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**MANIFESTATIONS OF POSITIVE ILLUSIONS IN COUPLE  
RELATIONSHIPS**

**511.01 – GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY**

**Abstract of the doctoral thesis in psychology**

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### CONCEPTUAL REFERENCES OF THE RESEARCH

**The actuality and importance of the addressed subject.** At present, the marital couple, which represents a union between two interactive individualities at the bio-psycho-social level, is undergoing a comprehensive process of change, driven by transformations occurring in the context of societal challenges. These changes are perceived both at the level of external aspects of the couple, affecting the nature and role of its psychosocial dimension, and at the level of dyadic elements that impact the relationships between the two partners. The challenges faced by couples in the Republic of Moldova shape the structure, dynamics, and evolution of marital and family relationships, affecting other phenomena and processes within the psychosocial and demographic context. The consequences of these modifications are elucidated in various local research studies [2, 4, 5, 6].

In the research conducted by Corcevoi M., certain issues at the family and marital levels are highlighted, specifically: the disruption of marital stability, difficulties in defining, accomplishing, and distributing roles within the family, and a lack of cohesion, leading to an increase in family maladjustment [4]. The impact on the marital couple, in this context, directly influences family relationships. Additionally, the study "The Social Representation of the Contemporary Family in the Republic of Moldova", conducted by Cazacu D., identifies a series of terms with a predominantly negative connotation, associated with the concept of family (such as money, divorce, cohabitation, violence, separation) [2]. These terms actually indicate certain problems and obstacles that families and couples encounter, as well as the gradual formation of a less desirable image of these unions in society. Consequently, the instability and dysfunctionality of marital couples are reflected in the high divorce rates.

This data suggests that the issues encountered by the conjugal dyad in the Republic of Moldova directly affect the longevity and satisfaction experienced within the couple. The influence of various beliefs, myths, and expectations becomes increasingly pronounced, leading to preferences for alternative forms of cohabitation, such as consensual unions. Additionally, they

can directly impact dyadic interactions, with the couple exhibiting signs of relational maladjustment. In the given context, this lack of adaptation is expressed through states of incongruence between self-perception and experience, disturbing perceptual discrepancies, and irrational beliefs about oneself, the partner and the relationship itself [3, p. 53]. Furthermore, social changes have an impact on the cognitive and behavioral aspects of marital partners, emphasizing the need for the continuous study of these dimensions to enhance and strengthen dyadic relationships. Similarly, cognitive dimensions in marital relationships constitute a relatively new area of scientific interest, encompassing individuals' perceptions, thoughts and beliefs about their partner and the relationship itself.

Research initiated in the field of psychology has highlighted that interpersonal perception often deviates from reality and involves certain positive modifications, achieved by ignoring or minimizing negative information and accentuating the positive aspects. Thus, relational cognitions are not limited to a dichotomous black-and-white approach, but often contain a certain level of cognitive bias. In this regard, positive illusions, as positively biased perceptions, can provide an important explanatory framework for shaping and testing hypotheses regarding the psychological factors contributing to positive relational outcomes. This theoretical framework allows for the examination of the role of biased perceptions in the dynamics of relational processes characterizing different stages of marriage. Therefore, positive illusions can be identified as a major variable explaining variations in the quality of existing marital relationships.

The compelling necessity to study the perceptual aspect in illusory terms also stems from the specific nature of interpersonal perception, which can be understood as a holistic process reflecting self-perception and the perception of the marital partner in couple life. These evaluative-interpretative aspects are embedded in the realm of everyday interactions, leveraging the personality of each partner in the dyad.

**Framing of the theme in the international, national, zonal concerns of the research collective and in an inter- and transdisciplinary context, presentation of the results of the previous research.** Despite the multitude of studies addressing positive illusions in various aspects over time, research on the targeted phenomena has predominantly focused on their effects and role in couple relationships. In recent decades, relevant studies have emerged, highlighting certain implications of positive illusions in the field of couple's psychology. In this regard, the research conducted by Barelds and Dijkstra [7, 8], Endo, Heine and Lehman [9], Engdahl [10], Fowers et al. [12, 13], Hall and Taylor [14], Krawciw [15], Martz, Verette and Arriaga [16], McNeil [17], Miller, Niehuis and Huston [18], Murray et al. [19, 20, 21, 23, 24, 25], Rigby [26] has been conclusive. Studies in this regard reveal the multidimensional and ambiguous nature of

positive illusions and their impact on couple relationships. On the one hand, the functionality of positive illusions is found in the high level of marital satisfaction and stability, in the motivation to develop the relationship, in the positive perception of the marital partner, on the other hand, these positively biased perceptions can create an imaginary world that does not correspond to reality, hindering the process of functional adaptation of the couple.

Although studies on positive illusions in couple relationships have been carried out in various countries, in the Republic of Moldova there is no evidence of such works, which allows us to note an insufficient investigation of positive illusions in couple relationships in the context of societal challenges faced by the marital dyad. The mentioned aspects generate **research problem** which consists of *elucidation of the following questions: how do positive illusions manifest themselves in couple relationships and how can the harmonization of positive illusions be ensured to improve dyadic relationships?*

**The aim of the paper** is to establish the particularities of the manifestation of positive illusions in relation to the satisfaction in the couple, the mutual perceptions of the marital partners, as well as the development of a psychological intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in the couple relationships.

**Research objectives:**

1. analysis and synthesis of research with reference to the theme studied;
2. determining the particularities of positive illusions, marriage myths, marital satisfaction, self-perceptions, and mutual perceptions of marital partner according to "gender of subjects" and "duration of marriage";
3. the development of psychological gender profiles regarding the interrelationship between positive illusions, marital satisfaction and the perception of the marital partner;
4. the development, implementation and evaluation of the effectiveness of the "Psychological intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in couple relationships".

**Research hypotheses:**

**General hypothesis:** We assume that there are particularities in the manifestation of positive illusions in couple relationships.

**Specific hypotheses:** *Hyp. 1.* We assume that there are differences in the manifestation of positive illusions, marriage myths, marital satisfaction, self-perceptions and perceptions of marital partners based on the *gender of the subjects*. *Hyp. 2.* We assume that there are differences in the manifestation of positive illusions and marital satisfaction based on the *duration of marriage*. *Hyp. 3.* We assume that the implementation of a psychological intervention program will contribute to the harmonization of positive illusions in couple relationships.

## **Research Methodology Synthesis and Justification of Chosen Research Methods**

**Theoretical Methods:** Scientific documentation, analysis and synthesis of specialized literature regarding the research problem, the hypothetico-deductive method for interpreting and explaining the results obtained in the present study.

**Empirical Methods:** 1. Positive Illusions Test regarding couple's relationships, developed by S. Murray; 2. List of Marriage Myths, developed by D. Popenoe and B. Whitehead; 3. Marital Satisfaction Test, developed by V. Stolin, T. Romanova, and G. Butenco; 4. Leary Interpersonal Relationship Test, developed by T. Leary, G. Leforge, and R. Sazek.

**Statistical-mathematical methods:** descriptive statistical methods (establishing percentages and mean values) and inferential statistical methods (determining the Bravais-Pearson correlation coefficient, independent t-test (test t-Student), paired-samples t-test, analysis of variance ANOVA).

The research methods were selected in accordance with the theoretical-empirical approach that aimed to elucidate the defining aspects of positive illusions in couple relationships and determine the manifestation of these positively biased perceptions in the marital dyad in relation to the satisfaction in the couple and the mutual perceptions of the marital partners. Cumulatively, the research methods used in the present study allow for a diversified approach and a deeper understanding of the manifestation of positive illusions in couple relationships.

**The scientific novelty and originality** reside in developing one of the first theoretical-experimental studies in the national context in general psychology, establishing the characteristics of positive illusions in couple relationships; establishing The theoretical-explanatory model of the manifestation of positive illusions in couple relationships; creating Gender psychological profiles regarding the interrelationship between positive illusions, marital satisfaction, and the perception of the marital partner; developing The psychological intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in couple relationships.

**The obtained results contributing to addressing an important scientific problem** consist in establishing the particularities of the manifestation of positive illusions and developing the psychological intervention program, having the effect of harmonizing positive illusions in couple relationships, in order to use the theoretical, methodological and applied results in psychological practice.

**The theoretical significance of the research** resides in augmenting and reinforcing the theoretical foundation related to positive illusions by synthesizing information on how these positively biased perceptions manifest in the context of couple relationships and their role in the marital dyad; substantiating The theoretical-explanatory model of the manifestation of positive

illusions in couple relationships; providing a theoretical-scientific foundation for The psychological intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in couple relationships; embracing an intra and interdisciplinary approach in this research, not limiting the study solely to the perspective of general psychology, but also considering aspects of social and couple psychology.

**The practical value of the work** consists in the possibility of applying the adapted psychodiagnostic methodology in research on the population of the Republic of Moldova; developing Gender psychological profiles regarding the interrelationship between positive illusions, marital satisfaction, and the perception of the marital partner; validating The psychological intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in couple relationships.

The experimental data can be valuable for researchers, psychologists, and couples counselors, as well as individuals involved in a marital relationship. The study results and the proposed psychological intervention program can be used in relationship counseling and couple psychotherapy, as well as in various adult education programs designed to develop skills necessary for premarital and marital life.

