Abstract

Background: In recent years, an increasing number of studies have emerged that contribute to the explanation of the development and consolidation of adolescent romantic relationships. In this regard, Collins made a significant contribution to the previous models focusing on different stages; his proposal is focused instead on the meaning of each stage for adolescents. In attempting to find empirical support for this model, this paper analyses these couples' characteristics at a deeper level; all the areas identified by Collins were considered together: involvement, content, quality of the couple, and cognitive and emotional processes. Method: 3,258 adolescents (48.6% males) in Andalusia were surveyed, selecting those who had a dating relationship at that time (N=1,202). Cluster analysis and predictive discriminant analysis were run. Results: The results indicated four distinct groups of adolescent couples, which were different not only in the participants' age, but in all the dimensions analyzed. Conclusions: These results are discussed in terms of the significance of these variables for adolescents when defining their romantic relationships.

Keywords
Romantic relationships, adolescence, stages, social development.