

## Abstract

This study investigated (a) gender differences in romantic relationship, (b) predictors of love satisfaction, (c) the influence of dating on one's subjective experiences and personal growth, and (d) personal strivings of dating and non-dating participants. 97 college students, of which 42 currently dating, were administered a newly developed partner perception questionnaire, Sternberg's Love Scale, the personal striving elicitation procedure, and the Experience Sampling Method. Five dimensions in partner characteristics were identified in the newly developed questionnaire: Beauty, Support, Communication, Interaction, and Prospect. The results showed that Communication and Intimacy were most essential in dating. Beauty was more important to males, and Prospect more important to females. Dating had no perceived effect on achievement strivings and on one's study, and was perceived to encourage personal growth. The participants reported more positive emotions when they were staying with their partner compared to when they were not together. Findings indicated that dating was a substantially positive experience for Hong Kong students, is centered on communication and emotional exchange, and has no apparent drawback in academic and other domains.