x) < \frac{1}{4}\min\{\alpha_n r^2, m_n r\}. \tag{120b}$$

On $\mathcal{G}_x$, (120a) ensures that each $\{\nabla_s \bar{J}_n(W,s)\}_a$, $a \in V^\star$, exceeds both zero and every $\{\nabla_s \bar{J}_n(W,s)\}_b$, $b \notin V^\star$, by at least $m_n/2$ for (W,s) satisfying (79), as in (98). Condition (120b) makes the uniform bound in (52) sufficiently smaller than the lower bound for $J^\star - \mathcal{J}(W,s)$ on $\mathcal{B}_r$ as in (122) below.

Theorem 3 establishes that $\bar{J}_n$ has local maximizers in $\mathcal{N}_r$.

Theorem 3. *Under Assumptions A1–A6, on $\mathcal{G}_x$. Every maximizer $(\widehat{W}, \widehat{s})$ of $\bar{J}_n$ over $\overline{\mathcal{N}}_r$ is a local maximizer on $\mathcal{X}_\kappa$ and satisfies*

$$d_O(\widehat{W}, \mathcal{W}^\star) < r, \qquad \|\widehat{s} - u^\star\|_2 < r. \tag{121}$$

At least one such maximizer exists.

Proof. The set $\mathcal{X}_\kappa$ is compact. Equation (33) gives continuity of the set-distance, so $\overline{\mathcal{N}}_r$ in (112) is a nonempty compact subset of $\mathcal{X}_\kappa$. Since $\bar{J}_n$ is continuous, it attains its maximum over $\overline{\mathcal{N}}_r$.

We adapt the argument used in the proof of Theorem 3 in Ning and Liu [31]. The comparison is over the relative boundary in (114). For every $(W,s) \in \mathcal{B}_r$, (85) and $\|s - u^\star\|_1 \ge \|s - u^\star\|_2$ give

$$J^\star - \mathcal{J}(W,s) \ge \frac{1}{4}\min\{\alpha_n r^2, m_n r\}. \tag{122}$$

The curvature term in (85) gives the $\alpha_n r^2/4$ bound on the first face of (114), whereas its support term gives the $m_n r/4$ bound on the second face. For any $U \in \mathcal{W}^\star$, equations (52) and (122) yield

$$\begin{aligned} \bar{J}_n(U,u^\star) - \bar{J}_n(W,s) &= J^\star - \mathcal{J}(W,s) + (\bar{J}_n - \mathcal{J})(U,u^\star) - (\bar{J}_n - \mathcal{J})(W,s) \\ &\ge \frac{1}{4}\min\{\alpha_n r^2, m_n r\} - 2\kappa^2\eta_n(x) > 0, \end{aligned} \tag{123}$$

where the strict inequality is due to (120b). The point $(U,u^\star)$ belongs to $\overline{\mathcal{N}}_r$. Hence (123) excludes $\mathcal{B}_r$ from the set of restricted maximizers. By (114), every restricted maximizer belongs to $\mathcal{N}_r$, proving (121).

Since $\mathcal{N}_r$ is open relative to $\mathcal{X}_\kappa$, every restricted maximizer has a relative neighborhood in $\mathcal{X}_\kappa$ contained in $\overline{\mathcal{N}}_r$. It is therefore a local maximizer of $\bar{J}_n$ on the original feasible set $\mathcal{X}_\kappa$, including when its support vector lies on a coordinate or respective face of $\mathcal{S}_\kappa$. □

Corollary 4 evaluates r_W and r_s at the maximizers in Theorem 3.

Corollary 4. *Under Assumptions A1–A6, on $\mathcal{G}_x$. Every maximizer in Theorem 3 satisfies*

$$\text{(i)} \quad r_W(\widehat{W}, \widehat{s}) = 0, \qquad \text{(ii)} \quad r_s(\widehat{W}, \widehat{s}) = 0. \tag{124}$$

Proof. Fix any such maximizer. Holding its support block fixed and varying the orthogonal block along smooth curves gives

$$\operatorname{grad}_W \bar{J}_n(\widehat{W}, \widehat{s}) = 0. \tag{125}$$

For every $v \in \mathcal{S}_\kappa$, the segment

$$t \longmapsto \widehat{s} + t(v - \widehat{s}), \qquad 0 \le t \le 1, \tag{126}$$

is feasible. The one-sided derivative at $t = 0$ is nonpositive by local maximality, and hence

$$\left\langle \nabla_s \bar{J}_n(\widehat{W}, \widehat{s}),\, v - \widehat{s} \right\rangle \le 0, \qquad v \in \mathcal{S}_\kappa. \tag{127}$$

Taking the supremum in (127), with $v = \widehat{s}$ attaining zero, gives $r_s(\widehat{W}, \widehat{s}) = 0$ by (92). Equation (125) gives $r_W(\widehat{W}, \widehat{s}) = 0$, proving (124). □

Corollary 5 combines (124) and (96) to obtain $\widehat{s} = u^\star$.

Corollary 5. *Under Assumptions A1–A6, on $\mathcal{G}_x$. Every maximizer in Theorem 3 satisfies*

$$\begin{aligned} &\text{(i)} \quad \widehat{s} = u^\star, \\ &\text{(ii)} \quad \operatorname{supp}(\widehat{s}) = \operatorname{Top}_\kappa(\widehat{s}) = V^\star. \end{aligned} \tag{128}$$

Proof. Equation (121), (124), and (120a) verify (93), (94), and (95), respectively, with $\varepsilon_W = \varepsilon_s = 0$. Therefore Theorem 2 applies, and (96) gives $\widehat{s} = u^\star$. Since $u^\star = \mathbf{1}_{V^\star}$ by definition, its support and its κ largest coordinates both equal $V^\star$, proving (128). □

Corollary 6 specializes (104) to $\varepsilon_W = \varepsilon_s = 0$.

Corollary 6. *Under Assumptions A1–A6, on $\mathcal{G}_x$. Every maximizer in Theorem 3 satisfies*

$$d_{V^\star}(\widehat{W}, \mathcal{W}^\star) \le d_O(\widehat{W}, \mathcal{W}^\star) \le \frac{4(\kappa-1)\sqrt{\kappa}\,\eta_n(x)}{\alpha_n}. \tag{129}$$

Proof. Equations (121) and (124), together with (120a), verify (93)–(95) with $\varepsilon_W = \varepsilon_s = 0$. Hence Corollary 2 applies. Equation (103) gives

$$b_n(x, 0, 0) = \frac{4(\kappa-1)\sqrt{\kappa}\,\eta_n(x)}{\alpha_n}. \tag{130}$$

Substitution of (130) into (104) yields (129). □

Corollary 7 specializes (106) and (107) to $\varepsilon_W = \varepsilon_s = 0$.

Corollary 7. *Under Assumptions A1–A6, on $\mathcal{G}_x$. Every maximizer in Theorem 3 satisfies*

$$\text{(i)} \quad \left\| \widehat{W} P_{V^\star} \widehat{W}^\top - \Pi^\star \right\|_F \le \frac{8(\kappa-1)\sqrt{\kappa}\,\eta_n(x)}{\alpha_n}, \tag{131}$$

$$\text{(ii)} \quad \left\| \sin\Theta\Big(\widehat{W} P_{V^\star} \widehat{W}^\top, \Pi^\star\Big) \right\|_F^2 \le \frac{32\kappa(\kappa-1)^2\eta_n(x)^2}{\alpha_n^2}. \tag{132}$$

Proof. The same substitutions into (93)–(95) allow Corollary 3 to be applied with $\varepsilon_W = \varepsilon_s = 0$. Substitution of (130) into (106) and (107) yields (131) and (132), respectively. □

If the deterministic inequalities in (120) hold, then (44) and Theorem 3 together with Corollaries 4–7 imply that (121), (128), (129), (131), and (132) hold simultaneously with probability at least $1-2e^{-x}$.

Theorem 1 follows from Theorem 3, Theorem 2, and Corollary 3.

Proof of Theorem 1. By Lemma 1, $\mathbb{P}(\mathcal{G}_x) \ge 1 - 2e^{-x}$. On $\mathcal{G}_x$, Theorem 3 and (120) give at least one local maximizer of $\bar{J}_n$ satisfying

$$d_O(\widehat{W}, \mathcal{W}^\star) < r, \quad \|\widehat{s} - u^\star\|_2 < r. \tag{133}$$

Since $J = n\bar{J}_n$ with $n > 0$, the local maximizers of J and $\bar{J}_n$ coincide.

Now let $(\widehat{W}, \widehat{s})$ be any local maximizer satisfying (133). Varying W along smooth curves in $O(p)$ and s along the feasible segments $\widehat{s} + t(v - \widehat{s})$ yields

$$\operatorname{grad}_W \bar{J}_n(\widehat{W}, \widehat{s}) = 0, \qquad \Big\langle \nabla_s \bar{J}_n(\widehat{W}, \widehat{s}),\, v - \widehat{s} \Big\rangle \le 0, \quad v \in \mathcal{S}_\kappa. \tag{134}$$

Consequently, both residuals in (92) are zero. Since $r < r_0$, (133) implies (93). Thus Theorem 2, with $\varepsilon_W = \varepsilon_s = 0$, yields $\widehat{s} = u^\star$ and $\widehat{\mathcal{V}} = \operatorname{Top}_\kappa(\widehat{s}) = V^\star$. Corollary 3 and (130) give the projector bound in (4). All these conclusions hold on the event $\mathcal{G}_x$, which proves the theorem. □

B.3 Sufficient conditions

We verify the assumptions for a specified shared-signal family of the observed matrices. For the fixed $V^\star$ introduced above, suppose

$$2 \le |V^\star| = \kappa < p. \tag{135}$$

For $\ell = 1, \dots, L$, let the fixed matrices $C^{(\ell)} \in \mathbb{R}^{p\times p}$ satisfy

$$C^{(\ell)} = C^{(\ell)\top}, \qquad \operatorname{diag}\Big(C^{(\ell)}\Big) = 0, \qquad C^{(\ell)} = P_{V^\star} C^{(\ell)} P_{V^\star}. \tag{136}$$

Suppose that

$$C_i = \sum_{\ell=1}^{L} z_{i\ell} C^{(\ell)}, \qquad z_i = (z_{i1}, \dots, z_{iL})^\top, \qquad \Sigma_z = \mathbb{E}(z_i z_i^\top) \succ 0, \tag{137}$$

where Σ_z is a finite second-moment matrix, and that, for a fixed $W^\star \in O(p)$ and $\sigma_A, \sigma_B \ge 0$,

$$A_i = W^\star C_i W^{\star\top} + \sigma_A E_i^A, \qquad B_i = C_i + \sigma_B E_i^B. \tag{138}$$

The noise matrices satisfy

$$\mathbb{E}(E_i^A) = \mathbb{E}(E_i^B) = 0_{p\times p}, \qquad E_i^A = E_i^{A\top}, \quad E_i^B = E_i^{B\top}, \quad \operatorname{diag}(E_i^B) = 0 \quad \text{almost surely.} \tag{139}$$

Assume that, for every a, b,

$$\begin{aligned} \mathbb{E}(C_{i,ab} E_i^A) &= 0_{p\times p}, \\ \mathbb{E}\big(E_{i,ab}^B W^\star C_i W^{\star\top}\big) &= 0_{p\times p}, \\ \mathbb{E}(E_{i,ab}^B E_i^A) &= 0_{p\times p}, \end{aligned} \tag{140}$$

and that

$$\bigcap_{\ell=1}^{L} \ker\Big(C^{(\ell)}\Big) = \operatorname{span}\{e_j : j \notin V^\star\} = \ker(P_{V^\star}). \tag{141}$$

Suppose further that

$$\{(z_i, E_i^A, E_i^B)\}_{i=1}^n \quad \text{are independent and identically distributed,} \tag{142}$$

and that finite, possibly dimension-dependent constants K_A, K_B satisfy

$$\max_{a,b} \|B_{i,ab}\|_{\psi_2} \le K_B, \qquad \sup_{\|x\|_2=\|y\|_2=1} \|x^\top A_i y\|_{\psi_2} \le K_A. \tag{143}$$

For this model, the quantities in Assumption A3 are given by

$$\begin{aligned} &\mathcal{W}^\star = \{W^\star Q : Q \in O(p),\ Q^\top C^{(\ell)} Q = C^{(\ell)} \text{ for } \ell = 1, \dots, L\}, \\ &\Pi^\star = W^\star P_{V^\star} W^{\star\top}, \qquad J^\star = \mathbb{E}\|C_i\|_F^2. \end{aligned} \tag{144}$$

Set

$$m_n = 2 \min_{a\in V^\star} \sum_{b\in V^\star\setminus\{a\}} \mathbb{E}(C_{i,ab}^2). \tag{145}$$

Proposition 1 verifies Assumptions A1–A5 for the model in (138).

