

Love Relationships

Relaciones de pareja

Relações de casal

Luciana Polizzi

ABSTRACT: Love is for people one of the most complex and important emotions. Its analysis regarding the relationships in youngsters and middle-aged adults has been widely discussed, but with little exploration in the elderly. Among the theories that have addressed the love relationship, one of the most important is the triangular theory of love, which will be the focus of this article. This theory considers that the course of the relationship depends on the fluctuation of the three components that make up love: intimacy, passion and commitment. These components can together be plotted out as points of a triangle. On each of them, a different aspect of love is presented. Considering the importance of the love experience on old people's well-being and based on the study of the components of the relationship, this article contributes to the knowledge about intimacy, passion and decision/commitment in this stage of life. This research is performed from their analytical study, comparing other age groups, differentiating long term and short term couples and the satisfaction such relationships provide.

Keywords: Elderly people; Love relationship; Love.

RESUMEN: *El amor es una de las emociones más complejas e importantes para las personas. Su análisis respecto a las relaciones de pareja ha sido ampliamente abordado en adultos jóvenes y de mediana edad, siendo escasa su exploración en personas mayores. Entre las teorías que han abordado la relación amorosa, una de las más destacadas y en la que nos centraremos en el desarrollo del artículo es la teoría triangular del amor. La misma considera que el curso de la relación de pareja depende de la fluctuación de los tres componentes que integran el amor: intimidad, pasión y compromiso. Estos componentes juntos, pueden graficarse como los vértices de un triángulo. En cada uno se manifiesta un aspecto diferente del amor. Considerando la importancia que la experiencia amorosa posee sobre el bienestar en la vejez y basándose en el estudio de los componentes de la relación amorosa, el presente artículo hace un aporte respecto al conocimiento de los mismos (intimidad, pasión y decisión /compromiso) en esta etapa de la vida a partir del su estudio analítico, comparación respecto de la a otros grupos de edad, diferenciación en parejas de corta y larga duración y la satisfacción que proporcionan dichas relaciones.*

Palabras clave: *Adultos mayores; Relación de pareja; Amor.*

RESUMO: *O amor, para as pessoas, é uma das mais complexas e importantes emoções. A análise sobre os relacionamentos tem sido amplamente abordada em adultos com idades entre os mais jovens e os de meia-idade, com pouca exploração em idosos. Entre as teorias que têm abordado a relação, uma das mais importantes e que vamos nos concentrar no desenvolvimento deste artigo é a teoria triangular do amor. Ela considera que o curso da relação depende da flutuação dos três componentes que fazem amor: a intimidade, a paixão e o compromisso. Estes componentes em conjunto podem ser representados graficamente como os vértices de um triângulo. Em cada um, expressa-se um aspecto diferente do amor. Considerando-se a importância da experiência do amor, tem o bem-estar na velhice e com base no estudo dos componentes do relacionamento, este artigo faz uma contribuição ao conhecimento sobre o mesmo (paixão, intimidade e decisão / compromisso) neste fase da vida de seu estudo analítico, em relação à comparação com outros grupos etários, diferenciação em pares de curto e longo prazo, e a satisfação que fornecem essas relações.*

Palavras-chave: *Idoso; Relacionamento; Amor.*

Introduction

Love and sexuality are issues that have generated interest in multi-disciplinary fields. Love, noted Hendrick (1995), is the most powerful and important element in a love relationship. It implies a feeling for the other, it is an unconditional commitment and mutual caring that contributes to the well-being and development of the two partners (Sternberg, 1996). Most individuals spend much of their adult life as a couple, and it is assumed that love is the construct that allows continuity in the life cycle.

First, this paper deals with the theoretical framework, emphasizing Sternberg's triangular theory of love, which gives us a context for an interesting interpretation of a love relationship's cycle. Then, several research results on the subject will be shared.

