Emerging Adulthood

Work, Romantic Relationships, and Life Satisfaction in Argentinean Emerging Adults
Alicia Facio and Santiago Resett

The online version of this article can be found at:

Additional services and information for *Emerging Adulthood* can be found at:

Email Alerts: http://eax.sagepub.com/cgi/alerts

Subscriptions: http://eax.sagepub.com/subscriptions

Reprints: http://www.sagepub.com/journalsReprints.nav

Permissions: http://www.sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav

>> Version of Record - Jan 29, 2014

OnlineFirst Version of Record - Dec 16, 2013

What is This?

Work, Romantic Relationships, and Life Satisfaction in Argentinean Emerging Adults

Alicia Facio[1] and Santiago Resett[1]

Abstract
Few studies have jointly examined the development of love and work in emerging adulthood and even less so in the majority world. This article provides data about how love and work are related within each domain, across domains, and to life satisfaction in emerging adults from an understudied ecology, Argentina. For this purpose, 272 randomly selected Argentineans reported on romantic relationships, work satisfaction, and life satisfaction at age 23 and 27. On both occasions, satisfaction in the romantic domain was a better predictor of concurrent life satisfaction than work. At age 23, love but not work added modestly to the prediction of life satisfaction 4 years later. A much stronger stability was found in love than in work domain. Consistent with the segmentation model, but not with the spillover model, no cross-domain associations were detected over time. Results are discussed in light of important features of the Argentinean macrosystem.

> Work is a necessary evil to be avoided
>
> Mark Twain

In his seminal article *Emerging Adulthood: A Theory of Development from the Late Teens Through the Twenties*, Arnett (2000) contended that emerging adults often experience transitions in living arrangements, education, work, and interpersonal relationships that create challenges and opportunities. How they cope with these transitions is a key developmental issue and has a great impact on their current and later psychosocial functioning.

Work is a vital and relevant experience in human life and an important developmental context throughout adulthood. Much more than a means to earn money, work is a way to promote connection to the broader social world, enhance well-being, and provide subjective satisfaction and accomplishment (Blustein, 2008). Hence, exploring and preparing for meaningful work is central to identity development throughout the 20s. Indeed, finding satisfying, stable work and identifying one's work as a "career" are important milestones in a successful transition to adulthood (Arnett, 2004; Mortimer, Vuolo, Staff, Wakefield, & Xie, 2008; Skorikov & Vondracek, 2011).

Although in the 1950s, Erikson (1950/1968) had already claimed that intimacy and commitment to a romantic partner is one of the most important developmental tasks of young people, some authors assumed that emerging adults' romantic relationships were not particularly important or formative (Roisman, Masten, Coatsworth, & Tellegen, 2004). Recent data, however, made clear that such an assumption is no longer tenable. The formation and maintenance of romantic bonds are vital to the lives of emerging adults (Finchman & Cui, 2011). This is not surprising, taking into account that at this stage romantic partnerships develop into loving and caring bonds that assume an attachment quality (Katz & Beach, 1997).

Why Study Emerging Adults From Argentina?

The vast majority of current theory and knowledge about young people's development is derived from research conducted in the "minority world"—a term increasingly used to describe the subset of primarily Western nations that are members of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, which includes North America and North and Central Europe. In recent years, developmental scholars have increasingly focused on understanding the experiences of young people in other parts of the world, that is, the majority world.

Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) pointed out that applying existing theories of development to diverse ecologies is an important aspect of theory building and elaboration—what they call the "discovery mode" versus the prevalent "verification mode." In this respect, young people living in a Latin American country constitute an interesting and underresearched ecological

[1] Department of Education Science, Universidad Nacional de Entre Rios, Entre Rios, Parana, Argentina

Corresponding Author:
Alicia Facio, Psychologist, Department of Education Science, Universidad Nacional de Entre Rios, Parana 3100, Entre Rios, Argentina.
Email: afacio45@gmail.com

variation for developing a theory of how love and work relate to each other and to well-being in emerging adulthood. While there is a growing body of research on development throughout the 20s, it refers mostly to the minority world youth, and information about emerging adults growing up in Argentina and other Latin America countries is urgently needed.

Argentina is a developed Latin American country of Italian and Spanish descent. It ranks 46th among 169 nations of the world on the Human Development Index. This index is estimated by the United Nations taking into account life expectancy at birth (77 years), educational level (98% adult literacy), and average standard of living adjusted by purchase power. Argentina belongs to the high but not to the very high human development group and is the second best positioned nation in Latin America surpassed only by Chile. Further national data include a 90% rate of urbanization and an economic structure in which the gross domestic product (GDP) is composed mostly by services (trade, education, health, etc.). Approximately 89% of Argentineans are Catholic. Although it does not belong to the minority world, emerging adulthood does exist in Argentina: at age 19 and 23, the percentage of young people who did not consider themselves entirely adult (69% and 55%, respectively) was very similar to that of the United States (Facio, Resett, Micocci, & Mistrorigo, 2007).

