Journal of Psychological and
Educational Research
JPER - 2020, 28 (1), May, 45-63

DO EMOTION RECOGNITION AND EMOTION REGULATION PREDICT DYADIC ADJUSTMENT? THE MODERATING ROLE OF RELATIONSHIP LENGTH

Andreea Ursu• Maria Nicoleta Turliuc
Cuza University of Iasi, Romania

Abstract
Emotion recognition and emotion regulation, measured on a questionnaire of emotional intelligence, were related to several dimensions of dyadic adjustment. In a sample of 181 college students (54% females) recognition of their own and their partner's emotions along with regulation of their own and their partner's emotions were used for predicting dyadic adjustment and its dimensions. Recognition of partner's emotions, regulation of one's own and partner's emotions positively predicted dyadic consensus and negatively dyadic satisfaction, while recognition and regulation of partner's emotions predicted dyadic cohesion. The research also explored the moderating role of gender and relationship length in predicting dyadic adjustment and its dimensions. The results revealed that only relationship length moderates the relationship between the recognition of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction, and the relationship between the regulation of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction.

Keywords: emotion recognition; emotion regulation; dyadic adjustment; dyadic satisfaction; young adults

Introduction

Emotion recognition and emotion regulation influence positively and negatively intimate partners' dynamic and behavior. Salovey and Mayer (1990) suggested that these two emotional processes together with utilization of

Correspondence concerning this paper should be addressed to:

• Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Doctoral School of Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences. Address: Toma Cozma Street, No. 3, 700704, Iași, Romania. E-mail: *ursu.anndreea@gmail.com*

emotions form an umbrella concept, namely emotional intelligence. These abilities have an intrapersonal, but also an interpersonal character. Thus, one person can appraise and express his/her own emotions, but in the same time can appraise other people' emotions. In addition, one person can regulate their own emotions, but also others' emotions and they can use their own or others' emotions in flexible planning and redirecting attention and motivation.

Researchers have studied the link between emotional intelligence and relational variables such as relationship satisfaction, relationship quality or relationship conflict. However, the results are mixed. For example, Malouff, Schutte, and Thorsteinsson (2014) in one meta-analysis found a significant association between trait emotional intelligence and relational satisfaction. Contrary to these results, Brackett and colleagues (2005) found no significant correlations between ability emotional intelligence and dyadic satisfaction or relational conflict.

Although the link between emotional intelligence and dyadic satisfaction was already assessed, none study assessed the link between specific processes as emotion recognition or emotion regulation and dyadic adjustment and its dimensions, dyadic cohesion, dyadic satisfaction and dyadic consensus. To cover this gap, we aimed to assess: (a) the relationship between emotional intelligence and dyadic adjustment, overall and on theirs dimensions; (b) the potential role of emotional intelligence and its dimensions in predicting dyadic adjustment and its dimensions; (c) the moderating role of gender and relationship length between emotional intelligence dimensions and dyadic adjustment dimensions.

We begin our survey of the literature by briefly discussing the relationship between recognition of emotions and dyadic adjustment and move on to discuss the relationship between regulation of emotions and dyadic adjustment. Next, we discuss the potential role of emotion recognition and emotion regulation in predicting dyadic adjustment. Further, we present the potential moderating role of gender and relationship length for the relationship between emotion recognition, emotion regulation and dyadic adjustment.

Emotion recognition and dyadic adjustment

Recognition of emotions represents the ability to correctly identify one's own and others' emotions from verbal, non-verbal or dynamic sources. Several studies have assessed the relation between low ability of recognizing their own emotions, defined as alexithymia, and dyadic adjustment or marital quality. Other

studies have assessed the link between recognition of others' emotions, more precisely, partner's emotions and dyadic adjustment. Most studies concluded that individuals who do not recognize their own emotions have poorer dyadic satisfaction (Cordova, Gee, & Warren, 2005; Yelsma & Marrow, 2003). The same pattern is also valid for recognition of others' emotions. Individuals who do not recognize partner's emotions reported lesser dyadic satisfaction, while individual with high abilities in recognizing partner's emotions have greater satisfaction (Cohen, Schulz, Weiss, & Waldinger, 2012; Yoo & Noyes, 2016).

Emotion regulation and dyadic adjustment

Emotion regulation help individual to evaluate the situation's emotional impact and to determine which types of emotional reactions are the most appropriate, enabling individuals to decide when and how they should express their emotions (Wang & Saudino, 2011). Although, it has been suggested that emotion regulation represents a good determinant of romantic relationships (Bloch, Haase, & Levenson, 2014), studies which have actually test this assumption are not numerous. For instance, the use of suppression has a negative effect on relationship quality, both partners reporting lower level of relationship quality (Impett et al., 2012; Velotti et al., 2016). In addition, it was found that greater downregulation and emotional expression was positively associated with couple satisfaction (Bloch et al., 2014, Cameron & Overall, 2018). It seems that more is needed to be done in order to know the effect of specific emotion regulation strategies on relationship variables.