Triangular theory of love

Among the theories that have addressed the love relationship, one of the most remarkable is Sternberg's triangular theory of love (1986, 2000). This theory considers that the course of a relationship depends on the fluctuation of the three components that make up love: intimacy, passion and commitment. These components together, pictorially labeled on the points of a triangle. On each corner of the triangle, a different aspect of love is manifested.

Intimacy (top triangle's point) encompasses the close bonds in a love relationship, help when one is in need, unconditional support, communication, affective bonds and mutual approach in the relationship, represented by the sharing action. The intensity of intimacy will be related to the marital satisfaction or dissatisfaction, depending on the difference between the love triangle that person hoped to build with his/her partner, depending on their expectations of the relationship (ideal triangle) and the love triangle which represents reality (real triangle).

Intimacy is also lived in the present, and is gradually built through cumulative intimacy (intimacy developed in past love experiences), which directly influences the ability to learn from previous relationships. Moreover, Passion (left point of the triangle), is linked to romance, physical attraction, sexual fulfillment, devotion needs, self-esteem, belonging, submission, desire and sexual satisfaction.

Its expression can, sometimes be motivated by physiological and psychological aspects that show what happen in the dynamics of the couple.

In this sense, Sternberg (1997) suggests that this component may have a fast progress at the beginning of the emotional relationship and go skyrocketing up to a peak, then gradually start decreasing to reach a level of stability. It will all depend on the type of love, the moment lived and the people involved. Just as with intimacy, the intensity of this component can vary over time, both in the same relationship and in different ones.

The last component (right point of the triangle) refers to the decision to love the other person and establish a commitment to maintain that love. If the relationship evolves in a rewarding way, decision and commitment can gradually increase to reach a balance that will be crucial in maintaining a long-term relationship. If the relationship deteriorates or becomes meaningless, the commitment may disappear.

The three components of love interact with each other and their importance can differ from one relationship to another, or over time in the same relationship (Sternberg, 1997). In addition, intimacy, passion and decision/commitment may exist independently. Sternberg (1988) proposed that loving relationships could change over time and that the time course of each component may be different. Although in the early stages of the relationship, the component of passion tends to be the most important one, it diminishes significantly as time goes by. Contrastively, the components of intimacy and commitment tend to grow in the early years and then remain at high levels for the length of the relationship. These differences in the components based on the permanence in a relationship have been confirmed by a study conducted in Spain by Yela (1997), but according to his data, the passionate love dimension somehow deviates from what Sternberg initially proposed. According to Yela, passionate love grows less steeply at first and then descends more smoothly than expected, up to reaching certain stability. It is important to highlight that the sample of the study was performed with individuals under 25 years old, with an average duration in their relationship of 2.9 years.

The importance of love relationships

Romantic relationships have been widely explored and research has focused on identifying the aspects that influence mate choice (Valdez Gonzalez, Arce, & Lopez, 2007); communication between members of the relationship (Diaz Loving, & Sánchez Aragón, 2000; Julien Chartrand, Simard, Bouthillier, & Bégin, 2003; Nina Estella, 1991; Sanchez Aragon, 2002; Sanders, Halford, & Behrens, 1999); how conflicts are handled and solved (Bolger, & Zuckerman, 1995; Creasey, 2002; Lopez, Gover, Leskelä, Sauer, Schirmer, & Wyssmann, 1997; Noller, 2000; Rivera Aragon, Loving, & Sanchez Diaz Aragon, 2002) and the levels of satisfaction that they provide (Chavez, 1994; Dunn, Croft, & Hackett, 2000; Johnson, & Bradbuty, 1999; Lomas, 1983; Muñoz, 1978; Ojeda Garcia Diaz Aragon Loving, & Rivera, 1997). Studies that have researched love relationships from a gender perspective have identified that women show less passion and emotional closeness to their partners than men do (Villar, & López Chivral Villamizar, 2005).