Proposition 1. *Under* (135)*–*(143)*, Assumptions A1–A5 hold with* (144)*, the strictly positive margin in* (145)*, $\nu_n = CK_AK_B$ for a universal constant $C > 0$, and the strictly positive curvature constant $\alpha_n = \alpha_C$ defined in* (161) *below.*

Proof. Every $W \in O(p)$ has the unique representation $W = W^\star Q$, where $Q = W^{\star\top} W \in O(p)$. Expanding the population criterion yields

$$\mathcal{J}(W^\star Q, u^\star) = \mathbb{E}\operatorname{Tr}(Q^\top C_i Q C_i). \tag{146}$$

Indeed, for every $a, b \in V^\star$, the three remaining terms in the entrywise expansion have coefficients σ_A, σ_B, and $\sigma_A\sigma_B$, respectively, and their unscaled expectations vanish by (140):

$$\mathbb{E}\big[C_{i,ab} e_a^\top Q^\top W^{\star\top} E_i^A W^\star Q e_b\big] = e_a^\top Q^\top W^{\star\top} \mathbb{E}(C_{i,ab} E_i^A) W^\star Q e_b = 0, \tag{147}$$

$$\mathbb{E}\big[E_{i,ab}^B e_a^\top Q^\top C_i Q e_b\big] = e_a^\top Q^\top W^{\star\top} \mathbb{E}\big(E_{i,ab}^B W^\star C_i W^{\star\top}\big)\, W^\star Q e_b = 0,$$

$$\mathbb{E}\big[E_{i,ab}^B e_a^\top Q^\top W^{\star\top} E_i^A W^\star Q e_b\big] = e_a^\top Q^\top W^{\star\top} \mathbb{E}(E_{i,ab}^B E_i^A) W^\star Q e_b = 0. \tag{148}$$

Symmetry identifies the remaining sum with the trace in (146). Orthogonal invariance of the Frobenius norm therefore yields

$$J^\star - \mathcal{J}(W^\star Q, u^\star) = \frac{1}{2}\mathbb{E}\|Q^\top C_i Q - C_i\|_F^2. \tag{149}$$

Moreover, expansion in the fixed matrices $C^{(\ell)}$ gives the second-moment identity

$$\begin{aligned}\mathbb{E}\|Q^\top C_i Q - C_i\|_F^2 &= \sum_{\ell,m=1}^{L} (\Sigma_z)_{\ell m} \left\langle Q^\top C^{(\ell)} Q - C^{(\ell)},\, Q^\top C^{(m)} Q - C^{(m)} \right\rangle \\ &\geq \lambda_{\min}(\Sigma_z) \sum_{\ell=1}^{L} \|Q^\top C^{(\ell)} Q - C^{(\ell)}\|_F^2. \end{aligned} \tag{150}$$

The inequality follows by applying the smallest-eigenvalue bound for Σ_z to the L coefficients at each matrix entry and summing over the entries. Since $\Sigma_z \succ 0$, the expression in (150) is zero exactly when every $C^{(\ell)}$ is preserved by Q. Thus (144) gives the full population maximizer set at $u^\star$.

Define

$$\mathcal{H}_C = \{Q \in O(p) : Q^\top C^{(\ell)} Q = C^{(\ell)} \text{ for } \ell = 1, \dots, L\}. \tag{151}$$

This is a closed subgroup of the compact group $O(p)$. Cartan's closed subgroup theorem implies that it is an embedded Lie subgroup [25, Theorem 20.12]. Consequently, $\mathcal{W}^\star = W^\star \mathcal{H}_C$ is a nonempty compact smooth embedded submanifold of $O(p)$. Each of its points maximizes $\mathcal{J}(\cdot, u^\star)$ by (149); hence its Riemannian gradient is zero.

For $Q \in \mathcal{H}_C$, the defining equalities are equivalent to

$$C^{(\ell)} Q = Q C^{(\ell)}, \qquad \ell = 1, \dots, L. \tag{152}$$

It follows that Q preserves the common kernel in (141). Orthogonality then implies preservation of its orthogonal complement, $\mathrm{range}(P_{V^\star})$, and therefore

$$Q P_{V^\star} Q^\top = P_{V^\star}, \qquad (W^\star Q) P_{V^\star} (W^\star Q)^\top = \Pi^\star. \tag{153}$$

If $R \in O(p)$ satisfies $R P_{V^\star} = P_{V^\star}$, orthogonality gives

$$R^\top P_{V^\star} = P_{V^\star} R = P_{V^\star}. \tag{154}$$

The support condition in (136) now implies

$$R^\top C^{(\ell)} R = R^\top P_{V^\star} C^{(\ell)} P_{V^\star} R = C^{(\ell)}. \tag{155}$$

Thus $R \in \mathcal{H}_C$, and the group property gives $UR \in \mathcal{W}^\star$ whenever $U \in \mathcal{W}^\star$. These identities verify every part of Assumption A3.

The Lie algebra of $\mathcal{H}_C$ is

$$\mathfrak{h}_C = \{\Omega \in \mathbb{R}^{p\times p} : \Omega^\top = -\Omega,\ C^{(\ell)}\Omega = \Omega C^{(\ell)} \text{ for } \ell = 1, \dots, L\}. \tag{156}$$

Indeed, differentiating the defining equalities of $\mathcal{H}_C$ at the identity gives the displayed commutation relations; conversely, these relations imply that $\exp(t\Omega)$ commutes with every $C^{(\ell)}$ for all t. For a skew-symmetric Ω, differentiating (149) along $Q(t) = \exp(t\Omega)$ yields

$$-\frac{d^2}{dt^2} \mathcal{J}(W^\star \exp(t\Omega), u^\star)\Big|_{t=0} = \mathbb{E}\|C_i\Omega - \Omega C_i\|_F^2. \tag{157}$$

To see the coefficient explicitly, the matrix $F_i(t) = \exp(-t\Omega) C_i \exp(t\Omega) - C_i$ satisfies $F_i(0) = 0$ and $F_i'(0) = C_i\Omega - \Omega C_i$; hence the second derivative of $\|F_i(t)\|_F^2/2$ at zero is $\|F_i'(0)\|_F^2$. The finite

second moment in (137) justifies differentiation after expectation, or equivalently differentiation of the finite second-moment expansion.

The same expansion as in (150) gives

$$\mathbb{E}\|C_i\Omega - \Omega C_i\|_F^2 = \sum_{\ell,m=1}^{L} (\Sigma_z)_{\ell m} \left\langle C^{(\ell)}\Omega - \Omega C^{(\ell)},\, C^{(m)}\Omega - \Omega C^{(m)} \right\rangle$$

$$\geq \lambda_{\min}(\Sigma_z) \sum_{\ell=1}^{L} \|C^{(\ell)}\Omega - \Omega C^{(\ell)}\|_F^2. \tag{158}$$

Consequently,

$$\mathbb{E}\|C_i\Omega - \Omega C_i\|_F^2 = 0 \quad \Longleftrightarrow \quad \Omega \in \mathfrak{h}_C. \tag{159}$$

The orthogonal complement of $\mathfrak{h}_C$ within the skew-symmetric matrices has positive dimension. To verify this, choose unit vectors $v \in \mathrm{range}(P_{V^\star})$ and $w \in \ker(P_{V^\star})$. By (141), there is an ℓ such that $C^{(\ell)}v \neq 0$. The skew-symmetric matrix $\Omega_{v,w} = vw^\top - wv^\top$ satisfies

$$\{C^{(\ell)}\Omega_{v,w} - \Omega_{v,w}C^{(\ell)}\}w = C^{(\ell)}v \neq 0, \tag{160}$$

so $\mathfrak{h}_C$ is a proper subspace. Define

$$\alpha_C = \min_{\substack{\Omega^\top = -\Omega,\ \Omega \perp \mathfrak{h}_C \\ \|\Omega\|_F = 1}} \mathbb{E}\|C_i\Omega - \Omega C_i\|_F^2. \tag{161}$$

The constraint set is nonempty and compact, and the objective is continuous and strictly positive there by (159). Hence $\alpha_C > 0$.

For $Q_0 \in \mathcal{H}_C$ and $U = W^\star Q_0$, left multiplication by U is an isometry for the Frobenius metric, and

$$\begin{aligned} T_U\mathcal{W}^\star &= \{U\Omega : \Omega \in \mathfrak{h}_C\}, \\ \{\xi \in T_U O(p) : \xi \perp T_U\mathcal{W}^\star\} &= \{U\Omega : \Omega^\top = -\Omega,\ \Omega \perp \mathfrak{h}_C\}. \end{aligned} \tag{162}$$

For such $\xi = U\Omega$, the curve $t \mapsto U\exp(t\Omega)$ is the geodesic with initial velocity ξ [13, Section 2.2.2, Eq. (2.14)]. Since Q_0 preserves every C_i, one has

$$\mathcal{J}(W^\star Q_0 \exp(t\Omega), u^\star) = \mathcal{J}(W^\star \exp(t\Omega), u^\star). \tag{163}$$

The geodesic second-derivative identity [2, Proposition 5.5.4], (157), and (161) therefore imply

$$-\langle \xi,\, \mathrm{Hess}_{WW}\, \mathcal{J}(U, u^\star)[\xi] \rangle \geq \alpha_C \|\Omega\|_F^2 = \alpha_C \|\xi\|_F^2. \tag{164}$$

This proves Assumption A4 with $\alpha_n = \alpha_C$.

For $U = W^\star Q \in \mathcal{W}^\star$, expansion of (11), followed by (152) and (140), yields

$$\{D_0(U)\}_{ab} = \begin{cases} \mathbb{E}(C_{i,ab}^2), & a, b \in V^\star, \\ 0, & \{a, b\} \not\subseteq V^\star. \end{cases} \tag{165}$$

As $\mathrm{diag}(C_i) = 0$, this implies

$$\{2D_0(U)u^\star\}_a = \begin{cases} 2 \displaystyle\sum_{b \in V^\star \setminus \{a\}} \mathbb{E}(C_{i,ab}^2), & a \in V^\star, \\ 0, & a \notin V^\star. \end{cases} \tag{166}$$

The selected sums are positive. Indeed, if such a sum were zero for some $a \in V^\star$, then $\mathbb{E}(C_{i,ab}^2) = 0$ for every b. By (137) and $\Sigma_z \succ 0$, this would give $C_{ab}^{(\ell)} = 0$ for all b, ℓ. Its symmetry would then imply $C^{(\ell)}e_a = 0$ for every ℓ, contradicting (141). Thus (145) is strictly positive, and (166) proves Assumption A5.

The structural conditions and (142) give Assumption A1. For unit vectors x, y, Lemma 2.7.7 of [43] implies

$$\|B_{i,ab}x^\top A_i y\|_{\psi_1} \leq C\|B_{i,ab}\|_{\psi_2}\|x^\top A_i y\|_{\psi_2} \leq CK_AK_B. \tag{167}$$

This proves Assumption A2 and completes the verification. □

For a concrete instance, take $L = 1$, $C_i = z_i C$, and

$$C_{ab} = \begin{cases} c, & a, b \in V^\star,\ a \neq b, \\ 0, & \text{otherwise}, \end{cases} \qquad c \neq 0. \tag{168}$$

Let $z_i \sim N(0,1)$, and let $G_i^A, G_i^B \in \mathbb{R}^{p\times p}$ have independent $N(0,1)$ entries, with all these variables and matrices mutually independent across modalities and subjects. Set

$$E_i^A = \frac{1}{2}(G_i^A + G_i^{A\top}), \qquad E_{i,ab}^B = \begin{cases} \frac{1}{2}(G_{i,ab}^B + G_{i,ba}^B), & a \neq b, \\ 0, & a = b. \end{cases} \tag{169}$$

Define A_i, B_i by (138) for any fixed $W^\star \in O(p)$. Symmetry, centering, and independence verify (139), (140), and (142).