**Key scientific outcomes presented for support include:**

1. Positive illusions represent a cognitive dimension conditioned by the psycho-socio-cultural context, constituting a set of positively biased perceptions. This phenomenon is prevalent among both men and women at different evolutionary stages of couple relationship.
2. Positive illusions lead to variations in the perception of the marital partner, characterized by the reduction of negative traits and the accentuation of positive ones.
3. Positive illusions contribute to a higher relational quality for couples through their impact on marital satisfaction, a fundamental indicator of functionality and success in a relationship.
4. Gender psychological profiles display differences in the interrelation between positive illusions, marital satisfaction, and the perception of the marital partner.
5. The implementation of the psychological intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in marital relationships and learning effective ways to focus on the positive aspects of the couple contributes to improving interactions between partners and increasing the functionality of the couple.

**Approval and Implementation of Scientific Results:** The research findings received approval through annual reports presented during meetings of the Psychology Department. The scientific significance of the research was affirmed through presentations at various national and international conferences, including the International Scientific Conference "Integration through

Research and Innovation" at USM, Chisinau (editions in 2017, 2018, 2020), the National Scientific Conference "Research in Educational Sciences and Psychology: Challenges, Perspectives. In Memoriam Professor Nicolae Bucun, Chisinau, 2021, and the International Conference on Applied Psychology "Current Trends and Perspectives in Psychological Research" at USM, Chisinau (2018, 2022). The scientific results obtained were integrated into the educational activities for the training and development of students (at USM) in the Psychology specialty through courses such as Cognitive Processes Psychology, Psychodiagnostics, Psychological Assistance Service, as well as for students from other faculties in courses like Psychology, Organizational and Interpersonal Communication Culture. The practical implementation of scientific results occurred through a psychological intervention program conducted with married couples and in premarital and marital counseling activities.

**Publications on the Thesis Topic.** The fundamental content of the research is presented in 10 scientific works, including articles in journals and materials from both national and international scientific conferences.

**The Volume and Structure of the Thesis.** The thesis is composed of an abstract in Romanian, Russian, and English language, a list of tables, a list of figures, an introduction, three chapters, general conclusions and recommendations, a bibliography of scientific works, appendices, and the author's CV. The core volume of the thesis is 142 pages. The work includes 16 tables and 51 figures.

**Keywords:** positive illusions, couple relationships, marital partners, marital satisfaction, marriage myths, partner perceptions, harmonizing positive illusions, gender differences, duration of marriage.

## THESIS CONTENT

The *Introduction* argues the relevance and importance of the research topic in the context of autochthonous psychology are argued; the purpose and objectives of the research are established; the conceptual framework and scientific research methodology are indicated; the novelty and scientific originality of the research are highlighted; the theoretical and applied value of the scientific investigation is emphasized; the approval methods of the results and the summary of the thesis sections are presented.

In Chapter 1, *Theoretical references on positive illusions in couple relationships*, is analysed and defined *the concept of positive illusions* in the view of various authors, through the prism of conceptual distinctions, emphasizing certain similarities and differences. Also, there are presented *theories and explanatory models* of positive illusions. The theories utilized in the



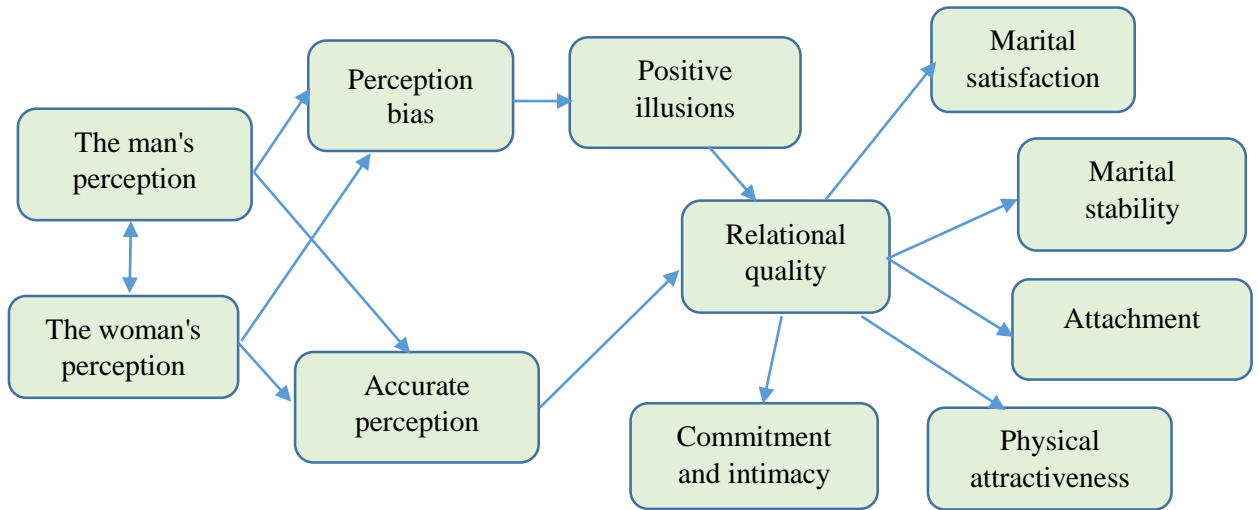
research explain individuals' illusory tendencies, and the explanatory models of positive illusions address the issue of "accuracy versus idealization", which has been approached in this work through the use of an integrative, dialectical approach. This approach is based on the coexistence of positive illusions and an accurate perception of reality, significantly reducing the impact of the polarization of this issue.

Thus, the analyzed studies outline a typology of positive illusions [1, 27]: illusory self-image, illusion of control, and unrealistic optimism being the most frequently encountered. Similarly, issues related to the conceptualization and manifestation of positive illusions in a psychosocial context have led us to highlight the main ones *dilemmas* faced by these phenomena: universality-cultural specificity, fixity-flexibility, conscious-unconscious [1, 9, 12]. In this regard, positive illusions exhibit an oscillating and changing character depending on the context.

The specialized studies analyzed have allowed us to conclude that *the emergence and development of positive illusions* is conditioned by the evolutionary stage of the couple relationship [16, 18]. Therefore, during the courtship period and the early years of marriage, the level of positive illusions is higher compared to subsequent stages, during which an intense process of self-disclosure and mutual understanding between partners takes place. This does not imply the absence or a lower level of positive illusions in other stages, as they also arise when there are disagreements in the marital dyad, turning undesirable aspects into less frustrating features, with an emphasis on positive traits and moments.

One special focus is dedicated to the analysis of studies in the field that highlight *the functionality of* positive illusions in interactions between marital partners. Furthermore, *the theoretical aspects* outlining the specificity of romantic relationships are presented. In this context, romantic relationships are based on a series of principles that explain the evolution and dynamics of interactions between the two marital partners [11], emphasizing, in fact, the heterogeneous and complex nature of couple relationships. Relational aspects in a couple can be explained through a multitude of approaches that segmentally explain the multifaceted nature of marital relationships.

The analysis of the specialized literature regarding the specifics of positive illusions in romantic relationships has allowed us to develop a theoretical-explanatory model of the manifestation of positive illusions in couple relationships (Figure 1).



**Fig. 1. Theoretical-explanatory model of the manifestation of positive illusions in couple relationships**

The model presented in Figure 1 reflects the interrelation between the perceptions of marital partners and dimensions of relational quality that exhibit interdependencies with positive illusions. According to the proposed model, each partner constructs their perception, requiring a functional balance between accuracy and positive bias to ensure relational success. The symbiosis between positive illusions and accurate perception has multiple positive implications for the quality of the couple relationship, including satisfaction, marital stability, attachment, physical attractiveness, intimacy, and commitment. If we refer to marital satisfaction and stability, on the one hand, positive illusions contribute to the development and maintenance of a positive relationship, reinforcing the belief that the relationship will be satisfying and enduring. On the other hand, an accurate perception of reality helps to solve disagreements and frustrations that may arise within the dyad, acknowledging their existence and the need for successful resolution. Illusory positive perception of the attractiveness of the marital partner represents a motivational source and can contribute to increasing positive interactions, the level of commitment, and intimacy in the marital dyad. And with regard to attachment, although positive illusions cannot induce changes in the attachment of marital partners, they can function as a means to disregard the negative aspects of individuals with insecure attachment.

In Chapter 2, *Manifestations of positive illusions in couple relationships*, the experimental design is described, the research methodology is presented, with the measurement instruments applied: 1. Positive Illusions Test regarding couple's relationships; 2. List of Marriage Myths; 3. Marital Satisfaction Test; 4. Leary Interpersonal Relationship Test.

**Purpose of the investigative approach** lies in establishing the particularities of positive illusions in couple relationships. To achieve the stated goal, we have developed a comparative and correlational experimental research model, with the following *objectives*: to determine the manifestation of positive illusions, marriage myths, and the level of marital satisfaction in couples

based on the gender of the subjects; establish the characteristics of the manifestation of positive illusions and marital satisfaction based on the duration of marriage; identify the characteristics of self-perception and perception of the marital partner based on the gender of the subjects; develop gender psychological profiles regarding the interrelationship between positive illusions, marital satisfaction, and the perception of the marital partner.

Within this process of inquiry, we formulated the following **hypotheses**:

*Hyp. 1.* We assume that there are differences in the manifestation of positive illusions, marriage myths, marital satisfaction, self-perceptions, and perceptions of marital partners based on the *gender of the subjects*.