Emotion recognition, emotion regulation and dyadic adjustment

Emotion recognition and emotion regulation can influence intimate partners' interactions through several mechanisms. When individuals recognize their own emotions, they respond to them faster, express them more easily in their relationship, and present more openly their needs signaled by those emotions (Johnson, Makinen, & Millikin, 2001; Oatley & Johnson-Laird, 2011; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Abilities to recognize others' emotions help individuals to choose more adaptive behavioral response, which may contribute to the quality of interpersonal relationship (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000). Recognizing pleasant or unpleasant emotions represents an important element of intimate partners' interactions because it offers feedback to continue or to stop a specific behavior, it helps individuals to respond in more appropriate and

constructive ways to the situation encountered and toward their partner (Yoo & Noyes, 2016). On the other side, emotion regulation helps people to manage their self or others' emotions towards obtaining their goals (Gross, 2015; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Moreover, recognizing self and others' emotions represents not only the key precondition of understanding and anticipating a person's behavior (Schlegel, Grandjean, & Scherer, 2014), but it also facilitates the communication of negative events and helps find adaptive emotion regulation strategies for regulating emotions (Cordova et al., 2005).

It was also suggested that individuals who recognize and regulate their own emotions and others' emotions may establish pleasant and mutually satisfied romantic relationships, build and maintain long-term committed relationships (Malouff, Schutte, & Thorsteinsson, 2014).

Gender and relationship length as moderators

Although in the last decades gender differences on emotions recognition have been intensely studied, the results are still mixed. There are studies which suggest a female superiority in decoding facial expressions (Rotter & Rotter, 1988; Schlegel et al., 2014; Trommsdorff & John, 1992), other studies suggest a male superiority, for specific emotions as anger (Rotter & Rotter, 1988), while others suggest no gender differences between male and female for negative affect or neutral affect (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002; Schlegel et al., 2014). Moreover, research on emotion recognition and dyadic adjustment, and its dimensions has not given consideration on the moderating role of gender. Previous research on gender differences of emotions recognition abilities is limited to only presenting the gender differences, without testing the potential moderating role of gender. The same pattern is valid for emotion regulation and romantic relationships outcomes such as satisfaction. Studies such as Bloch and colleagues (2014) on emotion regulation and dyadic satisfaction link presented the different paths for wife and husband without testing the potential moderating role of gender for this relation.

Moreover, relationship length is another understudied possible moderator for emotion recognition, emotion regulation and dyadic adjustment link. The emotional dynamic may be different in newly relationships, comparing to committed long-term couples, marital or non-marital. Moreover, emotional processes such as recognition and regulation may have different impact on relationship variables such as dyadic adjustment depending on

relationship length. In addition, Malouff and his colleagues (2014) suggested that length of relationship may be a potential moderator in explaining the link between emotional intelligence and relationship satisfaction.

Based on the previous results' and arguments, it appears that further exploration of emotion recognition and emotion regulation associations with dyadic adjustment, and the moderating role of gender and relationship length may be warranted.

The current study

Few studies have examined the link between emotion recognition and dyadic adjustment, or emotion regulation and dyadic adjustment. Moreover, it appears that so far no research has explicitly connected emotion recognition, emotion regulation and dyadic adjustment. Thus, in the present paper, we extend the research on emotional processes and young romantic relationships in fourth ways. First, we aimed to check the relationship between emotion recognition, emotion regulation and dyadic adjustment. Second, we examined not only the process of recognizing and regulating their own emotions, but also the process of recognizing and regulating partner's emotions. Third, we examined the relationship between emotion recognition, emotion regulation and dyadic adjustment at two levels, overall, but also at dyadic adjustment dimensions level (dyadic consensus, dyadic satisfaction, and dyadic cohesion). Fourth, we examined the potential moderating role of gender and relationship length between emotion recognition, emotion regulation and dyadic adjustment, and its dimensions.

We expected (a) emotion recognition and emotion regulation to be related (correlate) with dyadic adjustment and its three dimensions; (b) emotion recognition and emotion regulation will predict dyadic adjustment and its three dimensions, (c) gender and relationship length to moderate the link between emotion recognition, emotion regulation and dyadic adjustment, and its dimensions.