Note that three distinct eigenvalues of C are $c(\kappa-1)$, $-c$, 0, with multiplicities 1, $\kappa-1$, and $p-\kappa$, respectively. Thus its kernel is exactly $\ker(P_{V^\star})$. Let $\lambda_1, \ldots, \lambda_p$ denote these eigenvalues in an orthonormal eigenbasis. In this basis, the identity $(C\Omega - \Omega C)_{ab} = (\lambda_a - \lambda_b)\Omega_{ab}$ shows that $\mathfrak{h}_C$ consists of the skew-symmetric blocks within the eigenspaces and that its orthogonal complement consists of the blocks between distinct eigenspaces. The smallest absolute difference between distinct eigenvalues within the spectrum is $|c|$. Hence

$$\|C\Omega - \Omega C\|_F^2 \geq c^2 \|\Omega\|_F^2, \qquad \Omega^\top = -\Omega, \quad \Omega \perp \mathfrak{h}_C. \tag{170}$$

Since $\mathbb{E}(z_i^2) = 1$, the constants are therefore $\alpha_n = c^2$, $m_n = 2(\kappa-1)c^2$, and $J^\star = \kappa(\kappa-1)c^2$. For every pair of unit vectors x, y, independence and the symmetrized Gaussian construction yield

$$\mathrm{Var}(x^\top A_i y) = (x^\top W^\star C W^{\star\top} y)^2 + \frac{\sigma_A^2}{2}\{1 + (x^\top y)^2\} \leq c^2(\kappa-1)^2 + \sigma_A^2, \tag{171}$$

$$\max_{a,b} \mathrm{Var}(B_{i,ab}) = c^2 + \frac{\sigma_B^2}{2}. \tag{172}$$

Therefore, for a universal constant $C_\psi > 0$ determined by the convention for the ψ_2 norm, (143) holds with $K_A = C_\psi \sqrt{c^2(\kappa-1)^2 + \sigma_A^2}$, and $K_B = C_\psi \sqrt{c^2 + \sigma_B^2/2}$. The population coefficient bound (50) holds with $\mathbb{E}(B_{i,ab} A_i) = C_{ab} W^\star C W^{\star\top}$, and $M_0 = c^2(\kappa-1)$.

C Full OSSA algorithm pseudocode

Algorithm 1 gives the canonical OSSA single-support OSSA solver. Algorithm 2 gives the overlap-regularized K-support extension.

When $K = 1$ and $\lambda = 0$, the inner ℓ-loop collapses to a single s-update, the aggregate M_i reduces to SB_iS, and the algorithm reduces exactly to Algorithm 1. For $K \geq 2$, the Gauss-Seidel sweep updates each support against the current W and the current values of the other supports, with the overlap penalty entering linearly through $-\lambda \sum_{r\neq\ell} s^{(r)}$. As in the canonical OSSA case, backtracking guarantees a monotone objective sequence, and multiple random restarts are used to mitigate local optima.

Algorithm 2 Overlap-regularized K-clique OSSA

Require: Symmetric matrices $\{A_i, B_i\}_{i=1}^n$ in one community; number of supports K; per-support budget κ; overlap penalty $\lambda \geq 0$; initial steps η_W, η_s; backtracking factor $\beta \in (0,1)$

Ensure: Alignment W, relaxed supports $\{s^{(\ell)}\}_{\ell=1}^K$, and hard supports $\{\widehat{\mathcal{V}}^{(\ell)}\}_{\ell=1}^K$

Initialize $W \leftarrow I_p$ or a random orthogonal matrix; initialize $s^{(\ell)} \in \mathcal{S}_\kappa$ for $\ell = 1, \ldots, K$
repeat
  $S^{(\ell)} \leftarrow \mathrm{diag}(s^{(\ell)})$ for $\ell = 1, \ldots, K$
  $M_i \leftarrow \sum_{\ell=1}^K S^{(\ell)} B_i S^{(\ell)}$ for $i = 1, \ldots, n$
  $G_W \leftarrow 2\sum_{i=1}^n A_i W M_i$ and $W^+(\eta) \leftarrow \Pi_{O(p)}(W + \eta G_W)$
  Choose the largest $\eta \in \{\eta_W \beta^m : m \geq 0\}$ satisfying
  $J_K(W^+(\eta), \{s^{(\ell)}\}) \geq J_K(W, \{s^{(\ell)}\})$, and set $W \leftarrow W^+(\eta)$
  $D \leftarrow \mathrm{sym}\{\sum_{i=1}^n (W^\top A_i W) \circ B_i\}$
  for $\ell = 1, \ldots, K$ **do** ▷ Gauss-Seidel sweep over supports
    $g^{(\ell)} \leftarrow 2Ds^{(\ell)} - \lambda \sum_{r \neq \ell} s^{(r)}$
    $s^{(\ell,+)}(\eta) \leftarrow \Pi_{\mathcal{S}_\kappa}(s^{(\ell)} + \eta g^{(\ell)})$
    Choose the largest $\eta \in \{\eta_s \beta^m : m \geq 0\}$ satisfying
  $J_K(W, \ldots, s^{(\ell,+)}(\eta), \ldots) \geq J_K(W, \ldots, s^{(\ell)}, \ldots)$,
  and set $s^{(\ell)} \leftarrow s^{(\ell,+)}(\eta)$
  end for
until the objective and iterate changes satisfy the stopping tolerances
$\widehat{\mathcal{V}}^{(\ell)} \leftarrow \mathrm{Top}_\kappa(s^{(\ell)})$ for $\ell = 1, \ldots, K$
return W, $\{s^{(\ell)}\}_{\ell=1}^K$, $\{\widehat{\mathcal{V}}^{(\ell)}\}_{\ell=1}^K$

Implementation constants. Unless otherwise stated, we use initial step sizes $\eta_W = 5 \times 10^{-2}$, $\eta_s = 5 \times 10^{-2}$, backtracking factor $\beta = 0.5$ with a floor $\eta_{\min} = 10^{-12}$, relative objective tolerance $\mathrm{tol}_{\text{outer}} = 10^{-5}$, per-block objective-improvement threshold $\mathrm{tol}_{\text{inner}} = 10^{-7}$, and a maximum of 20 outer block-coordinate iterations (with up to 30 projected-gradient iterations per W-block and per support-vector update, each using backtracking line search). Random orthogonal initializations are generated by QR decomposition of an i.i.d. $N(0,1)$ Gaussian matrix (equivalently, samples from the Haar measure on $O(p)$). Support initializations are generated by drawing each entry i.i.d. uniform on $[0,1]$ and then projecting onto $\mathcal{S}_\kappa$ via the clip-and-soft-threshold simplex projection, we verified that uniform $s = (\kappa/p)\mathbf{1}_p$ and binary κ-hot random initializations produce indistinguishable selections within restart-to-restart variability. For the ABCD experiments, we use 16 random restarts for canonical OSSA evaluation (Algorithm 1), 4 for per-κ selection, and 4 for multi-clique fits (Algorithm 2). The canonical single-clique simulation sweeps use 8 random restarts; settings for the remaining simulation diagnostics are reported in Appendices D.4–D.7. The restart with the largest training objective is retained. For the ABCD bootstrap stability analysis we use 2 restarts with a lighter $(\mathrm{max_outer}, \mathrm{max_iter}_{W,s}) = (10, 15)$ schedule and $\mathrm{tol}_{\text{outer}} = 10^{-4}$, $\mathrm{tol}_{\text{inner}} = 10^{-6}$ to keep the 100-bootstrap budget tractable, retaining the same step sizes and backtracking factor. Detailed optimization settings are listed in Table 5.

Computational cost. In a community of size p, one dense outer iteration costs $O(np^3)$ for the W-block matrix products and $O(np^2)$ for forming $D(W)$, plus $O(Kp^2)$ for support gradients and $O(Kp \log p)$ for capped-simplex projections. The polar projection costs $O(p^3)$. Memory is $O(np^2)$ for dense subject matrices. In the ABCD experiments, the largest community has about 30 nodes, so runtime is dominated by the number of subject-level matrix products and restarts rather than by the cubic polar step.

D Additional experimental results and diagnostics

This appendix collects simulation sweep curves, robustness analyses, and ABCD training-side diagnostics referenced from Sections 3 and 4. Unless otherwise stated, the simulation experiments use the canonical OSSA generative model of Section 3.1 or the multi-clique extension of Section 3.2, with the same nuisance structure.

Table 5: OSSA optimization budgets used at each stage of the pipeline. Joint support-and-alignment fits use initial step sizes $\eta_W = \eta_s = 5\times10^{-2}$, backtracking factor $\beta = 0.5$ with floor $\eta_{\min} = 10^{-12}$, and projected-uniform s initialization. Fixed-support baseline W-refits hold s fixed and use three W initializations, including the identity (Appendix D.9). "Outer" is the maximum number of block-coordinate sweeps for joint fits; for fixed-support W-refits, it gives the maximum number of W-update iterations per initialization. "Inner" is the maximum number of projected-gradient iterations per W-block and per support-vector update; each iteration uses backtracking line search. "Restarts" is the number of optimization runs from the specified initializations; the run with the largest training objective is retained.

Stage	Restarts	Outer	Inner	$\eta_W = \eta_s$	$(\mathrm{tol}_{\mathrm{outer}}, \mathrm{tol}_{\mathrm{inner}})$
Canonical OSSA evaluation (Table 3)	16	20	30	5×10^{-2}	$(10^{-5}, 10^{-7})$
Per-κ selection	4	15	20	5×10^{-2}	$(10^{-5}, 10^{-7})$
Multi-clique fits ($K \geq 2$)	4	15	20	5×10^{-2}	$(10^{-5}, 10^{-7})$
ABCD bootstrap stability	2	10	15	5×10^{-2}	$(10^{-4}, 10^{-6})$
Canonical single-clique sweeps	8	20	40	5×10^{-2}	$(10^{-5}, 10^{-7})$
Per-baseline W-refit (fixed s)	3	200	-	5×10^{-2}	$\mathrm{tol}_{\mathrm{improve}} = 10^{-9}$

D.1 Complete simulation generator

In Section 3.1, the main text writes $\zeta_i^A = \xi_i^A + \tau_i^A$ and $\zeta_i^B = \xi_i^B + \tau_i^B$ to keep the simulation model concise. For each replicate we draw the data $\{(A_i, B_i)\}_{i=1}^n$ from the following procedure (single-clique unless noted; multi-clique substitutions in brackets). Default ambient size is $p = 40$ for the canonical OSSA experiments and $p = 50$ for the multi-clique experiments, with $n = 30$ subjects per replicate. "$\mathrm{LR}_r(V, c)$" denotes a symmetric rank-r random block of magnitude c, supported on $V \subseteq [p]$, generated as $UU^\top \circ \Sigma$ with $U \in \mathbb{R}^{|V|\times r}$ having i.i.d. $N(0, c^2/r)$ entries and Σ a symmetrized random ±1 sign matrix (entries $\Sigma_{ab} = \frac{1}{2}(\sigma_{ab} + \sigma_{ba})$ with $\sigma_{ab} \overset{\text{i.i.d.}}{\sim} \mathrm{Unif}\{-1, +1\}$), embedded as zero outside $V \times V$.

