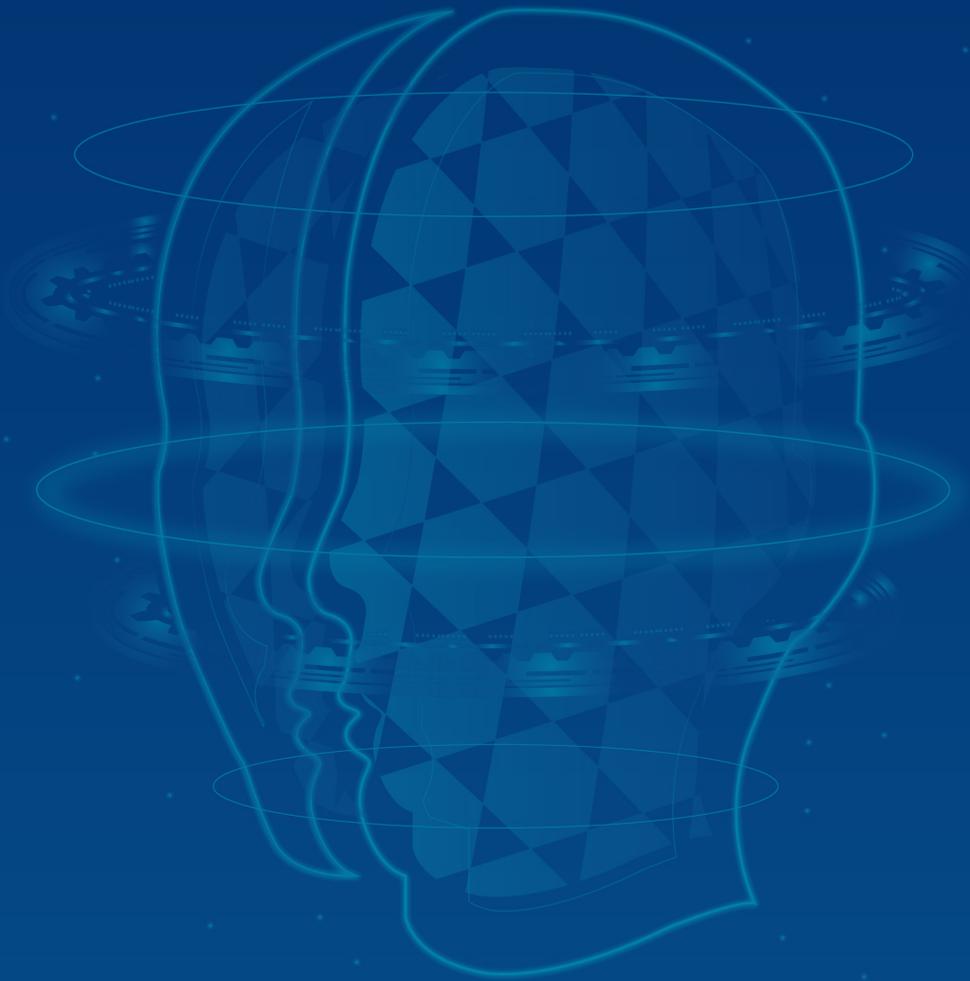




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Head Over Heels: Romantic Relationship Ensuing Conflict among Peer Interactions of Dycian Freshmen Class

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ABSTRACT

It is the very nature of human individuals to feel love and be loved, the need for intimacy and romantic love from their fellow and love from their friends. From there, people slowly learned and grew as individuals. Hence, all people yearn to be held by someone, to have a partner with whom they may spend the rest of their lives. The objective of this study is to explore and understand the conflicts that may ensue in entering romantic relationships towards their peer interactions. Anchored in this study are Duck's Model of Relationship Breakdown, Aristotle's Theory of Friendship, and the Social Penetration Theory. Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions: 1. What are the perspectives of the informants about: A. romantic relationship, B. friendship. 2. What are the conflicts that may arise in entering a romantic relationship to their peer relationship? 3. What are the remedies to the conflicts that may ensue while engaging in a romantic relationship in regards to their peer interaction? Semi-structured interviews and non-probability sampling were used in the study, which was qualitative phenomenological research. Significant statements were chosen from the verbatim transcripts of the interviews. Then, in order to identify the emerging themes, these were divided into theme clusters. The following themes emerged from the interviews: Matter of Choice, Inevitable Connection, Conventional Stressors, and Relationship Key Factors. The researchers' findings were as follows: 1. A. Romantic relationship can be seen as a choice to make, B. Friendship is built through inescapable connections made from the very start; 2. Conflicts arising are the common stressors in a relationship; and 3. There are key factors to mitigate these ensuing conflicts as entering romantic relationships impacts peer interactions.

INTRODUCTION

It is the very nature of human individuals to feel love and be loved. The need for intimacy and romantic love from their fellow and love from their friends. From there, people slowly learned and grew as individuals. Hence, all people yearn to be held by someone, to have a partner with whom they may spend the rest of their lives. Sometimes people believe they have found them only to discover later that they are little more than buddies. In fact, individuals frequently confuse romantic love and friendship love (Esperas, 2022). However, even though they both make human individuals joyful and happy, romantic love and friendship love are two separate and not mutually exclusive ideas.

