Medical Xpress

Love is a many-faceted thing: Study examines the relationship between age and satisfaction with love life

April 9 2014

Regular churchgoers, married people or those who enjoy harmonious social ties are most satisfied with their love life. This also goes for people who are currently in love or who experience the commitment and sexual desire of their partners, says Félix Neto and Maria da Conceição Pinto of the Universidade do Porto in Portugal. Their findings, published in an article in Springer's journal *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, look at the influences on love life satisfaction throughout one's adult life.

The researchers associate love with the desire to enter into, maintain, or

expand a close, connected, and ongoing relationship with another person. In turn, love life satisfaction is a purely subjective, overall measurement of someone's actual enjoyment of love. To investigate the factors that influence this across various age groups, 1,284 adult Portuguese women and men ranging between 18 and 90 years old were asked to evaluate and weigh specific facets of their own love lives by using the Satisfaction With Love Life Scale.

Neto and Pinto found that a combination of factors such as age, religious involvement, marital status and love style (e.g. manipulative or playful), influence a person's love satisfaction. Young adults (18 to 30 years old) enjoy similar overall levels of love satisfaction as do adults (31 to 59 years old) and older adults (60 to 90 years old). In comparing adults in the older age groups, those beyond 60 years of age were found to be less satisfied with their love lives than those between 31 and 59 years old, partly because it is of less importance to them. While education does not impact a person's love life satisfaction, religious involvement does. The finding that believers and regular churchgoers are positive about their love lives is in line with previous studies that associate religious involvement with better mental health and greater satisfaction with life and sexual relationships in general.

People who enjoy higher levels of well-being and have harmonious social relationships also tend to be more content with their love lives. The same is true for people who are currently in love, in contrast to those who are not in a romantic relationship. Married and cohabiting respondents (and especially those who experienced the commitment and sexual desire of their partners) of all ages enjoy higher love satisfaction than divorced people.

While men and women's satisfaction with their love lives are generally the same, gender does play a role when various love styles are considered for specific age groups. Adult men with a Ludus style (game-playing,

manipulative love that keeps partner uncertain about relationship) or Mania style (possessive, jealous) rate their love lives as more fulfilled.

The authors conclude: "In contrast to much past investigation on love, our research used a sample of adults representing a full range of age. Focusing on exploration of age variations in satisfaction with love life, the research displayed a comprehensive view of differences and similarities across the adult life span."

More information: Neto, F. & Pinto, M. C. (2014). Satisfaction with love life across the adult life span, *Applied Research in Quality of Life*, DOI: 10.1007/s11482-014-9314-6

Provided by Springer

Citation: Love is a many-faceted thing: Study examines the relationship between age and satisfaction with love life (2014, April 9) retrieved 25 April 2024 from https://medicalxpress.com/news/2014-04-many-faceted-relationship-age-satisfaction-life.html

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.