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## Romantic Beliefs in Dating Life: Its Impact on Satisfaction in Emerging Adults

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### Abstract:

*This study aims to determine the influence of \*romantic beliefs\* on relationship satisfaction in individuals within the phase of emerging adulthood. This phase is marked by significant changes in individual development, including romantic relationships. The method used in this research is simple regression analysis, with data collection through questionnaires completed by eligible respondents. The results show that \*romantic beliefs\* have a significant impact on relationship satisfaction, where higher romantic beliefs are associated with lower levels of relationship satisfaction. These findings contradict the initial hypothesis, which suggested that \*romantic beliefs\* would enhance relationship satisfaction. Based on these results, the study suggests that individuals should adopt more realistic views on romance in order to maintain the quality of their relationships. Additionally, the implications of this research can contribute to the development of interpersonal relationship theories, particularly in the context of emerging adulthood, and serve as a consideration for counselors or psychological practitioners in providing guidance on romantic relationships.*

**Keywords:** *emerging adulthood, relationship satisfaction, romantic beliefs*

## 1. Introduction

Human life consists of various developmental stages, each with specific tasks required to achieve optimal self-development. One crucial stage is early adulthood or emerging adulthood, which occurs between the ages of 18 and 29 (Arnett, Žukauskienė, & Sugimura, 2014). This phase is significant as individuals begin to develop more intimate and complex romantic relationships (Papalia, Olds, & Feldman, 2009). According to Erikson's (1968) psychosocial development theory, this stage is associated with Intimacy vs. Isolation, where individuals must develop intimate relationships to optimize their personal growth. Emerging adulthood is a critical period for seeking intimacy, security, and readiness for long-term commitment (López, Viejo, & Ruiz, 2019).

During this phase, individuals begin to explore their identity and potential life partners through dating relationships. Research by Arnett et al. (2014) suggests that well-managed romantic relationships have a positive impact on subsequent life stages. Conversely, breakups can lead to emotional distress, such as sadness and even depression (Belu, Lee, & O'Sullivan, 2016). Relationship satisfaction is a key aspect of a successful romantic relationship (Angela & Hadiwirawan, 2022). Couples who experience satisfaction are more likely to maintain long-term commitment.

However, relationship satisfaction is influenced not only by partner dynamics but also by romantic beliefs, which refer to expectations about how relationships should function and how partners should behave (Sprecher & Metts, 1989). These beliefs shape individuals' perceptions and behaviors in their relationships. Some studies show a positive correlation between romantic beliefs and relationship satisfaction, while others indicate that unrealistic expectations can negatively affect relationship quality (Lemay & Venaglia, 2016; Vannier & O'Sullivan, 2017).

This study aims to examine the impact of romantic beliefs on relationship satisfaction in emerging adults. Given the limited research on this topic and contradictory findings in past studies, this research seeks to contribute to the understanding of how romantic beliefs influence satisfaction in dating relationships. Thus, the hypothesis tested is that romantic beliefs significantly impact relationship satisfaction in emerging adulthood.

## 2. Methodology

This study employs a non-experimental quantitative approach, where data is collected without any manipulation of the variables under study and analyzed using statistical analysis to test the pre-formulated hypotheses. The research design used is cross-sectional, in which data is collected at a specific point in time. The type of analysis applied is regression analysis, aimed at determining the influence of romantic beliefs as an independent variable on relationship satisfaction as a dependent variable.

The study population consists of individuals aged 18 to 29 years who are currently in a romantic dating relationship. The sample comprises 153 participants, selected through purposive sampling based on specific criteria. The inclusion criteria for participants were individuals aged 18 to 29 years, currently in a romantic dating relationship, and not engaged or married. Initially, 159 participants were recruited, but six participants did not

meet the criteria and were excluded from the analysis.

For data collection, participants were asked to complete a questionnaire consisting of two main instruments. First, a scale measuring romantic beliefs, which includes dimensions such as Love at First Sight, Idealization, Love Finds a Way, and The One and Only, was used to assess the extent to which romantic beliefs influence participants' perceptions of their relationships. Second, a relationship satisfaction scale was used to measure participants' level of satisfaction in their romantic relationships, considering factors such as communication, trust, and emotional support within the relationship. The collected data will be analyzed using regression analysis to determine the extent to which romantic beliefs influence relationship satisfaction. Before conducting the analysis, the data will be tested to ensure instrument validity and reliability and to check for potential issues such as multicollinearity or heteroscedasticity.

### 3. Results

The questionnaire data were summarized in a demographic characteristics table covering age, gender, and relationship duration.