- **Draw planted support(s).** Sample $\mathcal{V}^\star \subseteq [p]$ uniformly without replacement of size $\kappa = 10$. For the multi-clique generator, sample $K \in \{2, 3\}$ supports $\mathcal{V}^{\star,(\ell)} \subseteq [p]$ via a random permutation of $[p]$ and consecutive blocks of size κ, with adjacent supports sharing exactly $r \in \{0, 4\}$ nodes (so they are pairwise disjoint when $r = 0$). Defaults: K=2, κ=10, r=0 (*disjoint*); K=2, κ=10, r=4 (*overlap-4*); K=3, κ=8, r=0 (K=3 *disjoint*).
- **Draw low-rank block U_i and sign matrix Σ_i.** Sample $U_i \in \mathbb{R}^{\kappa\times r_{\mathrm{sig}}}$ with i.i.d. $N(0, c_{\mathrm{sig}}^2/r_{\mathrm{sig}})$ entries and the symmetric sign mask Σ_i as above. Defaults $r_{\mathrm{sig}} = 3$, $c_{\mathrm{sig}} = 1.5$.
- **Form C_i (Canonical OSSA) or C_i^{tot} (multi) and embed.** Canonical OSSA: $C_i = \mathrm{LR}_{r_{\mathrm{sig}}}(\mathcal{V}^\star, c_{\mathrm{sig}})$. Multi: $C_i^{\mathrm{tot}} = \sum_{\ell=1}^K \mathrm{LR}_{r_{\mathrm{sig}}}(\mathcal{V}^{\star,(\ell)}, c_{\mathrm{sig}})$ with an independent $(U_i^{(\ell)}, \Sigma_i^{(\ell)})$ for each support. Both are zero outside their planted supports.
- **Draw background matrices ξ_i^A, ξ_i^B.** Each is a fresh i.i.d. rank-r_{bg} symmetric block with the same LR recipe but supported on all p nodes, with amplitudes $c_{\mathrm{bg}}^A = c_{\mathrm{bg}}^B = 0.6$ (Canonical OSSA) and $c_{\mathrm{bg}}^A = c_{\mathrm{bg}}^B = 0.4$ (multi-clique), $r_{\mathrm{bg}} = 4$. Backgrounds are independent across modalities.
- **Draw modality-specific nuisance blocks τ_i^A, τ_i^B (Canonical OSSA only).** Two disjoint modality-specific nuisance variation node sets $\mathcal{D}^A, \mathcal{D}^B \subseteq [p] \setminus \mathcal{V}^\star$, each of size $|\mathcal{D}| = 12$, are sampled once per replicate (not per subject) by random permutation of $[p] \setminus \mathcal{V}^\star$ and consecutive slicing. For each subject i we then draw $\tau_i^B = \mathrm{LR}_{r_{\mathrm{dec}}}(\mathcal{D}^B, c_{\mathrm{dec}}^B)$ and $\tau_i^A = \mathrm{LR}_{r_{\mathrm{dec}}}(\mathcal{D}^A, c_{\mathrm{dec}}^A)$ independently, with $r_{\mathrm{dec}} = 3$ and $c_{\mathrm{dec}}^A = c_{\mathrm{dec}}^B = 1.5$. The multi-clique generator omits this step.
- **Draw noise matrices E_i^A, E_i^B.** Symmetric Gaussian: $E_i^A = \frac{1}{2}(G_i^A + G_i^{A\top})$ with $G_i^A \sim N(0, 1)^{p\times p}$ (and analogously for E_i^B), then scaled by σ_A, σ_B. Defaults $\sigma_A = \sigma_B = 0.3$ (Canonical OSSA) and $\sigma_A = \sigma_B = 0.4$ (multi-clique). Sweep ranges in the appendix vary $\sigma \in [0.1, 0.5]$.

- **Symmetrize and zero the diagonal.** Set

$$B_i \;=\; \tfrac{1}{2}(\widetilde{B}_i + \widetilde{B}_i^{\top}), \qquad A_i \;=\; \tfrac{1}{2}(\widetilde{A}_i + \widetilde{A}_i^{\top}),$$

where $\widetilde{B}_i = C_i + \xi_i^B + \tau_i^B + E_i^B$ and $\widetilde{A}_i = W^\star C_i (W^\star)^\top + \xi_i^A + \tau_i^A + E_i^A$ (replace C_i by C_i^{tot} and drop the τ terms in the multi-clique case), then enforce $\mathrm{diag}(A_i) = \mathrm{diag}(B_i) = 0$.

- **Draw $W^\star$.** Sample $G \sim N(0,1)^{p\times p}$, take its (sign-corrected) QR factor Q so that $Q \sim \mathrm{Haar}(O(p))$, and set

$$W^\star \;=\; \mathrm{polar}\big((1-\alpha)\, I_p + \alpha\, Q\big) \;=\; \tilde{U}\tilde{V}^{\top}, \qquad \tilde{U}\,\Sigma\,\tilde{V}^{\top} \;=\; \mathrm{SVD}\big((1-\alpha)\, I_p + \alpha\, Q\big),$$

which equals I_p at $\alpha{=}0$ and a Haar-random orthogonal matrix at $\alpha{=}1$, and is itself orthogonal for every $\alpha \in [0,1]$. The rotation strength is swept over $\alpha \in \{0, 0.25, 0.5, 0.75, 1\}$ for OSSA, OSSA-NOW, and the support-selection baselines; the OSSA-ORACLE reference uses $\alpha \in \{0, 0.2, 0.4, 0.6, 0.8, 1\}$. The headline canonical OSSA configuration uses $\alpha{=}1$ and the multi-clique configuration uses $\alpha{=}0.6$.

D.2 Full canonical OSSA sweep curves

Figure 3 reports the full rotation and noise trajectories summarized by Table 1. The rotation sweep isolates the coordinate-mismatch setting, while the noise sweep shows that OSSA remains above the fixed-W baselines even when the planted support is observed through stronger subject-level noise.

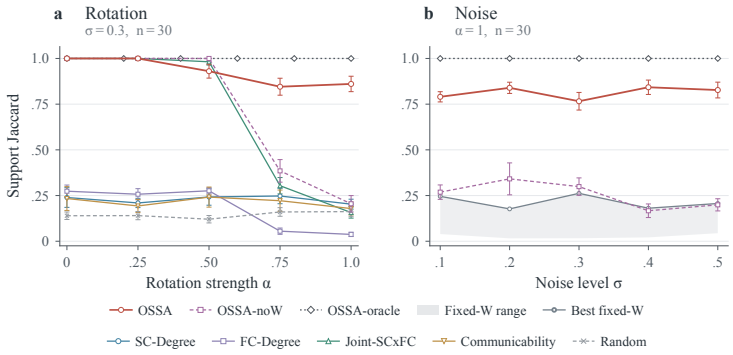


Figure 3: Canonical OSSA support recovery (Jaccard with $\mathcal{V}^\star$, mean $\pm$ s.e., 10 replicates). (a) Rotation sweep $\alpha \in [0,1]$ at $\sigma = 0.3$, $n = 30$. (b) Noise sweep $\sigma \in [0.1, 0.5]$ at $\alpha = 1$, $n = 30$. In panel (b), the grey band spans the minimum and maximum mean Jaccard values of SC-Degree, FC-Degree, Joint-SCxFC, Spectral-SC, and Spectral-FC at each noise level; the "Best fixed-W" line follows the upper boundary.

D.3 ABCD community-detection diagnostics

Figure 4 reports the training-side diagnostics used to fix the number of FC communities in the baseline ABCD cohort. The diagnostics are computed only from the training absolute-FC mean within each split and therefore do not use validation or test data. Modularity peaks at $Q = 3$, while eigengap and silhouette show a strong coarser $Q = 2$ split followed by a stable elbow at $Q = 3$. We use $Q = 3$ as the smallest stable nontrivial partition beyond the coarse two-community split, and the choice is stable across split seeds. In the experiments, communities are estimated by spectral clustering on the training mean absolute-FC matrix. The multilayer DCSBM result motivates the shared-community assumption but is not used as a literal generative claim for ABCD.

D.4 Sparsity-budget misspecification

In practice the budget κ is rarely known exactly. We sweep the supplied $\kappa \in \{4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16\}$ at planted $\kappa^\star = 10$, holding all other settings at the moderate-rotation, moderate-noise slice $p = 40$, $n = 30$, $\alpha = 0.6$, $\sigma = 0.4$ (8 replicates per supplied κ, 6 random restarts), and report Jaccard, precision, and recall against $\mathcal{V}^\star$.

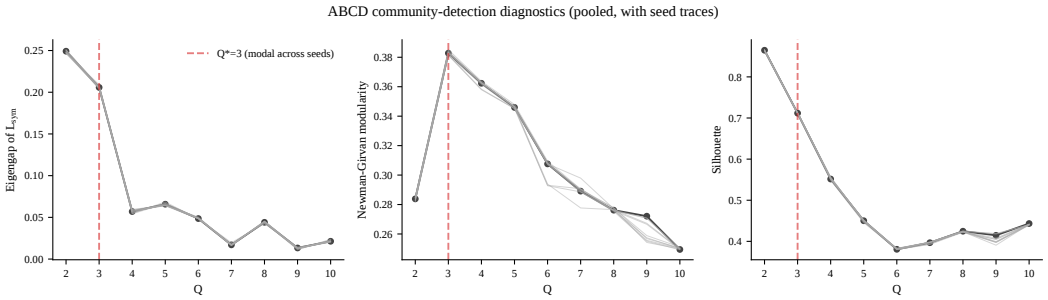


Figure 4: ABCD community-detection diagnostics on the training absolute-FC mean. Light gray traces are per-seed; dark line is the pooled training average. The diagnostics support a stable $Q = 3$ working partition: modularity peaks at $Q = 3$, and eigengap/silhouette show a coarse $Q = 2$ split with a clear elbow at $Q = 3$. No split seed selects a different working partition under this rule.

OSSA degrades gracefully on both sides of the truth (Figure 5). Under-specification ($\kappa < \kappa^\star$) yields high precision but limited recall (e.g., $\kappa = 4$: precision 1.00, recall 0.40, Jaccard 0.40); over-specification ($\kappa > \kappa^\star$) yields perfect recall and reduced precision (e.g., $\kappa = 16$: precision 0.62, recall 1.00, Jaccard 0.62). At the truth $\kappa = 10$, OSSA attains Jaccard 0.81 ± 0.06 and precision 0.89. The strongest non-OSSA baseline at $\kappa = 10$ is JOINT-SCXFC at 0.49, which tracks below OSSA across the entire grid. OSSA-NOW matches or slightly exceeds OSSA at $\alpha = 0.6$ for $\kappa \leq 10$ (where $W = I$ is a useful approximation at moderate rotation) but degrades faster on the over-specified side. For this budget-misspecification sweep, we also include SPECTRAL-SC and SPECTRAL-FC, which rank nodes by the absolute loading of the leading eigenvector of the training mean SC and FC matrices, respectively. Missing or extra budget translates into the corresponding precision/recall trade-off at the planted nodes rather than catastrophic Jaccard loss, indicating that OSSA is a usable estimator when κ is supplied heuristically.

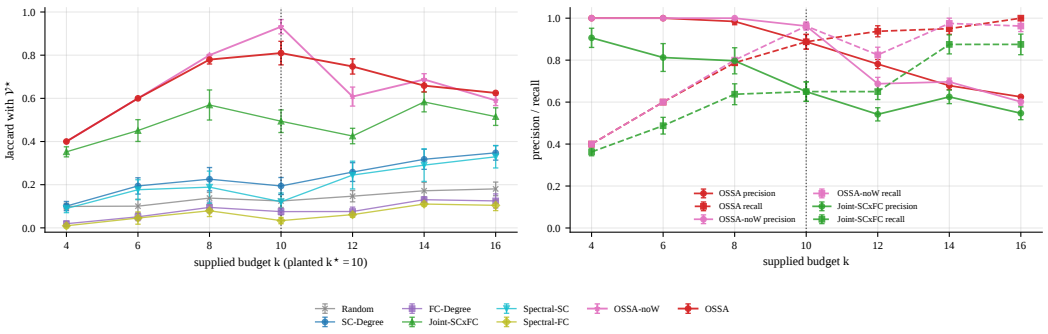


Figure 5: Robustness to sparsity-budget misspecification at $\kappa^\star = 10$, $\alpha = 0.6$, $\sigma = 0.4$ (mean $\pm$ s.e., 8 replicates). (a) Jaccard with $\mathcal{V}^\star$ vs. supplied κ. (b) Precision and recall vs. supplied κ for OSSA, OSSA-NOW, and the strongest non-OSSA baseline (JOINT-SCXFC); solid = precision, dashed = recall.

D.5 Selection stability

We assess stability of the selected support along two complementary axes on a single base dataset at $\alpha = 0.6$, $\sigma = 0.4$, $n = 30$, $\kappa^\star = 10$: per-node selection frequency across 40 bootstrap resamples (with replacement) of the subjects. Each bootstrap fit uses one random initialization, so the bootstrap curve captures both subject-resampling variability and single-start optimization variability. We also examine the distribution of pairwise Jaccard between 15 random initializations on the same (non-resampled) data for OSSA and OSSA-NOW (Figure 6b).

Bootstrap selection frequency on the 10 planted nodes is substantially higher than on non-planted nodes for OSSA (0.46 vs. 0.18; Figure 6a), consistent with concentration on $\mathcal{V}^\star$ rather than a restart-dependent local optimum. The moderate pairwise Jaccard similarity across restarts indicates sensitivity of the fitted support to initialization, consistent with the nonconvexity of the joint optimization problem. For the main experiments, we use multiple restarts and keep the run with the largest training objective. However, we note that this selection rule does not guarantee a global maximizer or eliminate variation across independently generated sets of restarts. OSSA-NOW achieves higher restart concentration at this moderate rotation ($\alpha = 0.6$, where $W = I$ is a useful approximation to $W^\star$ and the smaller-dimensional optimization is easier to stabilize) but pays the cost in recovery quality at $\alpha = 1$ (Section 3.1, Table 1).