Despite being a representative, federal, and republican democracy, Argentina, like most Latin American countries, is characterized by political instability and repeated economic crises. A military dictatorship, state terrorism, a war against the United Kingdom, very high inflationary rates, severe impoverishment due to neoconservative policies, and high unemployment rates were some of the misfortunes Argentinean people endured during the past 40 years. Poverty and unemployment have receded since 2003, but the gap between the poorest and the richest remains at its widest. Poll after poll indicate that economic instability, insecurity, and corruption figure among the greatest concerns of the population and that most Argentineans distrust the three branches of the government as well as politicians, union leaders, and the police.

Some features of the Argentinean context that may be influential with respect to work and love in emerging adulthood will be described. Presently, unemployment rate is not high (7%) in Argentina, except in those below 25 years old, among which it reaches 12%. However, a third of workers belong to the informal economy, with the consequent lack of protection by labor laws, and the percentage is even higher in the case of emerging adult workers. Unlike the United States, the vast majority of adolescents do not work. Work values are not so strong among Argentinean young people. For example, one third of 14- to 24-year-olds from Greater Buenos Aires agreed that "life would be much better without working" (Deutsche Bank, 1993). Similarly, when reporting about their most important life goals, "to be happy" ranked first (86%) followed by "raising a family," "being a good parent," and "having a rich emotional life" (71%, 63%, and 59%, respectively). Only in the fifth rank (54%), a goal referring to work appeared: "Developing a professional career." "Being a hard worker" was endorsed only by 31% (Deutsche Bank, 1999).

As regards interpersonal relationships, Oyserman, Coon, and Kemmelmeier's (2002) meta-analyses showed that people from most Latin American countries, including Argentina, scored higher on both individualism and collectivism compared to European North Americans. Authors disagree as to the relation between *familism*—defined as relatedness to family, seeking harmony with family members, or supporting and seeking advice from family—and collectivism. Regard for family values—and not the nonkin type of collectivism—is high in Argentina as well as in most Latin American countries. Nearly one half of 18- to 21-year-olds believed that "family responsibilities should be more important than career plans in the future." More than one half thought that "despite opportunities in other areas of the country, I should try to live near my parents in the future"; and a vast majority considered family to be more important than friends, religion, and homeland (Facio et al., 2007). In agreement with this panorama, the salience of romantic partners in the network of close relationships increased from adolescence to emerging adulthood at a lower rate in Argentina than in the minority world (e.g., Carver, Joyner, & Udry, 2003; Seiffge-Krenke, 2003). For example, at 17 and 19 years old, the majority (66% and 55%, respectively) did not have a romantic partner. Only at age 23, romantic partners surpassed friends and mothers in the network of support providers, and not being involved in a love relationship was associated with higher depression in females and lower self-esteem in both genders (Facio, Resett, & Micocci, 2010).

Work, Love, and Life Satisfaction

Relations between life domains, work and love in this case, can be explained by three hypotheses. The *spillover hypothesis* proposes direct influence of one domain on the other, such as, for example, workers who have satisfying (or dissatisfying) jobs also will have satisfying (or dissatisfying) romantic relationships and vice versa. The *compensation hypothesis* proposes an inverse relationship between spheres of life; for example, workers would seek experiences and rewards in love that are denied to them in work and vice versa. The *segmentation hypothesis* proposes that domains of life are sharply separated from one another without significant mutual influence (Judge & Klinger, 2008). Although the spillover hypothesis has received more empirical support in the minority world, Judge and Watanabe (1994) stated that the interaction between domains can be mitigated by cultural values and beliefs. For instance, Georgellis and Lange (2012) found that the percentage of workers who belonged to the segmentation group was high in lower GDP per capita countries and in more secular, less traditional societies. In Argentina, it could be hypothesized that work satisfaction at age 23 will not affect romantic satisfaction 4 years later, whereas romantic satisfaction will be a significant predictor of work satisfaction over that period.

Life satisfaction—along with happiness an important component of subjective well-being—is an evaluative process in

which people assess the global quality of their lives on the basis of their own unique set of criteria (Pavot & Diener, 2008). Although in many societies people report being happy, Latin American nations, including Argentina, often report higher levels of well-being than might be expected considering these nations' wealth. Tov and Diener (2007) proposed that social closeness and support—a prominent feature in Latin American nations—are the cultural values that might explain this outcome. In line with this hypothesis, Facio and Resett (2009) found a high level of life satisfaction in Argentinean emerging adults, despite their living in an unstable country and despite their having, in many cases, low-paid and unstable jobs.

Vast research has shown that work and life satisfaction relate to one another. For example, unemployment had a lasting effect on baseline levels of subjective well-being even after work was regained (Lucas, Clarck, Georgellis, & Diener, 2004). Howard, Galambos, and Krahn (2010) found that being employed was associated with more life satisfaction in young adulthood. Job satisfaction is also related to subjective well-being. For instance, a review found concomitant correlations that ranged from .19 to .49 between job satisfaction and life satisfaction (Judge & Klinger, 2008). Likewise, involvement in and the quality of romantic relationships are essential components of well-being (Diener, Gohm, Suh, & Oishi, 2000). Dush and Amato (2005) found that both were related to happiness in emerging adulthood and across the life span. Demir (2008) showed that global romantic relationship quality predicted 3–6% of the variance in happiness, above and beyond Big Five personality traits.

