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Emotional competences and subjective well-being: The mediating role of relationship satisfaction in young Spanish adults

Estefanía Mónaco¹ José-Antonio Gil-Gómez² ,
and Inmaculada Montoya-Castilla³

¹Department of Personality, Assessment and Psychological Treatments, University of Valencia, Valencia, Spain

²Instituto de Automática e Informática Industrial, Universitat Politècnica de València, Valencia, Spain

³Department of Personality, Assessment and Psychological Treatments, University of Valencia, Valencia, Spain

Establishing and maintaining relationships is one of the challenges facing young adults at the beginning of this stage in their lives. Emotional competences are related to relationship satisfaction and subjective well-being. This paper aims to study the relationship between emotional competences and subjective well-being in young adults, considering the mediating role of satisfaction with the partner. Two hundred and thirty-three young Spanish people (60.1% women) between 18 and 35 years old (Mean = 22.93; *SD* = 3.72) participated in the study. All of them had a romantic partner. The Questionnaire of Emotional Skills and Competences (ESCQ-21), the Scale of Evaluation of the Relationships (RAS), the Scale of Satisfaction with Life (SWLS) and the Scale of Positive and Negative Experiences (SPANE) were used to measure the variables. For analysis, the SPSS version 26 and Mplus version 7.0 were used. The results indicate a significant relationship between emotional competences, relationship satisfaction and subjective well-being. The mediation model showed that satisfaction with the relationship plays a mediating role between the ability to regulate emotions and subjective well-being. The importance of emotional education both inside and outside relationships is considered, in order to promote healthy and non-violent relationships among young people.

Keywords: Emotional competences; Couple; Relationship satisfaction; Subjective well-being; Youth.

The way in which romantic relationships develop throughout the life cycle has been investigated in previous literature (Roberson et al., 2018). Given the organisation of our society, there is an increasing likelihood of engaging in exclusive, long-term relationships characterised by a high level of intimacy and a strong sense of commitment in early adulthood (Shulman & Connolly, 2013). Young people invest a large proportion of their personal resources in establishing and maintaining romantic relationships (Furman, 2018). If these relationships are satisfactory and of good quality, they have a positive influence on their health and subjective well-being (Ditzen et al., 2019; Gómez-López et al., 2019).

Interest in the study of well-being has increased exponentially in the last two decades, due to the growing concern in Western societies about the quality of life of their members. Subjective well-being refers to the overall assessment of the quality of life that an individual experiences according to his or her own standards. It consists of two components: cognition (life satisfaction) and affect (positive and negative) (Martela & Sheldon, 2019). People with high subjective well-being therefore report high satisfaction with the different areas of their lives, high positive affect (feeling of vitality, interest and positive mood) and low negative affect (distress and unpleasant moods). According to previous research, people's perception of their subjective well-being is closely related to

Correspondence should be addressed to Inmaculada Montoya-Castilla, Department of Personality, Assessment and Psychological Treatments, University of Valencia, Blasco Ibañez Avenue, 21, Valencia 46010, Spain. (E-mail: inmaculada.montoya@uv.es).

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their state of physical and mental health (Keller, 2019). It also is a protective factor against the development of some psychopathologies and physical health problems of psychosomatic origin (Martela & Sheldon, 2019).

Youth is an important life stage for the study of well-being, since it is a time in their development when people face various specific life tasks and decisions, related to the incipient development of their adult roles (Baggio et al., 2017). As mentioned above, one of the challenges is maintaining a partner relationship, along with other decisions of an academic, work or professional nature, complete economic independence and leaving the parental home, among other decisions (Furman, 2018). For this reason, difficulties in learning new skills and competences naturally arise at this stage. In addition, the complications arising from a complex historical, social and economic context could reduce the levels of well-being of young adults, as well as leading them to develop depressive and/or anxious symptoms and suffer from relationship difficulties (Gómez-López et al., 2019). This has repercussions on society in economic and health terms, as it is a public health problem (Harding et al., 2015).

