

THE CONCEPT OF LOVE IN SPAIN

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The model of romantic love is given great importance in the Spanish context, and its related myths are widely accepted. It has also been suggested that the concept of love can play a role in the origin and maintenance of gender violence. As an initial step toward an exploration of this relationship, the aim of this article is to study the prevailing concept of love in the Spanish population and to analyze any possible differences in this conception resulting from gender and age. A short version of the Love Attitudes Scale was administered to a representative sample of 1,351 people. The results show that both men and women widely accept the love styles Eros, Agape, Storge and Pragma, reject the Ludus style, and are indifferent to the Mania style. However, the order of preference for these love styles is different for men and women and for different age groups. The results are analyzed and discussed.

Keywords: love styles, gender differences, age differences.

Se ha demostrado la importancia otorgada en nuestro entorno al modelo de amor romántico y la aceptación de los mitos al respecto. En esta misma línea, se ha sugerido que el concepto de amor puede tener un papel en el surgimiento y mantenimiento de violencia de género. Con objeto de iniciar el análisis sobre esta cuestión, se presenta un trabajo cuyo objetivo es profundizar en el estudio del concepto de amor imperante entre la población general española y analizar las diferencias que el género y la edad introducen en dicha concepción. Para ello se administró la versión reducida de la Escala de Actitudes sobre el Amor (LAS) a una muestra representativa de 1.351 personas. Los resultados indican que tanto entre los varones como entre las mujeres los estilos de amor Eros, Ágape, Storge y Pragma son aceptados mayoritariamente, el estilo Ludus es rechazado y se muestra indiferencia hacia el estilo Manía. Al margen de esta coincidencia general, el orden de preferencia varía entre varones y mujeres y para los diferentes grupos de edad. Se analizan y discuten estos resultados.

Palabras clave: estilos de amor, diferencias de género, diferencias de edad.

Love is a cultural construction, and each historical period has developed a different conception of it and of the links between marriage, love and sex (Barrón, Martínez-Íñigo, De Paul & Yela, 1999; Yela, 2000, 2003).

Since the early nineteenth century there has been an association between the concepts of romantic love, marriage and sexuality that has endured to the present day (Barrón et al., 1999). Over recent decades, in Western culture, this relationship has become closer and closer, to the extent that romantic love is considered the fundamental reason for maintaining matrimonial relations, and “being in love” the basis for forming a couple and remaining in it (Simpson, Campbell &

Berscheid, 1986; Ubillos et al., 2001); consequently, this conception has become popular and normative, marriage appears as a personal choice and romantic love and satisfaction sexual must be achieved in marriage (Barrón et al., 1999; Yela, 2003).

As Sangrador (1993) points out, love can be understood as an attitude (positive attitude or attraction towards another person, which includes a predisposition to think, feel and behave in a certain way vis-à-vis that person), as an emotion (feeling or passion that includes, moreover, certain physiological reactions), or as a behaviour (caring for the other person, being with them, attending to their needs, etc.). This differentiation (and particularly the conception of love as an attitude or as an emotion) would connect with the differentiation between Eros, or passionate love, and Agape, or altruistic love, proposed by Lee (1973, 1976) in one of the classic typologies, which we shall take as the axis of the present work.

This classification included six basic types of love, three “primary colours” (Eros or passionate love, Ludus

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or game-playing love, and Storge or friendship-based love) and three “secondary colours” (Mania or obsessive love, Pragma or pragmatic love, and Agape or altruistic love), formed through the combination of the primary colours, but with their particular properties and characteristics. Some of them coincide with another classic typology of love, that of Sternberg (1989), explored empirically in the Spanish context in works such as those of Serrano and Carreño (1993) or Yela (1997).