**Table 1.**

*Participant Demographic Characteristics*

Characteristics	Number of Participants	Percentage
<b>Age</b>		
18-21	70	45.8%
22-25	70	45.8%
26-29	13	8.5%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	46	30.1%
Famale	107	69.9%
<b>Long Dating</b>		
>6 months	16	10.5%
6-12 months	42	27.5%
13-18 months	31	20.3%
19-24 months	25	16.3%
25-30 months	9	5.9%
31-36 months	15	9.8%
>36 months	15	9.8%
<b>Analysis</b>		
Meet the criteria	153	96.2%
Does not meet criteria	6	3.8%

The majority of participants in this study were female (69.9%), and most were between the ages of 18-25. Additionally, 96.2% of the participants met the research criteria.

**Table 2.**  
*Regression Test*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	f	p
H1	Regression	794.631	1	794.631	50.228	< .001
	Residual	2388.899	151	15.821		
	Total	3183.529	152			

  

Model		Unstandardized	Standard Error	Standardized	t	p
H0	(Intercept)	28.098	0.370		75.943	< .001
H1	(Intercept)	35.164	1.048		33.565	< .001
	Romantic Beliefs	-0.198	0.028	- 0.500	-7.087	< .001

The ANOVA results indicate that the regression model is significant with a p-value < 0.001, meaning that there is a significant relationship between the two variables. Additionally, the negative regression coefficient for Romantic Beliefs (-0.198) suggests that the higher the level of romantic beliefs, the lower the level of relationship satisfaction.

The data analysis results reveal that H1 in this study is accepted, indicating a significant influence of romantic beliefs on relationship satisfaction in emerging adulthood dating relationships. The regression analysis results show a significant effect of romantic beliefs on relationship satisfaction ( $R^2 = .250$ ,  $p < .001$ ), meaning that romantic beliefs contribute 25% to variations in relationship satisfaction. The obtained linear model equation suggests that romantic beliefs can predict a decline in relationship satisfaction. This finding aligns with several previous studies.

#### 4. Discussion

The discussion of this study focuses on understanding the relationship between romantic beliefs and relationship satisfaction in emerging adulthood. This research makes a significant contribution by exploring different dimensions of romantic beliefs, such as Love at First Sight, Idealization, Love Finds a Way, and The One and Only, as well as their relationship with relationship satisfaction. One of the key findings is that the Idealization dimension is negatively associated with relationship satisfaction. This suggests that individuals with highly idealistic romantic beliefs, which often involve unrealistic expectations of their partners, tend to feel less satisfied in their relationships. In contrast, the other dimensions did not show a significant relationship, indicating that more realistic or optimistic romantic beliefs do not directly impact relationship satisfaction.

The novelty of this study lies in integrating two variables that have rarely been examined together: romantic beliefs and relationship satisfaction in the context of dating relationships during emerging adulthood. The findings align with previous research, such as the study by Sprecher and Metts (1999), which showed that idealistic romantic beliefs can negatively affect relationship satisfaction. However, these findings contradict some

theories that suggest optimistic or idealistic views of relationships can enhance relationship quality. For instance, the dimensions Love at First Sight and Love Finds a Way did not show significant effects, differing from the study by Frazier et al. (2012), which argued that such optimistic perspectives are crucial for long-term relationship success.

These findings have significant practical implications. Understanding how romantic beliefs relate to relationship satisfaction can inform educational programs or interventions aimed at helping young couples manage their expectations. This is particularly relevant for individuals in emerging adulthood, who often experience major transitions in their romantic lives. A realistic approach to relationships may improve relationship quality and satisfaction.

This study also holds valuable insights for psychology practitioners, particularly relationship counselors, in assisting individuals and couples in developing a healthier and more realistic perspective on their relationships, potentially enhancing long-term relationship satisfaction and stability. Furthermore, these findings open up opportunities for future research to explore other factors influencing relationship dynamics among individuals in emerging adulthood. This study emphasizes the importance of considering internal factors like romantic beliefs, which play a crucial role in relationship quality, alongside external factors. Thus, this research enriches academic knowledge and provides new directions for studies on relationship quality in young adulthood.

## 5. Conclusion

The aim of this study is to examine the effect of romantic beliefs on relationship satisfaction in individuals during the emerging adulthood phase. The results indicate that romantic beliefs have a significant impact on relationship satisfaction, contributing 25% to its variance. Through simple regression analysis, it was found that romantic beliefs can predict a decline in relationship satisfaction. This finding contradicts the initial hypothesis, which assumed that romantic beliefs would predict an increase in relationship satisfaction. This study provides new insights into how romantic perceptions can influence relationship quality, particularly among individuals in the emerging adulthood stage.

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