An interpersonal relationship that incorporates physical or emotional intimacy with another person or people is referred to as an intimate relationship. It should even be a non-sexual relationship involving family, friends, or acquaintances, despite the fact that an intimate relationship is typically a relationship. In fact, as mentioned by Cherney *et al.* (2019), loyalty, encouragement, and trust are the foundations of all interpersonal relationships. Love can also serve as the foundation for close bonds. Maintaining all connections requires mutual respect and reciprocity of these traits. The expression "relationships and family" has a wide range of connotations for different people. Furthermore, intimate connections between individuals are supported through emotional ties and exchanges.

These connections frequently develop out of and are bolstered by shared experiences.

Moreover, a relationship where comprehension of one another's feelings outweighs disagreements and where love for one's partner comes before ego. A meaningful, genuine relationship is one in which both parties make an effort to make the other feel good on a daily basis (Robinson, 2023). While it is frequently great, fulfilling, and enjoyable, a romantic relationship can also be difficult or complicated. It may be a little different from other relationships in this regard.

Hence, this study would ultimately focus on exploring and understanding the perspectives of three facets of love in the perspective of the freshmen class of Dr. Yanga's Colleges, Inc.: the friend, the boyfriend/girlfriend, and the one who treasures both of these two people. According to researchers, people enjoy talking about love because it evokes memories—both happy and unhappy—that are designed to be recalled. Additionally, people can explore and share their own stories and experiences of love that have truly gotten the best of many, in whatever shapes it may take (Shaw, 2016).

Theoretical Underpinnings

Duck's Model or Duck's Model of Relationship Breakdown

According to psychologist Duck (1980,1982), this model highlights the phases that people go through after a

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Figure 1: Duck’s Phase Model of Relationship Breakdown

relationship ends; it includes five stages, which are as follows:

The intra-psychic stage is the first stage in this process, this occurs when a person, after spending considerable time considering the causes of their dissatisfaction and potential solutions, admits to themselves that they are unhappy in their relationship. However, they do not yet express them openly. This is also when people start weighing the benefits and drawbacks of remaining in that relationship. The individual reaches a point where they realize, “I cannot stand this any longer,” at the conclusion of this stage.

The second phase, known as dyadic, happens when a person addresses their partner and expresses their displeasure. At this stage, the partner initiating the breakup has a number of concerns; common objections involve the partner’s dedication to the relationship. The unsatisfied partner also reconsiders their current connections. At this point, the threshold is reached: ‘I would be justified in quitting?’

In this third phase point, the unhappy partner addresses their concerns with their partner and informs their social network. Duck claims that it is much more difficult for a couple to rebuild their relationship at this time because their difficulties have been made public, but it is still possible. Certain cases lead to friends and family taking sides, starting meddling in the couple’s relationship, and providing advice, making reconciliation difficult. This stage usually results in the breakup of the relationship, and the threshold is ‘I mean it.’

At the end of a relationship, each partner tries to minimize their flaws while emphasizing their strengths, a process known as grave dressing. The attempt to make oneself look good while making one’s partner look awful prepares one for a new relationship. They try to show themselves they are trustworthy and loyal to attract a new partner. At this point, the threshold is ‘it is time to start a fresh life.’

Duck and his colleague Rollie introduced the resurrection phase to the model in 2006. They proposed that at this point, people move past the sorrow and distress of the relationship’s dissolution and achieve personal development. Tashiro and Frazier (2003), who studied 92 students who had experienced a breakup, also corroborate this notion. Despite their distress, they also achieved personal progress. They also discovered that when people concentrated on the problem rather than their own personal shortcomings, they felt better. For example, a long-distance couple split up when one of them cheated on the other. Rather than focusing on personal weaknesses, individuals may believe that their acts are motivated by their long-distance relationships.

With the mentioned theory, its interconnectedness to this study reveals that when the conflict is formulated at any moment in time, Duck’s model becomes involved. As a result, when a person has a breakup, he or she will go through the stages of the relationship.

Aristotle’s Friendship Theory

Friendship is a reasonable morality or indicates goodness, and it is also the most essential component of living. Nobody would regard living without friends more highly, whether he had all the other advantages. There are, however, some opposing viewpoints on friendship. Some argue that it is an issue of similarity. Aristotle’s perspective believes that having friends has already become a part of everyone’s lives, and one cannot possibly survive without them. He also stated that one of the reasons why people have friends is because they have something in common or have comparable interests in life. Where the term “compatibility” appears.

He Additionally Proposed Three Types of Friendship

First, utility is backed by friendship in which utility is a transient thing that changes depending on the circumstances. As a result of the removal of the bottom for friendship, the relationship itself disintegrates, because it was what kept it alive. Such people do not spend much time together because they do not always like one another and hence see no reason for such an association unless it is mutually beneficial.