*Hyp. 2.* We assume that there are differences in the manifestation of positive illusions and marital satisfaction based on the *duration of marriage*.

The experimental group included 100 married couples, the subjects were randomly selected, the main prerequisite being marital status and voluntary participation in the research.

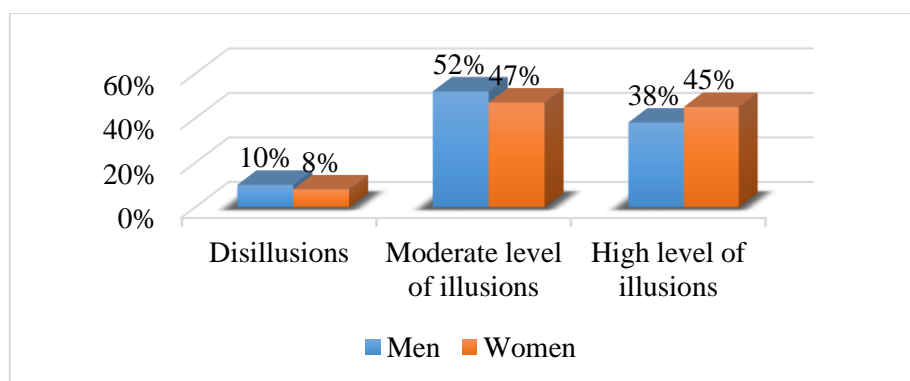
The results are presented below:

### 1. Positive illusions and marriage myths in couple relationships

This section of the research includes a double incursion. First, manifestations of positive illusions about the marital relationship and marriage myths are determined according to the gender of the experimental subjects (items *a* and *b*). Second, manifestations of positive illusions are identified according to the duration of the marriage (item *c*).

#### *a) Determining the manifestation of positive illusions based on gender*

Figure 2 reflects the results obtained by participants regarding the manifestation of positive illusions based on respondents' gender, after administering the Test of positive illusions.



**Fig. 2. Manifestation of positive illusions based on subjects' gender**

From Figure 2, we observe that a high level of illusions is reported by 38% of men and 45% of women. Additionally, approximately half of the respondents have a moderate level of positive illusions (52% men and 47% women). Moreover, 8% of women and 10% of men experienced disillusionment, which represents negative cognitive constructions regarding various

relational aspects. If we comparatively analyze the results from a gender perspective regarding positive illusions, we observe that there are no gender differences, a fact confirmed by the t-Student statistical method ( $t=1.144$ ,  $p$  non-significant).

*b) Determining the manifestation of marriage myths based on gender*

Moving forward, we aim to determine gender differences in marital myths within marital couples. In this context, it is worth noting that myths embody a shared belief, conditioned by the psychosocial context, representing an elaboration of collective consciousness. Certain myths constructed and embedded in society influence the expectations of individuals engaged in a romantic relationship, cohabitation, or marriage, as well as the relational behavior between marital partners, fostering changes in attitudes toward marriage. Therefore, understanding marital myths is important for ensuring optimal functionality within a couple.

Below, we present the results obtained by participants for each of the 10 marriage myths proposed in this research (Table 1).

**Table 1. Results obtained for marriage myths based on subjects' gender**

Marriage myths	Men		Women	
	true	false	true	false
Myth 1. Marriage benefits men much more than women.	34%	66%	69%	31%
Myth 2. Having children typically brings a married couple closer together and increases marital happiness.	81%	19%	78%	22%
Myth 3. The keys to long-term marital success are good luck and romantic love.	82%	18%	80%	20%
Myth 4. The more educated a woman becomes, the lower her chances of getting married.	38%	62%	44%	56%
Myth 5. Couples who live together before marriage, and are thus able to test how well suited they are for each other, have more satisfying and longer-lasting marriages than couples who do not.	46%	54%	50%	50%
Myth 6. People can't be expected to stay in a marriage for a lifetime as they did in the past because we live so much longer today.	52%	48%	61%	39%
Myth 7. Marrying puts a woman at greater risk of domestic violence than if she remains single.	37%	63%	43%	57%
Myth 8. Married people have less satisfying sex lives, and less sex than single people.	47%	53%	51%	49%
Myth 9. Cohabitation is just like marriage, but without "the piece of paper."	45%	55%	39%	61%
Myth 10. Because of the high divorce rate, which weeds out the unhappy marriages, people who stay married have happier marriages than people did in the past when everyone stuck it out, no matter how bad the marriage.	46%	54%	51%	49%

The data presented in Table 1 allows us to assert that marriage myths are still persistent in society, with the lowest scores recorded by men for myth 1 (34%) and by women for myth 9 (39%). Additionally, we identified myths whose affirmative prevalence percentage is observed in both men and women: myth "Having children typically brings a married couple closer together and increases marital happiness." (81% men and 78% women) and the myth "The keys to long-term marital success are good luck and romantic love." (82% men and 80% women). There is also a

reversal of the percentage values obtained for myth 1: 69% of women believe that men have greater benefits from marriage than women, and only 34% of men responded affirmatively to this myth.

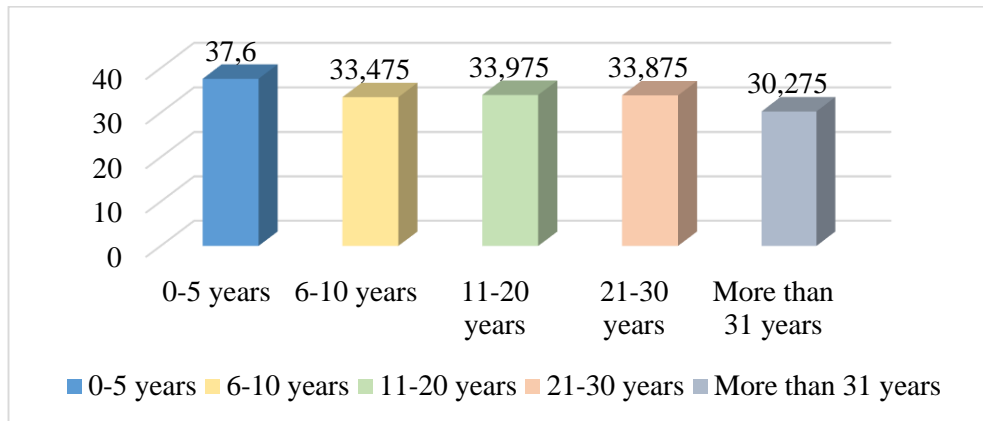
Upon conducting a thorough analysis of the manifestation of positive illusions and marriage myths, we have identified certain myths that contribute to the idea of positivity in couple relationships. Our next goal is to determine the level of positive illusions based on participants' affirmative responses to marriage myths that reflect positivity. Here, we provide a concise overview of the main results obtained in this context.

The majority of men and women who believe in the myth *"Having children typically brings a married couple closer together and increases marital happiness."* scored in the moderate (55.56% male and 38.47% female) and high (33.33% male and 50% female) levels of positive illusions. Additionally, there is a cumulative 25.64% of participants reporting disillusionment, even though they consider this statement to be true. In the case of the myth *"The keys to long-term marital success are good luck and romantic love."* the same tendency to manifest positive illusions is maintained in both women and men. Cumulatively, more than 2/3 of the respondents who answered yes to this myth have high levels of positive illusions (39.02% men and 43.75% women) and moderate levels (47.56% men and 50% women). According to the survey data, only 13.04% of men and 14% of women experienced disillusionment in the context of answering yes to the myth *"Couples who live together before marriage, and are thus able to test how well suited they are for each other, have more satisfying and longer-lasting marriages than couples who do not."* Additionally, we observe high percentage values of participants who answered affirmatively to the myth and, at the same time, in the manifestation of positive illusions, obtained moderate levels (men 39.13% and women 60%) and high levels (men 47.83% and women 36%). For the myth *"Because of the high divorce rate, which weeds out the unhappy marriages, people who stay married have happier marriages than people did in the past when everyone stuck it out, no matter how bad the marriage."*, predominantly moderate levels of positive illusions are observed (46.30% men and 44.90% women) along with high levels (35.18% men and 32.65% women). The analysis of responses given by subjects with varying levels of positive illusions to marriage myths denoting positivity revealed a possible relationship between positive illusions and certain marriage myths. Therefore, there was a predominance of affirmative responses to these marriage myths among men and women with moderate and high levels of positive illusions.

*c) Determining the manifestation of positive illusions based on the duration of marriage*

To establish if there are differences in the manifestation of positive illusions based on the duration of marriage, we delimited 5 categories of marital couples depending on the duration of their relationship as follows: *0-5 years; 6-10 years; 11-20 years; 21-30 years; more than 31 years.*

Next, we present the average values obtained in the manifestation of positive illusions by respondents based on the duration of marriage (Figure 3).