Considering the above, it is important to study the factors that are related with relationship satisfaction and the subjective well-being of the young Spanish population. Numerous personal and environmental factors have been studied as predictors of subjective well-being, such as socioeconomic status (Neira et al., 2019), temperament (Bojanowska & Zalewska, 2018), attachment style (Galinha et al., 2013), personality traits (Cotter & Kerschner, 2018) and social relationships (Galinha et al., 2013), among others. Recent research has focused on two factors that seem to affect well-being (e.g. Geng, 2018): emotional competence (EC) and emotional intelligence (EI). As they are similar but not equivalent concepts, the main difference between EI and EC is the approach to learning emotions and how to manage them: EI is considered an innate skill or trait people are born with, although it can be learned later, while EC emphasises the skills that the person develops through cultural and contextual socialisation or that can be acquired through a learning process, and they are considered a group of generic skills related to emotions (Lau & Wu, 2012).

This paper focuses on the study of EC, as it is a field in which there is less abundant literature, and therefore more empirical evidence is needed (Schoeps et al., 2019). The definition of EC focuses on emotional skills that are developed in the immediate social context, in response to personal needs and the demands of their environment (Takšić et al., 2009). The emotional skills (Lau & Wu, 2012) can be summarised in three main components of EC for handling emotionally related situations: (a) identifying and understanding personal feelings and those of others, (b) expressing and communicating emotions, and (c) coping adaptively with negative emotional responses.

The ability to recognise, express and manage emotional information is related to subjective well-being (Huang et al., 2018). Individuals with high EC are better able to actively cope with difficult situations, positively process stressful events, and re-evaluate their life circumstances as satisfactory (Geng, 2018). They also tend to understand and accept different emotional states, meaning that unpleasant moods and distress are experienced with less psychological burden (Kong et al., 2019). In contrast, people with low levels of EC have difficulty processing their emotions efficiently, which can affect the intensity, frequency, and duration of their positive life experiences (Kong et al., 2019). This leads to a decline in their subjective perception of emotional well-being and life satisfaction, and may present problems in their interpersonal adaptation and mental health (Keller, 2019).

In addition to being related to personal subjective well-being, ECs are related to positive interpersonal variables, such as satisfaction with the romantic partner (Malouff et al., 2014). Well-developed ECs enable people to perceive and consider others' feelings when they feel frustrated in their relationship, and to understand, name and adequately express their own emotional states (Wollny et al., 2019). All this leads to a better management of emotions, resolving conflicts with partners in a constructive manner through empathy, negotiation and cooperation, without resorting to verbal or behavioural aggressiveness (Blázquez-Alonso et al., 2012). High EC therefore not only increases satisfaction with the relationship, but also prevents situations of violence in the relationship, increases the quality of the bond and the adjustment of the relationship (Megías et al., 2018).

The most recent studies show interest in identifying the variables that could be mediating the relationship between ECs and subjective well-being (Geng, 2018; Huang et al., 2018). At the same time, satisfaction with sentimental relationship has been observed as mediating between personal and health variables (Cotter & Kerschner, 2018). Considering that satisfaction with the romantic partner is closely related to ECs, and is at the same time a strong and consistent predictor of subjective well-being, the necessary pre-conditions are fulfilled (Baron & Kenny, 1986) to study the mediating role of this interpersonal variable.

The aim of this paper is to study the relationship between ECs and subjective well-being of young adults, considering the mediating role of satisfaction with sentimental relationship. In relation to this objective, the following hypotheses are formulated: (H1) ECs (emotional perception and understanding, emotional labelling and expression, emotional management and regulation) (H1.1) will positively correlate with satisfaction with the relationship, with life satisfaction and with positive affects, and (H1.2) will negatively correlate with negative affects; (H2) relationship satisfaction (H2.1) will positively correlate with life satisfaction and positive affect, and (H2.2) will negatively correlate with negative affect;

and (H3) relationship satisfaction will function as a mediating variable between ECs and variables of subjective well-being (life satisfaction, positive affect and negative affect).

METHODS

Participants

A total of 233 Spanish young adults (60.1% women) between the ages of 18 and 35 participated in the study (Mean_{age} = 22.93; *SD* = 3.72). All the participants had a partner when the study took place, with a relationship duration of between 3 months and 9 years (Mean_{time} = 37.86 months; *SD* = 25.11).

Instruments

The instruments used in this study are well-established self-report measures that have been adapted and validated for the Spanish youth population.