Second, friendship is based on pleasure. The friendship between the young is thought to be based on pleasure since the young lives are governed by their emotions, and their primary focus is on their own pleasure and the opportunity of the moment. Their tastes change as kids get older, therefore they are quick to create and break friendships; because their attachment varies just as the things that satisfy them do, and this type of delight changes quickly. Also, the young are prone to falling for erotic friendship, which is mostly influenced by emotions and supported pleasure. That is why people drift in and out of friendship so swiftly, frequently altering their attitudes within the same day.

Third, perfect friendship is based on kindness. Only friendship between those who are good and similar in their goodness is perfect. To these people, all wish good for the opposing good, and they are all excellent. People who want the best for their friends are the most genuine friends because one loves the opposite for what he is, not for any incidental quality. As a result, their relationship will survive as long as they continue to be good; and goodness is a lasting trait. Also, each party is both absolutely and for his friend, because the great are both good and valuable to everyone.

This hypothesis has the most influence on how people now perceive friendship in a variety of ways. As a result, this may influence how friendship affects a romantic connection and vice versa.

Social Penetration Theory

To explain how information exchange functions in the growth and disintegration of interpersonal relationships, social penetration theory was established. Altman and Taylor (1973) defined social penetration as the bonding process that takes a relationship from superficial to more intimate. Self-disclosure, the deliberate process of sharing knowledge about oneself, is especially used to achieve social penetration (Derlega, Metts, Petronio, & Margulis, 1993). To a point, self-disclosure improves intimacy in partnerships. Social penetration can occur in a variety of circumstances, including sexual relationships (e.g., Taylor & Altman, 1975, 1987), friendships, social groups (such as religious organizations or football clubs), and work ties. The theory has also been used in contexts of computer-mediated communication such as online dating and virtual teams.

Furthermore, the onion model is an excellent analogy for expressing how social penetration theory works, focusing on social penetration as a method in which people “peel back” layers of personal information until they reach the essence through interpersonal interaction. It takes time to get to know someone’s “core self,” the most intimate aspects of them. The public image is a person’s exterior layer that is apparent to many others. The private self is a person’s innermost layers that are only gradually exposed to significant persons through disclosure. The layers of the social penetration hypothesis are superficial layers, middle layers, inner layers, and core personality. Superficial layers contain relatively shallow information such as clothing and music preferences. Political opinions and social attitudes are included in the middle levels. Spiritual ideals, deep fears, ambitions, goals, imaginations, and secrets are all part of the inner layers. The most intimate detail about a person is contained in the core personality. There must be an exchange of knowledge for connections to flourish. The variety of the topics discussed and the depth of closeness that leads to these interactions are critical to social penetration.

In a nutshell, social penetration theory and its relatedness to this academic paper boil down to the fact that one of the two friends entered a romantic relationship. The friend may want to open up and disclose what he/she is feeling when his/her friend enters a romantic relationship. However, he/she may just choose to permanently guard and limit the closeness that these two friends have according to this theory. For example, Karl and Alex have known each other since they were freshmen. Their friendship was typical of most guys in that they hung out and made fun of each other. Karl started dating Jenny a few months ago. Because Karl and Alex were such good friends, he wanted to confide in Alex but was hesitant to do so because they had not truly talked about feelings

previously. If he admits to these feelings, he opens himself up to some heavy-handed humor or psychological manipulation. Karl might be wary of revealing his actual feelings. Perhaps he will isolate this aspect of his life for the duration of the school year.

The main objective of this study is to understand and explore whether committing to a romantic relationship could ensue conflict among peers in society. Hence, it particularly answers the following questions: 1) What are the perspectives of the informants about a) Romantic relationship, and b) Friendship; 2) What are the conflicts that may arise in entering a romantic relationship to their peer relationship? 3) What are the potential remedies to the conflicts that may ensue while engaging into a romantic connection in regards of their peer interaction?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This academic paper cultivated the usage of a qualitative methodology in which it gathers and analyzes non-numerical data (such as text, video, or audio) in order to better comprehend ideas, views, and experiences. It can be utilized to gain in-depth insights into a topic or to generate fresh research ideas (Bhandari, 2020). Furthermore, it is used often to learn more about how people see the world. While there are numerous ways to qualitative research, they all have the flexibility of preserving rich meaning when evaluating data.

Given that this study focuses on the conflicts that may arise in entering romantic relationships regarding peer interactions. The researchers firmly believe that a descriptive phenomenological approach is greatly suited to properly designing the exploration of romantic relationships and its brought about circumstances in someone’s peer relationship.

Descriptive phenomenology is the study of how phenomena are deliberately experienced (Giorgi, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2012; Vagle, 2018). Descriptive phenomenology investigates how events are experienced as they enter a person’s awareness. Uncovering a basic framework that defines “things as they are” by peeling back the layers of relationships, thoughts, feelings, and behavior (Husserl, 1913, 1983). Descriptive phenomenology does not aim to develop or demonstrate theories, nor does it seek to present individual truths; rather, it seeks to pinpoint the fundamental core of psychological mechanisms required for the phenomenon under study to be consciously lived (Englander 2016; Moustakas, 1994).

Moreover, semi-structured sets of questions were used to give a more engaging and dynamic manner of dialogue. This was followed by asking a follow-up question, especially if the answer of the informant piqued the researchers’ interest and could somehow elevate the interaction to a higher level of conversation.