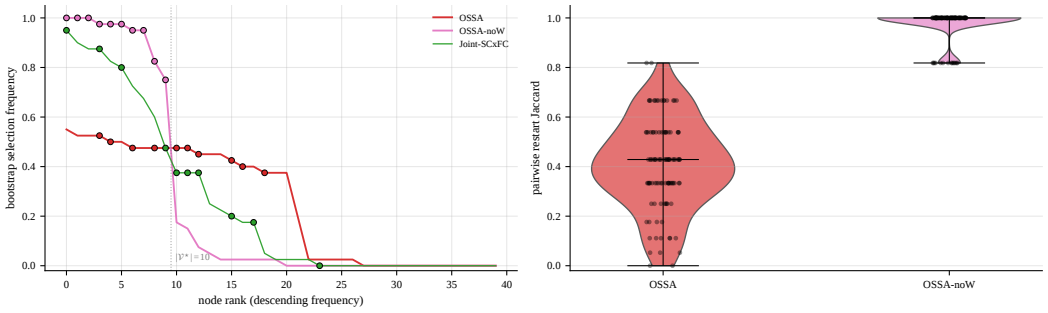


Figure 6: Selection stability of OSSA at $\alpha = 0.6$, $\sigma = 0.4$, $n = 30$. (a) Per-node bootstrap selection frequency, sorted descending; circled markers indicate planted nodes ($|\mathcal{V}^\star| = 10$). (b) Violin distribution of pairwise Jaccard between 15 random restarts on the same data, for OSSA and OSSA-NOW.

D.6 Multi-clique simulation details

This subsection gives the full design behind Section 3.2. We use one community with $p = 50$ nodes and $n = 30$ subjects. Each replicate contains K planted supports $\{\mathcal{V}_\ell^\star\}_{\ell=1}^K$, each carrying an independently sampled mixed-sign low-rank signal block. The subject-level signal is

$$C_i^{\text{tot}} = \sum_{\ell=1}^{K} C_i^{(\ell)},$$

and the observed matrices are

$$B_i = C_i^{\text{tot}} + \xi_i^B + \sigma_B E_i^B, \qquad A_i = W^\star C_i^{\text{tot}} W^{\star\top} + \xi_i^A + \sigma_A E_i^A.$$

We fix rotation strength $\alpha = 0.6$ and noise level $\sigma = 0.4$. We evaluate three planted regimes: two disjoint settings, $(K, \kappa) = (2, 10)$ and $(3, 8)$, and one overlapping setting with $K = 2$, $\kappa = 10$, and exactly four shared nodes. The overlapping nodes receive additive signal from both planted supports. No extra modality-specific nuisance variation blocks are added, because the other planted supports already act as structured distractors for each target support.

We compare OSSA-K against four size-matched competitors. SPECTRAL-SC-K: compute the top K eigenvectors of the training mean SC matrix $\bar{B}$. For component ℓ, rank nodes by $|v_\ell(j)|$ and select the top κ nodes. If a disjoint version is used, previously selected nodes are removed before the next component. COMMUNICABILITY-K clusters nodes using communicability distance. SEQUENTIAL-OSSA repeatedly fits canonical OSSA, masks the selected nodes, and refits until K supports are obtained. RANDOM-K samples K supports uniformly. Unlike OSSA-K, SEQUENTIAL-OSSA estimates a fresh rotation at each step and enforces disjoint supports by construction.

For this diagnostic simulation, λ for OSSA-K is selected on the grid reported in Appendix D.7, choosing the smallest value within one standard error of the peak best-match Jaccard. Because planted labels are available here, this λ_{best} rule is used only to summarize the recoverability envelope of the method; it is not used as a real-data tuning rule. We report best-match Jaccard after Hungarian assignment to the planted supports, together with the mean pairwise overlap of the fitted supports. All methods use six random restarts, with eight replicates for $K = 2$ and six for $K = 3$.

Table 6: Full multi-clique support recovery (mean $\pm$ s.e.). JACC: best-match Jaccard. OVL: mean pairwise overlap of fitted supports. In the two disjoint regimes all methods produce fitted overlap 0.00 ± 0.00; overlap is therefore reported only for the $r = 4$ regime.

Method	**Disjoint** K=2	**Overlap** r=4, K=2		**Disjoint** K=3
	JACC	JACC	OVL	JACC
RANDOM-K	0.150 ± 0.009	0.123 ± 0.016	0.00 ± 0.00	0.133 ± 0.012
SPECTRAL-SC-K	0.522 ± 0.048	0.368 ± 0.026	0.00 ± 0.00	0.401 ± 0.039
COMMUNICABILITY-K	0.652 ± 0.056	0.284 ± 0.023	0.00 ± 0.00	0.552 ± 0.061
SEQUENTIAL-OSSA	0.710 ± 0.040	0.448 ± 0.026	0.00 ± 0.00	0.744 ± 0.063
OSSA-K (λ_{best})	$\mathbf{0.945 \pm 0.023}$	$\mathbf{0.910 \pm 0.066}$	$\mathbf{3.75 \pm 0.56}$	$\mathbf{0.975 \pm 0.016}$

D.7 Continuous λ-trajectory

The λ_{best} values summarized in Section 3.2 and Appendix D.6 are read off a dense log-spaced grid spanning four decades. We fit OSSA-K at $\lambda \in \{0, 1, 2, 3, 5, 10, 20, 30, 50, 70, 100, 150, 200, 300, 500, 700, 1000, 2000, 3000\}$ on each of the three regimes from Section 3.2 ($K = 2$ disjoint, $K = 2$ with $r = 4$ shared nodes, $K = 3$ disjoint), using the same seeds and replicate counts as the main experiment (8 replicates for $K = 2$, 6 for $K = 3$, 6 random restarts per fit). The vertical line in each panel of Figure 7 marks the selected λ_{best} for that regime. This oracle selection is used only to summarize whether the λ-path contains a recoverability region. It is not a deployable tuning rule and is not used in ABCD.

The trajectories share a common shape: at small λ the supports collapse (high pairwise overlap, low Jaccard against the planted partition); raising λ separates the supports until fitted overlap matches the planted value (with λ_{best} near this crossing); further increases drive the supports into full disjointness. In the disjoint regimes, fitted overlap reaches zero between $\lambda = 100$ and $\lambda = 200$. For $K = 2$, Jaccard remains near 0.95 across $\lambda \in [150, 300]$, whereas for $K = 3$ it peaks at $\lambda = 150$ and declines over the same interval. In the $r = 4$ regime, fitted overlap shows an overall decrease from $\kappa = 10$ at $\lambda = 0$ to approximately $r = 4$ near $\lambda_{\text{best}} = 200$ (3.75 ± 0.56), with Jaccard peaking near this crossing and declining as larger penalties force the supports toward full disjointness.

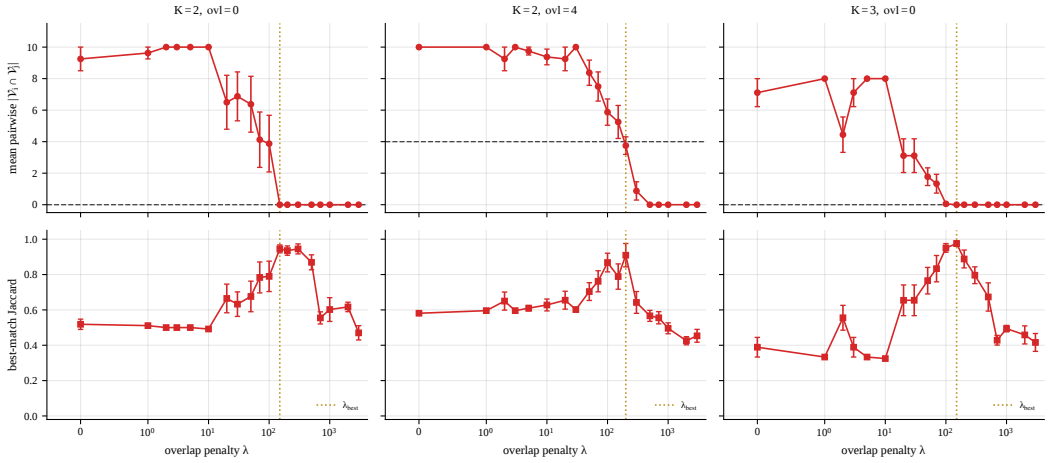


Figure 7: Continuous λ-trajectory of OSSA-K across three planted regimes (mean $\pm$ s.e.; 8 replicates for $K = 2$, 6 for $K = 3$). Top row: mean pairwise overlap of fitted supports; dashed line marks the planted overlap. Bottom row: best-match Jaccard with the planted supports. Columns: $K = 2$ disjoint, $K = 2$ with $r = 4$ shared nodes, $K = 3$ disjoint. Vertical dotted line marks λ_{best} summarized in Table 2. Full baseline values are reported in Appendix Table 6.

D.8 ABCD κ-robustness

We verify that OSSA's lead over the nine comparison methods in Table 7 is preserved at $\kappa \in \{3, 5, 8, 10\}$, not only at the design choice $\kappa = 3$. Each row summarizes the same 30 (seed, community) units. The SC-degree-quartile-matched null uses 1000 draws per unit at $\kappa = 3$ and 30 draws per unit at $\kappa \in \{5, 8, 10\}$ (Table 7).

The headline pattern is that OSSA achieves the largest mean null-corrected gain $M_{3,\text{aln}}$ at every tested budget. At $\kappa = 3$, SC-DEGREE, JOINT-SCXFC, and COMMUNICABILITY have positive mean null-corrected gains ($+0.59$ to $+0.69$), showing that these selectors achieve higher aligned correlations than the degree-matched null average. At the tested budgets $\kappa \geq 5$, SC-DEGREE, JOINT-SCXFC, COMMUNICABILITY, FC-DEGREE, and SDI have near-zero or negative mean null-corrected gains $M_{3,\text{aln}}$. OSSA, in contrast, retains $M_{3,\text{aln}}$ gain of $+0.37$ to $+0.41$ at $\kappa \in \{5, 8, 10\}$, exceeding all compared baselines at each of these budgets.

Table 7: ABCD κ-robustness: OSSA vs. nine comparison methods at $\kappa \in \{3, 5, 8, 10\}$, mean $\pm$ s.e. across 30 (seed, community) units. The table reports $M_{3,\text{aln}}$ gain, defined as $M_{2,\text{aln}}$ minus the mean SC-degree-quartile-matched null.

	$M_{3,\textbf{aln}}$ **gain**			
Method	$\kappa = 3$	$\kappa = 5$	$\kappa = 8$	$\kappa = 10$
OSSA	$\mathbf{+0.81 \pm 0.03}$	$\mathbf{+0.41 \pm 0.03}$	$\mathbf{+0.39 \pm 0.03}$	$\mathbf{+0.37 \pm 0.02}$
OSSA-NOW	$+0.60 \pm 0.05$	$+0.13 \pm 0.02$	$+0.09 \pm 0.02$	-0.03 ± 0.01
SC-DEGREE	$+0.69 \pm 0.06$	$+0.02 \pm 0.03$	-0.01 ± 0.01	-0.02 ± 0.02
JOINT-SCXFC	$+0.67 \pm 0.06$	-0.06 ± 0.03	-0.03 ± 0.02	-0.07 ± 0.01
COMMUNICABILITY	$+0.59 \pm 0.05$	-0.04 ± 0.01	$+0.00 \pm 0.01$	-0.04 ± 0.01
FC-DEGREE	$+0.06 \pm 0.09$	-0.23 ± 0.05	-0.21 ± 0.02	-0.14 ± 0.02
BRAINGNN	$+0.42 \pm 0.09$	$+0.03 \pm 0.03$	$+0.01 \pm 0.04$	$+0.03 \pm 0.03$
BRAINNETCNN	$+0.28 \pm 0.08$	-0.08 ± 0.05	$+0.04 \pm 0.04$	$+0.00 \pm 0.03$
SDI	$+0.38 \pm 0.08$	-0.01 ± 0.03	-0.11 ± 0.02	-0.06 ± 0.02
RANDOM	$+0.38 \pm 0.09$	$+0.01 \pm 0.06$	-0.06 ± 0.04	-0.02 ± 0.03

D.9 ABCD baseline W-fitting protocol

For each baseline support $\widehat{\mathcal{V}}_q^m$, the per-method alignment W_q^m is obtained by running the OSSA W-block of Algorithm 1 on training subjects with $s = \mathbf{1}_{\widehat{\mathcal{V}}_q^m}$ held fixed, using three initializations (including the identity), up to 200 W-update iterations per initialization, and monotone backtracking. The run with the largest training objective is retained. At $\kappa = 3$, the $M_{3,\text{aln}}$ random-null W_r is fit using a lighter schedule of up to 50 iterations from a single random orthogonal initialization to keep the 1000-draw null tractable per (seed, community) unit. The deep-learning baselines (BRAINGNN, BRAINNETCNN) are fit on a 3×3 (learning rate, weight decay) grid selected by validation loss.