Although both work and romantic relationships are important developmental tasks and relevant sources of well-being in emerging adulthood, few studies have jointly examined their contribution to life satisfaction (Diener, personal communication, November 17, 2012). It can be expected that even in the minority world love would be more highly associated with life satisfaction than work. However, it would be interesting to explore whether romantic relationships are even more influential compared to work in a Latin American country, in which social closeness and support are prominent and highly adaptive and work values are not so strong.

Research Goals

Taking into account Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (2006) and Judge and Watanabe's (1994) assertions, the present study attempts to provide data on the relationship between love, work, and life satisfaction in emerging adults who belong to an understudied and interesting ecology: Argentina. The aims of this article are:

First, we described specific aspects of both developmental tasks—love and work—throughout the 20s in Argentina.

Second, we explored how work and romantic relationships are concurrently related to life satisfaction at two time points in emerging adulthood: age 23 and 27. Given the abovementioned facts about the Argentinean context, we hypothesize that, at both age, love would be a stronger predictor of life satisfaction than work, especially so at age 27, when the majority of romantic partners are living together.

Third, we examined whether satisfaction with work and love at age 23 adds to the prediction of life satisfaction at age 27 above and beyond its level at age 23. We hypothesize that satisfaction with romantic relationships would be a better predictor than work.

Finally, we explored the extent to which successful experiences in work and love at age 23 influence the level of satisfaction they show as workers and romantic partners, respectively, 4 years later. In a country in which the labor market is especially difficult for young people to navigate, it is expected that stability over a 4-year period will be weaker in the work domain compared to the love domain. We contend, as well, that spillover effects of romantic satisfaction into work satisfaction would be detected over time but not conversely.

Method

Participants

A sample of 698, 13- to 16-year-old students ($M = 14.7$, standard deviation [SD] $= 1.4$; 50% male) was randomly selected from the total population attending 8th to 10th grades in Parana, Argentina. Parana, a city with a population of 250,000, is the capital of Entre Rios, a province with 1.2 million inhabitants that, by GDP per capita, ranks 12th of 24 districts. They were surveyed 2 and 4 years later with 7% attrition. A subgroup of 322 young people was randomly selected to be examined for the fourth and fifth time; 272 of them participated in both waves when they were 21–25 ($M = 23$, $SD = 1.2$; 48% male) and 24–29 ($M = 27$, $SD = 1.2$; 47% male) years old, respectively. So, the participants of the present article are drawn from the fourth and fifth measurement wave of a larger longitudinal project. Those who dropped out did not differ from those who remained in the study as regards gender, age, or socioeconomic status; 8% of them had died, 50% denied their consent, and 42% could not be located.

At age 23, 55% viewed themselves as partially adult, but 4 years later the majority (62%) considered they had reached adulthood. As regards education, at age 23, 25% had dropped out of secondary school; 12% had finished high school but did not enter higher education; 17% had dropped out of tertiary education; and 46% were attending college or had a degree. Four years later, the percentages had changed to 22%, 11%, 25%, and 42%, respectively. At both age, 20% and 39%, respectively, had become parents. Participants belonged to the 82% group of Argentinean adolescents who had completed at least 7 years of schooling at the turn of the century.

Procedure

For age 23 and 27, members of the research team administered the survey at participants' homes; the visits took around 2 hr. In 7% of the sample who did not reside in Paraná, it was administered via e-mail. Confidentiality was ensured, and the aims of

the study were made explicit. All participants provided, orally, their informed consent.

Measures

Survey Questions. Standard survey questions were used for reporting basic sociodemographical information, education, work and love status, length of the romantic relationship, and being a parent.

Satisfaction With Romantic Relationships. At age 23 and 27, participants completed four support scales (Intimacy, Admiration, Affection, and Reliable Alliance) from Network of Relationships Inventory (Furman & Buhrmester, 1992) relative to romantic partners. A Support index was calculated averaging the four provisions. Conflict and Antagonism scales were averaged to derive a Negative Interchanges measure. Sample items included "How much do you talk to this person about everything" (intimacy); "How much does this person like the things you do" (admiration); "How much does this person love you" (affection); "How sure are you that this relationship will last no matter what" (reliable alliance); "How much do you and this person disagree and quarrel" (conflict); and "How much do you and this person hassle or nag one another" (antagonism). Response options ranged from 1 (*little or none*) to 5 (*the most*). Cronbach's αs varied from .85 to .92 at average age 23 and from .81 to .93 4 years later.