Research Locale

The researchers’ chosen location was Dr. Yanga’s Colleges

Inc., where DYCIans are noted for their maturity, it was demonstrated by the researchers' initial study. According to a recent survey, 5 out of 5 educators coming from the same department believed that 1st Year College DYCIans are already adept at dealing with this type of relationship. Furthermore, DYCI is a well-known school for instilling principles in their students (such as being Mission-Driven, Altruistic, God-centered, Innovative, and Socially Responsible). Since they learned the values mentioned above, it became their advantage to implement everything they learned and incorporate it into their daily life.

Research Participants

The primary focus of this study is on DYCI's Freshmen Class. They were selected for their expertise and comfort in answering or providing a different perspective on the specific subject. And they are already of legal age to deal with such a situation. The sample methods employed are quota sampling and purposive sampling. First, informants were sub-grouped based on their descriptive conjunction in quota sampling. Which is 5 for those who have both friends and lovers, 5 for those who are friends, and 5 for those who are lovers. Also, purposive sampling requires researchers to develop their own standards for selecting respondents. As a result, the following are the criteria: 1.) must originally be from Dr. Yanga's Colleges, Inc. High School Department, 2.) must have already experienced or be experiencing the situation/circumstances, and 3.) must be at least 18 years old, and 4.) coming from the freshmen class of DYCI irrespective of College Program. Remember that gender was not used to select informants.

Data Gathering Procedure

After designing the research instruments, it was handed over to the researcher adviser to ensure the validity and reliability of the researcher-made questions. This was critical to the data collection so that the sets of questions offered to informants were devoid of prejudice. Eventually in order to effectively carry out the interviews, letters of consent were given to the Senior High School Department, particularly to the administrators and faculty members, and the series of interviews took place once authorized. During the data collection process, an audio recorder was employed to record the answers from the informants. Following that, all acquired data were transcribed for interpretation and analysis. Finally, the answers obtained from the informants were thematized in order to meet the study's goal.

Data Analysis

As stated by Giorgi (2009), establishing a phenomenological method consists of four stages: (1) reading the transcriptions numerous times, (2) discerning meaning units, (3) arranging meaning units into meaning structures, and (4) synthesis. Furthermore, the purpose of the researchers is to describe the phenomenon as exactly as possible while eliminating any pre-determined framework and being truthful to the facts.

The interpretation of the transcribed interviews obtained from various people was based on the informant's perspective and experiences. Furthermore, the study's participants think thoroughly, and they ensured that they are familiar with the questions posed to the informants before conducting the investigation. The analysts ensured that the topic is on point and that the responses are relevant to the research issue. The hidden messages of the informants' answers produced meanings that are analyzed by the fundamental structure; they evaluate the study if the informants' statements may link to their own experiences that are trustworthy to share an enthusiastic study.

Ethical Considerations

The participants' dignity and confidentiality are the researchers' top priorities while collecting data. The integration of beneficence, non-maleficence, and justice all throughout the study is strongly advocated by researchers. A consent form had to be completed by each participant before the interview began. This confirms to participants the sole goal of this academic study and signifies their consent to partake.

- Beneficence - the results of the study were advantageous for both the researchers and the informants.
- Non-maleficence - no informants were put into harm all throughout the interview.
- Justice - researchers safeguard the avoidance of unfairness in handling gathered data.
- Equity - the researchers made sure that the informants were all treated fairly.
- Respect - if the chosen informant refused to take part or answer in the study, the researchers respected the person's decision.
- Privacy - the identity and information of the informants were used solely for the study alone and were all kept confidential.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter answers the questions posed in the problem statement. The answers provided by each of the informants have been thoroughly analyzed and interpreted in order to fully grasp the concepts and themes that are critical and pertinent to the objectives of this study, which is to understand and explore the conflicts that may substantially arise during the course of a romantic relationship and their impact on their peer relationship. To answer the research questions, the researcher first gathered noteworthy statements, which were then organized into various categories.

Matter of Choice

It became clear from all the informants' statements of the significance and justification of the concept of a "romantic relationship" that it is a question of individual choice. Informants claim that choosing to enter romantic relationships is a conscious decision. They emphasized that to really commit to a romantic relationship, there must be a great deal of intimacy. In order to achieve this,

Table 1: Matter of Choice

Emergent theme	Theme cluster	Formulated meanings
Matter of choice	Strong Bond	• Deep connection and knowing someone’s background.
	Trustworthiness	• Someone to rely on.
	Part of Adulthood	• Usual crisis and experiences of teenagers.
	Thinking Thoroughly	• Considering both pros and cons of it. • Looking to a bigger and wider future.
	Setting Priorities	• Understanding what needs to focus on.
	Personal business	• Making it only between the people concerned. • Should not be made public.

a person must decide to totally invest in the relationship in order to develop a strong connection and trust in their partner. Furthermore, informants stated that entering romantic partnerships is a normal element of being an adult or an event that youngsters frequently encounter. Entering such a relationship additionally involves deciding what to prioritize, considering the implications at various points, and keeping it private and intimate only to those who are involved.