Emotional competences

ECs were assessed using the reduced version of the Emotional Skills and Competencies Questionnaire (ESCQ-21; Schoeps et al., 2019). While the original instrument (Takšić et al., 2009) consists of 45 items with an answer format on a 6-point Likert type scale (*1 = Never; 6 = Always*), the Spanish validation reduces the numbers of items to 21. It evaluates EI based on competencies and emotional skills on three scales: Perception and understanding of emotions (e.g. “I am able to distinguish whether my friend is sad or disappointed”); Labelling and expression of emotions (e.g. “I can easily name most of my feelings”); Management and regulation of emotions (e.g. “I can stay in a good mood, even if the people around me are in a bad mood”). The reliability of these three scales in the original version (Takšić et al., 2009) was very good (between $\alpha = .88$ and $\alpha = .92$). This strong internal consistency was replicated in the short version (Schoeps et al., 2019), with a Cronbach’s α of .84, .90 and .79, respectively, for all three scales. The reliability of this study for the sample is very good for the scale of emotional perception and understanding ($\alpha = .84$) and for the scale of emotional labelling and expression ($\alpha = .92$), and good for the scale of emotional management and regulation ($\alpha = .73$).

Satisfaction with the relationship

Satisfaction with the relationship was assessed using the Relationship Assessment Scale (RAS; Spanish validation by Lozano et al., 2010). This consists of seven items in a 5-point Likert scale format (*1 = Strongly Disagree;*

5 = Strongly Agree). The questions refer to the degree of satisfaction, quality of the relationship, degree to which needs and expectations are covered, love for the partner and difficulties in the relationship (e.g. “My partner satisfies my needs”). This instrument provides an overall score that indicates the degree of general satisfaction with the relationship, with a reliability α of .86 (Lozano et al., 2010). The reliability for the sample of this study is very good ($\alpha = .81$).

Satisfaction with life

The Satisfaction with Life Scale was used to assess life satisfaction (SWLS; Spanish validation by Vázquez et al., 2013). This short scale evaluates people’s satisfaction with their life in general (e.g. “My life conditions are excellent”). It consists of five items with a 7-point Likert-type scale (*1 = Completely disagree; 7 = Completely agree*). The scale has a very good internal consistency (Cronbach $\alpha = .84$) in the Spanish validation (Vázquez et al., 2013). The reliability for the sample of this study is very good ($\alpha = .87$).

Positive and negative experiences

The Scale of Positive and Negative Experiences was used to evaluate this variable (SPANE; Diener et al., 2010). The scale consists of 12 items; 6 refer to positive or pleasant experiences or moods (e.g. “In the last four weeks I have had happy feelings”) and 6 refer to negative or unpleasant experiences or moods (e.g. “In the last four weeks I have had feelings of fear”). Participants are asked to rate how often they have experienced positive and negative feelings during the past month on a 5-point Likert scale (*1 = Never; 5 = Always*). It has two dimensions: positive affect and negative affect. Moreover, it is possible to consider an overall well-being scale by subtracting the negative affect from the positive affect. The original version of the scale (Diener et al., 2010) has shown good psychometric properties (α de Cronbach = .81 for the positive affect scale and Cronbach’s $\alpha = .89$ for the negative affect scale). The reliability for the sample in this study is good ($\alpha = .77$ for both scales).

Procedure

Firstly, the project and the evaluation battery were approved by the University of Valencia’s ethics committee (procedure number: H152846236674), ensuring that the fundamental principles set out in the Helsinki Declaration and the Council of Europe’s Convention on Human Rights were respected. The requirements established in Spanish legislation on biomedical research, personal data protection and bioethics were also met. The

informed consent has been appropriately obtained by the participants. The data were collected online through the LimeSurvey platform, a free software application for the implementation of online surveys. The study was cross-sectional. The sample collection was based on convenience and proximity. Participants answered the battery of questionnaires throughout the year 2019. All procedures performed in studies involving human participants were in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional research committee and with the 1964 Helsinki Declaration and its later amendments or comparable ethical standards.

Data analysis

For the analysis of the data, first, an exploratory study of the variables was carried out, and some basic descriptive statistics were calculated to determine the means and standard deviations. Pearson's bivariate correlations were subsequently produced to estimate the relationship between the variables. These analyses were carried out using the SPSS version 26 statistical package.