More specifically, love relationships in elderly people have been identified within the main affective bonds and among those that provide the highest levels of satisfaction. Such relationships, which are part of the network, provide various forms of support and influence greatly on the seniors' overall well-being (Arias, 2004, 2005; Arias, & Polizzi, 2011; Bishop, Martin, & Poon, 2006; Chou, & Chi 2001; Peirce, Frone, Russell, Cooper, & Mudar, 2000; Phillips, Sui, Yeh, & Cheng, 2008; Polizzi, 2011, Prince-Paul, 2008; Vanderhorst, & McLaren, 2005; Warren, Stein, & Grella, 2007; Zinbarg, Lee, & Yoon, 2007).

More recently, the interest in the process of formation and dissolution of romantic relationships and their changes have increased considerably. A study in Mexico showed that these processes have been changed from what used to be standard. In this way, an early and long-lasting marriage becomes less important in its regular course as there is evidence of greater variability within marital situations and trajectories (Solis, & Puga, 2009). Likewise, there is an important increase in the number of studies that explore love relationships and gay and lesbian marriages (Soft, 2001; Buffie, 2011; Deevey, 1990, Fingerhut, & Maicel, 2010; Oswald, & Kuvalanka 2008; Quam, & Whitford, 1992; Wienke, & Hill, 2009).

As regards the importance of the couple in old age, Arias, and Polizzi (2011) found that almost all of the elderly interviewed, included their partner within their social support network.

This relationship performed multiple functions. Both men and women believed that their partners mainly contributed with emotional support, showing that this bond has characteristics of closeness and confidentiality. In all cases, the assessment of this relationship as extremely intimate or very intimate and the high reciprocity in most of them reinforces the importance that these bonds have at this stage of life.

Research in this field, shows gender differences: while men reported receiving more support from their partners (Arias, & Polizzi, 2013; Polizzi, 2011; Reyes, Camacho, Eschbach, & Markides, 2006), women tend to prioritize the children as providers of support (Melendez Moran, Thomas, & Navarro Miguel Pardo, 2007; Polizzi, 2011; Polizzi, 2012). Villar, *et al.* (2005) consider that satisfaction in the marital relationship has a "U" shape pattern. This would indicate that the relationship has priority for both members at the beginning, when they just meet; it decreases in midlife and then again becomes important in old age. In addition, these same authors have found that males achieve significantly higher scores on marital satisfaction than women.

Considering the love experience importance for the elderly's well-being and based on the study of the components of the relationships (intimacy, passion and decision / commitment), this paper contributes to their knowledge in this stage of life. This is an analytical study, which compares other age groups, differentiates short and long-term couples and evaluates the satisfaction provided by such relationships.

Differences and similarities by age group

While research on the love relationships has focused more on samples of young and middle-aged adults, some studies have focused on comparing them with seniors, thus the findings provide insight about the importance and characteristics of this relationship in old age. In this way, a study performed in the city of Mar del Plata (Polizzi, 2013) revealed that the components of love showed a similar distribution in the elderly and middle-aged adults. Both groups hierarchically prioritized commitment, intimacy and passion. However, comparison by age group showed interesting differences. The commitment component emphasizes more cognitive than emotional aspects and represents the most rational and conscious characteristic of the relationship.

Within the latter component, people aged 65 to 75 showed higher levels of commitment compared to middle-aged adults. The intimacy component also revealed statistically significant differences in this direction. Thus, seniors reveal greater feelings of closeness, support, unconditionality, communication and mutual rapprochement in their love relationships than middle-aged adults do.

Other studies have shown that, in comparison with earlier stages of life, older people express more affection for their partners and fewer negative emotions in conflicts within their relationships (Carstensen, Gottman, & Levenson, 1995). They also had less conflict and more predisposition to pleasure in several areas, demonstrating a positive view of marriage in old age (Levenson, Carstensen, & Gottman, 1993). Meanwhile, Iacub (2006) mentions that love in young people relates more to the speed, arrogance and pretense, while in senior citizens love manifests in a less narcissistic way. There is greater acceptance of others and less omnipotence to be associated with scarcity, loneliness, difficulty and less idealized expectations. Meanwhile, Carstensen, Fung, and Charles (2003) found that the elderly give much importance to intimacy and emotional and affective processes. They also have a more consolidated capacity to regulate emotions than other age groups, allowing them to live their loving commitment as an opportunity for enhancing quality of life.