Method

Participants

The initial sample of the present study consisted of 194 college students from a large Romanian university. We eliminated 13 individuals because they

obtained the maximum score on desirability scale. Thus, the final sample consists of 84 males and 97 females, belonging to the age group of 18-30 years (*M*=21.03, *SD*=2.74). At the time of the study all participants were involved in a heterosexual romantic relationship (involved in a committed relationship, engaged or married). For more details of sample's characteristics, *see* Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic characteristics of participants

Variables	
Sex	
Male	84 (46.4%)
Female	97 (53.6%)
Age years M(SD)	21.03 (2.74)
Education	
High school	142 (78.5%)
Bachelor	34 (18.8%)
Master	5 (2.8%)
Length (months) *M(SD)*	26.22 (22.35)
Marital status	
Involved in a committed relationship	162 (89.5%)
Engaged	7 (3.9%)
Married	12 (6.6%)

Measures

Emotion recognition and emotion regulation. To assess emotion recognition and emotion regulation INEM questionnaire was used. The scale was developed by Constantin and his colleagues. The scale is developed based on Salovey and Mayer model of emotional intelligence (1990). The scale has 50 items organized in 5 factors as follows: understanding of one's own emotions, understanding of other's emotions, regulating one's own emotions, regulating others emotions and social desirability. All items were modified from a general perspective to a more specific one, nouns as "individuals, other people" were changed with "my partner". For instance, the item "Reuşesc uşor să îi fac pe ceilalţi să înţeleagă cum mă simt într-un moment dat (I can easily explain to others how I am feeling in a specific moment)" was modified in "Reuşesc uşor să îl/o fac pe partenerul/a meu/a să înţeleagă cum mă simt într-un moment dat (I can easily explain to my partner how I am feeling in a specific moment)". For each factor internal consistence was assessed. Alpha Cronbach values are as follows: understanding own emotions .70, understanding others' emotions .79, regulating own emotions .74, regulating others' emotions .64 and desirability scale .50. Because this scale is new, other validity data are not yet available.

Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale. To assess aspects related to romantic relationships outcomes the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale (R-DAS) (Busby et al., 1995) adapted to the Romanian population (Turliuc & Muraru, 2013) was used. This instrument has three dimensions: marital satisfaction, marital consensus and marital cohesion. Again, we modified some items to be in accord with the majority participants' marital status – being involved in one non-marital committed romantic relationship. For example, "Evaluați în ce măsură vă certați cu soțul/soția dumneavoastră" (Assess how much do you fight with your husband/ wife) was modified in "Evaluați în ce măsură vă certați cu partenerul/a dumneavoastră" (Assess how much do you fight with your partner). Internal consistency for each dimension was assessed by Alpha Cronbach. For dyadic satisfaction dimension we obtained .62, for dyadic consensus .76 while for dyadic cohesion .59.

Socio-demographics questions. This section included questions about participants' gender, age, education, partner relationship status and the length of the relationship.

Procedure

First year students were invited to participating to this study. All participants received extra course credit for their participation. They received a link where they filled in the study's scales. The questionnaires relevant to the present study took approximately 15 minutes to be completed. Informed consent was obtained from all participants.

Results

Descriptive statistics and correlations for all measures are presented in Table 2. Recognition of one's own emotions was significantly correlated with none of R-DAS factors, but was significantly positive correlated with overall dyadic adjustment ($r=.15$, $p<.05$). Recognition of partner's emotions was significantly positively correlated with dyadic consensus ($r=.28$, $p<.01$), dyadic cohesion ($r=.15$, $p<.05$) and overall dyadic adjustment ($r=.18$, $p<.05$), and significantly negatively correlated with dyadic satisfaction ($r=-.21$, $p < .01$).

Concerning emotion regulation, the results revealed that regulation of one's own emotions was significantly correlated as follows: positively with dyadic consensus ($r=.21$, $p < .01$) and overall dyadic adjustment ($r=.15$, $p<.05$),

and negatively with dyadic satisfaction (r=-.17, p<.05). Regulation of partner's emotions was not significantly correlated with overall dyadic adjustment but it was significantly positively correlated with dyadic consensus (r=.24, p<.01) and dyadic cohesion (r=.14, p<.05) and negatively with dyadic satisfaction (r=-.24, p<.05).

Table 2. Descriptive statistics and correlations between INEM and R-DAS (total and subscales)

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. ROE	.72	.23	-							
2. RPE	.85	.20	.31**							
3. ERS	.73	.24	.20**	.24**						
4. ERP	.66	.21	.17*	.33**	.36**					
5. R-DAS_consensus	5.08	.71	.09	.28**	.21**	.24**				
6. R-DAS_satisfaction	2.21	.74	.01	-.21**	-.17*	-.24*	-.29**			
7. R-DAS_cohesion	3.57	.69	.13	.15*	-.18	.14*	.22**	-.32**		
8.INEM	.74	.15	.65**	.66**	.63**	.62**	.31**	-.18*	.21**	
9. R-DAS	3.85	.37	.15*	.18*	.15*	.12	.78**	.21**	.42**	.25**

Note: *p<.05 **p<.01 Note: ROE-recognition of one's own emotions; RPE-recognition of partner's emotions; ERS-regulation of self-emotions; ERP-regulation of partner's emotions, R-DAS_consensus - dyadic consensus, R-DAS_satisfaction - dyadic satisfaction, R-DAS_cohesion - dyadic cohesion, INEM-emotional intelligence scale, R-DAS-Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale

In order to test whether emotion recognition and emotion regulation would predict dyadic consensus, dyadic satisfaction, dyadic cohesion and overall dyadic adjustment, we conducted four regression analyses. For each model we used only the predictors' variables which previously significantly correlated with the criteria variables. In the following, we will present the results of each predictive model.