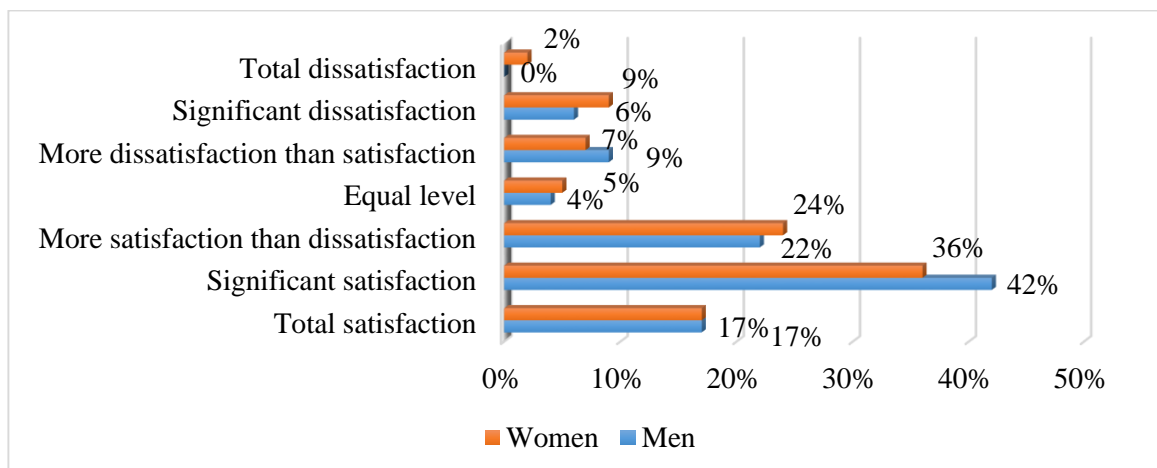


**Fig. 3. Manifestation of positive illusions based on the duration of marriage**

By comparing the results in Figure 3 allows us to observe that the highest level of positive illusions is evident in individuals engaged in a marital relationship for *0-5 years*. The lowest level of illusions is observed in individuals married for *more than 31 years*. Statistical processing of the results through the Scheffe test indicates the presence of significant differences in subjects with a marriage duration between *0-5 years* compared to subjects whose marriage has a duration of *over 31 years* ( $t=7.32$ ;  $p=0.001$ ).

## 2. The influence of subjects' gender and the duration of marriage on marital satisfaction

In order to outline a comparative image regarding marital satisfaction, we present the results obtained by men and women on *the Marital Satisfaction Test* (Figure 4).

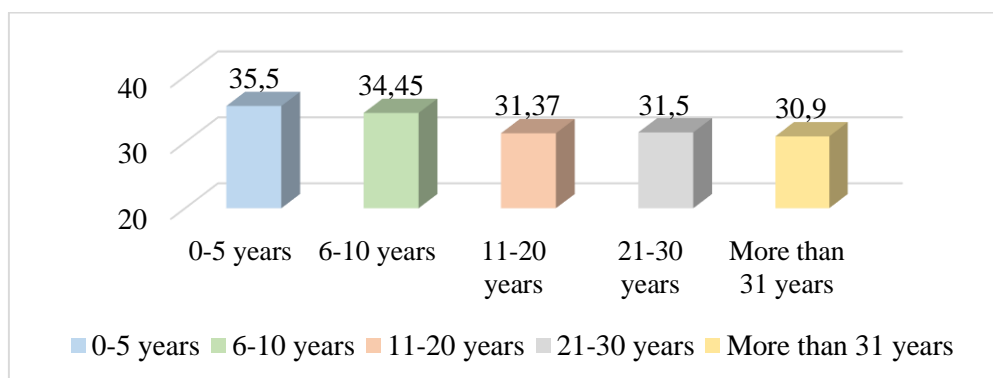


**Fig. 4. Manifestation of marital satisfaction based on subjects' gender**

By analyzing the data presented in Figure 4, we can conclude that the majority of study participants have obtained higher than equal levels of marital satisfaction and dissatisfaction. Specifically, 53% of women and 59% of men reported significant and total satisfaction, while 24%

of women and 22% of men exhibit more satisfaction than dissatisfaction in their relationship. Cumulatively, only 18% of women and 15% of men report varying degrees of marital dissatisfaction. If we comparatively analyze the results obtained based on gender, we observe that there are no gender differences, a fact confirmed by the t-Student statistical method ( $t=-0.689$ ,  $p$  non-significant).

Next, we present the mean values obtained in the present research regarding marital satisfaction based on the duration of marriage (Figure 5).



**Fig. 5. Manifestation of marital satisfaction based on the duration of marriage**

According to the data presented in Figure 5, we observe differences in the results reflecting marital satisfaction based on the current duration of marriage. Comparing the results allows us to note the following differences in the mean values obtained by respondents: *0-5 years* ( $m=35.5$ ), *6-10 years* ( $m=34.45$ ), *11-20 years* ( $m=31.37$ ), *21-30 years* ( $m=31.50$ ), *more than 31 years* ( $m=30.9$ ). There are significant differences between individuals engaged in the current relationship for *0-5 years* and those whose relationship lasts *more than 31 years* ( $0-5$  years  $m=35.5$ ; more than 31 years  $m=30.9$ ;  $t=4.600$ ,  $p=0.023$ ).

The results regarding the level of marital satisfaction do not identify significant differences based on the gender of the subjects. Differences are highlighted only based on the duration of marriage, specifically for individuals engaged in the current relationship for *0-5 years* and those whose relationship lasts *more than 31 years*, with the latter being less satisfied.

### **3. Self-perception and partner perception in a couple**

Another relevant and indispensable aspect of the research was the study of self-perceptions and reciprocal perceptions of marital partners. In this regard, participants were administered *Leary Interpersonal Relationship Test* by T. Leary, G. Leforge, and R. Sazek.

#### *a) The particularities of self-perception*

Below, we present the results obtained by participants in order to identify certain particularities of self-perception. To determine if there are significant differences in the results obtained by the subjects, we used inferential statistics, opting for the t-Student test.

The average results obtained for self-perception based on the gender of the respondents are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2. Particularities of self-perception based on gender**

Leary Test Scales	Women	Men	Test t
Authoritarian	8,67	8,59	t=,258, p non-significant
Selfish	7,85	7,39	t=1,811, p non-significant
Agressive	7,31	7,27	t=,176, p non-significant
Suspicious	9,16	7,78	t=4,927, p=0,000
Subordinate	7,73	6,98	t=2,821, p=0,005
Dependent	7,97	7,29	t=2,688, p=0,008
Friendly	9,12	8,45	t=2,789, p=0,006
Altruistic	9,21	8,07	t=3,993, p=0,000

According to the data presented in the above table, we identify significant differences only for the following scales: *suspicious* (women m=9.16, men m=7.78, t=4.927, p=0.000), *subordinate* (women m=7.73, men m=6.98, t=2.821, p=0.005), *dependent* (women m=7.97, men m=7.29, t=2.688, p=0.008), *friendly* (women m=9.12, men m=8.45, t=2.789, p=0.006), and *altruistic* (women m=9.21, men m=8.07, t=3.993, p=0.000).

*b) The particularities of marital partner perception*

Table 3 presents the mean differences related to particularities of marital partner perception based on gender.

**Table 3. Particularities of marital partner perception based on gender**

Leary Test Scales	Women	Men	Test t
Authoritarian	8,08	9,58	t=-4,568, p=0,000
Selfish	8,38	8,24	t=,397, p non-significant
Agressive	7,49	7,61	t=-,367, p non-significant
Suspicious	10,03	8,93	t=3,134, p=0,002
Subordinate	7,40	6,75	t=1,988, p=0,048
Dependent	7,76	6,77	t=2,978, p=0,003
Friendly	9,25	9,04	t=,568, p non-significant
Altruistic	9,30	9,00	t=,793, p non-significant

As observed in Table 3, significant differences based on the gender of respondents are noted in the scales of *authoritarian*, *suspicious*, *subordinate*, and *dependent*. Analyzing the results comparatively for *the authoritarian scale* (women m=8.08, men m=9.58, t=-4.568, p=0.000), we can infer that men perceive their wives as more authoritarian, contrary to the tendency of women to perceive their husbands as less authoritarian. Additionally, women perceive their husbands as more *subordinate* (women m=7.40, men m=6.75, t=1.988, p=0.048) and more *dependent* (women m=7.76, men m=6.77, t=2.978, p=0.003). Significant differences were also noted in the *suspicious scale* (women m=10.03, men m=8.93, t=3.134, p=0.002), indicating that women perceive their husbands as more suspicious than men perceive their wives. The study of self-perceptions highlighted certain particularities of self-perception and marital partner perception, identifying