In addition, a structural equation modelling (SEM) analysis was performed with the latent variables to predict the pathways from ECs, (estimated using emotional perception and understanding, labelling and emotional expression, and emotional management and regulation) to subjective well-being (estimated using life satisfaction, positive affect and negative affect), with satisfaction with the partner acting as a mediating variable. The total, direct and indirect effects were estimated, and Bootstrap confidence intervals (CI) were constructed around the estimates to evaluate the effects of the mediating variable.

The mediation analyses were performed using the Mplus version 7.0 statistical software package (Muthen & Muthen, 2017) and with the maximum likelihood estimate (ML). In addition, CIs were constructed around the estimates to assess the effects of mediators. The model fit was estimated using the five main fit indices (Hu & Bentler, 1999): the chi-squared test (χ^2), the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) and the comparative fit index (CFI). For a model to be deemed to fit properly, the chi-square test is expected to be non-significant, requiring an RMSEA of $<.08$ (with a value of $<.04$ desirable), a CFI of $.90$ or more (with a value of $.95$ or more desirable). Furthermore, we calculated the coefficient of determination (R^2) to estimate the proportion of the variance in the dependent variables that is explained by the independent variables (Marsh & Scalas, 2018). Finally, we calculated Durbin-Watson (d) and variance inflation factor (VIF) to test multicollinearity.

RESULTS

Confirmatory analysis

Confirmatory factorial analysis (CFA) was conducted to test the appropriateness of the instruments in our sample. Acceptable fit indexes were obtained for ECs [ESCQ-21; χ^2 (df) = 386.302 (173); CFI = $.91$; TLI = $.90$; RMSEA (CI) = $.07$ ($.06$ – $.08$); SRMR = $.07$], satisfaction with the relationship [RAS; χ^2 (df) = 42.503(14); CFI = $.95$; TLI = $.93$; RMSEA (CI) = $.08$ ($.06$ – $.12$); SRMR = $.04$], satisfaction with life [SWLS; χ^2 (df) = 8.393(5); CFI = $.99$; TLI = $.99$; RMSEA (CI) = $.05$ ($.00$ – $.11$); SRMR = $.02$] and positive and negative experiences (SPANEX; χ^2 [df] = 63.95 (23); CFI = $.97$; TLI = $.92$; RMSEA [CI] = $.08$ [$.06$ – $.11$]). In addition, all items adequately saturated on the corresponding factors suggested by the original authors. These results suggest that the use of these instruments in our sample is reliable.

Descriptive statistics

As seen in the descriptive statistics (Table 1), values of asymmetry below 2 and values of kurtosis below 7 indicate a normal distribution, so the variables of this study can be handled as a normal distribution (Hu & Bentler, 1999).

Relationships between variables

The bivariate correlations (Table 2) show that ECs are significantly and positively related to relationship satisfaction, positive affect, and life satisfaction, and significantly and negatively related to negative affect. Correlations between relationship satisfaction and some dimensions of EC (perception and understanding, and labelling and expression) are significant but small. The EC that is most strongly related both to satisfaction with the relationship and to the variables of subjective well-being is emotional management and regulation.

Satisfaction with the relationship is also significantly and positively related to satisfaction with life and positive affect, and significantly and negatively related to negative affect. The strongest correlation is between satisfaction with the relationship and positive affect.

Structural equation modelling: The mediating role of relationship satisfaction

Structural equation analyses were performed to test the hypothetical relationship between the latent variables, considering the calculation of each latent variable (factor) from its corresponding observable variables (items) (MacKinnon, 2008). A partial mediation model was estimated, in which the exogenous factors were ECs

TABLE 1
Means (*M*), standard deviation (*SD*), rank, asymmetry and kurtosis

	Rank	<i>M</i> (<i>SD</i>)	Asymmetry	Kurtosis
Emotional perception and understanding	25	31.26 (4.81)	-.51	.11
Labelling and emotional expression	30	30.94 (6.61)	-.67	.02
Emotional management and regulation	30	31.01 (4.92)	-.58	.85
Satisfaction with the relationship	20	31.13 (3.76)	-1.44	2.46
Satisfaction with life	28	24.41 (6.11)	-.42	-.48
Positive affect	22	22.69 (3.50)	-.75	1.35
Negative affect	22	15.11 (4.71)	.47	.04