Emotion recognition, emotion regulation and dyadic consensus. For testing whether emotion recognition and emotion regulation would predict dyadic consensus, we conducted multiple regression analysis with recognition of partner's emotion, regulation of self and partner's emotions entered as simultaneous predictors of dyadic consensus. These variables significantly predicted dyadic consensus, $F(3,177)=7.75$, $p<.001$, $R^2=.11$. Recognition of partner's emotions, regulation of self and partner's emotions explained 11% of dyadic consensus.

Emotion recognition, emotion regulation and dyadic satisfaction. A multiple regression was run to predict dyadic satisfaction from recognition of partner's emotions, regulation of one's own and partner's emotions. The results

of the regression indicated that the three predictors explained 8% of the variance ($F(3,177)=5.44$, $p<.001$, $R^2=.08$).

Emotion recognition, emotion regulation and dyadic cohesion. A multiple regression was used to predict dyadic cohesion from recognition of partner's emotions and regulation of partner's emotions. These variables predicted 4% of dyadic cohesion, $F(3,177)=2.92$, $p<.05$, $R^2=.04$.

Emotion recognition, emotion regulation and dyadic adjustment. For testing whether emotion recognition and emotion regulation would predict dyadic adjustment, we conducted a multiple regression analysis with recognition of own emotions, recognition of partner's emotions, regulation of one's own and partner's emotions entered as simultaneous predictors of dyadic adjustment. These variables predicted dyadic adjustment, $F(4,176)=2.53$, $p<.05$, $R^2=.05$. Recognition of own and partner's emotions together with regulation of one's onw and partner's emotions explained 5% of dyadic adjustment.

In addition, we also tested if gender and length of relationship moderate the relationship between recognition of one's own emotions, recognition of partner's emotions, regulation of self emotions, regulation of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction, dyadic cohesion, dyadic consensus and dyadic adjustment. Firstly, we created new variables based on the interactions between gender and each independent variable (gender x recognition of one's own emotion, gender x recognition of partner's emotions, gender x regulation of one's own emotion, gender x regulation of partner's emotions) respectively, length of relationship and each independent variable (length of relationship x recognition of one's own emotion, length of relationship x recognition of partner's emotions, length of relationship x regulation of one's own emotion, length of relationship x regulation of partner's emotions). Second, we run linear regression analysis for each dependent variable (and dyadic satisfaction, dyadic cohesion, dyadic consensus and dyadic adjustment) with gender, respectively length of relationship, each independent variable (recognition of own emotion, recognition of partner's emotions, regulation of own emotion, regulation of partner's emotions) and the interactions between gender and each independent variable, respectively relationship length and each independent variable as predictors.

In the case of gender as moderator, we found significant results for regulation of partner's emotions and dyadic cohesion ($b=-.31$, $p<.05$). In the case of length of relationship, we found significant results for recognition of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction ($b=-.012$, $p<.05$), and regulation of partner's

emotions and dyadic satisfaction (b=-.013, p<.05). Afterwards, we examined the moderating role of gender in predicting the relation between regulation of partner's emotions and dyadic cohesion. We used the same procedure for examining the potential interactions of relationship length in predicting the link between recognition of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction, and in predicting the link between regulation of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction. Three models were tested and the results are presented in the following.

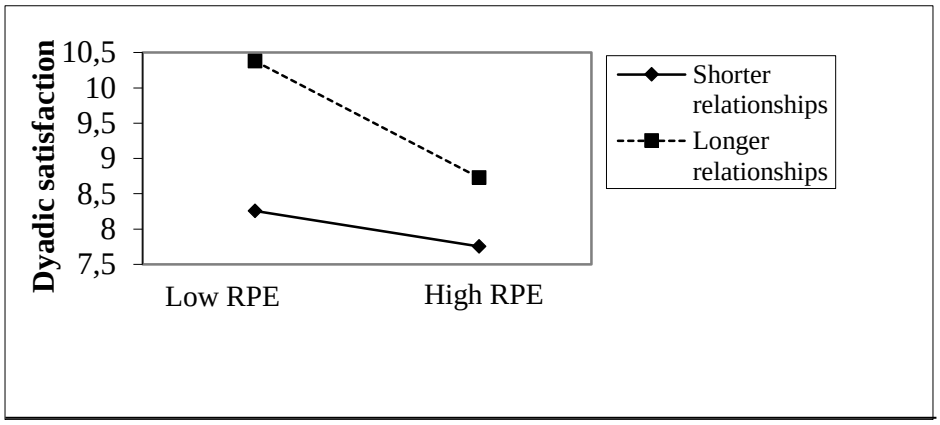
Table 3. Dyadic adjustment factors' explained by gender; length of relationship and regulation of partner's emotions; recognition of partner emotions