The informants set things straight that romantic relationship is indeed about a strong bond and connection making each other familiar with their background and preferences. To cite:

“Siguro kailangan munang sobrang magkakilala at tsaka may background siguro bago maging kayo dapat nagtitiwala ka sa kanya.” (I guess you need to get to know each other a lot first and also maybe have a background before you can be together, you should have a trust on him).

(TB1, Line 1-3)

“Siyempre pag sinabing romantic relationship madami satin naiisip agad yung 2-person pambabae at lalaki talaga ayun doon papasok yung mga intimacy.” (Of course, when we say romantic relationship, many of us immediately think of the 2-person female and male, that is where intimacy comes in.)

(F4, Line 272-274)

“Sa romantic relationship naiintimate kayo sa isa’t isa at mas iba yung closeness ninyo kasi uhm... nagsimula kayo sa pagkakaibigan yun lang.” (In a romantic relationship, you become intimate with each other, and your closeness is different because you started as friends).

(P3, Line 394-396)

As mentioned above, romantic relationships are founded through familiarizing each other and the intimacy that it upholds for both parties. Fittingly, as stated by Barton, *et al.* (2013), the more intimate partners are aware of one another’s struggles, stresses, thoughts, and emotions, the simpler it is for a pair to form an emotional bond.

Moreover, they also uttered that being trustworthy counts the best in a romantic relationship.

“Mas maganda kasi yung ganong open lalo na yung trust andon sa inyong dalawa.” (It is better to be open like that, especially when there is trust between the two of you).

(F4, Line 298-299)

Clearly seen above, the importance of being open is

a fundamental reason why trust is being established, especially in such a romantic relationship. Truthfully, as mentioned by Courtney (2023), this is because trust is integral to all other aspects of a relationship, including openness, transparency, vulnerability, and respect. Additionally, informants supported the idea that although such relationships are common among teenagers, it is still up to them to decide whether to engage in them or not. To testify:

“Para sa kinang romantikong relationship ay ano parang normal lang na isang kabataan na ano yung iba na pinapasok lang nila basta basta hindi nila iinisip ito bago sila pumasok.” (For me, a romantic relationship is something that seems normal to a young person who just enter into it without thinking thoroughly).

(F1, Line 148-150)

Truly, falling in love romantically with somebody has been a usual part of teenage life.

However, as mentioned by informants, someone should not enter such a relationship without thinking of it thoroughly. Hence, informants affirmed:

“Kumbaga sa isang romantikong relation kumbaga hindi porket sinabing romantic lagi na kayong dapat sweet sa isat isa siyempre may ibat iba kaming natutunan na hindi porket lagi dapat kayong magkakasama dahil samang dalawa yung may point na hindi talaga lagi kami magkakasama dahil busy din kami senior high din kami na magkacollege na kami siyempre masiniintindi namin yung magiging future namin at siguro kapag nagkaroon na kami ng stable na job na hindi na kami umaasa sa magulang namin para gawin yung mga bagay na gusto namin.” (In a relationship, not because it is romantic you should always be sweet to each other. Of course, there are multiple lessons, you do not always need to be with each other because for the two of us there is really a point in time where we are not on each other’s side. It is because we are first year College, and it is being clear to us about our future and maybe once we have a stable job already, we do not have to depend on our parents anymore just to do things we want).

(P1, Line 334-343)

“Yung romantic relationship kasi isa siyang seryosong bagay na karamihan ngayon sa kabataan ngayon masyado siyang big deal sa mga kabataan ngayon kasi madami ng kabataan na pumapasok sa romantic relationship

na hindi muna pinagiisipan kaya madami yung mga taong nasasaktan kaya yung romantic relationship isang sagradong bagay na dapat pinagiisipan munang mabuti para kasi iyon sa future mo iyon yung magdadala sa future mo yun yung makakasama mo habambuhay.” (The romantic relationship is a serious thing that most of the young people today take as a big deal because there are many young people who enter into a romantic relationship without thinking about it first, so there are many people who are hurt, so the romantic relationship is a sacred thing that people should think of carefully because it is what would determine their future with the person that they will be with).

(TB2, Line 42-49)

“Ang romantic relationship para sa kin ay hindi ito biro na hindi basta basta pinapasok kailangan muna pagisipan dahil isa itong malaking commitment at pagsubok para sayo dahil kailangan mo ito bigyan ng oras na kahit marami kang ginagawa dapat balance pa rin.” (Romantic relationship for me is not a joke that most people just vehemently enter. It should be carefully considered because it has a significant commitment and challenge for us since we have to allot time to it even if we have a lot of things to do, but should still be balanced).

(TB3, Line 98-102)

As articulated above, indeed a romantic relationship matters the most when a great deal of willingness is put into it and its foundation is not shallow and superficial. It is better to look at a bigger picture where the present is not only seen but the future is also being considered. It is crucial to have realistic expectations for the future and to consider any difficulties and hurdles that can develop in the relationship (Darak, 2020). Moreover, informants asserted that in entering such a relationship, priorities should be set.