Differences and similarities between women and men

In the study of the components of the relationship, more specifically in relation to gender differences, the results are controversial. While Villar et al (2005) found that women had a lower level than men in the components of intimacy and passion; in other studies, the differences were not seen in the same way (Cassepp-Borges, Leoni, & Martins, 2009; Polizzi, 2012, 2013; Sternberg, 1988; Yela, 1997). In another study (Polizzi, 2013) women and men showed a similar composition in the components of the love relationship: apart from obtaining similar results, participants ordered components from greater to lesser ones placing commitment in the first place, intimacy in the second one and passion in the third and last one. Likewise, the item analysis of the triangular love scale did not show significant differences between the two groups either.

Short and long-term couples

Marriage and especially the long-term one has been extensively researched demonstrating that old age is positively associated with mental and physical health as well as economic well-being (Sweeney & Replogle, 2002). Villar, *et al.* (2005) examined the structure of loving experience in long-term relationships (46.6 years on average) in a sample of 144 participants over 65 years old. From this study, they concluded that the structure of the loving experience in older people with long-term partners is similar, but not identical, to that found in young people with newer relationships. High levels of commitment, sense of responsibility and support toward the partner, plus less passion, seem to be the most characteristic aspects of these relationships.

Meanwhile, Polizzi (2013) made a comparison of the components of the loving relationship between people with long-term ($x: 34.6$) and short-term relationships ($x: 3.5$) and the results show no differences among the three components. They were hierarchically ordered in the same way for both groups prioritizing commitment, then intimacy and finally passion. These findings show contradictions and consistencies with the theory proposed by Sternberg (1986), namely: this theory states that at the beginning of a relationship, passion is the most prioritized component but over time, commitment and intimacy components prevail. In the present study, results corroborated these last aspects, but not the former one.

The same study deepened its analysis on this aspect conducting a scale review item by item showing some significant differences in certain statements that endorse the principles of the author. The short-term partner group had items that revealed the dimension of passion, while those items that showed differences in favor of the long-term partner group, corresponded mainly to the components of commitment and intimacy. For example, people with short-term partner scored higher on items such as "I fantasize about my partner" or "I especially enjoy physical contact with my partner." While the long-term relationships people scored higher on items such as: "I cannot imagine life without my partner", "I'm sure about my love for my partner" or "I really appreciate my partner is in my life". The study mentioned (Polizzi, 2013) may have been affected by the sample surveyed. This study included people who had short-term partners, who were mostly in relationships of 4 and 5 years, therefore time may have influenced negatively in the passion component compared to the other two.

Meanwhile, Arias, and Polizzi (2013) evaluated qualitatively changes that occurred in couples in old age compared to other stages. Most people thought that a love relationship was enriched with greater understanding and mutual acceptance, more sympathy and confidence.

The need for the other became more important not only for the emotional and instrumental support they received, but also for the feeling of being loved, valued and desired. Passion had a high priority in the young people's relationships whereas company scored higher in old age, and primarily among women.

Partner Satisfaction

Regarding satisfaction in the relationship there are currently few studies. Polizzi (2013) found that the major differences in marital satisfaction were found in the comparison between elderly and middle-aged adults, the former being those who got the highest scores. These results point in the same direction of another study (Villar, *et al.*, 2005) already mentioned, which states that the relationship has a "U" shape pattern. The analysis of partner satisfaction, according to the duration of the relationship and gender, has not yielded significant differences (Polizzi, 2013).