In accordance with Lee’s proposal (1973, 1976) and the description by Ubillos and cols. (Ubillos et al., 2001; Ubillos, Paéz & Zubieta, 2003), the characteristics of these styles of love would be as follows:

- **Eros** or passionate/romantic love, characterized by irresistible passion, with intense feelings, intimacy, strong physical attraction and sexual activity.
- **Ludus** or game-playing love, characterized by casual interactions, with little emotional involvement, absence of future expectations and avoidance of intimacy and intensity.
- **Storge** or friendship-based love, characterized by lasting commitment that develops slowly and prudently and by the sharing of attitudes and values; it is based on intimacy, friendship, companionship and affection, and seeks long-term commitment rather than short-term passion.
- **Pragma** or pragmatic love: made up of Ludus and Storge, it is based on the rational quest for the ideal partner.
- **Mania** or obsessive/possessive love: made up of Eros and Ludus, it is characterized by intensity and intimacy, but also by jealousy, lack of communication and physical and psychological “symptoms”.
- **Agape** or altruistic love: made up of Eros and Storge, it is characterized by putting giving before receiving and by self-sacrifice for the good of the couple.

Lee’s typology has been widely considered in the research in this field; Hendrick and Hendrick (1986), for example, developed the *Love Attitudes Scale* (LAS) for assessing the six styles proposed in this typology (though they consider them as separate styles without distinguishing between primary and secondary) from an individual perspective on love relationships (Ubillos et al., 2001, 2003).

The original analyses carried out with this scale in university students showed that the predominant love style was Storge (66% of cases), followed by Eros (34%) and Pragma (17%) (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1993). For their part, Ubillos and cols. (2001), using the same

scale in samples of Spanish and Latin-American university students from 15 countries, observed that the most highly rated styles of love were Eros and Agape, the lowest-rated being Ludus and Pragma.

As Butler, Walter, Skowronski and Shannon (1995) point out, the LAS has also been employed for analyzing the relationship between styles of love and variables such as gender, age or diverse social, cultural and structural factors.

These studies have concluded, for example, that women give more importance to the Storge and Pragma styles, whilst men give more importance to Ludus and Agape (Bailey, Hendrick & Hendrick, 1987; Hall, Hendrick & Hendrick, 1991; Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986; Hendrick, Hendrick & Dicke, 1998; Ubillos et al., 2001); as regards age groups, Eros would be the preferred style among young adults, whilst with increasing age there would be a growing preference for styles such as Storge or Pragma (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986). The predominant love style would also be modulated by social factors such as the ratio between men and women (Guttentag & Secord, 1999), level of gender equality (Eagly & Word, 1999) or type of culture – individualistic or collectivistic (Dion & Dion, 1993) – and by individual factors such as personality characteristics, attitudes or religious beliefs (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1987, 1988).

The study of love takes on particular importance in view of its possible relation to a social problem of great current relevance, that of violence against women, which can have such devastating consequences for their lives and their health (Calvete, Estevez & Corral, 2007; Sarasúa, Zubizarreta, Echeburúa & De Corral, 2007). As pointed out in various studies, the love model (and specifically that of romantic love) prevalent in our society and the myths associated with it would be among the factors that can contribute to favouring and/or maintaining violence against women within the couple (Garrido, 2001; González & Santana, 2001; Sanmartín, Molina & García, 2003).

In this context it should be borne in mind that, according to the theory of differential socialization, in the process of initiation into social and cultural life, and based on the influence of socializing agents, people acquire differentiated gender identities that entail cognitive, attitudinal and behavioural styles, axiological and moral codes and stereotypical norms of the behaviour assigned to each gender (Walker & Barton, 1983).

This differential socialization affects a wide range of aspects of human life, including affective and intimate partner relationships. Thus, during the socialization process we learn what it means to fall in love, which feelings are appropriate, whom we should or shouldn't fall in love with, what and who is attractive (which tends to coincide with traditional gender role patterns), what an intimate partner relationship should be like (assymetric or egalitarian), and so on as well as, of course, all the cultural myths about love (Duque, 2006; Flecha, Puigvert & Redondo, 2005; Sanpedro, 2005).