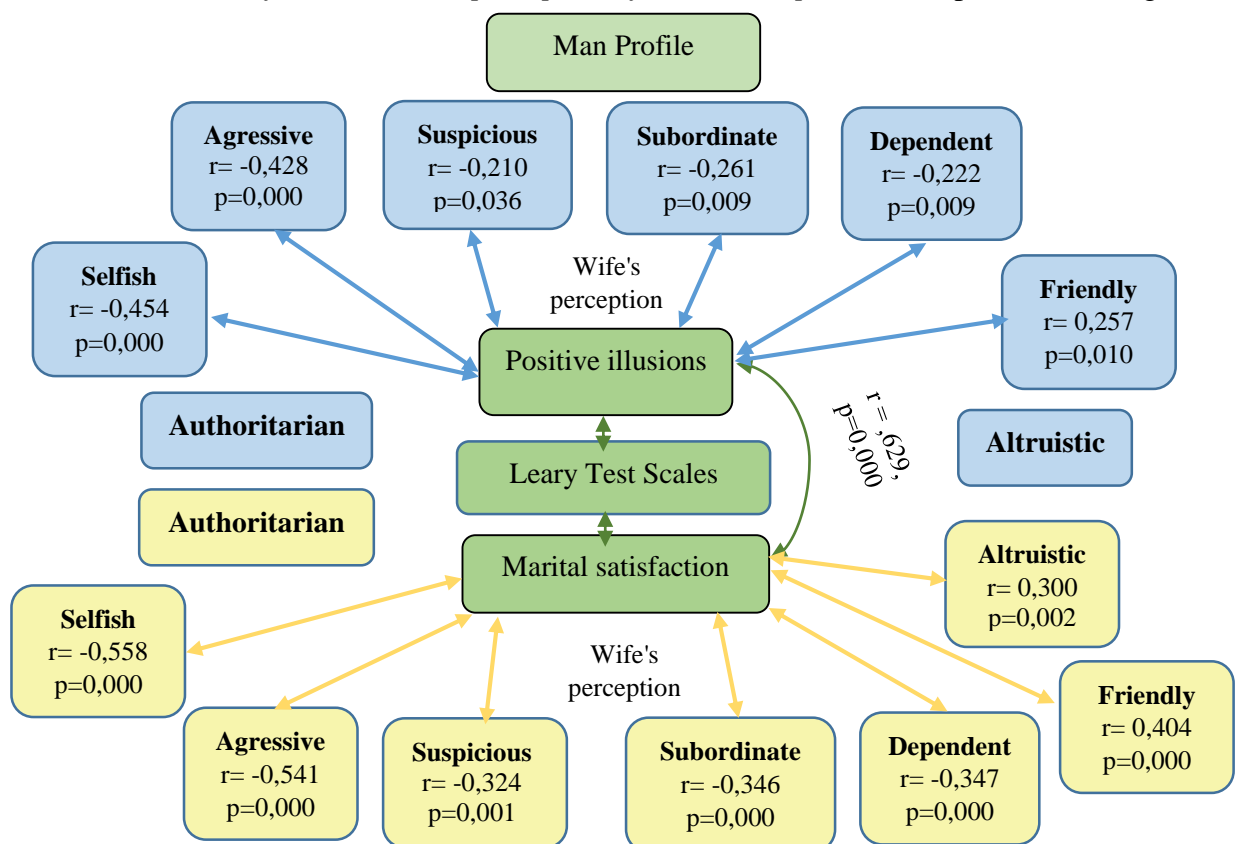


statistically significant differences based on gender. Therefore, women self-perceive as more suspicious, subordinate, dependent, friendly, and altruistic compared to men. And regarding the particularities of the marital partner, we obtained gender-based differences, with men perceiving their wives as more authoritarian. On the other hand, women perceive their marital partners as more suspicious, more subordinate, and more dependent. Results obtained support the idea that self-perception and perception of the marital partner represent perceptual correlates directly influenced by social norms, the specifics of dyadic interactions, and the potential for the development of each partner.

#### 4. The relationship between positive illusions, marital satisfaction, and perception of the marital partner

The designed research involves determining correlational aspects, and to identify the relationships between the investigated variables, we used the Pearson correlation coefficient ( $r$ ). As a continuation of the research process, we developed *Gender psychological profiles regarding the interrelationship between positive illusions, marital satisfaction, and the perception of the marital partner* (Figure 6 and Figure 7).

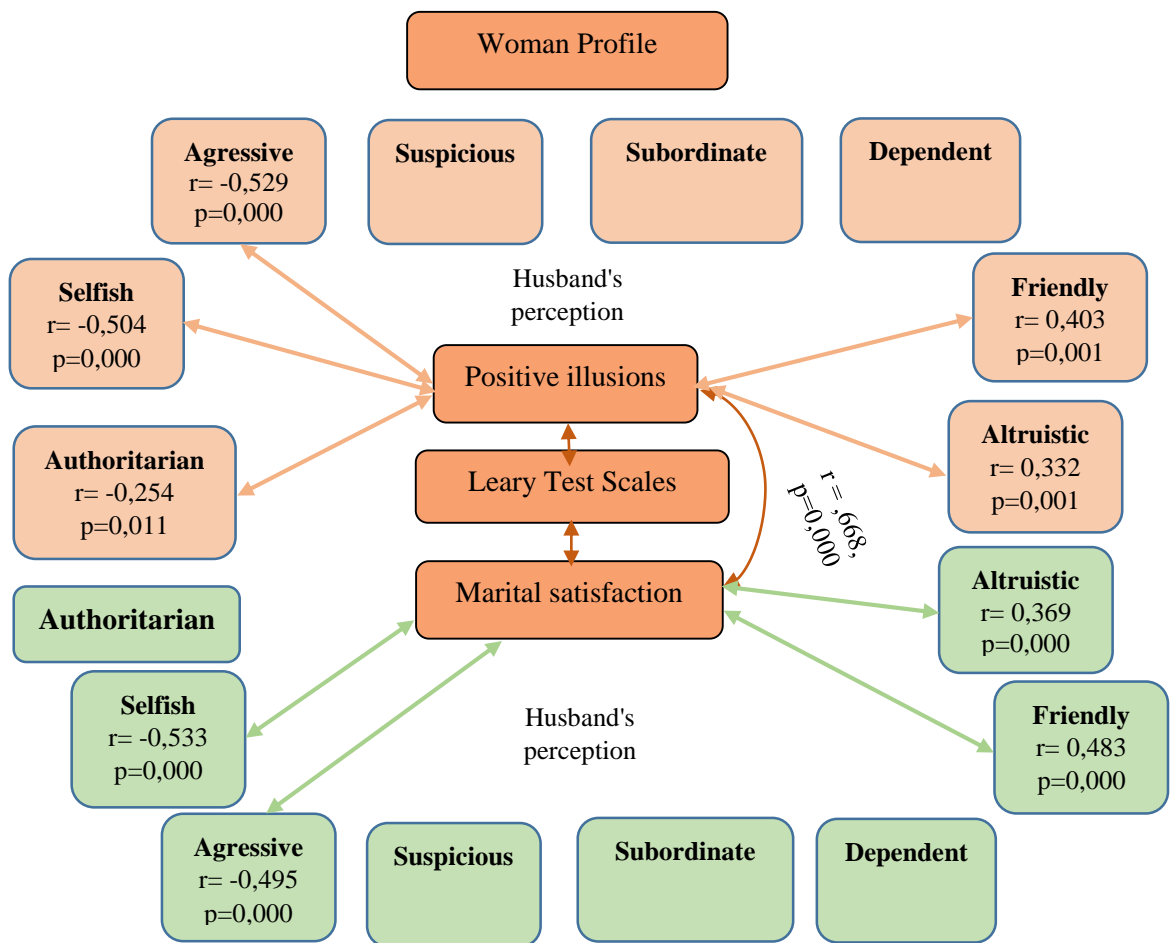
a) *The psychological profile of man regarding the interrelationship between positive illusions, marital satisfaction, and the perception of the marital partner* is represented in Figure 6.



**Fig. 6. Psychological profile of man regarding the interrelationship between positive illusions, marital satisfaction, and perception of the marital partner**

According to Figure 6, we highlight the following relational aspects of variables in men: a high level of positive illusions is associated with a high level of marital satisfaction. A defining element of positive illusions is the accentuation of positive traits of the partner and the minimization of negative ones. The manifestation of positive illusions involves positively biased perceptions of the marital partner, thus identifying a positive correlation between positive illusions and the perception of the wife as friendly, which is a positive trait. Additionally, having positive illusions, men perceive their wives as less selfish, aggressive, suspicious, subordinate, and dependent.

b) *The psychological profile of woman regarding the interrelationship between positive illusions, marital satisfaction, and perception of the marital partner is represented in Figure 7.*



**Fig. 7. Psychological profile of woman regarding the interrelationship between positive illusions, marital satisfaction, and perception of the marital partner**

Analyzing the data from Figure 7, we observe that the same correlational pattern is maintained in women, expressed through the interdependence between positive illusions and marital satisfaction. The positive perception of the husband involves amplifying friendship and

altruism traits. On the other hand, it is noted that women with a high level of positive illusions and marital satisfaction perceive their marital partners as less authoritarian, selfish, and aggressive.

The differences recorded in gender profiles regarding the interrelationship between positive illusions, marital satisfaction, and perception of the marital partner can be explained by gender stereotypes that still persist in society, shaping preferences and desirability for traits perceived as specifically masculine or feminine.

Similarities recorded in gender profiles can also be explained by the real and perceived similarities between the two partners. Additionally, an explanation may arise from the desirability of certain socially positively connotated traits and the awareness that certain negative traits can have a detrimental impact on the couple's relationship.

Chapter 3, *Psychological intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in couple relationships*, presents the conceptual and methodological approaches that have served as guidelines in developing the psychological intervention program for married couples. The main aspects related to the implementation of the proposed program are presented, providing a concise description of the structure and specifics of the sessions. Additionally, this chapter includes the results of evaluating the effectiveness of the psychological intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in couple relationships by comparing the results obtained by participants pre- and post-intervention.