Variable	B
Model 1. Gender, regulation of partner's emotions and dyadic cohesion	
Regulation of partner's emotions	.14*
Gender	-.18
Regulation of partner's emotions X gender	-.22
Model 2. Length of relationship, recognition of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction	
Recognition of partner emotions	-.35**
Length of relationship	.04**
Recognition of partner emotions X Length of relationship	-.01*
Model 3. Length of relationship, regulation of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction	
Regulation of partner emotions	-.34**
Length of relationship	.04**
Regulation of partner emotions X Length of relationship	-.01*

Note: *p<.05; **p<.01

Gender, regulation of partner's emotions and dyadic cohesion. We added gender as moderator for the regression analysis of regulation of partner's emotions and dyadic cohesion. The results showed that gender does not moderate the relationship between regulation of partner's emotions and dyadic cohesion.

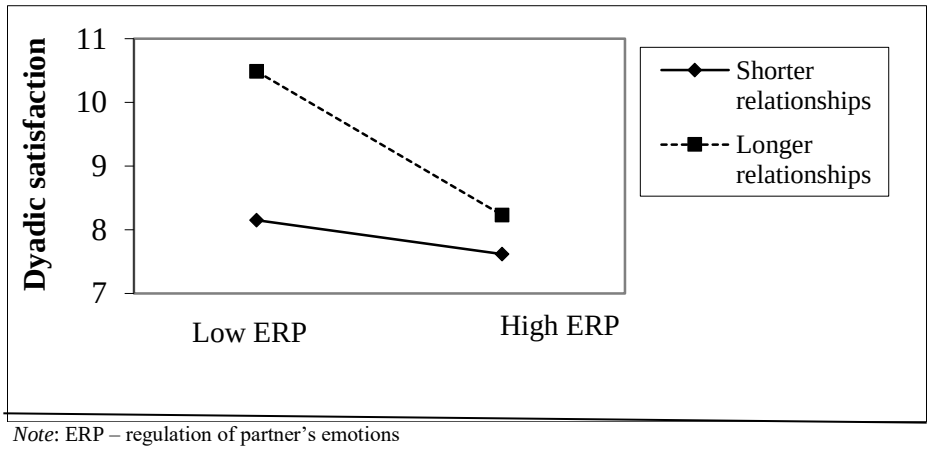
Length of relationship, recognition of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction. We run a regression analysis with recognition of partner's emotions as predictor, length of relationship as moderator and dyadic satisfaction as outcome. The results revealed that length of relationship moderates the relationship between recognition of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction. More precisely, there is a negative relation between recognition of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction, but when the relationship length increases, the dyadic satisfaction also increases (*see* Figure 1).



Note: RPE – recognition of partner's emotions

Figure 1. The interactive effect of recognition of partner's emotions and length of relationship on dyadic satisfaction

Length of relationship, regulation of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction. We run a new regression analysis with regulation of partner's emotions as predictor, length of relationship as moderator and dyadic satisfaction as outcome. The results showed that length of relationship also moderates the relationship between regulation of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction. More precisely, when partners in long term committed relationships regulate their partner's emotions, their dyadic satisfaction decreases (*see* Figure 2).



Note: ERP – regulation of partner's emotions

Figure 2. The interactive effect of regulation of partner's emotions and length of relationship on dyadic satisfaction

Discussion

The present study investigated the role of emotion recognition and emotion regulation in predicting overall dyadic adjustment and its three dimensions. Thus, the study has three principal aims. The first one was to explore whether recognition of one's own and partner's emotions and regulation of self and partner's emotions are associated with dyadic adjustment and its three dimensions. The second aim was to assess the predictive role of recognition of one's own and partner's emotions, and regulation of self and partner's emotions for dyadic adjustment and its three dimensions. The third aim was to examine the potential moderating role of gender and length of relationship between recognition of one's own and partner's emotions and dyadic adjustment and its dimensions, and regulation of self and partner's emotions and dyadic adjustment and its dimensions. As far as we know, this study is the first one to examine these relationships, thus the results should be viewed as exploratory.

For testing these assumptions, bivariate correlations, regression analysis and moderation analysis were run. In the following, we will detail them.