TABLE 2
Pearson's bivariate correlations

	<i>Perception and understanding</i>	<i>Labelling and expression</i>	<i>Management and regulation</i>	<i>Satisfaction relationship</i>	<i>Positive affect</i>	<i>Negative affect</i>	<i>Satisfaction with life</i>
Perception and understanding	1						
Labelling and expression	.52**	1					
Management and regulation	.49**	.48**	1				
Satisfaction on relationship	.13*	.16*	.25**	1			
Positive affect	.38**	.36*	.53**	.36**	1		
Negative affect	-.23**	-.32**	-.41**	-.22**	-.46**	1	
Satisfaction with life	.33**	.42**	.50**	.25**	.50**	-.53**	1

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

(emotional perception and understanding, emotional labelling and expression, emotional management and regulation). The final outcome factors were the variables of subjective well-being (life satisfaction, positive affect and negative affect), with satisfaction with the couple's relationship being the mediating variable (Figure 1). Some modification indexes were applied; concretely, we added some "with" commands, used in Mplus to indicate additional correlations between items. We added a "with" between two items from the "Perception and understanding of emotions" factor and another "with" command between two items from the "Management and regulation of emotions" factor of the ESCQ-21 instrument, which showed a remarkably strong correlation.

The mediation model (Figure 1) showed acceptable adjustment indexes: CFI = .900; TLI = .89; RMSEA = .052 (90% CI .047-.057); SRMR = .08.

Satorra-Bentler chi-Square (χ^2) and general model significance were significant, in contrary as expected (χ^2 [870] = 1421.984, $p < .001$), probably due to χ^2 is highly sensitive to sample size (Markland, 2007).

In this model, we observed that some of the variables are strongly correlated, such as life satisfaction and positive affect ($r = .84$). As well, beta values were higher than 1 for satisfaction with life ($\beta = 1.58$) and positive affect ($\beta = 1.51$). Given these results, it seems necessary to analyse if there is a multicollinearity problem between our variables. To this end, we calculated the Durbin-Watson coefficient (d) for the three independent variables. We observed that there seems to be no interdependence between the residuals, since d values are within

the rank from -1.5 to 2.5 ($d = 1.56$ for life satisfaction; $d = 1.98$ for positive affect; $d = 1.40$ for negative affect). Regarding the VIF, these values seem to be acceptable. VIF estimators range from 1.04 to 1.85 in our results, being lower than 10, point at which we could consider that there is a problem of multicollinearity (Kutner et al., 2004).

As shown in Table 3, satisfaction with the partner significantly mediates the relationship between emotional management and regulation and the variables of subjective well-being (life satisfaction, positive affect and negative affect). This mediation does not occur in the case of the other variables of EC. The model tested (Table 3) explains 30% ($R^2 = .30$) of the variance in life satisfaction, 35% of the variance in positive affect ($R^2 = .35$) and 18% of the variance in negative affect ($R^2 = .18$).

DISCUSSION

Young people face numerous stressors related to the onset of adult roles. In addition to the complications arising from a complex historical, social and economic context, these changes and difficulties could lead young people to experience reduced well-being, develop anxious-depressive symptoms and suffer relationship difficulties, with the consequent economic and health repercussions for society (Baggio et al., 2017). In view of the close relationship between well-being and physical and mental health, it is important to promote the subjective well-being of young adults (Harding et al., 2015).