Despite the changes in recent decades (at least in Western societies), love continues to have a strong presence in female socialization, forming its backbone, and remains the most high-priority life goal for women (Altable, 1998; Ferreira, 1995; Lagarde, 2005;

Sanpedro, 2005). Thus, the attainment of love and its development (falling in love, the intimate partner relationship, marriage, and so on) continues to be what the lives of most women revolve around; for men, on the other hand, the main priority continues to be social recognition (love and relationships remaining more in the background), thus, reflecting a priority socialization of women towards the private and of men towards the public sphere.

In sum, during the socialization process and through different socializing agents we are fed a series of contents with regard to interpersonal, affective and couple relationships that basically constitute a transposition of the dominant values in our society, which are none other than those of the patriarchal system as far as relations between men and women are concerned, as shown by diverse studies in this field (Altable, 1998; Charkow & Nelson, 2000; Moreno, González & Ros, 2007; Oliver & Valls, 2004).

Within this framework, and given our ultimate goal of exploring in more depth the issue of intimate partner violence against women and the factors that generate and maintain it, we embarked on this research, which forms part of a broader project, and whose objective is to make a descriptive study of the prevalent conceptualization of love among the general population in the Spanish context.

METHOD

Participants

The sample was selected from among the general population by means of stratified sampling by gender, and within each stratum, by quotas according to age. This sample was made up of a total of 1,351 persons, allowing us to set the error at $\pm 2.7\%$ for a significance level of 95.5%.

Table 1 shows the descriptive demographic data of the sample studied. It should be noted that, in accordance with the goals of the study, we opted for distinguishing four age groups: age 18 to 29 (15.3% of the sample, 41.5% women and 58.5% men), age 30 to 44 (28.7% of the sample, 50.9% women and 49.1% men), age 45 to 64 (33.9% of the sample, 55.9% women and 44.1% men) and age 65 or over (22.1% of the sample, 51.2% women and 48.8% men).

The majority of those making up the sample were of middle-middle socio-economic class, had a primary or secondary education and were in employment, though, as expected, some of these characteristics varied substantially between men and women and for the

Table 1
Descriptive data for the sample as a whole

Variable N (%)	Total sample
Sex	
Man	659 (48.8%)
Woman	692 (51.2%)
Age	
Mean (s.d.)	48.63 (17.22)
Range	(18-93)
18 to 29	207 (15.3%)
30 to 44	387 (28.7%)
45 to 64	458 (33.9%)
65 or over	299 (22.1%)
Socio-economic class	
Low	112 (8.3%)
Lower-middle	269 (19.9%)
Middle-middle	761 (56.3%)
Upper-middle	179 (13.3%)
High	30 (2.2%)
Educational level	
Cannot read/write	12 (0.8%)
Can read and write	128 (9.5%)
Primary education	369 (27.3%)
Secondary education	340 (25.2%)
Technical/vocational training	162 (12.0%)
Higher education	340 (25.2%)
Work status	
Housewife/husband	187 (13.8%)
Unemployed	123 (9.1%)
Employed	613 (45.4%)
On pension	97 (7.3%)
Retired	233 (17.2%)
Off sick	18 (1.3%)
Student	80 (5.9%)
Place of residence	
North	493 (36.5%)
Central	450 (33.3%)
South	318 (23.5%)
Islands	90 (6.7%)
Place of birth	
Spain	1267 (93.8%)
Outside of Spain	84 (6.2%)
Length of residence in Spain	
Mean (s.d.)	164.77 months
Range	(179.32)

different age groups.

It should be stressed that some of the results obtained (such as the high proportion of those with higher education) may be related to the type of survey carried out (over the telephone), which will be easier to respond to for the better educated. Indeed, a certain number of those contacted declined to participate on the grounds that they had difficulties understanding the items.

With regard to place of residence, those making up the sample were distributed proportionally throughout the different sectors into which we divided the country (north, central, south and islands).

Instruments

For the collection of data on the sociodemographic variables we used a questionnaire designed ad hoc which gathered information on sex, age, educational level, economic level, work status, place of residence, place of birth and, where applicable, length of time living in Spain.