Deep-learning baseline details. BRAINGNN and BRAINNETCNN are reimplemented in NumPy with hand-derived gradients and trained per (split-seed, community, κ) on the same train/val/test split as OSSA.

- **Input modality.** BRAINGNN: per-community training mean $\bar{D} = \frac{1}{n}\sum_i A_i \circ B_i$. BRAINNETCNN: per-subject SC submatrix B_i.
- **Prediction target.** BRAINGNN: maximize attention-pooled alignment energy $a^\top \bar{D}\, a$ ($a = \sigma(\theta)$). BRAINNETCNN: regress the z-scored scalar $y_i = \langle A_i, B_i \rangle_F$.
- **Loss.** BRAINGNN: $-a^\top \bar{D}_{\text{tr}} a$. BRAINNETCNN: mean squared error.
- **Architecture.** BRAINGNN: attention vector $\theta \in \mathbb{R}^p$, $a = \sigma(\theta)$, init $N(0, 0.1^2)$. BRAINNETCNN: 3-stage E2E$\to$E2N$\to$N2G with $W_{\text{row}}, W_{\text{col}}, W_2 \in \mathbb{R}^{p \times p}$, $W_3 \in \mathbb{R}^p$, init i.i.d. $N(0, 1/p)$.
- **Optimizer.** Adam (β_1=0.9, β_2=0.999, ε=10^{-8}), full-batch over the community.
- **Learning-rate grid.** $\eta \in \{10^{-2}, 10^{-3}, 10^{-4}\}$.

- **Weight-decay grid.** $\lambda_{\text{wd}} \in \{0, 10^{-4}, 10^{-3}\}$.
- **Batch size.** Full batch (n_{tr} subjects).
- **Epochs.** BRAINGNN: 200. BRAINNETCNN: 20.
- **Restarts and early stopping.** 16 restarts per (seed,q,κ); each draws $(\eta, \lambda_{\text{wd}})$ from the 3×3 grid by a seeded RNG. No within-restart early stopping. The best restart is selected on validation.
- **Validation criterion.** BRAINGNN: $-a^\top \bar{D}_{\text{val}} a$. BRAINNETCNN: validation MSE.
- **Saliency.** BRAINGNN: $a_v = \sigma(\theta_v)$. BRAINNETCNN: closed-form gating gradient $\text{sal}_v = \frac{1}{n}\sum_i |(W_3^\top h_i^{(2)} - y_i)(W_3)_v h_{i,v}^{(2)}|$ at $m=\mathbf{1}$.
- **Saliency $\to$ κ-node support.** $\widehat{\mathcal{V}} = \text{Top}_\kappa(\cdot)$, ties broken by ascending node index. The hard support is then passed through the same W-refit and held-out metric pipeline as every other baseline.

Table 8: Additional size-matched baseline comparisons on ABCD. Held-out $M_{1,\text{aln}}$ is reported as mean $\pm$ s.e. across 30 seed-community units. W/T/L denotes OSSA wins, ties, and losses against each baseline. These counts are descriptive because repeated splits reuse subjects.

Method	$M_{1,\text{aln}}$	OSSA W/T/L
OSSA	$\mathbf{10.55 \pm 0.85}$	—
NMF	9.96 ± 0.82	$28/1/1$
Sparse PLS	9.22 ± 1.10	$17/11/2$
Path efficiency	8.98 ± 0.71	$20/10/0$
Mean first passage time	8.32 ± 0.60	$29/0/1$
FAQ graph matching	7.57 ± 0.70	$26/4/0$
SC-to-FC ridge prediction	4.06 ± 0.49	$30/0/0$
Random	0.18 ± 0.04	$30/0/0$

Table 9: Subject-level paired bootstrap comparisons on held-out subjects from one split. $\Delta M_{1,\text{aln}}$ denotes OSSA minus the comparator. The 95% confidence intervals use 10,000 bootstrap replicates with the same resampled subject indices for all methods. Training-fitted supports and the community partition are held fixed, so the intervals exclude support-selection variability.

Comparator	Mean $\Delta M_{1,\text{aln}}$	95% CI
NMF	$+0.468$	$[0.400, 0.534]$
COMMUNICABILITY	$+0.802$	$[0.715, 0.893]$
SC-DEGREE	$+1.803$	$[1.716, 1.892]$
JOINT-SCXFC	$+1.874$	$[1.785, 1.967]$
FC-DEGREE	$+2.829$	$[2.748, 2.911]$
RANDOM	$+7.427$	$[7.292, 7.568]$

D.10 ABCD multi-clique λ-sensitivity

Diagnostic criterion. The K-support fit is not used as the default estimator in ABCD; it is a diagnostic for whether one FC community contains several dominant aligned structural cores. Since the OSSA objective is a trace alignment criterion, the primary held-out diagnostic is $M_{1,\text{aln}}$, evaluated on each fitted κ-node support after the same training-side W-refit used in Table 3. The correlation metrics $M_{2,\text{aln}}$ and $M_{3,\text{aln}}$ gain are retained as scale-free diagnostics of aligned FC–SC patterns after rotation, with degree-matched correction applied only to $M_{3,\text{aln}}$ gain; they complement but do not replace the objective optimized by OSSA.

Support geometry. Figure 8 shows a collapse-to-separation transition. For $\lambda \le 10^2$, the fitted supports nearly coincide: for $K = 2$, the mean pairwise Jaccard is 0.983 and $|U|/\kappa = 1.011$; for $K = 3$, the supports fully collapse with Jaccard 1.000 and $|U|/\kappa = 1.000$. Increasing λ first

ABCD multi-clique λ-diagnostic.
Top row: structural support behaviour; Bottom row: held-out Table~3-style metrics on each κ = 3 support

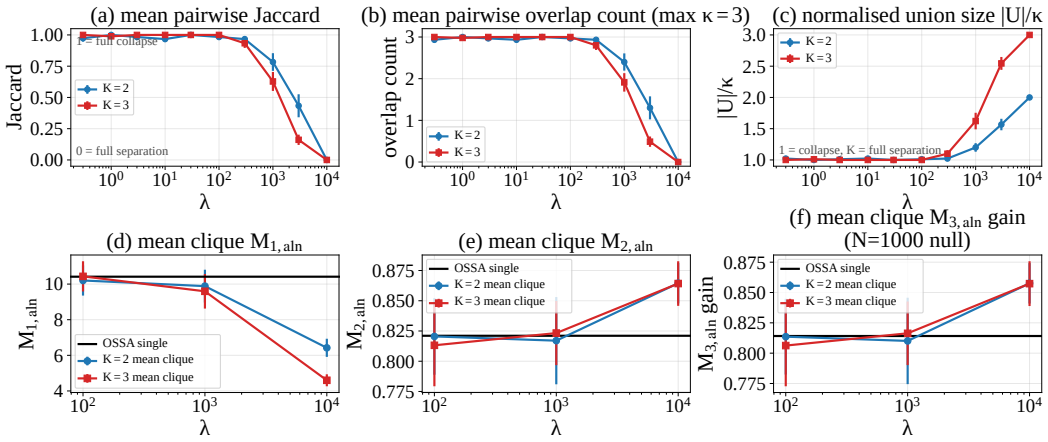


Figure 8: ABCD multi-clique λ-diagnostic. Top row: support geometry as λ varies. At small λ, the K supports collapse onto the same κ-node set. At large λ, the overlap penalty forces separation. Bottom row: held-out metrics evaluated on each $\kappa = 3$ support after the Table 3-style training-side W-refit. $M_{1,\mathrm{aln}}$ is the primary held-out OSSA objective and decreases after forced separation. $M_{2,\mathrm{aln}}$ and $M_{3,\mathrm{aln}}$ gain are scale-free correlation diagnostics and increase at large λ, indicating secondary correlation-structured motifs rather than multiple dominant high-M_1 alignment cores.

produces partial separation and then full disjointness. At $\lambda = 10^4$, the pairwise Jaccard is 0, with $|U|/\kappa = 2.000$ for $K = 2$ and 3.000 for $K = 3$. Thus the optimizer can separate the supports when forced, but the path does not reveal a stable intermediate multi-core regime.

Held-out metrics. The held-out metrics separate the primary objective from secondary correlation structure. At $\lambda = 10^2$, where the supports collapse, the mean clique-level $M_{1,\mathrm{aln}}$ is essentially the canonical OSSA value: 10.20 ± 0.85 for $K = 2$ and 10.43 ± 0.85 for $K = 3$, compared with 10.42 ± 0.80 for canonical OSSA. Once separation is forced, $M_{1,\mathrm{aln}}$ decreases: at $\lambda = 10^4$, it is 6.42 ± 0.51 for $K = 2$ and 4.60 ± 0.34 for $K = 3$. In contrast, $M_{2,\mathrm{aln}}$ and $M_{3,\mathrm{aln}}$ gain rise at $\lambda = 10^4$, reaching approximately 0.86. We interpret this as evidence for secondary scale-free FC-SC correlation motifs, not as evidence for several dominant OSSA cores, because these supports no longer remain competitive under the primary alignment-magnitude objective. Therefore, under the community construction and λ grid used here, ABCD supports a single dominant high-M_1 aligned core at $\kappa = 3$, with multi-clique OSSA serving as a diagnostic extension.

D.11 Multi-support extensions of ABCD baselines

Protocol. This auxiliary analysis checks whether the single-core conclusion is an artefact of comparing the K-support OSSA diagnostic only with single-support baselines. We extend the non-neural support selectors in Table 3 to $K \in \{2, 3\}$ supports at the same budget $\kappa = 3$. For ranking-based selectors, the K supports are consecutive disjoint κ-node blocks from the training-only node ranking. Thus $V^{(1)}$ contains the top κ nodes, $V^{(2)}$ contains the next κ nodes after removing $V^{(1)}$, and so on. RANDOM-K samples K disjoint κ-node blocks uniformly within each community and averages over $R = 200$ draws per seed-community unit. OSSA-K and OSSA-noW-K are evaluated on the same overlap-penalty grid $\lambda \in \{10^2, 10^3, 10^4\}$. Each fitted κ-node support is then evaluated by the same fixed-support training-side W-refit and held-out metrics used in Table 3. We report mean-clique metrics, averaging over the K supports within each seed-community unit, so that a larger K is judged by per-support yield rather than by a mechanically larger union.

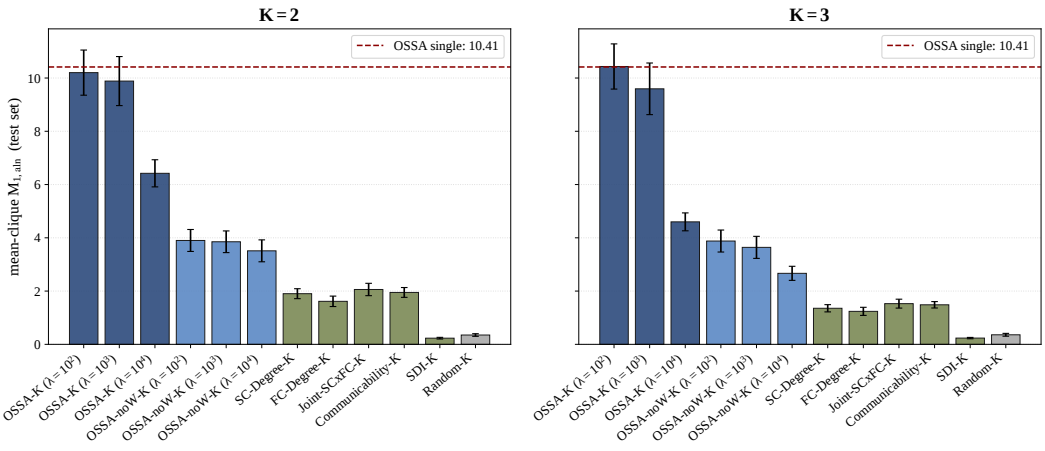


Figure 9: ABCD multi-support extensions of the Table 3 baselines, evaluated by the primary held-out objective $M_{1,\mathrm{aln}}$. Bars report mean-clique $M_{1,\mathrm{aln}}$, averaging over the K fitted $\kappa = 3$ supports within each seed-community unit; error bars are standard errors over the 30 seed-community units. The dashed line shows the single-support OSSA reference used in this multi-support diagnostic. OSSA-K remains close to this value only when supports collapse or partially overlap; forced separation lowers the primary alignment magnitude. Ranking-based multi-support extensions are substantially lower.