Therefore, based on the findings presented in the previous chapters, **the purpose of the intervention process** involves the development and experimentation of a psychological intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in couples. In this regard, **the objectives** of the psychological intervention program aim to: appreciate each partner in the marital dyad and respect similarities and differences; increase flexibility and willingness to cooperate in the marital dyad; foster positive interactions between couple partners and enhance the functionality of the couple; learn effective ways to focus on positive aspects within the relationship.

In the context of this intervention, we have formulated the following **hypotheses**:

*Hyp. 1.* The psychological intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in couple relationships will contribute to increase the level of positive illusions and marital satisfaction.

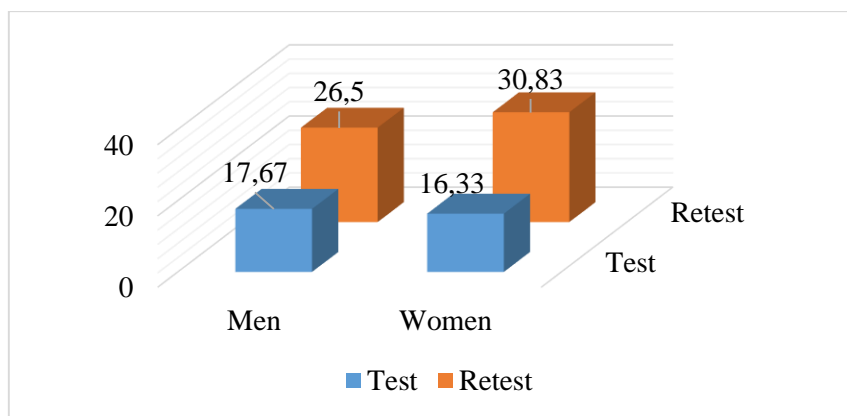
*Hyp. 2.* The psychological intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in couple relationships will produce changes in the perception of the marital partner.

**Subjects taking part in the psychological intervention program.** For the formative approach, we selected 6 marital couples who agreed to participate in the pre-intervention assessment, which established disillusionment, low marital satisfaction and high values *on Leary*

*Interpersonal Relationship Test* scales with reference to negative traits and low values on positive trait scales. The age of the participants ranged from 24 to 47 years and the duration of marriage ranged from 2 to 22 years. The program was structured in 12 sessions of 3 hours each, held from March to August 2022, with a frequency of one session per week. The extension of the psychological intervention program was due to the impossibility of working with all married couples at the same time and the availability of each marital dyad to participate fully in the proposed program was taken into account.

In order to assess the effectiveness of the psychological intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in couple relationships, the results of the participants in the formative experiment were analyzed by re-administering the following samples: *Positive Illusions Test regarding couple's relationships*, *Marital Satisfaction Test* and *the Leary Interpersonal Relationship Test*. Therefore, the differences between the test and retest results of the participants in the intervention approach were compared and highlighted through descriptive, qualitative analysis of the results and statistical analysis using paired t-test for comparing two paired variables in the same group.

We present below the changes that occurred in the subjects' results after the re-administration of *Positive Illusions Test*. Figure 8 graphically illustrates the test-retest results obtained by marital partners according gender.

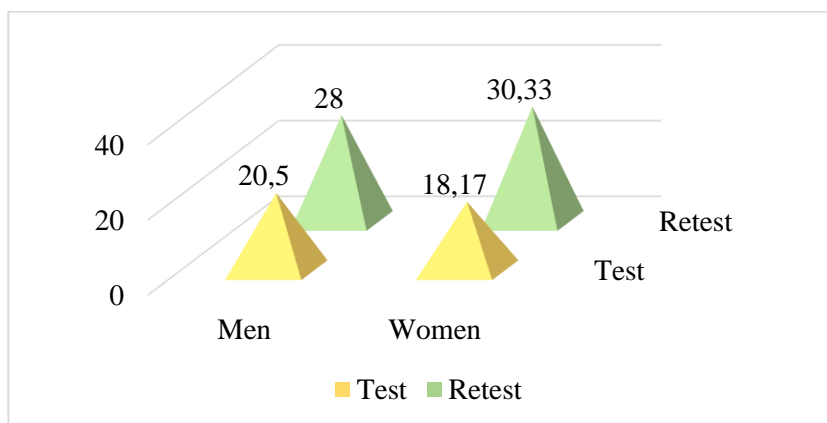


**Fig. 8. Manifestations of positive illusions by gender (test and retest)**

Examination of the mean values presented in Figure 8 revealed significant differences in the results reflecting the manifestation of positive illusions before and after the psychological intervention. The data obtained allow us to state that the level of positive illusions increased in the marital partners who followed the intervention program sessions, and the statistical comparison of the results shows significant differences before and after the psychological intervention in both men (test  $m=17.67$ ; retest  $m=26.50$ ;  $t=-3.792$ ;  $p=,013$ ) and women (test  $m=16.33$ ; retest  $m=30.83$ ;  $t=-4.636$ ;  $p=,006$ ). Analysing the data by gender, we can observe higher values for women in the

manifestation of positive illusions after participation in the program compared to men. This can be explained by the more active involvement and higher motivational persistence in women compared to men's high level of reluctance and low credibility about the intervention.

We proceed by presenting the results obtained after the re-administration of the *Marital Satisfaction Test* to the subjects of the psychological intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in couple relationships (Figure 9).



**Fig. 9. Mean values of marital satisfaction by gender (test and retest)**

The graphical presentation of the data recorded by the couple partners (Figure 9) shows differences between the average results in terms of marital satisfaction at the test and retest stage. Comparison of the pre- and post-intervention results allows us to find the following significant differences in mean values, statistically confirmed by the t-Student test: for men (test  $m=20.50$ ; retest  $m=28.00$ ;  $t=-4.248$ ;  $p=0.008$ ) and women (test  $m=18.17$ ; retest  $m=30.33$ ;  $t=-6.636$ ;  $p=0.001$ ). Thus, after the psychological intervention the marital partners rate the quality of the current relationship as higher compared to the period before participation in the formative experiment, increasing the state of happiness of both felt in the couple.

Another important aspect of the formative approach that was the basis for the development of the intervention program was the positivation of the perceptions of the conjugal partners, and in order to determine the changes in their perceptions, *the Leary Interpersonal Relationship Test* was re-administered.

We now present the results obtained in the testing and retesting phase of the participants' perception of self (Table 4) and perception of marital partner (Table 5). In the tables below, only the scales for which there were statistically significant differences are presented.

Table 4 compares the mean values recorded by the participants on self-perception before and after the psychological intervention.

**Table 4. Mean values for self-perception (test and retest)**

Leary Test Scales	Test	Retest	Value of t	Threshold of significance
<b>Men</b>				
Selfish	8,33	4,83	t=8,174	p=0,000
Agressive	7,50	4,83	t=4,000	p=0,010
Friendly	7,00	10,00	t=-6,708	p=0,001
Altruistic	6,17	9,17	t=-3,873	p=0,012
<b>Women</b>				
Selfish	6,67	3,33	t=6,742	p=0,001
Agressive	7,17	4,67	t=11,180	p=0,000
Suspicious	8,00	4,50	t=6,220	p=0,002
Friendly	7,67	8,83	t=-3,796	p=0,013
Altruistic	5,67	8,67	t=-5,809	p=0,002

We can see from the data presented in Table 4 that both men and women's self-perceptions changed in a positive direction. Thus, compared to the initial assessment stage, lower values are found for the *selfish and aggressive scale*. In the same context, higher values were recorded for the *friendly and altruistic scales*. Analysis of the results shows only one gender difference on the *suspicious scale*, with women obtaining lower values in the retest stage and men recording statistically insignificant differences on this scale.

In Table 5 we present a comparison of the results obtained in the testing and retesting phase by the participants regarding their perception of their marital partner.

**Table 5. Mean values for perception of marital partner (test and retest)**

Leary Test Scales	Test	Retest	Value of t	Threshold of significance
<b>Men</b>				
Selfish	9,17	5,83	t= 10,000	p= 0,000
Agressive	8,50	4,00	t= 10,510	p= 0,000
Suspicious	8,83	5,83	t= 4,392	p= 0,007
Friendly	5,33	9,00	t= -5,500	p= 0,003
Altruistic	5,67	8,83	t= -5,270	p= 0,003
<b>Women</b>				
Selfish	10,33	6,33	t= 6,928	p= 0,001
Agressive	9,50	5,67	t= 9,550	p= 0,000
Suspicious	9,00	4,83	t= 5,926	p= 0,002
Friendly	5,17	8,83	t= -17,393	p= 0,000
Altruistic	5,00	8,33	t= -15,811	p= 0,000

Analysing the mean values presented in Table 5, we identify significant differences in men and women's perceptions of their marital partner for the following scales: *selfish, aggressive, suspicious, friendly and altruistic*. The changes produced are reflected in two opposite directions: *the selfish, aggressive and suspicious scales* show lower values in the retesting stage compared to the initial testing, while *the friendly and altruistic scales* show more positive results after the psychological intervention.

Considering that the results obtained on *the authoritarian, subordinate and dependent* scales in terms of self-perception and perception of the marital partner were not included in Tables

4 and 5, we note the lack of significant differences in the testing and retesting stage on these scales for both women and men.

The development and implementation of the psychological intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in couple relationships focused on the need to provide psychological assistance to couples who are at an impasse, and the positive changes recorded in the formative experiment demonstrate the veracity of the objectives put forward and the effectiveness of the proposed program.