Work. Work was measured by two objective indicators: work qualification (*unskilled* = 1, *low qualified* = 2, and *technical–professional* = 3) and work hierarchy (*not in charge of other workers* = 1, *executive–supervisor* = 2, and *self-employed* = 0). Work satisfaction was assessed by two questions regarding the degree of satisfaction with salary and upward mobility (1 = *very unsatisfied* to 5 = *very satisfied*), and a third one about their ideal work (*I do not have it* = 1, *I am on track for it* = 2, and *I already have it* = 3). As satisfaction with salary and upward mobility were highly correlated, they were merged into a scale named Work Satisfaction; Cronbach's αs were .67 at average age 23 and .73 4 years later.

Life Satisfaction. At age 23 and 27, participants completed The Satisfaction with Life scale (Diener, Emmons, Larsen, & Griffin, 1985), a short 5-item instrument designed to measure global cognitive judgments of satisfaction with one's life. Alternatives ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). Cronbach's αs were .85 at average age 23 and .90 4 years later.

Results

Descriptive Data on Work and Love in Argentinean Emerging Adults at Age 23 and 27

Table 1 displays the percentages of Argentinean young people who had a job; the qualification and hierarchy of their jobs and their romantic status. At age 27, the percentage of those who were working had increased markedly from 66% to 88%,

Table 1. Work and Love Status in Argentinean Emerging Adults at Age 23 and 27.

	Age 23	Age 27
	Percentages	Percentages
Job qualification		
Professional/technical	14	29
Operative	36	48
Unskilled	16	11
Job hierarchy		
Executive	0	1
Supervisor	0	3
Not in charge of others	59	70
Self-employed	17	14
Employed	66	88
n	179	240
Not employed	34	12
n	93	32
Romantic relationships		
Has a boy/girlfriend	37	28
Cohabits	14	31
Married	11	16
Has a romantic relationship	62	75
n	169	203
Does not have a romantic relationship	38	25
n	103	69
N	272	272

because many who had only been studying finished higher education. The majority of participants carried out jobs that required low qualifications, and only a few were in charge of other workers.

Although the percentage of those having a romantic partner did not show considerable increase between age 23 and 27 (62% and 75%, respectively), the degree of commitment to the relationship was higher in the second time point (Friedman's rank test $\chi^2 = 46.8$, $p < .001$); cohabitation had become more frequent 4 years later. The median length of the relationship increased from 3 to 5 years, and around three quarters of participants were involved with the same person at both age. No gender differences were found in work and romantic involvement.

Table 2 displays statistics on work satisfaction in those who had a job at both measurement points ($n = 161$) and love satisfaction in those who were involved in a romantic relationship at both age ($n = 148$).

Participants were fairly satisfied with their salaries and upward mobility. When a repeated measures multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was performed on satisfaction with salary and upward mobility in 161 participants who had a job at both measurement points, only satisfaction with salary showed a significant increase over time $F(1, 160) = 4.95$, $p < .05$, $\eta^2 = 3\%$. At age 23, 30% considered they had the ideal job and 4 years later, the percentage was quite similar (34%).

Participants were very satisfied with the relationship they had with their romantic partners. When a repeated measures MANOVA was performed on negative interchanges and four provisions of support in 148 participants who had a romantic

Table 2. Work and Love Satisfaction at Age 23 and 27.

	Age 23	Age 27
Variable	M (SD)	M (SD)
Work satisfaction		
Has the ideal job	30%	34%
Satisfaction with salary	3.17 (1.18)	3.42 (1.06)
Satisfaction with upward mobility	3.58 (1.15)	3.39 (1.16)
Work satisfaction scale	3.38 (1.00)	3.40 (1.00)
n	161	161
Romantic satisfaction		
Negative interchanges	1.69 (0.57)	1.93 (0.70)
Intimacy	3.80 (0.91)	3.75 (0.96)
Admiration	3.95 (0.71)	3.94 (0.76)
Affection	4.37 (0.68)	4.38 (0.71)
Reliable alliance	4.06 (0.82)	4.09 (0.88)
Support	4.04 (0.68)	4.04 (0.70)
n	148	148

Note. Scores ranged from 1 (*very unsatisfied*) to 5 (*very satisfied*) for work satisfaction and from 1 (*little or none*) to 5 (*the most*) for romantic satisfaction scales.

Table 3. Life Satisfaction According to Work and Romantic Partner Status at Age 23 and 27.

	Age 23	Age 27
Status	M (SD)	M (SD)
Neither work nor partner	4.56 (1.40)	4.76 (1.03)
n	32 (12%)	6 (2%)
With work but no partner	4.70 (1.11)	4.70 (1.23)
n	71 (26%)	63 (23%)
With partner but no work	5.24 (1.13)	5.24 (1.39)
n	61 (22%)	26 (10%)
With partner and work	5.26 (1.06)	5.24 (1.20)
n	108 (40%)	177 (65%)
Total sample	5.02 (1.15)	5.10 (1.24)
N	272	272

Note. Scores ranged from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

Work and Love Satisfaction as Predictors of Concomitant Life Satisfaction at Age 23 and 27

Neither age, nor sex, nor being parents introduce any differences in life satisfaction but, at both measurement points, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) revealed that those with at least some tertiary education showed higher levels than the rest, $F(1, 270) = 5.17, p < .03, \eta^2 = 2\%$, and $F(1, 270) = 11.72, p < .001, \eta^2 = 4\%$, respectively.