Primary held-out alignment. Figure 9 shows that extending the baselines to several supports does not produce multiple competitive high-M_1 cliques. OSSA-K remains close to the canonical single-support value only in collapsed or partially collapsed regimes. At $\lambda = 10^2$, the $K = 2$ fit has mean-clique $M_{1,\mathrm{aln}} = 10.20 \pm 0.85$, but its supports nearly coincide ($|U|/\kappa = 1.01$, mean pairwise Jaccard 0.98); the $K = 3$ fit fully collapses and gives $M_{1,\mathrm{aln}} = 10.43 \pm 0.85$. When the overlap penalty forces disjoint supports at $\lambda = 10^4$, mean-clique $M_{1,\mathrm{aln}}$ drops to 6.42 ± 0.51 for $K = 2$ and 4.60 ± 0.34 for $K = 3$. The ranking-based K-support baselines are lower throughout: their best mean-clique $M_{1,\mathrm{aln}}$ is 2.06 ± 0.23 for $K = 2$ and 1.53 ± 0.17 for $K = 3$. Thus forcing multiple disjoint supports does not appear beneficial as a dimension-reduction step in ABCD.

Support-index degradation. For ranking-based extensions, the support index makes the same pattern more explicit. Figure 10 shows that, for SC-DEGREE, FC-DEGREE, JOINT-SCXFC and COMMUNICABILITY, $V^{(1)}$, the first κ-node block, corresponds to the original single-support baseline, whereas the later supports have much smaller held-out $M_{1,\mathrm{aln}}$. This degradation is expected when the FC-derived communities are already small: after the first high-signal support has been removed, the remaining disjoint blocks do not provide comparable high-M_1 structural cores.

Scale-free diagnostics. The scale-free diagnostics tell a complementary story rather than changing the primary conclusion. As in Appendix D.10, high-λ separated OSSA-K fits can increase $M_{2,\mathrm{aln}}$ or $M_{3,\mathrm{aln}}$ gain, but these metrics measure within-support FC-SC correlation after scale normalization. They do not replace the trace-alignment magnitude optimized by OSSA. We therefore interpret the high-λ scale-free gains as secondary correlation-structured motifs, not as evidence for several dominant high-M_1 aligned cores.

D.12 Structural connectivity within consensus supports

Table 4 in the main text reports the subject-averaged SC edge weights and their degree-matched reference ratios. Each consensus support forms a within-lobe triangle. The temporal and occipital supports lie in the right hemisphere, whereas the frontal support includes the left medial orbitofrontal region and bilateral frontal poles.

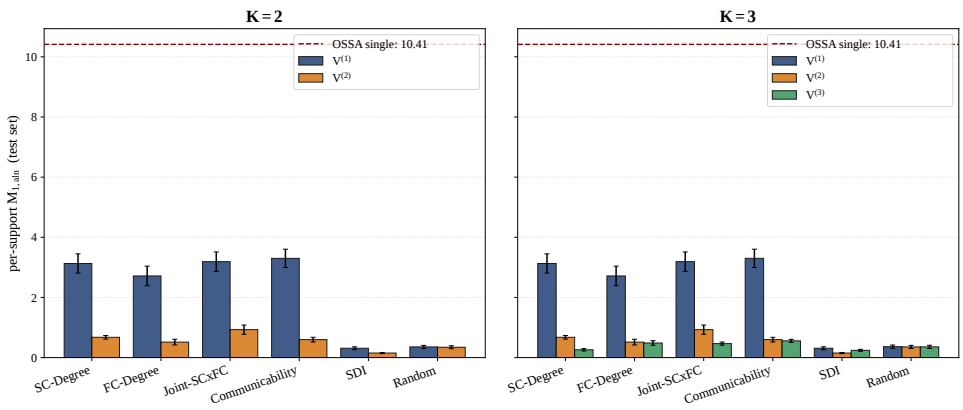


Figure 10: Per-support degradation for ranking-based baseline extensions with $K \in \{2, 3\}$. Each method forms K consecutive disjoint $\kappa = 3$ blocks from its training-only ranking. $V^{(1)}$ corresponds to the original single-support baseline; for SC-DEGREE, FC-DEGREE, JOINT-SCXFC and COMMUNICABILITY, the later supports have much smaller held-out $M_{1,\mathrm{aln}}$. The dashed line shows the single-support OSSA reference used in this multi-support diagnostic.

D.13 Empirical diagnostics of the fitted alignment

At $\kappa = 3$, the normalized squared projector distance $\|\widehat{W} P_{\widehat{V}} \widehat{W}^\top - P_{\widehat{V}}\|_F^2/(2\kappa)$ has community-wise means ranging from 0.54 to 0.67 over ten split seeds. Reference means based on $1{,}000$ Haar-random orthogonal matrices of each community's dimension range from 0.80 to 0.90. All 30 seed–community units lie below the 2.5th percentile of their corresponding Haar reference distribution.

For regional loadings $\ell_a = \sum_{j \in \widehat{V}} \widehat{W}_{aj}^2$, we quantify concentration using the participation ratio $\mathrm{PR} = (\sum_a \ell_a)^2 / \sum_a \ell_a^2$, which measures the effective number of contributing regions. Community-wise mean PR values over ten split seeds are approximately 5–10, compared with 10–19 under the Haar reference. The corresponding mean peak regional loadings, $\max_a \ell_a$, are approximately 0.59–0.69.

We measured the fraction of $\|\widehat{W} P_{\widehat{V}} \widehat{W}^\top\|_F^2$ contributed by matrix entries corresponding to contralateral homologous regions. Across the three communities, its means over ten split seeds are approximately 3.2–8.9 times the corresponding Haar-reference means.

For each community, we compared the fitted projectors $\widehat{W} P_{\widehat{V}} \widehat{W}^\top$ across all 45 pairs of the ten split seeds using squared Frobenius distance divided by 2κ. Mean distances were 0.0002, 0.113 and 0.0001 for the frontal, temporal and occipital communities, respectively. The observed stability is consistent with reproducibility of the spectral structure of mean training FC and does not by itself establish biological specificity.

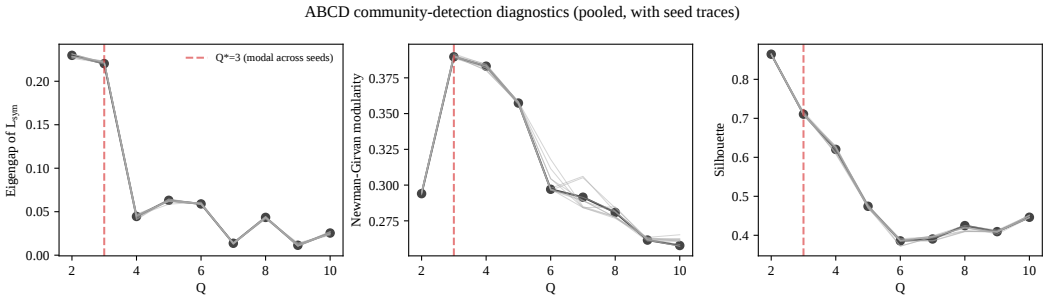


Figure 11: ABCD second-visit community-detection diagnostics. Light gray traces are per-seed; the dark line is the pooled training average. The eigengap of L_{sym}, Newman-Girvan modularity, and silhouette all peak at $Q^* = 3$, with no seed disagreeing, identical to the baseline cohort.

D.14 Sensitivity to community construction

Table 10: Sensitivity to community construction using the same training mean $|FC|$. Node recovery summarizes retention of the original nine selected regions under each construction. Held-out M_1 values are not directly comparable across Q, because community size changes the number of candidate edges.

Community construction	Sizes	Node recovery	Held-out M_1
$Q = 2$	52, 16	0.50	13.83
$Q = 3$, same partition refit (control)	30, 23, 15	0.89	10.30
$Q = 4$	17, 18, 14, 19	0.56	7.74
Spectral	22, 15, 31	0.61	10.71
Ward hierarchical	6, 20, 42	0.61	10.04
Louvain	24, 22, 22	0.67	8.85
Newman leading eigenvector	28, 17, 23	0.44	9.66

E ABCD second-visit replication details

This appendix documents the second-visit replication summarised in Section 4 on the ABCD Year-2 follow-up ("second-visit") release. The protocol is identical to the baseline (Year-1) evaluation: no hyperparameter is retuned, no seed is reshuffled, and the same per-method W-fit budget, multi-clique grid, and aggregation rules are reused.

Data and pipeline. The ABCD second-visit release contributes 1,909 subjects parcellated by the same 68-region Desikan-Killiany atlas as the baseline [11]. The canonical preprocessing pipeline (transposition to (N, p, p), exact symmetrization, diagonal enforcement, Fisher-z then non-negative clipping for FC, and $\log(1 + \cdot)$ for SC) and the cohort-median 5σ QC rule are applied without modification. QC drops 12 subjects (none with simultaneous FC and SC flags) and leaves $n_{\mathrm{ABCD2}} =$ 1,897 subjects. The $60/20/20$ deterministic splits over the same 10 seeds yield $n_{\mathrm{train}} = 1{,}138$ and $n_{\mathrm{val}} = n_{\mathrm{test}} \in \{379, 380\}$ per seed. The one-time test-evaluation rule of the baseline protocol is reused: each (method, metric, split) tuple is touched exactly once on the second-visit cohort.

Community partition. Spectral diagnostics on the training absolute-FC mean again select $Q^* = 3$ in every one of the 10 split seeds. The pooled training average likewise yields $Q_{\mathrm{pool}} = 3$. Cross-seed ARI on the modal-Q partitions is 0.99 ± 0.01 (min 0.96 across the 45 seed pairs), indicating near-perfect agreement up to label permutation (Figure 11). The pooled community sizes $(31, 23, 14)$ are within one node of the baseline pooled sizes $(30, 23, 15)$, supporting that the same three-community organisation is recovered at the second visit.

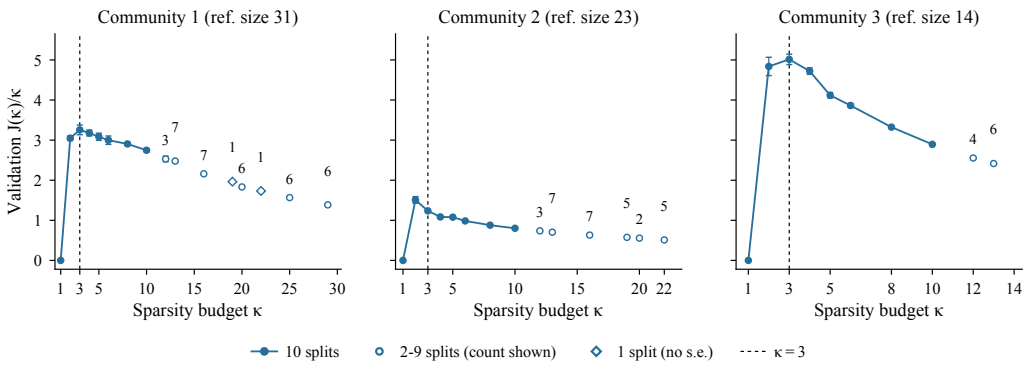


Figure 12: ABCD second-visit sparsity sweep after matching communities across splits to the pooled partition by maximum node overlap. Points show means and error bars show s.e.; counts below 10 are labeled, and single-split results have no error bar. Larger budgets may use different split subsets. The $\kappa = 1$ point is a trivial zero-objective floor. For tested budgets $\kappa \geq 3$, mean validation $J(\kappa)/\kappa$ decreases in all three communities.

Table 11: ABCD second-visit canonical OSSA evaluation, mean $\pm$ s.e. across 30 (seed, community) units, $\kappa = 3$, on $n_{\mathrm{ABCD2}} = 1{,}897$ subjects. Conventions match Table 3: $M_{3,\mathrm{aln}}$ gain is the difference between the method's $M_{2,\mathrm{aln}}$ and the mean of $N = 1000$ SC-degree-quartile-matched random nulls; $M_3\,p$ is mean (median) over the 30 units. The headline summary appears in Section 4 ("Second-visit replication"), with this appendix providing per-method detail.