Aspects that provide higher and lower satisfaction in couples

With regard to gender analysis, studies in the city of Mar del Plata, show that women emphasized issues related to sharing time, "being together" - chatting, laughing, hugging, being loved and wanted (Arias, & Polizzi, 2013; Polizzi, 2013), while men highlighted women's way of being (Polizzi, 2013). Men also expressed in a more general way, that their partners gave them satisfaction, happiness and enjoyment, although this was not often associated with company as it was for women (Arias, & Polizzi, 2013).

The partner's personality seems to be the most mentioned aspect that provides less satisfaction. Women also mentioned the failure to share moments together and having communication problems. Conversely, men more often state there are not any aspects which provide them less satisfaction (Polizzi, 2013).

When comparing middle-aged adults, the differences were mainly when evaluating the partner's aspects that gave them less satisfaction. In this sense, the elderly referred more to their partner's way of being as something that caused them distress and also to the times when their partner were unhealthy. Middle-aged adults mentioned more frequently not being able to share moments together and having communication problems as aspects that give them less satisfaction (Polizzi, 2013).

Depending on the duration of the relationship, people who had been less than five years together, refer to passion and their partner's way of being as the most satisfactory aspect of all. Instead, people whose relationship lasted for over 25 years, valued sharing moments with each other and also the emotional support and affection they receive from their relationship (Polizzi, 2013).

Conclusions

This paper provides new data that backs up the research findings which are part of the positive psychology. It represents, following this line, an attempt to overcome one-dimensional and static conceptions of development that poses a growth-decline dichotomy, recognizing that there can be gains and losses at any point in life. Taking into account the studies presented, we highlight the importance of the relationship in old age and its level of satisfaction. It is also important the existence of love within the experience and the importance of the most valued components such as communication, mutual support and company.

We can also see that although the three components of love are present throughout the entire life cycle of couples, they experience some evolutionary change. Considering the research reports of the article, we could say that from middle age the love relationship components and the level of satisfaction with the partner change and increase mainly with age. Contributions emphasizes in the importance of going further in new lines of research, considering, for example, the comparison with other younger age groups or with people in shorter term relationships than the ones reported in this article.

References

- Arias, C. J. (2004). *Red de apoyo social y bienestar psicológico en personas de edad*. Mar del Plata, Argentina: Suárez.
- Arias, C. J. (2005). Composición de la red de apoyo social de adultos mayores: Vínculos familiares y no familiares. Em: Golpe, L., & Arias, C. J. (Eds.). *Sistemas formales e informales de apoyo social para los adultos mayores aportes de una investigación científica al campo de la gerontología institucional*, 233-249. Mar del Plata, Argentina: Suárez.
- Arias, C. J., & Polizzi, L. (2011). La relación de pareja. Funciones de apoyo y sexualidad en la vejez. São Paulo, SP: PUC-SP: *Revista Kairós Gerontologia*, 14(Número Especial 10, "Eroticidade/sexualidade e Velhice", 49-71. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://revistas.pucsp.br/index.php/kairos/article/view/28932/20265>.
- Arias, C. J., & Polizzi, L. (2013). The couple relationship - support functions and sexuality in Old Age. São Paulo, SP: PUC-SP: *Kairós Gerontology Journal*, 16(N.Special 15, "Eroticism/Sexuality and Old Age", 27-48. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://revistas.pucsp.br/index.php/kairos/article/view/17535/13048>.
- Bishop, A., Martin, P., & Poon, L. (2006). Happiness and congruence in older adulthood: A structural model of life satisfaction. *Aging and Mental Health*, 10(5), 445-453. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13607860600638388>.
- Blando, J. (2001). Twice hidden: older gay and lesbian couples, friends, and intimacy. *Journal of the American Society of Aging*, 25(2), 87-89.
- Bolger, N., & Zuckerman, A. (1995). A framework for studying personality in the stress process. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 69(5), 890-902. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://www.columbia.edu/~nb2229/docs/bolger-zuckerman-jpsp-1995.pdf>.
- Buffie, W. C. (2011). Public health implications of same-sex marriage. *American Journal of Public Health*, 101(6), 986-990. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3093259/>.
- Carstensen L., Gottman J., & Levenson R. (1995). Emotional behavior in long-term marriage. *Psych Aging*, 10(1), 140-149. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://ist-socrates.berkeley.edu/~ucbpl/docs/47-Emotional%20Behavior95.pdf>.
- Carstensen, L. L., Fung, H. H., & Charles, S. T. (2003). Socioemotional selectivity theory and the regulation of emotion in the second of life. *Motivation and Emotion*, 27(Issue 2), 103-123. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://link.springer.com/article/10.1023/A:1024569803230>.
- Cassepp-Borges, V., & Maycoln Leôni Martins Teodoro. (2009). Versión Reducida de la Escala Triangular del Amor: Características del Sentimiento en Brasil *Revista Interamericana de Psicología/Interamerican Journal of Psychology*, 43(1), 30-38. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: http://pepsic.bvsalud.org/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0034-96902009000100004.
- Chávez, G. (1994). *Satisfacción, marital, expectativas y estrés en familias de mujeres que trabajan fuera del hogar y familias de mujeres dedicadas al hogar*. Tesis inédita de licenciatura en Psicología, Universidad de las Américas Puebla, Puebla.