As a result of the psychological intervention, participants experienced higher levels of marital satisfaction and moderate levels of positive illusions, with moderation in this regard being a desirable effect, referring to delusional optimism about the progress of the marital relationship. This manifests itself in the partners' increased confidence in the harmonious development of the couple and can lead to their considerable involvement in ensuring marital success.

At the same time, the psychological intervention program produced positive effects on self-perceptions and perceptions of the marital partner. As a result, both men and women, after the sessions, perceive themselves as less selfish and aggressive, but at the same time more friendly and altruistic. In women, unlike men, there is also a decrease in the level of suspicion. The same trend of change can be observed in the perception of the marital partner. These similarities show the importance of certain positive traits and the impact of certain negative traits in relationships. On the other hand, the explanation may also stem from the specifics of marital interactions, which are bidirectional and changes occur at the individual and dyadic level.

In the context of the results obtained from the implementation of the psychological intervention program, we mention that the harmonization of positive illusions in couple relationships contribute to the development of positive interactions, increasing the level of cooperation and flexibility in the couple, but at the same time allowing the harmonious development of each partner's personality.

## GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The heterogeneous and complex nature of couple relationships implies that the marital dyad should be considered as an entity composed of interacting parts. Thus, in a couple relationship, there are three participants: I, you, and we (the relationship). To understand the specific interactions between partners, it is necessary to focus on the interrelated nature of perceptions and beliefs concerning marital partners and the relationship. Researchers in the field of psychology have always been concerned with understanding the reasons and factors underlying the engagement and development of a relationship, and the cognitive dimension has gained ground in investigation. Phrases such as "love is blind" or "rose-colored glasses," often used in everyday communication, directly refer to positive perceptual bias, which has sparked heated debates about the necessity of accurate or illusory perceptions of couple life.

Considering that such research is not documented in the Republic of Moldova, we have undertaken a theoretical and empirical study to understand the specificities of positive illusions and their interrelation with other marital dimensions. The goal is to develop effective psychological intervention programs for couples facing challenges.

The theoretical-experimental approach undertaken allows us to formulate the following **general conclusions**:

1. Through the supported scientific approach, it was established that positive illusions reflect a cognitive dimension, conditioned by the psycho-socio-cultural context, representing a set of positively biased perceptions and beliefs about the marital partner and the couple relationship, the explanatory-integrative framework of these phenomena contributing to the elaboration of *The theoretical-explanatory model of the manifestation of positive illusions in couple relationships* (Chapter 1) [29, 30, 34, 36].

2. The results obtained within the experimental approach demonstrated that the gender of the subjects does not influence the level of positive illusions and marital satisfaction, this fact being specifically due to the interactions between the two partners in a couple, and the duration of the marriage can be considered a factor that determines the high level of positive illusions and marital satisfaction in the first five years of the relationship. At the same time, self-perception and the perception of the marital partner involve significant differences according to gender, due to the desirability of specific male or female traits and the persistence of gender stereotypes in society, but with a partial flexibility (Chapter 2) [31, 33, 36, 37].

3. The results obtained in the confirmatory experiment demonstrated that marriage myths are still persistent in society, reflecting a possible relationship between positive illusions and marriage myths denoting positivity (Chapter 2) [28].



4. The results obtained at the correlational level allowed the development of *Gender Psychological Profiles regarding the interrelationship between positive illusions, marital satisfaction and the perception of the marital partner*, which reflect the complexity of relational dynamics through the recorded interdependencies, thus contributing to the understanding of psychological phenomena from a gender perspective within conjugal partnerships (Chapter 2) [31, 37].

5. Through the design and implementation of the psychological intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in couple relationships, a significant positive evolution was established in the level of positive illusions, marital satisfaction, perception of the marital partner and self-perception (Chapter 3) [32].

The research results, with both theoretical and practical value, represent a tangible contribution *to solving the important scientific problem* of establishing the particularities of the manifestation of positive illusions and developing the psychological intervention program, having the effect of harmonizing positive illusions in couple relationships, in order to use the theoretical, methodological and applied results in psychological practice. We believe that the conducted research enriches general psychology with new theoretical and experimental insights into the manifestations of positive illusions in couple relationships.

The results of the theoretical and empirical endeavor serve as a significant foundation for formulating the following **practical recommendations**:

*For trainers and specialists in the field of couples' psychology:*

- Incorporate the obtained results into various informative and methodological materials for the purpose of informing, promoting, and fostering psychologically healthy couple relationships at a societal level.
- Initiate non-formal education programs and activities for couples, focusing on actions directed towards developing effective positive experiences and acquiring the necessary skills for the functional exercise of the marital role. These initiatives can also serve a psycho-prophylactic function.
- Incorporate the obtained results into various educational platforms for couples.
- Creating couple schools or couple-friendly centers in various regions of the Republic of Moldova with the goal of fostering the functional development of marital relationships.
- Creating and implementing a specialized university course dedicated to young individuals. This course aims to familiarize them with fundamental aspects of couple relationships, factors influencing dyadic interactions, and the evolutionary dynamics of relationships.

Understanding these aspects will promote the initiation, development, and maintenance of harmonious couple relationships.

- Applying the research findings and psychodiagnostic test results in theoretical-practical seminars and ongoing training for specialists who offer psychological assistance to dysfunctional couples.
- Implementing the psychological intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in couple relationships within institutions dedicated to ensuring the well-being and longevity of marital couples.
- Incorporating the researched dimensions in this work into the study programs of disciplines and courses related to Family and Couples Psychology.

*For psychologists and couples counselors:*

- Utilizing the theoretical-empirical results in informative-formative courses and training sessions dedicated to marital couples.
- The use of psychodiagnostic tests by psychologists and counselors for the comprehensive assessment of couple relationships.
- Psychologists and couples counselors adopting and implementing the intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in couple relationships.

*For marital couples:*

- Building trust in your partner and embracing an open, collaborative attitude towards your interactions and each other's personalities. Focus on the positive aspects of the relationship and your partner, but without neglecting the negative traits.
- Achieving a state of authenticity: providing mutual opportunities to construct and modify the perceptual system regarding the partner and the relationship, and avoiding gender stereotypes.
- Awareness of the role and involvement of each partner in the development of the relationship and the positive projection of the common future.
- Developing motivational strength and encouraging positive exchanges based on the needs of each partner.
- Systematically updating and recalling positive experiences, relived together.

### **Limits and Further Studies**

The limitations of the current study relate to the fact that the aim was not to take into account certain objective criteria (such as age category, number of children, and marriage order), as well as other relational-marital dimensions (e.g., attachment, marital stability etc.). Thus, we

presume that exploring these factors could provide new and important results in the field of couple psychology.

In the context of identifying these limitations, we would propose some directions for future research:

- Develop research to include age category, number of children and number of marriages.
- Expanding the experimental sample in an exploratory and formative approach by including other couples with different cohabitation forms (consensual union, cohabitation), which would allow for a comparative and longitudinal research.
- Utilizing multiple instruments to capture the complex nature of the studied phenomenon: measuring positive illusions about oneself and illusions of control.
- Expanding the scope of investigation by including other variables and criteria in research to explore various interrelationships of perceptual aspects and other relational-marital dimensions.

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## ADNOTARE

### **Dolinschi Cristina. Manifestări ale iluziilor pozitive în relațiile de cuplu. Teză de doctor în psihologie. Chișinău, 2024.**

**Structura tezei:** introducere, trei capitole, concluzii generale și recomandări, bibliografie din 310 titluri, 5 anexe, 142 pagini de text de bază, 16 tabele, 51 figuri. Rezultatele obținute sunt publicate în 10 lucrări științifice.

**Cuvinte-cheie:** iluzii pozitive, relații de cuplu, parteneri conjugal, satisfacție conjugală, mituri ale căsniciei, percepții ale partenerilor, armonizarea iluziilor pozitive, diferențe de gen, durata căsniciei.

**Scopul lucrării** constă în stabilirea particularităților de manifestare a iluziilor pozitive în raport cu satisfacția în cuplu, percepțiile reciproce ale partenerilor conjugal, precum și elaborarea unui program de intervenție psihologică privind armonizarea iluziilor pozitive în relațiile de cuplu.

**Obiectivele cercetării:** (1) analiza și sinteza cercetărilor cu referire la tema studiată; (2) stabilirea particularităților privind iluziile pozitive, miturile căsniciei, satisfacția conjugală, percepțiile de sine și percepțiile reciproce ale partenerilor conjugal în funcție de „genul subiecților” și de „durata căsniciei”; (3) elaborarea profilurilor psihologice de gen privind interrelația dintre iluziile pozitive, satisfacția conjugală și percepția partenerului conjugal; (4) elaborarea, implementarea și evaluarea eficienței „Programului de intervenție psihologică privind armonizarea iluziilor pozitive în relațiile de cuplu”.

**Noutatea și originalitatea științifică** rezidă în elaborarea unui dintre primele studii teoretico-experimentale, din spațiul național, în psihologia generală, care stabilește particularitățile de manifestare a iluziilor pozitive în relațiile conjugale; stabilirea Modelului teoretico-explicativ al manifestării iluziilor pozitive în relațiile de cuplu”; constituirea Profilurilor psihologice de gen privind interrelația dintre iluziile pozitive, satisfacția conjugală și percepția partenerului conjugal; elaborarea Programului de intervenție psihologică privind armonizarea iluziilor pozitive în relațiile de cuplu.