At age 23, 40% of the sample had a job and a romantic relationship; 22% had a romantic relationship but not a job; 26% had a job but not a romantic partner; and 12% (most of them students) did not have either. Four years later, the percentages had significantly turned into 65%, 10%, 23%, and 2%, respectively ($z = 7.37, p < .001$). Table 3 shows the means and SDs in life satisfaction for these groups at both age.

No difference was found in life satisfaction at neither age. When an ANOVA was performed on life satisfaction according to love–work status at age 23, the two groups who had a romantic partner were more satisfied with their lives than the other two. The same was found for life satisfaction and love–work status at age 27 $F(3, 268) = 6.03, p < .001, \eta^2 = 6\%$, and $F(3, 268) = 3.23, p < .02, \eta^2 = 4\%$, respectively.

As regards the second aim of this study, hierarchical regression analyses were performed to predict concomitant life satisfaction at age 23 and 27. Gender and educational attainment were introduced at Step 1; romantic satisfaction scales (negative interchanges, intimacy, affection, admiration, and reliable alliance) at Step 2, and work scales (qualification, work satisfaction, and having the ideal work) at Step 3. Table 4 displays the standardized β coefficients and R^2s.

partner at both measurement points, only negative interchanges showed a significant increase over time, $F(1, 147) = 22.86, p < .001, \eta^2 = 14\%$.

At both age, gender and educational attainment were nonsignificant predictors. At age 23, romantic satisfaction (Step 2) explained a large proportion of variance in concomitant life satisfaction ($\Delta R^2 = .22$); being admired by the partner was the only significant predictor. Work variables (Step 3) added significantly to the prediction ($\Delta R^2 = .09$); having the ideal work and work satisfaction were the best predictors in this respect.

At age 27, romantic satisfaction (Step 2) explained a large proportion of concomitant life satisfaction ($\Delta R^2 = .30$); perceived lower negative interchanges and higher reliable alliance in the romantic bond were the best predictors. Work variables (Step 3) added to the prediction modestly ($\Delta R^2 = .04$); work satisfaction was the only significant predictor.

Stability in Love, Work, and Life Satisfaction Between Age 23 and 27

To explore whether satisfaction with love and work at age 23 improved the prediction of life satisfaction 4 years later, gender and educational attainment (Step 1); life satisfaction at age 23 (Step 2); romantic satisfaction (negative interchanges, intimacy, admiration, affection, and reliable alliance; Step 3); and work variables (work qualification, work satisfaction, and having the ideal work; Step 4) were included.

Table 5 displays the standardized β coefficients and R^2s. Life satisfaction at age 23 was the only significant predictor of life satisfaction 4 years later. Prediction was not improved because of gender, educational attainment, romantic satisfaction, or work variables; but when four scales assessing romantic satisfaction were removed and only the affection scale ($\beta = .22, t = 3.22, p < .002$) was introduced at Step 3, the prediction improved modestly ($\Delta R^2 = .04$).

Hierarchical regression analyses were set up to look for intradomain stability in love and work, respectively, between age 23 and 27. As regards stability in love, gender and educational attainment (Step 1) and four provisions of support (intimacy, admiration, affection, and reliable alliance) from the

Table 4. Hierarchical Regressions of Love and Work on Concomitant Life Satisfaction at Age 23 and 27.

		Age 23			Age 27		
	Predictor	ΔR^2	β	t	ΔR^2	β	t
Step 1		.03			.03		
	Gender		.03	.33		−.07	−.95
	Educational attainment		.15	1.53		.10	1.46
Step 2		.22***			.30***		
	Negative interchanges		−.10	−1.02		−.21**	−3.16
	Intimacy		.01	.05		.10	1.30
	Admiration		.33*	1.97		.09	.89
	Affection		.01	.08		−.13	−1.36
	Reliable alliance		.09	.68		.40***	4.13
Step 3		.09**			.04*		
	Work qualification		.05	.52		.05	.66
	Work satisfaction		.17*	2.03		.16*	2.49
	Has the ideal job		.19*	2.09		.03	.55
Total R^2		.34***			.37***		
n		108			177		

*p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

Table 5. Hierarchical Regression of Love and Work at Age 23 on Life Satisfaction at Age 27.

	Predictor	ΔR^2	β	t
Step 1		.03		
	Gender		−.09	−.91
	Educational attainment		.17	1.81
Step 2		.28***		
	Life satisfaction (age 23)		.52***	6.30
Step 3		.03		
	Negative interchanges		−.01	−.09
	Intimacy		.12	.99
	Admiration		−.17	−1.07
	Affection		.24	1.56
	Reliable alliance		−.10	−.78
Step 4		.01		
	Work qualification		−.01	−.13
	Work satisfaction		.11	1.23
	Has the ideal job		−.08	−.93
Total R^2		.35***		
n		108		

***p < .001.

romantic partner at age 23 (Step 2) were included to predict support from romantic partners 4 years later. This model explained $R^2 = .44$ of variance; only intimacy and affection at age 23 were significant predictors of perceived support from the romantic partner at age 27 (β = .26, t = 3.08, p < .01 and β = .21, t = 1.99, p < .05, respectively).