In order to assess attitudes toward love we made use of the **Love Attitudes Scale (LAS)**. Of the different versions available we used the 18-item version (3 items for each of the six love styles previously described) developed by Hendrick, Hendrick and Dicke (1998), which explained 69% of the variance and obtained alpha coefficients of between .62 and .87, depending on the scale (.62 for the Mania scale, .69 for Ludus, .76 for Pragma, .77 for Eros, .82 for Agape and .87 for Storge).

In order to apply the instrument with Spanish speakers we used these 18 items from the version translated into Spanish and validated in Spanish and Latin-American students by Ubillos and cols. (2001).

Interviewees were required to state their level of agreement with the content of each item on a 5-point scale (where 1 indicated "Totally disagree with the statement" and 5 "Totally agree with the statement"), so that the higher the score, the more the respondent agreed with or accepted this form or style of love. This response scale is in the opposite direction to that of other versions (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986; Hendrick, Hendrick & Dicke, 1998; Ubillos et al., 2001), which is an important point to bear in mind on comparing our results with those of other studies.

Procedure

After consulting the census records, we fixed a suitable sample size for an acceptable error level and selected the sample using stratified sampling by gender, and within

each stratum by quotas according to age.

In order to guarantee the presence of people from the different geographical areas we divided the country into four sectors (north, central, south and islands) and selected people at random from the corresponding telephone directories.

At the same time, we trained the interviewer team in a group session, giving them instructions for the application of the questionnaire via telephone and for the input of the coded responses in the specially-designed database. Specifically, the interviewers identified themselves as such to the potential participants, provided information about the objectives of the research and the voluntary and anonymous nature of the study, and requested their participation. If they agreed to take part, the interviewer read them the questions and response options and entered their responses in an Excel file.

In all cases respondents were treated in strict accordance with current ethical research guidelines, and agreed to participate voluntarily and without any kind of remuneration or reward.

It should be stressed that one of the drawbacks of telephone interviews is their potential rejection by certain groups. In our case, and in accordance with information provided by the interviewers, men, younger people and those with lower educational levels showed greater reluctance to participate, giving as their reasons a lack of interest in the issue and, especially, lack of time. Thus, a possible limitation of the present work is an over-representation of older people and those with a higher educational level.

The data were analyzed using the SPSS statistical package (version 14.0 para Windows).

RESULTS

Table 2
Love Attitudes Scale (n= 1351)

Scale	Totally disagree	Mostly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Mostly agree	Totally agree	DK/NA
Eros	15 (1,1%)	32 (2,4%)	134 (9,9%)	476 (35,2%)	654 (48,4%)	40 (3,0%)
Ludus	555 (41,1%)	341 (25,2%)	231 (17,1%)	132 (9,8%)	33 (2,4%)	59 (4,4%)
Storge	113 (8,4%)	198 (14,7%)	257 (19,0%)	359 (26,6%)	369 (27,3%)	55 (4,0%)
Pragma	98 (7,2%)	171 (12,7%)	308 (22,8%)	438 (32,4%)	293 (21,7%)	43 (3,2%)
Mania	75 (5,6%)	258 (19,1%)	536 (39,7%)	333 (24,6%)	101 (7,5%)	48 (3,5%)
Agape	36	92	221	470	484	48

A first analysis of the data obtained indicates that, in general, interviewees show high levels of agreement with the Eros, Agape, Pragma and Storge styles, high levels of disagreement with the Ludus style, and indifference with respect to the Mania style.

Comparison of the distribution of percentages of response by gender (Table 3) shows that, although the