“Hindi pa sa ngayon kasi marami pang priorities aside sa studying meron pang families at iba pa.” (I do not think about it yet because there are many priorities aside from studying, there are families and so on).

(F1, Line 168-169)

“Para sa kin may dalawang epekto yung romantic relationship pwedeng makasama sayo like don ka na magfocus instead na sa mga priority mo or pwede makabuti sayo like using it to be inspired in achieving your goals.” (For me, a romantic relationship has two effects, it can be a bad influence like it would distract a person’s focus on their priorities. It can possibly be good in a way that it becomes a person’s inspiration).

(F5, Line 308-311)

As declared above, a romantic connection ought to be considered what must be valued and should serve as motivation rather than a hindrance to achieving ambitions. Furthermore, informants believe that getting into romantic relationships should at the very least be done in private.

“Para sa kin yung romantikong relation hindi siya dapat ginagawang public ayon lang.” (As for me, romantic relationship should not be publicly displayed).

(P2, Line 377-378)

There are matters that need not be publicized and put out in front of many people. Hence, making the relationship intimate only to the involved person even makes the relationship worthwhile without hesitation of being judged. As disclosed by Jacobsen (2022), couples will not be disclosing their flaws, fears, and vulnerabilities to the outside world, couples who keep their relationships private can appreciate and honor one another.

Inevitable Connection

Informants further shared their own personal viewpoints on friendship and peer relationships. They talked about how essential it is to have close companions who listen to them and who are perpetually supporting them in their decisions. Likewise, because these connections are inevitable this kind of relationship develops spontaneously and requires barely anything. In the words of informants, this indicates that peer relationships and friendships do not have to be forced; rather, they might develop naturally as a result of a feeling of connection.

Consequently, the concepts that arose from the informants’

Table 2: Inevitable Connection

Emergent theme	Theme cluster	Formulated meanings
Inevitable Connection	Accepting Criticisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open to what the friends have to say. • Adopts remarks to grow.
	Foundation of Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fundamental part of human life. • Building a long-lasting relationship.
	One Call Away	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willing to be there on the sidelines. • Ready to be a companion.
	Togetherness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facing problems and circumstances hand-in-hand.
	Comfortability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confident to share secrets and feelings with each other. • Knows each other’s true personality.

compelling reasons for friendships include being open to receiving criticism from peers, acknowledging that they have been an individual’s life’s foundation, being merely a call away, being together, and, lastly, feeling at ease around

each other.

The informants believe that friendships come with the reality that one needs to accept their flaws, and friends are there to critique and let them know the truth to develop

and grow. As stated:

“Sinopuport ko naman yung romantic relationship ng mga friends ko as long alam nila kung ano ang tama at mali at kung hanggang saan ang limitation nila at tsaka lagi ko sila nireremind hanggang dito lang din muna na dapat nirerespeto niyo din ang isat isa tas wag niyo madaliin yung mga bagay kasi dadating at dadating din naman doon.” (I support the romantic relationship of my friends as long as they know what is right and wrong and what is their limitation and I always remind them that they should respect each other and do not rush them. Those things will come eventually).

(F2, Line 190-195)

Indeed, having friends who would never tolerate lavish acts of wrongful doings, but would always remind of boundaries and limitations is what truly makes a friend, a real friend. As revealed by The Costa Rica News (2022), people can grow and get better, and friendship is the best and most trustworthy support system for doing so. Because of this, friendship is a quality that is enhanced by consistent and genuine treatment; it shows up in affection and mutual support but most definitely not in apathy or disdain. Furthermore, informants acknowledged that friends are the foundation of life making the world a better place to live in. To quote:

“For me yung friendship isa siya sa pinakamatatag na hahawakan mo siya as you go through life kasi ito yung magiging foundation mo bukod sa family kasi diba tayo sa family parang hind naman lahat open di din tayo nakakapagopen kasi sa friends parang lahat nabebend out natin yan kahit ano paman yan parang all throughout the day pwede natin imessage yung friend natin ng uy ganto ng yari nung araw ko yun so parang yung friendship kasi sakin siya yung stress reliever kasi nakakatulong ito kung paano natin nahahandle yung problems at iba pang struggles.” (For me, friendship is one of the strongest components to hold on as you go through in life as it will serve as your foundation apart from your family. Because in our family not everyone is open, we vent out everything to our friends. Also, we can message them all throughout the day like, ‘hey this is what happened to me this day,’ making friendship as my stress reliever as they get to helped me in handling problems and struggles).

(F2, Line 174-183)

“Lahat tayo dapat magkaroon ng friendship siyempre part na ito bilang isang istudyante.” (We should be engaged in friendship, it is a part of being a student).

(F3, Line 252-253)

“Ang kaibigan ang mas mahalagang magkaroon dahil para sakin ang kaibigan ang mas masaya at matibay na kahit ano mangyari andiyan ang kaibigan mo para suportahan ka, gabayan ka o maging parte ng pamilya.” (A friend is the most important thing to have because a friend is more happy and strong that no matter what happens they will be there to support you, guide you or be part of the family).

