

Psychological Aspects of The Manifestation of Different Types of Love Among High School Students

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Abstract

This article analyzes the psychological aspects of the manifestation of love and affection among high school students. The study examines the psychological factors influencing the formation of romantic relationships during adolescence and early youth, including personal identity, emotional development, self-awareness, social environment, and peer relationships. Based on an analytical approach, the significance of love and affection in the personal development of young people and their influence on emotional stability, social adaptation, and the formation of interpersonal relationships are discussed. The findings indicate that feelings of love and affection contribute to the development of psychological maturity, empathy, responsibility, and mutual respect among high school students. At the same time, it was found that insufficient emotional experience during this developmental stage may, in some cases, lead to psychological distress, anxiety, and interpersonal conflicts. The results emphasize the importance of supporting healthy emotional development and fostering psychological culture regarding love and romantic relationships among adolescents.

Keywords: love, affection, high school students, psychological development, emotional maturity, personal identity, self-awareness, interpersonal relationships, romantic feelings, social adaptation.

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1. Introduction

Among the issues of developmental periodization, early youth represents one of the most complex psychological stages, as it encompasses both the completion of adolescence and the onset of youth, accompanied by significant psychological and physical developmental changes. Early youth is considered one of the most important stages in human life, characterized by profound psychological transformations and developmental processes. This period includes students aged 15–18 years.

Young people aged 15–18 differ significantly from children of other age groups in terms of their psychological characteristics. During this stage, individuals undergo important processes such as identity formation, independent thinking, personality development, and adaptation to social changes. Simultaneously, feelings of love and affection emerge in new forms. During youth, individuals begin to discover not only their own self-worth but also their emotional attitudes toward others.

Love and affection during early youth are accompanied by physiological, emotional, social, and psychological

changes. Through physical and emotional development, adolescents experience new forms of social interaction and relationships. Their emotional world becomes increasingly complex as they begin seeking meaningful relationships in various areas of life, including friendship, love, and family. From a psychological perspective, feelings of love and affection during youth are often expressed in romantic forms. Initially, adolescents may perceive these feelings as vague emotional experiences because they often act based on their emotions without fully understanding themselves or others. Furthermore, adolescents' romantic relationships are frequently shaped by social influences and experiences gained from friends and peers.

Experiences of first love play a significant role in self-expression, the fulfillment of emotional needs, and personality development. Therefore, understanding love and affection from a psychological perspective constitutes one of the central aspects of adolescents' psychological and social development. Love, affection, and romantic relationships contribute to self-awareness, understanding one's emotional attitudes toward others, and developing the ability to regulate emotions.

In contemporary society, the extent to which adolescents correctly understand positive emotions and develop mechanisms for appropriately managing and preserving them when they arise is of considerable importance during this developmental stage.

2. Methodology

The present study was aimed at investigating the psychological aspects of the manifestation of love and affection during early youth and employed a comprehensive psychological approach. The participants consisted of 150 students enrolled in grades 9 and 10 of general secondary schools. Participants were selected using a random sampling method.

Both theoretical and empirical methods were employed in the research process. To collect empirical data, observation, interviews, socio-psychological questionnaires, and psychodiagnostic methods were utilized. The observation method was used to examine students' relationships with peers, emotional reactions, and characteristics of interpersonal communication. Through interviews, participants' perceptions of love and affection, emotional experiences, and personal views were explored in greater detail.

Psychodiagnostic assessment included the

“Psychological Types of Love” methodology developed by S. V. Flora and the “Love and Liking Scale” developed by Yu. E. Alyoshina and L. Ya. Gozman. These instruments enabled the assessment of various forms of love, levels of emotional attachment, tendencies toward romantic relationships, and the specific characteristics of emotional attitudes toward members of the opposite sex.

The collected data were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The findings provided insights into the formation of feelings of love and affection, their psychological characteristics, and the factors influencing their manifestation during early youth. Throughout the study, participants' personal information was kept confidential, and all ethical principles of psychological research were strictly observed.