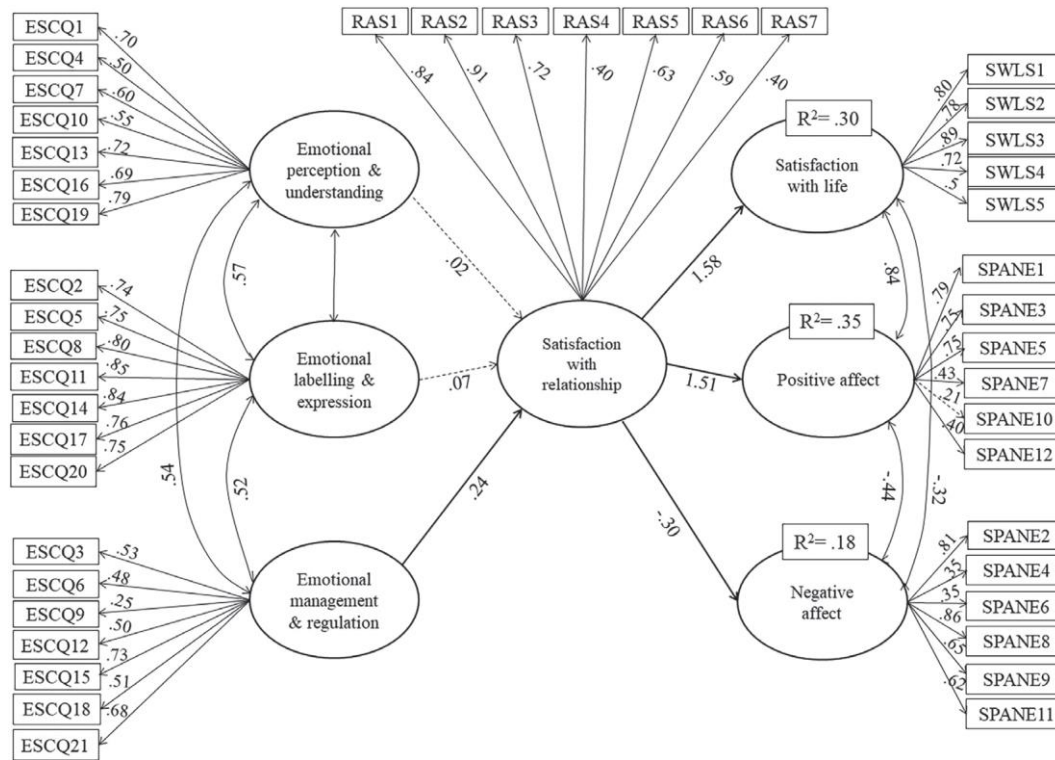


Figure 1. Model of mediation. N.B.: the continuous lines are significant predictions ($p < .01$), dashed lines are not significant. The standardized coefficients (β) between the variables are shown, and the standardized loads of each item on its factor.

TABLE 3
Coefficients, standard error (SE) and confidence intervals (CI) of specific indirect effects

Paths	ab	SE	Specific indirect effect	
			Lower 2.5%	Upper 2.5%
Perception and Understanding → Satisfaction w/ relationship → Satisfaction w/ life	.03	.07	-.11	.16
Perception and Understanding → Satisfaction w/ relationship → Positive affect	.02	.07	-.11	.16
Perception and Understanding → Satisfaction w/ relationship → Negative affect	-.01	.01	-.03	.02
Labelling and expression → Satisfaction w/ relationship → Satisfaction w/ life	.11	.08	-.06	.27
Labelling and expression → Satisfaction w/ relationship → Positive affect	.10	.07	-.04	.25
Labelling and expression → Satisfaction w/ relationship → Negative affect	-.02	.02	-.05	.01
Management and regulation → Satisfaction w/ relationship → Satisfaction w/ life	.38**	.08	.22	.53
Management and regulation → Satisfaction w/ relationship → Positive affect	.36**	.10	.17	.55
Management and regulation → Satisfaction w/ relationship → Negative affect	-.07*	.04	-.14	-.01

Note: Bold values = $< .01$ for .38 and .36; $< .05$ for $-.07$. ab = coefficient specific indirect effect. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

ECs, such as the ability to recognise, express and manage emotional information, are positively related to both subjective well-being positive interpersonal variables, such as relationship satisfaction (Wollny et al., 2019). In our society, there is an increased likelihood of engaging in partner relationships with a high level of intimacy and commitment in early adulthood. If these relationships are satisfactory and of good quality, they positively affect people's health and subjective well-being (Ditzen et al., 2019) The aim of this study was therefore to study the relationship between ECs and subjective well-being

of young adults, considering the mediating role of satisfaction with the partner.

The results obtained confirm our first hypothesis: ECs are related to satisfaction with the relationship and with subjective well-being. As reported in the literature, ECs are positively related to relationship satisfaction (Malouff et al., 2014; Wollny et al., 2019). Emotionally competent people therefore find it easier to communicate with their partner in a constructive way, effectively managing disagreements and actively seeking solutions to conflicts. Our results show that the correlation between relationship

satisfaction with emotional regulation is moderate, while its relationship with the other two ECs is small, although it is necessary to consider that increasing the sample size could strengthen the statistical significance of these relationships. As for its practical significance, this data suggests putting the focus especially on the emotional regulation when there is dissatisfaction in the couple, being that this is more external and manifests more observable behaviours which affect the romantic relationship (Blázquez-Alonso et al., 2012).