To assess stability in the work domain, gender and educational attainment (Step 1) and satisfaction with salary and upward mobility at age 23 (Step 2) were included to predict work satisfaction 4 years later. This model explained $R^2 = .09$ of variance; satisfaction with upward mobility was the only significant predictor of work satisfaction at age 27 (β = .23, t = 2.66, p < .01).

Hierarchical regression analyses were performed to explore transdomain associations. When gender and educational attainment were introduced at Step 1 and work variables at age 23 at Step 2, the model did not predict support from romantic partners at age 27. Likewise, when romantic satisfaction at age 23 was entered at Step 2, it did not predict work satisfaction at age 27.

Discussion

Bronfenbrenner and Morris (2006) stated that applying existing theories of development to diverse ecologies is an important aspect of theory elaboration. Nevertheless, as the vast majority of studies have been conducted in the minority world, little is known about young people developing in the majority world. Besides, few studies have jointly examined work and love contribution to life satisfaction. Considering the abovementioned facts, the purpose of this study was to provide data about how love and work are related within each domain, across domains, and to life satisfaction in emerging adults from an understudied and interesting ecology, Argentina. To this end, a community random sample was studied longitudinally at age 23 on average and 4 years later.

As regards the first aim, although the majority of Argentinean emerging adults worked and had a romantic relationship at age 23, most of them were simultaneously engaged in both developmental tasks 4 years later. Greater involvement was found in the work domain, but important changes in commitment to love bonds emerged as well. Cohabitation was more frequent and duration of relationships was longer. This pattern of findings is consistent with Finchman and Cui (2011) contention that, although emerging adulthood is an age of instability and exploration, in many cases emerging adults do not break up their romantic bonds simply to explore other options. As Arnett (2004) stated, compared to adolescents, emerging adults desire

more security and commitment in their relationships and the vast majority of them want to get married eventually.

Not surprisingly, participants were highly satisfied with their romantic relationships, in which they perceived low conflict and high support. What may be more surprising is that they were fairly satisfied with their work, despite that so many of them had low-paid and low-skill jobs in the informal economy. Fouad and Bynner (2008) asserted that the changing nature of the labor market in industrialized countries requires that individuals learn two critical meta-competencies: self-awareness and adaptability. It might be speculated that in Argentina most young people would be prepared to deal with labor market uncertainty because of the fact that they grow up in a country in which instability and economic crises are commonplace.

As regards the second and third aim of this article, data showed that love was a much more powerful predictor of life satisfaction than work. It was so at age 23, when romantic satisfaction accounted for 22% variance and work only 9%, and at age 27, when its influence increased even more (30% and 4%, respectively). Romantic partners' affection, but not any variable related to work, improved modestly (4%) the prediction of life satisfaction 4 years later. The latter is not a minor finding, considering that it did add significantly to the prediction above and beyond gender, educational attainment, and the high stability of life satisfaction ($r = .55$) between both time points.

In the minority world, empirical literature suggests that love satisfaction has important implications for life satisfaction, not only concurrently, but longitudinally as well (Gustavson, Røysamb, von Soest, Helland, & Mathiesen, 2012; Reis, 2001). Moreover, work satisfaction predicts concomitant and prospective life satisfaction to a lesser extent than would be expected on the basis of the philosophical and ideological presumptions of Protestant ethic and the Western emphasis on work (Judge & Watanabe, 1993; Rice, Near, & Hunt, 1980). However, the vast majority of studies have not conjointly examined the contribution of love and work. For the above reasons, one of the strengths of the present study is to demonstrate that romantic satisfaction was a much stronger predictor of life satisfaction than work, even more so at age 27. This finding is consistent with the highly regarded cultural values of social closeness and support, especially within the family, prevalent in Argentina. In this respect, it should be noted that by age 27, the majority of romantic partners have become family members. It is also consistent with the fact that in Argentina work values are not so high and the labor market has the difficult features already described. It is possible to speculate that for many Argentinean emerging adults work is an activity to be tolerated for the sake of a paycheck in which limited personal satisfaction and reward is found.

With respect to the fourth aim of this article, stability in satisfaction was detected in both romantic and work domains (42% and 8%, respectively), above and beyond gender and educational attainment. This evidence is contrary to Roisman et al.'s (2004) contention that both work and romantic experience in the transition to adulthood showed little prediction to adult outcomes, as compared to the salient developmental tasks

of adolescence. The greater stability found in love satisfaction may be partly explained by the continuity of the relationship itself: around three quarters were engaged with the same romantic partner at both age.