Unlikely other research carried out in the area of emotion recognition and dyadic satisfaction (Cohen et al., 2012) and emotion regulation and dyadic satisfaction (Bloch et al., 2014, Cameron & Overall, 2018), we found that recognition of partner's emotions, regulation of self and partner's emotions were negatively associated with dyadic satisfaction. However, other studies have also had unexpected results. For example, Brackett and colleagues (2005) did not find significant correlation between emotional intelligence and dyadic satisfaction. Although, we had a similar sample (of young adults, the majority of them being involved in non-marital committed relationships) as Brackett and colleagues (2005) the results of the present study shown a significant negative correlation between emotional intelligence and dyadic satisfaction, which it can be seen also between the emotional intelligence factors and dyadic satisfaction. As mentioned before, emotional intelligence is the capacity to perceive, process and regulate emotional information accurately and effectively, both within oneself and in others, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions and to influence those of others (Mayer & Salovey, 1990). Also, studies have shown that people express their emotions using often the therapeutic role of their partner (Rosenbluth & Steil, 1995), and that people who have an intimate partner are more healthier and happier than the single ones (Waite & Gallagher, 2000).

Therefore, for people with a higher emotional intelligence having an intimate partner which is largely confessing to them can be sometimes difficult or tiring, affecting in time their dyadic satisfaction.

Due to the lack of consistence between study results and previous studies, more is needed to be done in order to know, more precisely, which is the link between emotion recognition, emotion regulation and dyadic satisfaction.

The results for dyadic cohesion and dyadic consensus were in line with previous research results. More specifically, recognition and regulation of partner's emotions were positively correlated with dyadic cohesion and with dyadic consensus. Thus, in general, the results of the present study are in line with previous research of emotional activity and dyadic adjustment or relationship quality (Brackett et al., 2005; Malouff et al., 2014; Smith, Heaven, & Ciarrochi, 2008; Pollock, Khaddouma, Huet-Cox, Fillauer, & Bolden, 2017; Zeidner, Kloda, & Matthews, 2013).

Secondly, due to lack of significant correlations between recognition of one's own emotions and dyadic consensus, dyadic satisfaction and dyadic cohesion, this variable was eliminated from the following analyses, more precisely, from the predictive models analyses. This may be consistent with other research which found a non-significant actor effect of decoding emotions on relational satisfaction (Koerner & Fitzpatrick, 2002; Brackett et al., 2005).

The results of the present study add new knowledge in the area of emotional processes and romantic relationships by proposing four predictive models in which recognition of partner's emotions, regulation of self and partner's emotions explained 11%, and 8% of dyadic consensus, dyadic satisfaction, respectively. Recognition of partner's emotions and regulation of partner's emotions explained 4% of dyadic cohesion and all dimensions (recognition of one's own and partner's emotions along with regulation of self and partner's emotions) explained 5% of dyadic adjustment variance. Although, other researchers (Batool & Khalid, 2012; Vennum, 2006 as cited in Kililian, 2012) found that emotional intelligence explained a greater variance (48%, 17% , respectively) of dyadic adjustment, it should be noted that the emotional intelligence questionnaire used by them was based on Bar-On model (Bar-On, 2005), and not on Salovey and Mayer model (1990). The Bar-On model of emotional intelligence include items regarding self-regard, emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, independence, actualization, empathy, social responsibility, interpersonal relationship, stress tolerance, impulse control, reality

testing, flexibility, problem solving, optimism, and happiness. As can be seen, the questionnaires based on this model assess other romantic relationship's aspects.

Thus, the results of the present study are not in contradiction with other previous reported results, rather it adds new knowledge in the area of emotional processes and romantic relationships.

In addition, our paper endeavored to further extend the current knowledge of emotional processes in romantic relationships by examining the potential moderating role of gender and length of relationship in predicting dyadic satisfaction, dyadic cohesion, dyadic consensus and dyadic adjustment based on recognition of one's own emotions, recognition of partner's emotions, regulation of self and partner's emotions. Based on preliminary analysis, we found significant results for the interactions of relationship length with recognition of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction, for the interaction of relationship length with regulation of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction, and for the interaction of gender and regulation of partner's emotions and dyadic cohesion. When entering gender and relationship length in our model for predicting dyadic cohesion and dyadic satisfaction based on regulation of partner's emotions, respectively recognition of partner's emotions, the results show that gender does not moderate the link between regulation of partner emotions and dyadic cohesion. One possible explanation was found. Because the gender roles for participants' generation tend to be more egalitarian and due to self-focus character of this developmental stage (Arnett, 2000), gender had no effect on the link between regulation of partner's emotion and dyadic cohesion.

Moreover, the relationship length does moderate the link between recognition of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction, and regulation of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction. Although, there is a negative relationship between recognition of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction, when the length of relationship is increasing the negative correlation between recognition of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction is starting to decrease. In other words, we suppose that due to interpersonal adjustment process, and on the basis of growing commitment, trust, honesty, respect, concern with relational outcomes, individuals learn in time to decode their partner's emotional reactions, which makes them adapt their responses to their partner's feedback and needs expressed emotionally. Moreover, by time, participants are entering in a new developmental stage, adulthood, the self-focus and identity exploration start to

decrease and they are more interested in building and maintaining more satisfied relationships.