Scale	Men (n=659)	Women (n=692)	Significance
Eros			
Disagreement	19 (3.0%)	28 (4.1%)	X(2)= 7.844 p= .020 Contingency coefficient= .077
Indifference	51 (8.1%)	83 (12.2%)	
Agreement	563 (88.9%)	567 (83.7%)	
Ludus			
Disagreement	401 (64.0%)	495 (74.5%)	X(2)= 17.649 p= .000 Contingency coefficient= .116
Indifference	127 (20.2%)	104 (15.6%)	
Agreement	99 (15.8%)	66 (9.9%)	
Storge			
Disagreement	141 (22.5%)	170 (25.4%)	X(2)= 2.965 p= .227
Indifference	119 (18.9%)	138 (20.7%)	
Agreement	368 (58.6%)	360 (53.9%)	
Pragma			
Disagreement	174 (27.4%)	95 (14.1%)	X(2)= 44.776 p= .000 Contingency coefficient= .182
Indifference	160 (25.1%)	148 (22.0%)	
Agreement	02 (47.5%)	429 (63.9%)	
Mania			
Disagreement	163 (26.0%)	170 (25.2%)	X(2)= 5.482 p= .065
Indifference	239 (38.0%)	297 (44.0%)	
Agreement	226 (36.0%)	208 (30.8%)	
Agape			
Disagreement	21 (3.4%)	107 (15.9%)	X(2)= 120.563 p= .000 Contingency coefficient= .291
Indifference	61 (9.7%)	160 (23.7%)	
Agreement	546 (86.9%)	408 (60.4%)	

Scale	Men (n= 190)	Women (n= 197)	Significance
Eros			
Disagreement	7 (3.8%)	5 (2.5%)	X(2)= 1.976 p= .372
Indifference	13 (7.0%)	21 (10.7%)	
Agreement	166 (89.2%)	171 (86.8%)	
Ludus			
Disagreement	120 (64.5%)	145 (74.0%)	X(2)= 4.062 p= .131
Indifference	35 (18.8%)	28 (14.3%)	
Agreement	31 (16.7%)	23 (11.7%)	
Storge			
Disagreement	48 (26.0%)	53 (27.2%)	X(2)= .894 p= .640
Indifference	33 (17.8%)	41 (21.0%)	
Agreement	104 (56.2%)	101 (51.8%)	
Pragma			
Disagreement	59 (31.9%)	34 (17.3%)	X(2)= 16.350 p= .000 Contingency coefficient= .203
Indifference	55 (29.7%)	49 (25.0%)	
Agreement	71 (38.4%)	113 (57.7%)	
Mania			
Disagreement	37 (20.1%)	50 (25.5%)	X(2)= 4.918 p= .086
Indifference	74 (40.2%)	89 (45.4%)	
Agreement	73 (39.7%)	57 (29.1%)	
Agape			
Disagreement	10 (5.4%)	36 (18.3%)	X(2)= 44.984 p= .000 Contingency coefficient= .325
Indifference	18 (9.8%)	57 (28.9%)	
Agreement	156 (84.8%)	104 (52.8%)	

love styles primarily accepted or rejected by men and women are similar, men show significantly higher levels of agreement with the Eros, Ludus and Agape styles, and women with the Pragma style.

Below we present the results obtained on dividing the sample by age group and comparing in each group the scores for men and for women in relation to each love style.

Scale	Men (n= 121)	Women (n= 86)	Significance
Eros			
Disagreement	3 (2.6%)	3 (3.5%)	X(2)= .943 p= .624
Indifference	14 (12.2%)	14 (16.5%)	
Agreement	98 (85.2%)	68 (80.0%)	
Ludus			
Disagreement	53 (46.0%)	55 (66.3%)	X(2)= 8.700 p= .013 Contingency coefficient= .205
Indifference	31 (27.0%)	11 (13.2%)	
Agreement	31 (27.0%)	17 (20.5%)	
Storge			
Disagreement	30 (25.9%)	21 (25.3%)	X(2)= .544 p= .762
Indifference	24 (20.7%)	14 (16.9%)	
Agreement	62 (53.4%)	48 (57.8%)	
Pragma			
Disagreement	26 (21.8%)	9 (10.7%)	X(2)= 7.526 p= .023 Contingency coefficient= .189
Indifference	37 (31.1%)	20 (23.8%)	
Agreement	56 (47.1%)	55 (65.5%)	
Mania			
Disagreement	28 (24.1%)	16 (19.0%)	X(2)= 1.231 p= .545
Indifference	43 (37.1%)	37 (44.1%)	
Agreement	45 (38.8%)	31 (36.9%)	
Agape			
Disagreement	4 (3.5%)	16 (19.0%)	X(2)= 34.913 p= .000 Contingency coefficient= .386
Indifference	20 (17.2%)	35 (41.7%)	
Agreement	92 (79.3%)	33 (39.3%)	