- Chou, K. L., & Chi, I. (2001). Stressful life events and depressive symptoms: social support and sense of control as mediators or moderators? *International Journal of Aging and Human Development*, 52(2), 155-171. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11352200>.
- Creasey, G. (2002). Associations between working models attachment and conflict management behavior in romantic couples. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 49(3), 365-375. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://shrike.depaul.edu/~ztan/psy326/cou493365.pdf>.
- Díaz Loving, R., & Sánchez Aragón, R. (2000). Negociando y comunicando en pareja: Relación entre estilos de comunicación y estilos de negociación. *La Psicología Social en México*, 8, 32-38.
- Dunn, K., Croft, P., & Hackett, G. (2000). Satisfaction in the sex life of a general population Sample. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, 26(2), 141-151. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: https://scholar.google.co.uk/citations?view_op=view_citation&hl=en&user=egIpkGMAAAAJ&citation_for_view=egIpkGMAAAAJ:eQOLeE2rZwMC.
- Fingerhut, A. W., & Maicel, N. C. (2010). Relationship formalization and individual and relationship well-being among same-sex couples. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, 27(7), 956-969. (doi: 10.1177/0265407510376253).
- Ginsberg, B. T., Pomerantz S. C., & Kramer-Feeley, V. (2005). Sexuality in older adults: behaviours and preferences. *Age and Ageing*, 34, 475-480. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16043445>.
- Iacub, R. (2006). *Erótica y vejez. Perspectivas de Occidente*. Buenos Aires, Argentina: Paidós.
- Julien, D., Chartrand, E., Simard, M., Bouthillier, D., & Bégin, J. (2003). Conflict, social support and relationship quality: An observational study of heterosexual, gay male, and lesbian couples communication. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 17(3), 419-428. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://psycnet.apa.org/psycinfo/2003-07483-014>
- Johnson, M., & Bradbuty, T. (1999). Marital satisfaction and topographical assessment of marital interaction: A longitudinal analysis of newlywed couples. *Personal Relationship*, 6, 19-40.
- Levenson, R. W., Carstensen, L. L., & Gottman, J. M. (1993). Long-term marriage: Age, gender, and satisfaction. *Psychology and Aging*, 8(2), 301-313. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/8323733>.
- Lomas, P. (1983). *La crisis de la familia*. México: Premia.
- López, F., Gover, M., Leskela, J., Sauer, E., Schirmer, L., & Wyssmann, J. (1997). Attachment styles, shame, guilt and collaborative problema-solving orientations. *Personal Relationships*, 4, 187-199. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://homepages.wmich.edu/~esauer/Lopez.pdf>.
- Meléndez-Moran, J. C., Tomás- Miguel, J. M., & Navarro-Pardo, E. (2007). Análisis de las redes sociales en la vejez a través de la entrevista Manheim. *Salud pública de México*, 49(6), 408-414. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://bvs.insp.mx/rsp/articulos/articulo.php?id=002096>.