3. Results

The psychological characteristics of feelings of love and affection were examined among 150 students of grades 9 and 10 who participated in the study. The results of S. V. Flora's “Psychological Types of Love” methodology demonstrated the manifestation of various forms of love among the participants. Romantic love and friendship-based love were found to be the most prevalent forms among the majority of respondents.

According to the results of the “Love and Liking Scale” developed by Yu. E. Alyoshina and L. Ya. Gozman, a considerable proportion of students demonstrated positive emotional attitudes and interest toward members of the opposite sex. At the same time, among some respondents, the feeling of liking was found to be stronger than the feeling of love.

The findings obtained through observation and interviews revealed that feelings of love and affection occupy an important place in emotional development, self-awareness, and the system of peer relationships during early youth. Most participants associated love with mutual understanding, trust, and emotional closeness.

Overall, the results confirmed that feelings of love and affection actively develop during early youth and exert a significant influence on psychological development.

4. Discussion

The findings of the present study indicate that the

psychological types of love manifested during early youth vary according to factors such as age, gender, and place of residence. The obtained results support contemporary developmental psychology theories,

which emphasize that the formation of romantic relationships constitutes one of the key developmental tasks of adolescence.

Results of the “Psychological Types of Love” by gender

T/r	Gender	N	S	D	T
I	male	32	11,81	71,64	-1,18
	female	66	14,06	81,63	
II	male	32	11,25	80,39	-2,17*
	female	66	16,08	119,27	
III	male	32	17,91	116,73	-1,41
	female	66	21,47	148,96	
IV	male	32	16,16	130,59	-1,13
	female	66	18,74	105,30	
V	male	32	9,50	51,87	-1,10
	female	66	11,26	56,50	
VI	male	32	15,56	122,71	-0,95
	female	66	17,65	94,82	

*P<0,05; **P<0,01; ***P<0,001

The identification of a statistically significant gender difference in the Ludus type of love indicates that attitudes toward romantic relationships are associated with gender-related characteristics. These findings are consistent with the typology of love proposed by J. A. Lee (1973), who described Ludus love as an orientation toward romantic relationships characterized by playfulness and the pursuit of enjoyment. Contemporary

studies have also reported that the expansion of social media and digital communication has contributed to the increase in short-term and experimental romantic relationships among adolescents (Demir, 2021; Sumter & Vandenbosch, 2019). Therefore, the higher prevalence of Ludus love may be explained by the tendency of modern youth to perceive romantic relationships as opportunities for exploration and experimentation.

Results of the “Psychological Types of Love” by age

T/r	Yoshi	N	S	D	T
I	15-16	80	11,66	60,43	-4,24***
	17-18	18	20,72	97,39	

II	15-16	80	12,09	85,83	-5,44***
	17-18	18	25,22	84,18	
III	15-16	80	18,29	124,99	-3,80**
	17-18	18	29,28	113,27	
IV	15-16	80	16,29	110,36	-3,31**
	17-18	18	25,06	69,94	
V	15-16	80	9,59	52,07	-3,23**
	17-18	18	15,56	41,79	
VI	15-16	80	15,74	95,34	-2,60**
	17-18	18	22,44	109,91	

*P<0,05; **P<0,01; ***P<0,00

The results obtained with respect to age demonstrated that the Eros and Agape types of love were significantly more prevalent among respondents aged 17–18 years compared to those aged 15–16 years. This finding can be explained by Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development. According to Erikson, in the later stages of adolescence, personal identity becomes relatively more stable, and the need for intimacy and close interpersonal relationships increases. Consequently, romantic relationships begin to incorporate not only physical attraction but also elements of emotional closeness, mutual trust, and commitment (Erikson, 1968).

The higher manifestation of the Eros type among respondents aged 17–18 years suggests that romantic feelings become deeper and processes of idealization intensify with age. Similar findings were reported by Furman and Shaffer (2003) and Collins (2003), who

emphasized that romantic relationships exert a substantial influence on emotional development during the later stages of adolescence.