At the same time, people with a high capacity to perceive, understand, express and manage their emotions experience greater satisfaction with their life conditions. They also feel more vital and positive and experience less distress. This relationship is probably due to emotionally competent people's ability to enhance their positive emotions, and to understand, accept and manage their unpleasant emotions, maintaining a basic state of optimism, gratitude and happiness as a vital attitude (Geng, 2018).

The second hypothesis of our study is also corroborated by the results: satisfaction with the partner relationship is related to young people's assessment of their subjective well-being. This is probably related to the fact that the relationship is a vital area which is priority in young people's social network. A satisfactory relationship is therefore associated with greater life satisfaction and positive affect, while a conflictual relationship that does not meet one's needs goes hand in hand with a state of discomfort, worry, apathy and distress (Kong et al., 2019).

The third hypothesis of our study is partially confirmed by the results. Satisfaction with the relationship acts as a mediator between ECs and subjective well-being, but only in the case of emotional management. In other words, the ability to regulate the intensity of our emotions, together with strategies in the face of negative emotions and the ease of self-generation of positive emotions, is positively related with relationship satisfaction. This in turn is related to the perception of subjective well-being. The fact that mediation occurs only in the case of emotional management could be due to the fact that it is the EC that most strongly manifests itself in the form of externalised behaviours, and therefore has a direct impact on the quality of interpersonal relationships (Vater & Schröder-Abé, 2015).

In addition, it is interesting to note that emotional regulation, and relationship satisfaction as a mediator, is more strongly related to life satisfaction and positive affect than to negative affect. This is congruent with what has been found in other previous studies (e.g. Gallagher & Vella-Brodric, 2008; Koydemir & Schütz, 2012). In the literature, it is observed that high EI is more related to variables of well-being, while other variables such as lack of social support are more related to variables of discomfort, such as negative affect (Gallagher and Vella-Brodric). If we consider the practical significance of this data, we could think that a good way to promote life

satisfaction, vitality, interest and positive mood of young people is to encourage the learning of emotional regulation skills and their relationship satisfaction. However, people who have a high level of distress and unpleasant moods, should probably also be encouraged in other variables.

Our work is not free of limitations, including the sample size, since it would be necessary to expand it to increase the validity of the results. Another limitation is the cross-sectional nature of our data, and as such it would be advisable to examine the variables at different points in time, to determine whether current ECs predict relationship satisfaction and well-being in the future. In addition, we believe that the use of self-reports may be a limitation, since we are not evaluating real EC, but instead the subjective perception of EC (Takšić et al., 2009). It would be interesting to include performance measures of EC in order to evaluate actual performance. Finally, for future research we consider that our study would be enriched if evaluation were included in a dyad format, that is if measures of self-reporting by the other partner in the relationship were added in order to relate one's ECs to satisfaction with the relationship and the partner's well-being (Wollny et al., 2019).

CONCLUSION

The main conclusion that we can draw from this study is the importance of promoting emotional regulation from the early stages of adulthood, as a way for young adults to establish satisfactory and quality relationships with their romantic partners and then increase their subjective well-being.

One way to teach emotional regulation skills is by designing and implementing emotional education programmes (LeBlanc et al., 2020). It would be necessary to test whether emotional interventions increase well-being as suggested by observational studies. As well as their usefulness and effectiveness, the need to implement this kind of interventions has been extensively demonstrated among children and adolescents in school contexts, but not in young people (Roberson et al., 2018). Therefore, professionals and researchers interested in well-being may invest resources in the emotional education of young people, and especially in emotional regulation within the partner relationship (Vater & Schröder-Abé, 2015).

The partner relationship is the first step towards building the family, and the main socialising agent of future generations. Young people who are skilled in managing emotions will be more likely to establish satisfactory relationships. At the same time, this will prevent the emergence of violent behaviour within the relationship, which is enhanced by a lack of ECs and coping skills when dealing with conflict (Megías et al., 2018). Consequently, investing in the emotional education of couples is an

investment in the well-being of society, building healthy and secure families of the future.

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