(TB3, Line 112-115)

“Yung friendship isa siyang foundation sa buhay mo yung mga kaibigan mo yung friendship yun yung makakasama

mo sa pagharap sa mga problema sa buhay mo.” (Friendship is a foundation in your life, your friends are the friends that will be with you in facing the problems of your life).

(TB2, Line 50-52)

Informants fully think friendship has been playing a key part in their lives, as indicated above in obvious phrases. In light of the preceding, friends provide people with further reasons to be joyful, serve as stress-relievers, and foster relationships that last a lifetime. Moreover, friends being such a one-call-away is what friends are all about for some informants. To testify:

“Sa pagkakaibigan naman masasandalan mo kumbaga one call away ganon.” (As for friendship, they are the ones you can lean on like it is one call away).

(P2, Line 379-380)

“Ang friendship para sa akin ito yung handang makinig sa iyo tuwing kinakailangan mo ng kausap katulad ng kapag marami kang problema sa kanila mo ilalabas at nandyan din sila para damayan ka sa tuwing may hindi ka magandang nararamdaman.” (Friendship for me is the one who is willing to listen to you whenever you need someone to talk to, like when you have a lot of problems you voice out to them and they are also there to empathize with you whenever you are not feeling good.)

(TB4, Line 103-107)

It matters a lot to have a friend who will be there for you when your life feels like it is falling apart. Similarly, they emphasized that friendship is about being together. Together, they faced difficulties, problems, and whatever the world threw at them. To cite:

“Parang relation na mas pinapagtibay ng panahon na kahit na lagi kayo nagaaway na hindi dahilan ng laging pagaaway dahil sa misunderstanding titigilan mo na siya kausapin dahil pwede naman ito ayusin o pagusapan.” (It is like a relationship that gets stronger with time that even if you always fight, it is not a reason to always fight just because of a misunderstanding, you eventually stop talking to him because it can be fixed or talked about).

(P1, Line 344-347)

“Iba kasi yung friendship sa pagsinabing romantic pang dalawahan pag sinabing friendship siyempre may tampuhan pero iba parin talaga pag sinabing pagkakaibigan.” (Friendship is still quite different from romantic love, which only involves two people. This is because when we say friendship, it does not matter whether you are bickering).

(F4, Line 275-277)

“Para sakin yung friendship doon mo makikita yung halaga ng isang kaibigan kung gaano kayo magtatagal at paano ninyo malalagpasan ang mga pagsubok together.” (For me, friendship is where you can see the value of a friend, how long you will last and how you can overcome trials together).

(F5, Line 312-314)

As mentioned above, friends are about staying and sticking together amidst problems and misunderstandings. From there, a true friend will show his/her true colors making

the relationship even more worthwhile and happy. No matter how long time passes, true friends will remain. Hence, true to the saying, “Good friends look out for one other; close friends understand each other; but true companions endure beyond words, distance, and time.” Eventually, peers can be determined depending on how comfortable and compatible people are with one another. The ability to express their actual persona. “Nasasabi ninyo sa isat isa yung nararamdaman ninyo tsaka komportable kayo kasi magkaibigan kayo.” (You can tell each other what you feel and you are comfortable because you are friends).

(P4, Line 397-398)

In a nutshell, comfortability means everything for a long-lasting peer relationship. In fact, as uttered by Morin, *et al.* (2020), friends feel at ease around close friends because they know they will have many more interactions with them. A single embarrassing moment is unimportant because they believe there will be many

more opportunities to succeed.

Conventional Stressors

Informants highlighted struggles that may have emerged because of starting romantic relationships with their peer contacts. This may differ because many have claimed that it is completely based on what they experienced and how they truly felt in various situations. As a result, the theme of conventional stressors that have been mundane concerns in a romantic relationship, and their potential influence on their peer relationship, arises. Accordingly, themes were concentrated, and time was the most common problem in circumstances, especially when demand is not reached. The same thing happens when misunderstanding often occurs, even when someone must choose between being with his/her partner or a friend, and the irritation of bringing up irrelevant stories and topics inside the peer circle.

Informants noted that a lack of time is a prevalent cause

Table 3: Conventional Stressors

Emergent theme	Theme cluster	Formulated meanings
Conventional Stressors	Time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of time to bond with peers. • Division of time peers and romantic relationship.
	Misunderstanding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certain cases that need to choose who to be with. • A disagreement and thinking of not being loved anymore.
	Irrelevant Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bringing up insignificant issues to the group. • Irritation that it brings to the circle of friends.

of conflict in romantic relationships, which has an adverse effect on their peer relationships. To cite:

“Meron parang pag umenter ka ng relationship may mga time na parang mas dadami yung time na inaalot mo sa boyfriend mo kaya mababawasan yung time.” (There are changes because when you enter a relationship there would be a time that allotted time with your boyfriend will increase).

(TB1, Line 19-21)

“Siyempre talagang may pagbabago kasi yung time kunwari parang dati puro friends lang ang kasama pero nung nagkaroon sila ng special someone o napasok sila sa isang romantic relationship parang nagkaroon din ng konting na bawas sa time ng friendship.” (Of course, there is a change because time before seems to have only been with friends, but when they had a special someone or entered into a romantic relationship, it seems like there was a little reduction in the time of friendship).