Method	$M_{1,\mathrm{aln}}$	$M_{2,\mathrm{raw}}$	$M_{2,\mathrm{aln}}$	$M_{3,\mathrm{aln}}$ gain	$M_3\,p$
OSSA	$\mathbf{10.16 \pm 0.87}$	$+0.494$	$\mathbf{+0.811}$	$\mathbf{+0.81}$	$0.073\,(0.042)$
OSSA-NOW	3.23 ± 0.30	$+0.514$	$+0.539$	$+0.54$	$0.211\,(0.166)$
COMMUNICABILITY	3.19 ± 0.28	$\mathbf{+0.672}$	$+0.672$	$+0.67$	$0.145\,(0.083)$
JOINT-SCXFC	3.11 ± 0.31	$+0.623$	$+0.623$	$+0.62$	$0.173\,(0.084)$
SC-DEGREE	3.02 ± 0.31	$+0.652$	$+0.652$	$+0.65$	$0.158\,(0.044)$
FC-DEGREE	2.27 ± 0.31	-0.124	-0.124	-0.13	$0.549\,(0.633)$
BRAINGNN	0.64 ± 0.17	$+0.285$	$+0.324$	$+0.32$	$0.324\,(0.291)$
RANDOM	0.51 ± 0.14	$+0.260$	$+0.248$	$+0.25$	$0.370\,(0.406)$
BRAINNETCNN	0.37 ± 0.12	$+0.328$	$+0.432$	$+0.43$	$0.275\,(0.207)$
SDI	0.07 ± 0.02	$+0.257$	$+0.322$	$+0.32$	$0.322\,(0.315)$

Per-community budget. The per-community budget $\kappa = 3$ from the baseline cohort is reused without retuning. Figure 12 summarizes validation $J(\kappa)/\kappa$ after matching communities across split seeds to the pooled reference partition by maximum node overlap. Among the tested budgets $\kappa \geq 3$, the mean is highest at $\kappa = 3$ in each community, consistent with the baseline results.

Canonical OSSA evaluation. The summary appears in Section 4 ("Second-visit replication"); this appendix provides per-method numbers and per-community decomposition (Table 11). At $\kappa = 3$ over 30 (seed, community) units, OSSA attains $M_{1,\mathrm{aln}} = 10.16 \pm 0.87$, with the ablation OSSA-NOW (3.23 ± 0.30) and the classical baseline SC-DEGREE (3.02 ± 0.31) clustering at roughly one third of OSSA's value. The $M_{2,\mathrm{raw}} \to M_{2,\mathrm{aln}}$ shift again shows that high-degree or SC-summary baselines can look competitive in raw coordinates (e.g., COMMUNICABILITY: $+0.672$, SC-DEGREE: $+0.652$), whereas OSSA leads after rotation-aware evaluation ($+0.811$ vs. next-best $+0.672$). The same conclusion holds on the SC-degree-quartile-matched null gain $M_{3,\mathrm{aln}}$ ($+0.81$ vs. next-best $+0.67$). After matching each split's community labels to the pooled partition by maximum node overlap, OSSA leads on $M_{1,\mathrm{aln}}$ in all three communities. For pooled community sizes $(31, 23, 14)$, its scores are 10.17 ± 0.26, 4.32 ± 0.04, and 15.98 ± 0.07, respectively (mean $\pm$ s.e. across ten splits), versus highest baseline means of 3.66, 1.11, and 5.00.

Table 12: Cross-visit support replication between the ABCD baseline and Year-2 follow-up releases for canonical $\kappa = 3$ supports. Results are averaged over 30 (seed, community) units. CVSR denotes the support-set Jaccard overlap between visits. nCVSR is the null-corrected replication score relative to size-matched or SC-degree-quartile-matched random supports.

Method	Overlap	Fraction	CVSR	nCVSR		Exact	≥ 2	Null p
	count	$(/\kappa)$	(Jaccard)	size-matched	degree-matched	rate	rate	median
OSSA	2.86±0.08	0.95±0.03	0.928±0.033	0.921±0.034	0.935±0.031	0.85	1.00	0.022
JOINT-SCxFC	3.00±0.00	1.00±0.00	1.000±0.000	1.000±0.000	1.000±0.000	1.00	1.00	0.019
FC-DEGREE	2.87±0.06	0.96±0.02	0.933±0.032	0.929±0.034	0.910±0.043	0.87	1.00	0.019
COMMUNICABILITY	2.83±0.07	0.94±0.02	0.917±0.035	0.903±0.040	0.877±0.051	0.83	1.00	0.017
SC-DEGREE	2.83±0.07	0.94±0.02	0.917±0.035	0.909±0.038	0.893±0.044	0.83	1.00	0.035
RANDOM	1.73±0.20	0.58±0.07	0.503±0.072	0.455±0.079	0.430±0.080	0.33	0.57	0.205
SDI	1.73±0.11	0.58±0.04	0.433±0.038	0.370±0.045	0.370±0.040	0.07	0.67	0.058
OSSA-NOW	1.50±0.21	0.50±0.07	0.430±0.073	0.361±0.082	0.349±0.084	0.30	0.40	0.498
BRAINGNN	0.97±0.21	0.32±0.07	0.270±0.067	0.194±0.073	0.201±0.072	0.17	0.27	0.813
BRAINNETCNN	0.47±0.12	0.16±0.04	0.103±0.029	0.015±0.031	0.020±0.030	0.00	0.10	1.000

Cross-visit support replication To evaluate whether the selected structural supports remain stable across longitudinal neurodevelopment, we compare the canonical $\kappa = 3$ supports identified from the baseline and Year-2 ABCD releases. For each split seed and matched FC community, we compute a cross-visit support replication score

$$\mathrm{CVSR} = \frac{|\widehat{V}_{\mathrm{base}} \cap \widehat{V}_{\mathrm{Y2}}|}{|\widehat{V}_{\mathrm{base}} \cup \widehat{V}_{\mathrm{Y2}}|},$$

corresponding to the Jaccard overlap between the baseline and second-visit supports. We additionally report the overlap count, overlap fraction, exact replication rate, and a degree-matched null-corrected replication score (nCVSR). Community labels between visits are aligned by maximum-overlap matching prior to evaluation.

Table 12 shows that OSSA remains highly stable across visits, with CVSR $= 0.928 \pm 0.033$ and mean overlap $2.86/3$ nodes. Importantly, this stability is achieved simultaneously with the substantially larger held-out alignment scores reported in Tables 3 and 11. Several graph-summary baselines, including SC-DEGREE, FC-DEGREE, COMMUNICABILITY, and JOINT-SCXFC, also exhibit high cross-visit support consistency, suggesting that portions of the dominant structural organization are preserved longitudinally within FC communities. In contrast, the deep-learning baselines exhibit substantially weaker support replication and near-null corrected stability.

Multi-clique sensitivity (λ-diagnostic). We replay the same $K \in \{1, 2, 3\}$ and log-spaced λ-sweep at $\kappa = 3$ on the second-visit cohort over the same 30 (seed, community) units (Figure 13); the summary appears in Section 4 ("Second-visit replication"). The diagnostic returns the same single-core signature as the baseline cohort: at $\lambda \leq 10^2$ the $K = 2$ and $K = 3$ fits collapse onto a single dominant support (mean pairwise Jaccard ≥ 0.98, normalised union ≤ 1.03); at $\lambda \in [10^3, 10^4]$ a sharp transition forces them into geometric expansion of the union ($K = 2$: $1.0 \to 2.0$; $K = 3$: $1.0 \to 2.97$), with no intermediate λ yielding stable partial separation.

F Compute resources

All experiments were run on a high-performance computing cluster. CPU jobs used Intel Xeon 6342 processors, with 4 CPU cores and 16 GB of RAM allocated per job (4 GB per core). GPU resources were used only for the deep-learning baselines, which ran on an RTX 8000 GPU. Runtime was measured from loading the preprocessed SC/FC matrices to saving the final metrics and figures. Raw MRI preprocessing is excluded. Table 13 reports peak memory usage (GB) and wall-clock time (minutes) for the main experiment groups.

G Limitations and broader impact.

Our theory establishes local statistical guarantees for canonical OSSA, including the existence of an empirical local maximizer near the population target. Note that the implemented block ascent

Table 13: Compute resources for the main reported experiments.

Experiment group	Worker type	Peak memory (GB)	Wall-clock time (min)
Simulation experiments	CPU	0.87	13
ABCD main evaluation	CPU	1.23	57
Random-null/κ-robustness/multi-clique diagnostics	CPU	0.62	5
Deep-learning baselines	GPU	1.23	45
ABCD second-visit replication	CPU	1.06	48

method is a finite multi-restart local solver, and we do not claim that its output lies in the specified neighborhood. Extending guarantees to the multi-support objective is future work. Empirically, the results are limited to the Desikan–Killiany atlas, ABCD, predefined FC communities, and small support budgets, so the anatomical supports should be treated as cohort- and pipeline-dependent hypotheses until replicated across parcellations, acquisition protocols, and clinical populations. OSSA may support more interpretable studies of brain development and disease-related network organization, but connectome-derived supports should not be used for individual diagnosis, screening, or group profiling without external validation and uncertainty reporting.

The community-wise formulation can also be applied to predefined overlapping functional communities. Each community would retain its own alignment and support parameters, so the same objective could be fitted independently within each community, with a shared region eligible for selection in more than one. However, support selections across communities would remain uncoupled, and an SC edge included in multiple community subproblems could contribute fully to each corresponding objective. Such independent fits therefore do not describe how a shared region's structural role is distributed across its functional memberships. Whether the relevant biological structure is best described by independent community-specific cores or by a decomposition of shared structural roles across systems remains an open question that the current formulation cannot resolve. Jointly modeling these shared roles is a direction for future work.

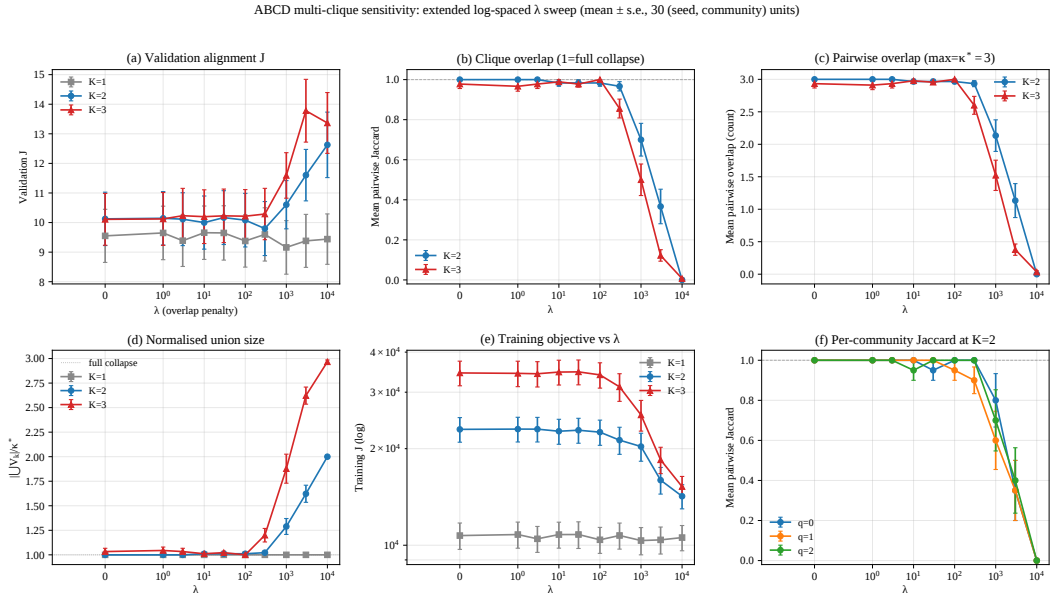


Figure 13: ABCD second-visit multi-clique λ-sensitivity on a log-spaced grid (mean $\pm$ s.e. over 30 (seed, community) units; x-axis on a symmetric-log scale to display $\lambda = 0$). Panels show: (a) Validation J evaluated on the union of supports; (b) Mean pairwise Jaccard (1 = full collapse); (c) Mean pairwise overlap count (maximum $\kappa = 3$); (d) Normalised union size $|\bigcup_\ell \widehat{\mathcal{V}}^{(\ell)}|/\kappa$ (1 = full collapse, K = full separation); (e) Training J on log scale; (f) Per-community pairwise Jaccard at $K = 2$. The single-core verdict (collapse at small λ, no per-node yield gain at large λ) holds in every community, replicating the baseline-cohort conclusion.

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