**Rezultatele obținute care contribuie la soluționarea unei probleme științifice importante** constau în stabilirea particularităților de manifestare a iluziilor pozitive și elaborarea programului de intervenție psihologică, având ca efect armonizarea iluziilor pozitive în relațiile de cuplu, în vederea utilizării rezultatelor teoretice, metodologice și aplicative în practica psihologică.

**Semnificația teoretică a cercetării** rezidă în completarea și consolidarea bazei teoretice cu privire la iluziile pozitive prin sintetizarea informațiilor despre manifestarea acestor percepții biasate pozitiv în contextul relațiilor de cuplu și rolul lor în diada conjugală; argumentarea Modelului teoretico-explicativ al manifestării iluziilor pozitive în relațiile de cuplu; fundamentarea teoretico-științifică a Programului de intervenție psihologică privind armonizarea iluziilor pozitive în relațiile de cuplu; abordarea intra și interdisciplinară a prezentei cercetări, dat fiind faptul că nu ne-am rezumat doar la perspectiva psihologiei generale prin studierea iluziilor pozitive ca un fenomen cognitiv, dar și cea a psihologiei sociale și de cuplu.

**Valoarea aplicativă a lucrării** constă în posibilitatea aplicării metodologiei psihodiagnostice adaptate în cercetare pe populația Republicii Moldova; elaborarea Profilurilor psihologice de gen privind interrelația dintre iluziile pozitive, satisfacția conjugală și percepția partenerului conjugal; validarea Programului de intervenție psihologică privind armonizarea iluziilor pozitive în relațiile de cuplu. Datele experimentale pot fi utile cercetătorilor, psihologilor și consilierilor de cuplu, persoanelor implicate într-o relație conjugală. Rezultatele studiului și programul de intervenție psihologică propus în cercetare pot fi utilizate în consilierea relațională și în psihoterapia de cuplu, în diverse programe de educare a adulților menite să dezvolte competențe necesare pentru viața de cuplu premaritală și maritală.

**Implementarea rezultatelor științifice:** în cadrul conferințelor științifice naționale și internaționale; în activitatea didactică de pregătire și formare a studenților (USM); în programul de intervenție psihologică realizat cu cuplurile conjugale și în activități de consiliere premaritală și maritală.



## АННОТАЦИЯ

**Долински Кристина. Проявления позитивных иллюзий в супружеских отношениях.**

**Диссертация на соискание ученой степени доктора психологии. Кишинев, 2024.**

**Структура диссертации:** введение, три главы, общие выводы и рекомендации, библиография из 310 наименований, 5 приложений, 142 страниц основного текста, 16 таблиц, 51 рисунок. Полученные результаты опубликованы в 10 научных статьях.

**Ключевые слова:** позитивные иллюзии, супружеские отношения, брачные партнеры, удовлетворенность браком, мифы о браке, самовосприятие, восприятие супруга, гармонизация позитивных иллюзий, гендерные различия, продолжительность брака.

**Цель работы:** установить особенности проявления позитивных иллюзий относительно удовлетворенности в паре, взаимного восприятия супружеских партнеров, а также разработать программу психологического вмешательства по поводу гармонизации позитивных иллюзий в паре.

**Задачи исследования:** (1) анализ и синтез исследований по изучаемой теме; (2) определение характеристик позитивных иллюзий, брачных мифов, удовлетворенности браком, самовосприятия и взаимного восприятия супругов по «полу испытуемых» и «длительности брака»; (3) разработка психологических гендерных профилей взаимосвязи позитивных иллюзий, удовлетворенности браком и восприятия супружеского партнера; (4) разработка, внедрение и оценка эффективности «Программы психологического вмешательства по гармонизации позитивных иллюзий в супружеских отношениях».

**Научная новизна и оригинальность** заключается в разработке одного из первых в отечественной области теоретико-экспериментальных исследований в общей психологии, устанавливающих особенности проявления позитивных иллюзий в супружеских отношениях; установление Теоретико-объяснительной модели проявления позитивных иллюзий в супружеских отношениях»; установление Психологических гендерных профилей относительно взаимосвязи позитивных иллюзий, удовлетворенности браком и восприятия супруга; разработка Программы психологического вмешательства по гармонизации позитивных иллюзий в супружеских отношениях.

**Полученные результаты, способствующие решению важной научной проблемы** заключаются в установлении особенностей проявления позитивных иллюзий и разработке программы психологического вмешательства, оказывающей эффект гармонизации позитивных иллюзий в отношениях пары, с целью использования теоретических, методологических и прикладных результатов в психологической практике.

**Теоретическая значимость исследования** заключается в дополнении и укреплении теоретической базы позитивных иллюзий путем синтеза информации о проявлении этих позитивно предвзятых представлений в контексте супружеских отношений и их роли в браке; обоснование Теоретико-объяснительной модели проявления позитивных иллюзий в супружеских отношениях; теоретико-научное обоснование Программы психологического вмешательства по гармонизации позитивных иллюзий в браке; внутри- и междисциплинарный подход настоящего исследования, учитывая тот факт, что мы не ограничивались только перспективой общей психологии, изучая позитивные иллюзии как когнитивный феномен, но также социальной психологией и психологией супружества.

**Практическая значимость** заключается в возможности применения психодиагностической методологии, адаптированной в исследовании, к населению Республики Молдова; разработка Психологических гендерных профилей взаимосвязи позитивных иллюзий, удовлетворенности браком и восприятия супруга; валидация Программы психологического вмешательства в отношении гармонизации позитивных иллюзий в супружеских отношениях. Экспериментальные данные будут полезны исследователям, психологам и семейным консультантам, людям, состоящим в супружеских отношениях. Результаты исследования и предложенная в исследовании программа психологического вмешательства могут быть использованы в консультировании и психотерапии пар, в различных программах обучения взрослых, направленных на развитие навыков, необходимых для добрачной и супружеской жизни.

**Внедрение научных результатов:** в рамках национальных и международных научных конференций; в дидактической деятельности по подготовке и обучению студентов (ГУМ); в программе психологического вмешательства, проводимой с супружескими парами, а также в добрачных и супружеских консультациях.

## ANNOTATION

**Dolinschi Cristina. Manifestations of positive illusions in couple relationships. PhD thesis in psychology. Chisinau, 2024.**

**The paper's structure:** introduction, three chapters, general conclusions and recommendations, bibliography of 310 titles, 5 annexes, 142 pages of basic text, 16 tables, 51 figures. The obtained results are published in 10 scientific papers.

**Keywords:** positive illusions, couple relationships, marital partners, marital satisfaction, marriage myths, perceptions of partners, harmonization of positive illusions, gender differences, duration of marriage.

**The aim of the paper** is to establish the particularities of the manifestation of positive illusions in relation to the satisfaction in the couple, the mutual perceptions of the marital partners, as well as the development of a psychological intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in the couple relationships.

**Research objectives:** (1) analysis and synthesis of research with reference to the theme studied; (2) determining the characteristics of positive illusions, marriage myths, marital satisfaction, self-perceptions, and mutual perceptions of marital partner according to "gender of subjects" and "duration of marriage"; (3) the development of psychological gender profiles regarding the interrelationship between positive illusions, marital satisfaction and the perception of the spouse; (4) the development, implementation and evaluation of the effectiveness of the "Psychological intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in couple relationships".

**Scientific novelty and originality** reside in developing one of the first theoretical-experimental studies in the national context in general psychology, establishing the characteristics of positive illusions in couple relationships; establishing The theoretical-explanatory model of the manifestation of positive illusions in couple relationships; creating Psychological gender profiles regarding the interrelation between positive illusions, marital satisfaction, and the perception of the marital partner; developing The psychological intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in couple relationships.

**The results obtained that contribute to the solution of an important scientific problem** consist in establishing the particularities of the manifestation of positive illusions and developing the psychological intervention program, having the effect of harmonizing positive illusions in couple relationships, in order to use the theoretical, methodological and applied results in psychological practice.

**The theoretical significance of the research** resides in augmenting and reinforcing the theoretical foundation related to positive illusions by synthesizing information on how these positively biased perceptions manifest in the context of couple relationships and their role in the marital dyad; substantiating The theoretical-explanatory model of the manifestation of positive illusions in couple relationships; providing a theoretical-scientific foundation for The psychological intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in couple relationships; embracing an intra and interdisciplinary approach in this research, not limiting the study solely to the perspective of general psychology but also considering aspects of social and couple psychology.

**The applicative value of the work** consists in the possibility of applying the adapted psychodiagnostic methodology in research on the population of the Republic of Moldova; developing Psychological gender profiles regarding the interrelation between positive illusions, marital satisfaction, and the perception of the marital partner; validating The psychological intervention program for harmonizing positive illusions in couple relationships.

**Implementation of scientific results:** in national and international scientific conferences; in the didactic activity of preparation and training of students (USM); in the psychological intervention program carried out with married couples and in premarital and marital counseling activities.

**DOLINSCHI CRISTINA**

**MANIFESTATIONS OF POSITIVE ILLUSIONS IN COUPLE  
RELATIONSHIPS**

**511.01 – GENERAL PSYCHOLOGY**

**Abstract of the doctoral thesis in psychology**

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