- Muñoz, M. (1978). Satisfacción e insatisfacción matrimonial: Influencias de los factores de balance marital y de auto-realización. *Revista Latinoamericana de Psicología*, 10 (3), 337-350. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://www.redalyc.org/pdf/805/80510303.pdf>.
- Nina Estrella, R. (1991). *Comunicación marital y estilos de comunicación: construcción y validación*. Tesis de doctorado en Psicología, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, México.
- Noller, P. (2000). La comunicación familiar: Vinculando las relaciones marital, padre-hijo y entre hermanos. *Revista de Psicología Social y Personalidad*, 16(2), 123-154.
- Ojeda García, A., Díaz Loving, R., & Rivera Aragón, S. (1997). El doble vínculo como determinante de la satisfacción marital. *Revista de Psicología Social y Personalidad*, 12(1), 19-40.
- Oswald, R. F., & Kuvalanka, K. A. (2008). Same sex couples legal complexities. *Journal of Families*, 29(8), 1051-1066. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <https://experts.illinois.edu/en/publications/same-sex-couples-legal-complexities>.
- Peirce, R. S., Frone, M. R., Russell, M., Cooper, M. L., & Mudar, P. (2000). A longitudinal model of social contact, social support, depression and alcohol use. *Health Psychology*, 19(1), 28-38. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/10711585>.
- Phillips, D. R., Sui, O. L., Yeh, A. G., & Cheng, K. H. (2008). Informal social support and older person's psychological well being in Hong Kong. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Gerontology*, 23(1), 39-55. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: http://commons.ln.edu.hk/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1020&context=sw_master.
- Polizzi, L. (2011). La importancia de la pareja, los hijos y los amigos en la vejez. En Actas de las Primeras Jornadas de Psicología de la Universidad Atlántida Argentina y Contexto Psicológico. Los Desafíos de la Clínica Actual. Mar del Plata: Universidad Atlántida Argentina.
- Polizzi, L. (2012). Componentes de la relación amorosa: diferencia por género y grupo de edad. 2das. Jornadas de psicología de la UAA y la Revista Contexto Psicológico. 30 de noviembre y 1 de diciembre de 2012, Mar del Plata, Argentina.
- Polizzi, L. (2013). La relación de pareja en la vejez. Segundo Congreso Latinoamericano de Gerontología Comunitario. Buenos Aires. Facultad de Psicología de la Universidad de Buenos Aires.
- Prince-Paul, M. (2008). Understanding the meaning of social well-being at the end of life. *Oncology Nursing Forum*, 35(3), 365-371. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18467287>. (doi: 10.1188/08.ONF.365-371).
- Quam, J. K., & Whitford, G. S. (1992). Adaptation and age-related expectations of older gays and lesbian adults. *The Gerontologist*, 32(3), 367-374. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://gerontologist.oxfordjournals.org/content/32/3/367.abstract>. (doi: 10.1093/geront/32.3.367).
- Reyes, C., Camacho, M., Eschbach, K., & Markides, K. (2006). El contexto de la familia y el vecindario en la salud de los ancianos del estudio EPESE hispano. *Colombia Médica*, 37, 45-49. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://www.bioline.org.br/pdf?rc06036>.