Scale	Men (n= 202)	Women (n= 256)	Significance
Eros			
Disagreement	7 (3.6%)	11 (4.4%)	X(2)= 2.184 p= .335
Indifference	18 (9.3%)	34 (13.6%)	
Agreement	168 (87.1%)	205 (82.0%)	
Ludus			
Disagreement	131 (67.5%)	198 (79.8%)	X(2)= 9.298 p= .010 Contingency coefficient= .144
Indifference	37 (19.1%)	33 (13.3%)	
Agreement	26 (13.4%)	17 (6.9%)	
Storge			
Disagreement	47 (24.1%)	74 (29.8%)	X(2)= 4.815 p= .090
Indifference	34 (17.4%)	55 (22.2%)	
Agreement	114 (58.5%)	119 (48.0%)	
Pragma			
Disagreement	68 (34.5%)	41 (16.5%)	X(2)= 19.736 p= .000 Contingency coefficient= .206
Indifference	43 (21.8%)	63 (25.3%)	
Agreement	86 (43.7%)	145 (58.2%)	
Mania			
Disagreement	63 (32.3%)	62 (24.8%)	X(2)= 5.072 p= .079
Indifference	68 (34.9%)	112 (44.8%)	
Agreement	64 (32.8%)	76 (30.4%)	
Agape			
Disagreement	6 (3.1%)	48 (19.3%)	X(2)= 45.967 p= .000 Contingency coefficient= .307
Indifference	16 (8.3%)	51 (20.5%)	
Agreement	171 (88.6%)	150 (60.2%)	

As it can be seen (Tables 4, 5, 6 and 7), the Eros or passionate/romantic love style yields agreement in over 80% of those interviewed, for all age groups and in both women and men. Percentages of agreement are higher among men than among women in all cases, though the differences are only statistically significant in the oldest group. This result is indicative of the high social value of romantic love throughout the the population studied (Ubillos et al., 2001).

The Ludus or game-playing love style, on the other hand, generates high levels of disagreement in all cases (for men and women in all age groups). It is worth noting that among those aged 18 to 29 (when the first stable relationships tend to be formed) and 45 to 64 (when the highest percentage of break-ups occur), women show significantly higher percentages of disagreement than men.

As far as the Storge or friendship-based love style is concerned, it yields levels of agreement of 50-60% among men and women in all age groups, with no differences between the sexes in any case. The highest percentages of agreement with this love style are found among older people, and this finding could be related to the greater importance given to long-term commitment at this time of life (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986).

In all the age groups, and among both men and women, there is a predominance of those in agreement with the Pragma or pragmatic love style; notably, however, in all age ranges the percentage is significantly higher among women than among men. This result may be related to the traditional gender roles in the framework of the couple, which have translated into greater investment of effort by women (in their role as carers), so that they rate such practical aspects more positively (Eagly & Word, 1999).

The majority of those interviewed (men and women in all age groups) did not commit themselves in relation to the Mania or obsessive love style, selecting the response option "Neither agree nor disagree". Given the importance it may have in view of its possible link to gender violence, it is worth highlighting that around 30% of men and women in all age groups indicated their acceptance of this intense and possessive love style.

Finally, in all the age groups the percentages of acceptance of the Agape or altruistic love style in men were significantly higher than those for women (starting from a difference of almost 40% in the youngest group, which falls with age to a figure of 10%). In contrast to the case of the other results, this would contradict the

cliché of self-denial being basically a female characteristic.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The results obtained permit us to conclude that the most widely accepted love styles in the Spanish context are, in the following order: Eros, Agape, Pragma and Storge. In contrast, Ludus generates disagreement or lack of acceptance, while the Mania style yields indifference.

