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Dating Partner: Will Love Contribute to Romantic Jealousy and Satisfaction?

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Abstract

Romantic Jealousy in dating partner is one of a phenomenon that often makes individual feels unsatisfied with their own relationship. However, there are still many things that can contribute to satisfaction in dating, one of which is love. This study aims to see the contribution of love to romantic jealousy and satisfaction in dating relationships. Respondents of this study are 196 people aged from 17 to 36 years, with a period of dating under 1 year to more than 5 years. Each respondent has a varied intensity of meetings, ranging from every day, uncertain, to undergoing long-distance relationships. The results of this study indicate that love has small contribution to romantic jealousy and satisfaction in dating. In other words, satisfaction in dating is not necessarily obtained only with love itself, but there are many other factors are able to contribute more to satisfaction in dating. Based on the results of this study, it is strongly recommended for future research to make a model of factors that contribute to satisfaction in dating, so as to be able to provide a clear picture of things that can affect satisfaction in dating.

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1. Preface

Opinion of dating as a form of relationship that develop individual task of marriage makes individuals use dating as a moment to be close to their partner. Couples start to getting to know each other before marriage with dating process. Strauss (2004) said that dating is a dyadic interaction of individuals, which has specific individual interaction, doing activities together, and needs to create "status" of relationship. One that can indicate how good the relationship is will be the relationship satisfaction. In dating partners, relationship satisfaction can answer question about individual's feeling to their partner (Hendrick, Dicke, & Hendrick, 1998). Beside explain individual's feelings to their partner, relationship satisfaction also can show and predict variety of other romantic relationship phenomena. Research done by Meeks, Hendrick &

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Hendrick (1998) prove that relationship satisfaction in dating partners will be gained if each individual can communicate well, also has a good love life orientation. Simply said that individual with good communication and good love orientation to their partner, will has a good relationship satisfaction also.

When we are talking about relationship satisfaction, there always be a relationship dissatisfaction. Relationship dissatisfaction comes out, not only when couples can't communicate well, or didn't has a good love life orientation, but can be caused by another thing. Romantic jealousy can be another one cause of the relationship dissatisfaction. We can say that romantic jealousy is a normal thing happens in a relationship. Even a family relationship has jealousy too. But in some ways, romantic jealousy can cause a distress, that affect dating, even a marital life (Pfeiffer & Wong, 1989). The distress caused by romantic jealousy not only affect the communication path, or dating and marital life, but also leads to far more worrying situation, such as suicide. One of the local news portal, here in Indonesia called out that a guy killed his own girlfriend just because of his romantic jealousy (Putra, 2018). It isn't just spread around the news portal, but some ways, there are so many cases that couples often got in the argument situation, yelled each other, or leave their partner, just because of their romantic jealousy. Getting on argument with partner, yelled each other, broke up, and even a murder case showed up because of individual's disappointment and jealousy to their partner. Dandurant & Lafontaine (2014) said that romantic jealousy shows a negative correlation with the relationship satisfaction. It means that when individual showed their romantic jealousy, this is the time that the level of their relationship satisfaction goes down.

Even Pfeiffer & Wong said that jealousy has a negative effect on relationship satisfaction, this doesn't mean that every individual has very low satisfaction when they jealous of their partner. This effect can be moderated by romantic attachment with partner. It means that even though individual felt jealous of their partner, this won't affect relationship satisfaction if there were a good romantic attachment. Another thing that support this assumption is the study from Dugosh (2000) that showed if romantic jealousy and relationship satisfaction can be moderated by love, which is a great deal of romantic attachment of couples. With this study provided, we can say that as long individual has a good romantic attachment, and love to their partner, this will create a good atmosphere and maintain their relationship satisfaction. This will work when a couple can share a strong love each other. Love is individual's form of deep and meaningful emotion (Rubin, 1970). With this deep emotion presented, individual can reduce romantic jealousy, and somehow maintain their own relationship satisfaction.

This study aim how far love can moderate romantic jealousy and relationship satisfaction, since we know that jealousy has negative effect on relationship satisfaction. Hypothesis of this study is love can moderate romantic jealousy and relationship satisfaction.

2. Method

2.1. Respondent

The respondent of this study are 46 males and 150 females ranged from 17 – 38 years old. Respondents are chosen randomly with simple random sampling, taking with questionnaire method using Google form media. This brings a total of 196 respondents which classified as 3 main categories, the age, intensity of meeting, and duration of they were dating.

49 respondents have been dating for 0-1 year, 53 respondents have been dating for 1-3 years, and 29 respondents have been dating for more than 5 years. For the intensity of meeting, 17 respondents met everyday with their partner, another 17 respondents met 5 days a week with their partner, 30 respondents met 3-4 times a week, 77 respondents met 1-2 times a week, and 11 respondents have uncertain intensity of meeting, including the long distance relationship couples.

2.2. Measurement

Relationship Satisfaction. In this study, relationship satisfaction was measured by the RAS (Relationship Assessment Scale), developed by Hendrick (1988). The RAS contain 7 self report item that show individual's satisfaction about how things going within themselves and their partner. The example of item presented on this scale is "How satisfied are you with your current relationship, compared to your last romantic relationship?" Reliability of this scale is 0.813, which can be said that this scale is reliable as an instrument.