The lesser stability in job satisfaction may be due to the fact that, as Arnett (2004) contend, for the majority of emerging adults work is still a domain of further exploration and instability compared to the love domain. Nevertheless, people in their late 20s are more likely to feel they have found a more identity-based line of work on which they want to be in the long run. In the case of Argentina (Facio et al., 2007), most of those who dropped out from secondary school get precarious and low-paid jobs in the informal economy, typically, females as domestics and males as low-qualified construction workers. Among those who got a high school diploma, a minority entered directly into the labor market whereas the majority began higher education. The latter trajectory is facilitated by a unique feature of Argentinean higher education: Most students are enrolled in public universities where no fees are paid and no entrance examinations are required. Nonetheless, drop-out rates are very high in Argentinean public universities. Due to this fact, at age 27 a minority has already finished long-term university programs (medicine, law, engineering, etc.) and many have changed careers to eventually drop out or complete a shorter program. In sum, between age 23 and 27, the majority has not been settled into a career for a long time.

Finally, contrary to what was hypothesized, no trans-domain continuities between love and work were detected. Work variables at age 23 did not predict support from romantic partners 4 years later. Likewise, romantic satisfaction at age 23 did not predict work satisfaction at age 27. These findings support the segmentation model: work and love satisfaction are not related in this sample of Argentinean emerging adults. These results are different from those reported by Shulman, Dickson, and Laursen (2014), in which effects of romantic satisfaction on work satisfaction were detected over time, but not the reverse. As Georgellis and Lange (2012) suggested, the segmentation between domains is more expectable in lower GDP countries and in societies with more secular and less traditional cultural values. Argentina is a developed country, albeit less affluent than those belonging to the minority world. Besides, Argentina is less traditional than other majority world countries: It is highly secular, no sex discrimination exists regarding access to different work activities, marriage with a same-sex partner is allowed by the law, and work values are not so high, among other features. All these facts suggest why the segmentation model might be more applicable in Argentina. In other words, for emerging adults in this sample—as for the majority of Argentineans, according to nationwide polls—being happy and to love and being loved—not work—are their most important life goals.

This research has several limitations. It relies solely on emerging adults' self-report, and it is widely assumed that common method bias inflates correlations between variables measured by self-reports. While romantic relationship satisfaction is examined through a widely used instrument of good

psychometric properties, work is assessed modestly through four questions. Although the total sample size is acceptable ($N = 272$), smaller numbers of participants were involved in both work and romantic relationships at both age, with the consequent decrease in statistical power.

Despite its limitations, these findings about how work, romance, and life satisfaction relate to one another come from one of the very few longitudinal studies in Latin America, which followed young people's socioemotional development from 14 to 27 years old. The fact that the sample studied here was selected at random from the total population attending 8th to 10th grade in a typical middle-sized Argentinean city and the fact that 78% of the original sample was retained increases the generalizability of these results.

Future research should examine other underresearched ecologies of different levels of human development, of diverse cultural traditions, to develop a theory of how love, work, and well-being develop and relate to one another in emerging adulthood, not only in the minority but in the majority world as well.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

References

Arnett, J. J. (2000). Emerging adulthood: A theory of development from the late teens through the twenties. *American Psychologist*, *55*, 469–480.

Arnett, J. J. (2004). *Emerging adulthood. The winding road from the late teens through the twenties*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Blustein, D. L. (2008). The role of work in psychological health and well-being: A conceptual, historical, and public policy perspective. *American Psychologist*, *63*, 228–240.

Bronfenbrenner, U., & Morris, P. A. (2006). The bioecological model of human development. In R. Lerner (Ed.), W. Damon & R. Lerner (Editors-in-chief), *Theoretical models of human development. Volume 1. Handbook of child psychology* (pp. 993–1028). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley.

Carver, K., Joyner, K., & Udry, J. R. (2003). National estimates of adolescent romantic relationships. In P. Florsheim (Ed.), *Adolescent romantic relationships and sexual behavior: Theory, research, and practical implications* (pp. 291–329). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Demir, M. (2008). Sweetheart you really make me happy: Romantic relationship quality and personality as predictors of happiness among emerging adulthood. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, *9*, 257–277.

Deutsche Bank. (1993). *La juventud argentina (Argentinian Youth)*. Buenos Aires, Argentina: Editorial Planeta.

Deutsche Bank. (1999). *Jóvenes hoy (Youth today)*. Buenos Aires, Argentina: Editorial Planeta.

Diener, E., Emmons, R. A., Larsen, R. J., & Griffin, S. (1985). The satisfaction with life scale. *Journal of Personality Assessment*, *49*, 71–75.

Diener, E., Gohm, C. L., Suh, E., & Oishi, S. (2000). Similarity of the relations between marital status and subjective well-being across cultures. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, *31*, 419–436.

Dush, C. M. K., & Amato, P. R. (2005). Consequences of relationship status and quality for subjective well-being. *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships*, *22*, 607–627.

Erikson, E. (1950/1968). *Identity, youth and crisis*. New York, NY: Norton.