The results also revealed a relatively higher prevalence of the Mania type of love among respondents aged 15–16 years. This finding may be explained by the emotional instability characteristic of this developmental stage, the ongoing process of self-discovery, and the stronger manifestation of emotional dependency within romantic relationships. According to Sternberg’s Triangular Theory of Love, the passion component tends to dominate during the early stages of romantic relationships, resulting in increased emotional intensity and fluctuations (Sternberg, 1986). From this perspective, the higher prevalence of the Mania type can be regarded as one of the natural psychological characteristics of early adolescence.

Results of the “Psychological Types of Love” by region

T/r	region	N	S	D	T
I	Rural	50	9,52	43,85	-4,80***
	Urban	48	17,29	85,27	
II	Rural	50	11,24	81,00	-3,28**
	Urban	48	17,90	121,12	
III	Rural	50	15,80	94,16	-4,16***

IV	Urban	48	25,00	146,55	-2,65**
	Rural	50	15,18	100,97	
V	Urban	48	20,73	113,52	-4,33***
	Rural	50	7,76	35,29	
VI	Urban	48	13,73	58,41	-2,03*
	Rural	50	14,96	87,59	
	Urban	48	19,06	113,97	

*P<0,05; **P<0,01; ***P<0,001

The results obtained across residential areas demonstrated that respondents living in urban environments scored higher on all types of love compared to their peers residing in rural areas. This finding can be interpreted from the perspective of Bronfenbrenner’s Ecological Systems Theory. According to this theory, individual development is significantly influenced by both micro- and macro-social environmental factors surrounding the person (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In urban settings, broader communication opportunities, greater intensity of peer interactions, and stronger exposure to mass media create favorable psychological conditions for the formation of romantic relationships.

In particular, the higher prevalence of Eros and Storge love among urban respondents may be associated with the greater diversity of interpersonal relationships characteristic of modern urban environments. These findings are consistent with cross-cultural studies conducted in Turkey, South Korea, and the United States. Such studies have shown that adolescents living in highly urbanized areas tend to report a higher frequency of romantic involvement and a greater need for emotional intimacy (Hatfield & Rapson, 2018; Neto, 2020).

The higher manifestation of Agape love among respondents aged 17–18 years and among participants living in urban areas suggests the development of altruistic values, empathy, and the ability to consider the interests of others as adolescents mature. Contemporary research in positive psychology has similarly indicated that altruistic motivation is directly associated with personal well-being and healthy romantic relationships (Seligman, 2019).

Thus, the findings of the present study indicate that the

psychological types of love during early adolescence are shaped by biological maturation, emotional development, social experience, and cultural environment. Constructive forms of love, such as Eros, Storge, and Agape, appear to strengthen with age, whereas forms such as Mania and Ludus are more closely related to the developmental characteristics of adolescence. The obtained results have important theoretical and practical implications for psychological prevention programs, family counseling services, and educational initiatives aimed at fostering healthy romantic relationships among adolescents.

5. Conclusion

The findings of this study demonstrate that the formation and manifestation of love and affection among high school students are associated with complex psychological, social, and developmental factors. The empirical analyses confirmed that the active development of romantic feelings during early adolescence is closely related to emotional maturity, self-awareness, and personal identity formation.

The study revealed that different psychological types of love (Eros, Storge, Agape, Ludus, Mania, and Pragma) were manifested among respondents to varying degrees. In particular, age was found to be associated with the deepening of romantic relationships and increased emotional stability, as evidenced by the relatively higher prevalence of Eros and Agape among students aged 17–18 years. This finding reflects the strengthening of intimacy, emotional stability, and altruistic orientation in psychosocial development.

Furthermore, the results indicate that feelings of love during early adolescence function not only as emotional

experiences but also as important psychological mechanisms contributing to social adaptation, the development of empathy, and the formation of interpersonal relationships. However, the incomplete development of emotional maturity may, in some cases, lead to emotional instability, idealization, and tendencies toward dependency within relationships.

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