In addition, we also tested the moderating role of relationship length between regulation of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction. We found that when the length of relationship is increasing and individuals are regulating their partner's emotions, their satisfaction is decreasing. One possible explanation is that regulation of partner's emotions may suppose an extra effort, and it may be difficult for young adults to focus on someone else and not on self when they are already concerned with identity explorations (Arnett, 2000). Due to the exploratory study's character and lack of previous studies on the moderating role of gender and relationship length between recognition of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction, and regulation of partner's emotions and dyadic cohesion, dyadic satisfaction respectively, caution is needed in interpreting the results.

The present research had several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results. We used self-report measures to assess responses on emotion recognition, emotion regulation and dyadic adjustment. We also obtained assessment of relationship's variables (dyadic satisfaction, dyadic cohesion, dyadic consensus, and dyadic adjustment) from only one member of the dyad. To get a better understanding of emotion processes in romantic relationships, future studies should consider reports from both members of the couple and supplement self-report data with observational or experimental data. Moreover, other studies should focus on specific regulation strategies as reappraisal, distraction, interpersonal or intrapersonal regulation and their impact on dyadic adjustment and its dimensions.

In addition, the study has limited generalizability not only in the sense that sample was collected from a specific group age, the majority of participants completed at least medium education, but also because of its exploratory character, being the first attempt in analyzing the link between emotion recognition, emotion regulation and dyadic adjustment. The participants in this study were first year students college, whose relationships, although committed, may be different from those of older individual involved in long-term committed relationships. Perhaps, the role of emotion recognition and emotion regulation in predicting dyadic adjustment and its dimensions surfaces more after intimate partners' are living together. Thus, future studies can assess emotion recognition, emotion regulation, and dyadic adjustment having a more heterogenic population sample. Examining whether emotion regulation is a mediator between emotion

recognition and dyadic satisfaction would be another interesting avenue for further research.

The role of emotion recognition and emotion regulation in romantic relationship's adjustment will needed to be examined in other studies with different measures (for emotion recognition, emotion regulation, dyadic adjustment, and dyadic satisfaction) and different romantic relationships samples (committed non-marital long-term relationships, marital newly romantic relationship, middle aged marital and older marital romantic relationships).

The quality of romantic relationships is influenced by many factors, including social skills, conflict resolution skills, daily negative and positive emotions balance, humor, work-family balance, personality traits, motivation, assertiveness skills, attachment style. Therefore, any specific variables are likely to have only a modest impact on the quality of romantic relationships. Given the importance of romantic relationships in individual life, such small effects can be very important.

In summary, this study provides new insights into the role of recognition of one's own and partner's emotions and regulation of self and partner's emotions in predicting dyadic adjustment and its dimensions. In addition, we also found that relationship length moderates the link between recognition of partner's emotion and dyadic satisfaction, and regulation of partner's emotions and dyadic satisfaction.

We concluded from our results that it may be useful to examine the specificity of emotion recognition and emotion regulation and romantic relationships outcomes link.

References

Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging Adulthood. A theory of development from the late teens through the tweenties. *American Psychologist, 55*(5), 469-480.

Bar-On, R. (2005). The impact of emotional intelligence on subjective well-being. *Perspectives in Education, 23*(1), 41-62.

Batool, S. S., & Khalid, R. (2012). Emotional Intelligence: A Predictor of Marital Quality in Pakistani Couples. *Pakistan Journal of Psychological Research, 27*(1), 65-88.

Bloch, L., Haase, C. M., & Levenson, R. W. (2014). Emotion regulation predicts marital satisfaction: More than a wives' tale. *Emotion, 14*(1), 130-144.

Brackett, M. A., Warner, R. M., & Bosco, J. S. (2005). Emotional intelligence and relationship quality among couples. *Personal Relationships, 12*, 197-212.

Busby, D. M., Christensen, C., Crane, D. R., & Larson, J. H. (1995). A revision of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale for use with distressed and nondistressed couples: Construct hierarchy and multidimensional scales. *Journal of Marital and family Therapy*, *21*(3), 289-308.

Cameron, L. D., Overall, N. C. (2018). Suppression and expression as distinct emotion-regulation processes in daily interactions: Longitudinal and meta-analyses. *Emotion, 18*(4), 465-480.

Cohen, S., Schulz, M. S., Weiss, E., & Waldinger, R. J. (2012). Eye of the Beholder: The individual and dyadic contributions of empathic accuracy and perceived empathic effort to relationship satisfaction. *Journal of Family Psychology, 26*, 236-245.