These results contrast with those described in studies using samples from other countries (Hendrick & Hendrick, 1993), in which researchers observe a preference for the Storge love style; on the other hand, they coincide with those found in the Spanish and Latin-American contexts by Ubillos and cols. (2001), who reported that the Eros and Agape styles were also the most widely accepted.

As far as the influence of gender is concerned, our results indicate that although men and women mainly accept the same styles of love, the order is slightly different in each case (Eros, Agape, Storge and Pragma in the case of men, and Eros, Pragma, Agape and Storge in that of women). In relation to this, men in general show greater acceptance of the Eros style (which is also the most widely accepted among older people) and Agape (the most well accepted for all age groups); women, on the other hand, show greater acceptance of the Pragma style in all the age groups and are more likely to reject the Ludus style (particularly those from the younger and intermediate age groups).

Table 7
Contingency tables, age 65 or over (n= 302)

Item	Men (n= 146)	Women (n= 156)	Significance
Eros			
Disagreement	2 (1,5%)	9 (6,2%)	X(2)= 7,739 p= ,021 Contingency coefficient= ,163
Indifference	6 (4,3%)	14 (9,6%)	
Agreement	131 (94,2%)	123 (84,2%)	
Ludus			
Disagreement	97 (73,5%)	97 (70,3%)	X(2)= 1,210 p= ,546
Indifference	24 (18,2%)	32 (23,2%)	
Agreement	11 (8,3%)	9 (6,5%)	
Storge			
Disagreement	16 (12,1%)	22 (15,5%)	X(2)= ,672 p= ,715
Indifference	28 (21,2%)	28 (19,7%)	
Agreement	88 (66,7%)	92 (64,8%)	
Pragma			
Disagreement	21 (15,6%)	11 (7,7%)	X(2)= 8,443 p= ,015 Contingency coefficient= ,172
Indifference	25 (18,5%)	16 (11,2%)	
Agreement	89 (65,9%)	116 (81,1%)	
Mania			
Disagreement	35 (26,3%)	42 (29,0%)	X(2)= ,340 p= ,844
Indifference	54 (40,6%)	59 (40,7%)	
Agreement	44 (33,1%)	44 (30,3%)	
Agape			
Disagreement	1 (0,7%)	7 (4,8%)	X(2)= 8,465 p= ,015 Contingency coefficient= ,171
Indifference	7 (5,2%)	17 (11,7%)	
Agreement	127 (94,1%)	121 (83,5%)	

These results coincide with the findings of Hendrick and cols. (Bailey, Hendrick & Hendrick, 1987; Hall, Hendrick & Hendrick, 1991; Hendrick & Hendrick, 1986; Hendrick, Hendrick & Dicke, 1998) and Ubillos and cols. (2001, 2003) with regard to the higher acceptance levels of Pragma by women and Agape by men, but not with their other results.

As regards age, the results reported here suggest that the acceptance of love styles such as Pragma or Agape would increase with age, whilst that of the Ludus style would decrease. This would be in the line suggested by Hendrick and Hendrick (1986), according to which maturity influences love styles, giving rise to a sequential development, so that Eros would be the preferential style among young adults, while as people got older they would increase their preference for styles such as Storge or Pragma. For their part, Butler and cols. (1995) concluded that with increasing age there is decreasing acceptance of styles such as Mania and Agape (this tendency being stronger among women than among men).

In sum, the results obtained indicate that the Eros or romantic love style is that which generates the highest levels of acceptance among those interviewed (over 80%), and among both men and women of all ages. As mentioned above, this finding clearly shows the currency in our context (Spain) of the romantic love model, and how this currency is found not only among the youngest population (as emerges from studies on this issue with university populations), but also among the Spanish population as a whole.

Having dealt with this first aspect, it is necessary to explore this issue in more depth, with a view, first of all, to gaining a better understanding of the relationships between love styles and variables such as age, other personal variables and those associated with intimate partner relationships; and second, to identifying the possible relationships between the concept of love and the genesis and/or maintenance of gender violence.

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