Facio, A., & Resett, S. (2009, July). *Happy emerging adults in Argentina: How do they make it?* Paper presented at the 11 European Congress of Psychology, Oslo, Norway.

Facio, A., Resett, S., & Micocci, F. (2010, March). *Romantic partners, parents and friends: Relationship change and stability in emerging adulthood*. Paper presented at the 13 Society for Research on Adolescence Biennial Meeting, Philadelphia, PA.

Facio, A., Resett, S., Micocci, F., & Mistrorigo, C. (2007). Emerging adulthood in Argentina: An age of diversity and possibilities. *Child Development Perspectives*, *1*, 115–118.

Finchman, D., & Cuis, M. (2011). Emerging adulthood and romantic relationships. An introduction. In F. D. Fincham & M. Cui (Eds.), *Romantic relationships in emerging adulthood* (pp. 3–12). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Fouad, N. A., & Bynner, J. (2008). Work transitions. *American Psychologist*, *63*, 241–251.

Furman, W., & Buhrmester, D. (1992). Age and sex differences in perceptions of networks of personal relationships. *Child Development*, *63*, 103–115.

Georgellis, Y., & Lange, T. (2012). Traditional versus secular values and the job–life satisfaction relationship across Europe. *British Journal of Management*, *23*, 437–454.

Gustavson, K., Røysambab, E., von Soestabc, T., Helland, M., & Mathiesen, K. (2012). Longitudinal associations between relationship problems, divorce, and life satisfaction: Findings from a 15-year population-based study. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, *7*, 188–197.

Howard, A., Galambos, N., & Krahn, H. (2010). Paths to success in young adulthood from mental health and life transitions in emerging adulthood. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, *34*, 538–546.

Judge, T. A., & Klinger, R. (2008). Job satisfaction: Subjective well-being at work. In M. Eid & R. J. Larsen (Eds.), *The science of subjective well-being* (pp. 393–413). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Judge, T. A., & Watanabe, S. (1993). Another look at the job satisfaction-life satisfaction relationship. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *78*, 939–948.

Judge, T. A., & Watanabe, S. (1994). Individual differences in the nature of the relationship between job and life satisfaction. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *67*, 101–107.

Katz, J., & Beach, S. (1997). Self-verification and depressive symptoms in marriage and courtship: A multiple pathway model. *Journal of Marriage and the Family*, *59*, 903–914.

Lucas, R., Clark, A., Georgellis, Y., & Diener, E. (2004). Unemployment alters the set-point for life satisfaction. *Psychological Science*, *15*, 8–13.

Mortimer, J. T., Vuolo, M., Staff, J., Wakefield, S., & Xie, W. (2008). Tracing the timing of "career" acquisition in a contemporary youth cohort. *Work and Occupations*, *35*, 44–84.

Oyserman, D., Coon, H., & Kemmelmeier, M. (2002). Rethinking individualism and collectivism: Evaluation of theoretical assumptions and meta-analyses. *Psychological Bulletin*, *128*, 3–73.

Pavot, W., & Diener, E. (2008). The satisfaction with life scale and the emerging construct of life satisfaction. *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, *3*, 137–152.

Reis, H. T. (2001). Relationship experiences and emotional well-being. In C. D. Ryff & B. H. Singer (Eds.), *Emotion, social relationships and health* (pp. 57–86). Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.

Rice, R. W., Near, J. P., & Hunt, R. G. (1980). The job satisfaction\life satisfaction relationship: A review of empirical research. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, *1*, 37–64.

Roisman, G. I., Masten, A. S., Coatsworth, J. D., & Tellegen, A. (2004). Salient and emerging developmental tasks in the transition to adulthood. *Child Development*, *75*, 123–133.

Seiffge-Krenke, I. (2003). Testing theories of romantic development from adolescence to young adulthood: Evidence of a developmental sequence. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, *27*, 519–531.

Skorikov, V. B., & Vondracek, F. W. (2011). Occupational identity. In S. J. Schwartz, K. Luyckx & V. L. Vignoles (Eds.), *Handbook of identity theory and research* (pp. 692–714). New York, NY: Springer.

Shulman, S., Dickson, D., & Laursen, B. (2014). Romantic experiences, work experiences and individual adjustment across emerging adulthood. *Emerging Adulthood*.

Tov, W., & Diener, E. (2007). Culture and subjective well-being. In S. Kitayama & D. Cohen (Eds.), *Handbook of cultural psychology* (pp. 691–713). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Author Biographies

Alicia Facio is full professor of Developmental Psychology at Universidad Nacional de Entre Rios. She is a certified clinical psychologist at private practice and a founding member of Asociacion de Terapia Cognitiva y Conductual del Litoral in which she trains psychologists and psychiatrists in cognitive therapy.

Santiago Resett is doctoral student at Universidad Catolica Argentina and holds a scholarship from the National Council of Scientific and Technological Research (CONICET). He is assistant professor of Developmental Psychology at Universidad Nacional de Entre Rios.