Cordova, J. V., Gee, C. B., & Warren, L. Z. (2005). Emotional skillfulness in marriage: Intimacy as a mediator of the relationship between emotional skillfulness and marital satisfaction. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology, 24*(2), 218-235.

Fitness, J., & Fletcher, J. (1990). Emotion labelling in close relationships. *New Zealand Journal of Psychology, 19*, 63-69.

Gross, J. J. (2015). Emotion regulation: current status and future prospects. *Psychological Inquiry, 26*, 1-26.

Impett, E. A., Kogan, A., English, T., John, O., Oveis, C., Gordon, A. M., et al. (2012). Suppression Sours Sacrifice: Emotional and Relational Costs of Suppressing Emotions in Romantic Relationships. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin, 38*(6), 707-720.

Johnson, S. M., Makinen, J. A., & Millikin, J. W. (2001). Attachment injuries in couple relationships: A new perspective on impasses in couples therapy. *Journal of marital and family therapy, 27*(2), 145-155.

Joshi, S., & Thingujam, N. S. (2009). Perceived Emotional Intelligence and Marital Adjustment: Examining the Mediating Role of Personality and Social Desirability. *Journal of the Indian Academy of Applied Psychology, 35*(1), 79-86.

Killian, K. D. (2012). Development and validation of the emotional self-awareness questionnaire: a measure of emotional intelligence. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 38*(2), 502-514.

Koerner, A., & Fitzpatrick, M. A. (2002). Nonverbal communication and marital adjustment and satisfaction: the role of decoding relationship relevant and relationship irrelevant affect. *Communication Monographs, 69*(1), 33-51.

Malouff, J. M., & Thorsteinsson, E. B. (2014). Trait emotional intelligence and romantic relationship satisfaction: A meta-analysis. *The American Journal of Family Therapy, 42*(1), 53-66.

Mayer, J. D., Salovey, P., & Caruso, D. R. (2000). Competing models of emotional intelligence. In Sternberg, R. J. (Ed), *Handbook of human intelligence* (pp. 396-422). New York: NY: Cambridge University.

Oatley, K., & Johnson-Laird, P. N. (2011). Basic emotions in social relationships, reasoning, and psychological illnesses. *Emotion Review, 3*(4), 424-433.

Pollock, B. E., Khaddouma, A., Huet-Cox, K., Fillauer, J. P., & Bolden, J. (2017). Emotional intelligence, relationship satisfaction, and the moderating effect of ADHD symptomatology. *Journal of Adult Development, 24*(1), 15-21.

Rosenbluth, S. C., & Steil, J. M. (1995). Predictors of intimacy for women in heterosexual and homosexual couples. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 12*, 163-175.

Rotter, N. G., & Rotter, G. S. (1988). Sex differences in the encoding and decoding of negative facial emotions. *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior 12*(2), 139-149.

Salovey, P., & Mayer, J. D. (1990). Emotional Intelligence. *Imagination, Cognition and Personality, 9*, 185-211.

Schlegel, K., Grandjean, D., & Scherer, K. R. (2014). Introducing the Geneva Emotion Recognition Test: An Example of Rasch-Based Test Development. *Psychological Assessment 26*(2), 666-672.

Smith, L., Heaven, P. C., & Ciarrochi, J. (2008). Trait emotional intelligence, conflict communication patterns, and relationship satisfaction. *Personality and Individual Differences, 44*, 1314-1325.

Trommsdorff, G., & John, H. (1992). Decoding affective communication in intimate relationships. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 22*(1), 41-54.

Turliuc, M. N., & Muraru, A. A. (2013). Psychometric proprieties of the Revised Dyadic Adjustment Scale on a sample of married adults. *Journal of Psychological and Educational Research, 21*(1), 49-76.

Velotti, P., Balzarotti, S., Tagliabue, S., English, T., Zavattini, G. C., & Gross, J. J. (2016). Emotional suppression in early marriage: Actor, partner, and

similarity effects on marital quality. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships, 33*(3), 277-302.

Waite, L. J., & Gallagher, M. (2000). *The case for marriage.* New York: Broadway Books.

Wang, M., & Saudino, K. J. (2011). Emotion regulation and stress. *Journal of Adult Development, 18*, 95-103.

Yelsma, P., & Marrow, S. (2003). An Examination of Couples' Difficulties With Emotional Expressiveness and Their Marital Satisfaction. *The Journal of Family Communication, 3*(1), 41-62.

Yoo, S. H., & Noyes, S. E. (2016). Recognition of Facial Expressions of Negative Emotions in Romantic Relationships. *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior, 40*, 1-12.

Zeidner, M., Kloda, I., & Matthews, G. (2013). Does dyadic coping mediate the relationship between emotional intelligence (EI) and marital quality? *Journal of Family Psychology, 27*(5), 795-805.

Received March 3, 2020
Revision April 28, 2020
Accepted May 29, 2020