Romantic Jealousy. The romantic jealousy if this study was measured by the Multidimensional Jealousy Scale, developed by Ofeiffer & Wong (1989). The scale contains 24 items, divided into 3 main dimensions, namely the cognitive jealousy, emotional jealousy, and behavioral jealousy. Example item of the cognitive jealousy is "I suspect that my partner is attracted to someone else". Example item of the emotional jealousy is "My partner is flirting with someone with the opposite sex". And for the behavioral jealousy, the example item is "I look to my partner's drawers, handbag, or pocket". Reliability of this scale is 0.875, which can be said that this instrument is reliable for the study.

Love. Love in this study measured by Rubin's Love Scale, which contains of 13 items. One of the item example presented is "If I could never be with my partner, my life would feel miserable". The reliability of this scale is 0.857.

3. Result

3.1. Descriptive Result

Gender. Descriptive result of the gender showed that male respondents have more love and romantic jealousy than female respondents. For the relationship satisfaction, both male and female respondents have the same score, which give us information that in this study, both male and female respondents maintain their satisfaction, even they have romantic jealousy.

Age. Descriptive result of the respondent's ages showed that love increases with ages. With this result, we can assume that the more individual's age is, the more love they have to their partner. On the contrary, jealousy of each individual are lower within increasing age. This can be happened because of each individual's own psychosocial development, and within increasing age, individuals are more mature to control their own emotion, and jealousy. For the relationship satisfaction, there wasn't any differences for each age group.

Duration of Dating. Couples within all duration of dating have all near the same score of romantic jealousy and relationship satisfaction. The main differences is love. Couples that have been dating for 3-5 years had the most love score. This can be assumed that 3-5 years duration of dating can be the peak of deep emotion shown within couples. Couples will share moments, emotion, and other love aspect in their relationship within 3-5 years dating duration.

3.2. Regression Analysis

Regression analysis used to measure the contribution of love to moderate romantic jealousy and relationship satisfaction. The regression analysis showed that both romantic jealousy and love give a significant contribution of relationship satisfaction. The contribution given is 29.3% ($p < 0.01$). There's a slight differences when love is analyzed as a moderating variable for romantic jealousy and relationship satisfaction. Love can contribute 29.8% as a moderator of romantic jealousy and relationship satisfaction. It means that love only give small portion of contribution in moderating romantic jealousy and relationship satisfaction. We can assumed that, how much you love your partner, you can always be jealous to your partner, and can feel unsatisfied with your relationship.

4. Discussion

This study aim is to see the contribution of love to moderating romantic jealousy and relationship satisfaction. Result of the study above shows that love can moderating romantic jealousy and relationship satisfaction, even though it has a small contribution. This result matches the previous study about love as a moderator of romantic jealousy and relationship satisfaction, provided by Dugosh (2000). The cause of love's small contribution can be happened because of the constant score of relationship satisfaction. The relationship satisfaction of the respondents tends to be stable from all of category shown in descriptive result. Age, gender, duration of dating, and intensity of meeting of each individual respondent show a stable score. It means that our respondents dah to have a good relationship satisfaction to their relationship. This will consider that any condition of relationship including, ages, duration, and intensity of meeting won't affect too much to individual's relationship satisfaction.

This finding can be caused of another factor that can affect relationship satisfaction. Yoo, Bartle-Haring, Day & Gangamma (2014) said that relationship satisfaction affected by a proper communication between partner, that can be moderated by emotional attachment, and sexual satisfaction along the way. Another thing that can give contribution to relationship[satisfaction is forgiveness. Sheldon, Gilchrist-Petty & Lessley (2014) found that individuals that can show forgiveness to their partner will have more relationship satisfaction than the one that not easily forgive. It's not always said "I forgive you", but just showing behavior of forgiveness, can increasing individual's relationship satisfaction. This can be called the non-verbal forgiveness, such as kissing, hugging, and even said I forgive you explicitly. This confirm that beside love, and another affection factor, problem solving and conflict resolution can also contribute to relationship satisfaction.

Another interesting finding in this study is the ageing process. From the descriptive result, we can see that there is changes within ages to the love and romantic jealousy. The explanation is, the more the age of the individual is, the more mature and more things can be developed by themselves. Individuals with more age can loved their partner more than before, and can jealous less. This findings showed us that age does matter to the relationship, especially in love, and how they can manage jealousy.

5. Conclusion and Future Findings

Based on the finding of this study, love has a small, but significant contribution to moderating romantic jealousy and relationship satisfaction. This finding showed that there are many things that can affect and contributing romantic jealousy and relationship satisfaction. Age is the main thing found in this study, that the more the age is, the great individual can manage jealousy, and strengthen their love to their partners.

This study also found that romantic jealousy won't always had negative effect towards relationship satisfaction, same as love. The more you love your partners, won't just eventually raise relationship satisfaction with partner. Good communication with partner, conflict management, and emotional attachment are another factors that can affect romantic jealousy and relationship satisfaction, along with other factors.

For further study, it is recommended to develop a factor model of relationship satisfaction, that will gives the information about how love can be the moderator of jealousy and relationship satisfaction.

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