- Rivera Aragón, S., Díaz Loving, R., & Sánchez Aragón, R. (2002). Negociación ante el conflicto en la población mexicana. *Revista de Psicología Social y Personalidad*, 16(2), 21-36.
- Sánchez Aragón, R. (2002). ¿Nos expresamos igual o diferente hombres y mujeres?: Estilos de comunicación con la pareja. *La psicología social en México*, 9, 749-755.
- Sanders, M., Halford, W., & Behrens, B. (1999). Parental divorce and premarital couple communication. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 13(1), 60-74. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.519.674&rep=rep1&type=pdf>.
- Solis, R., & Puga, I. (2009). Los nuevos senderos de la nupcialidad: cambios en los patrones de formación y disolución de las primeras uniones en México. En C. R. Romero (Coord.), *Tramas familiares en el México contemporáneo. Una perspectiva sociodemográfica*, 179-198. México: UNAM.
- Sternberg, R. (1986). A triangular theory of love. *Psych Rev*, 93(2), 119-135. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://psycnet.apa.org/psycinfo/1986-21992-001>. (doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0033-295X.93.2.119>).
- Sternberg, R. J. (1988). *El Triángulo del Amor: Intimidad, Pasión y Compromiso*. Barcelona, España: Paidós.
- Sternberg, R. (1997). Construct validation of a triangular love scale. *Eur J Soc Psych*. 27, 313-335. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://vivanautics.com/pdf/Sternberg1997.pdf>.
- Sternberg, R. (2000). *La experiencia del amor*. Barcelona, España: Paidós.
- Sweeney, M. M., & Replogle, E. M. (2002). Marital relationships. *Encyclopedia of Aging*. Recuperado en 14 mayo, 2011, de: <http://www.encyclopedia.com/doc/1G2-3402200251.html>.
- Valdez, J. L., Gonzalez, N. I., Arce, J., & López, M. C. (2007). La elección real e ideal de pareja. Un estudio con parejas establecidas. *Interamerican Journal of Psychology*, 41(3), 305-311. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://pepsic.bvsalud.org/pdf/rip/v41n3/v41n3a05.pdf>
- Vanderhorst, R. K., & Mc Laren, S. (2005). Social relationship as predictors of depression and suicidal ideation in older adults. *Aging and Mental Health*, 9(6), 517-525. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16214699>.
- Villar, F., Villamizar, D. J., & López Chivral, S. (2005). Los componentes de la experiencia amorosa en la vejez personas mayores y relaciones de pareja de larga duración. *Revista Española de Geriatría y Gerontología*, 40(3), 166-177. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=1970833>.
- Warren, J. I., Stein, J. A., & Grella, C. E. (2007). Role of social support and self-efficacy in treatment outcomes among clients with co-occurrence disorders. *Drug and Alcohol Dependences*, 89(2), 267-274. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2753536/>.
- Wienke, C., & Hill, G. J. (2009). Does the "Marriage benefit" extend to partners in gay and lesbian relationships? Evidence from a random sample of sexually active adults. *Journal of Family Issues*, 30(2), 259-289. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://jfi.sagepub.com/content/30/2/259.abstract>. (doi:10.1177/0192513X08324382).

Yela, C. (1997). Curso temporal de los componentes básicos del amor a lo largo de la relación de pareja. *Psicothema*, 9(1), 01-15. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/articulo?codigo=2013698>.

Zinbarg, R., Lee, J.E., & Yoon, L. (2007). Dyadic predictors of outcome in a cognitive-behavioral program for patients with Generalized Anxiety Disorder in committed relationships: A 'spoonful of sugar' and a dose of non-hostile criticism may help. *Behaviour Research and Therapy*, 45, 699-713. Recuperado en 12 junio, 2015, de: <http://www.psychology.northwestern.edu/documents/zinbarg-predictors.pdf>.

Recibido el 17/12/2015

Aceptado el 30/12/2015

Luciana Polizzi - Graduate in Psychology, Mar del Plata National University, Argentina.
Research grant at School of Psychology, Universidad Nacional de Mar del Plata, Argentina,
E-mail: polizzilu@gmail.com.