(F2, Line 196-200)

“Yung time ko sa mga kaibigan ko oo medyo nagkakaroon ng conflict pero don yun nga sinasabi ko naiintindihan nila kasi nga alam nila pumasok ako sa relationship na yon at kailangan din yun sa buhay iyon dadating at dadating talaga sa buhay natin iyon kaya kailangan intindihin mo yung side nila.” (When I was with my friends, yes, there was a bit of conflict, but just like what I said, they understand because they know that I entered into that relationship and that’s necessary in life, that will come and really come in

our life, so you have to understand their side).

(TB2, Line 88-92)

“Meron magbabago kasi papasok ka sa romantic relationship so kailangan mo ng time management para sa lahat ng bagay at may commitment ka na hindi mo pwedeng kalimutan.” (Something will change because you are entering a romantic relationship, so you need time management, and you have a commitment that you cannot neglect).

(TB3, Line 139-141)

“Oo, kasi katulad nga sa oras kailangan mo ng time management na kapag may date kami ng boyfriend ko tapos bigla may mag aaya so hindi ako makakasama kasi nauna yung boyfriend ko eh.” (I need to manage my time, there are instances when my boyfriend and I have a date, but then suddenly, someone asks me out and I cannot say yes because my boyfriend came first to invite).

(TB4, Line 145-147)

“Hindi naman mawawala ang pagbabago gaya ng kaunting oras na makasama sila or mas may oras siya kaysa samin na mga kaibigan niya kaya ganon.” (There will always be a change like less time to be with them or more time with him than my friends).

(F5, Line 320-322)

As expounded above, when someone engages in a romantic relationship, having insufficient time with peers causes tension. This indicates that time management should be prioritized in order to mitigate the loss of

peer relationships. As determined by Pace (2022), a lack of significant quality time may cause the relationship to fall out of love and end their relationship. A severe absence of quality time in relationships can erode its basis and damage any existing bonds. Someone who does not spend enough quality time together might overlook whether they love each other. Spending time with another is vital for growing and blossoming a relationship into something much more significant. That is why it is critical to recognize why relationships require quality time.

The informants also open up about the sad reality of being misunderstood in a such relationship. Others claimed that they even have to lie just to let others not feel bad about the situation. This circumstance often leads to being misunderstood, making the friendship a bit on the rock. To testify:

“Oo, kasi ano parang minsan may instances na nagaaya sila tapos sasabihin ko hindi ako pwede im with my partner parang ganun naglilie tapos namimisunderstand nila na ayoko na sa kanila.” (Yes, there are instances that my friends would invite me and then I would say, “I am not allowed to,” but in reality I am with my partner, forcing me to lie and then they would misunderstand that I do not want to be with them anymore).

(TB 1, Line 27-30)

“Meron kaming misunderstanding pero naayos namin naman ito at hindi na namin ito pinagusapan.” (We had a misunderstanding, but we fixed it and we didn’t talk about it anymore).

(TB 2, Line 39-40)

Just like any other relationship, misunderstanding has been the usual and typical reason for a declining number of friendships going to waste. Nonetheless, as mentioned, what matters the most is still constant communication, making the relationship safe from any possible destruction or loss. Suitably, as stated by Williams (2022), effective communication is essential for the continued development of a friendship. Moreover, informants also uttered their irritation to their friends

when bringing up irrelevant issues and stories about their romantic relationship problems when he/she is with his/her friends. To testify:

“Merong changes pagmagkasama sila siyempre parang nandon yung kwekwento niya yung about sa kanila pero ang dapat yung paguusapan ninyo about sa friendship ninyo.” (There are changes when they are together, of course it seems like his story is about them, but what you should be talking about is your friendship).

(F4, Line 288-290)

As enunciated above, peers get frustrated when a friend who is involved in an intimate relationship unexpectedly talks about his/her lover. This throws his/her friend off for a moment because they expect them to be discussing their friendship in relation to who he/she was with. Furthermore, conflicts emerge when their companion repeatedly opens up about his/her romantic quarrels, which do not interest them in the very first instance.

Relationship Key Factors

For informants, it is additionally essential to seek a remedy to the perennial issues with conflict that arise while establishing a love connection. For them, this not only prevents someone’s peer relationship from being wrecked but also makes committing to a love relationship worthwhile. They hold that there must be vital components to any connection, whether a romantic one, a friendship, or any other kind, to make it valuable. Therefore, demonstrating respect in any form is crucial for a relationship, especially when a conflict is about to arise. Furthermore, reducing potential disputes would be greatly aided by an awareness of the circumstance. In a similar vein, decision-making support emerged as well, although this is not a justification for poor decisions. In addition, keeping things private prevents the connection from declining. Even being open-minded has a significant role in finding a resolution to a problem that crops up in a relationship and in experiencing true happiness.

Informants understand the call-in showing respect for a

Table 4: Relationship Key Factors

Emergent theme	Theme cluster	Formulated meanings
Relationship Key Factors	Showing Respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding the situation someone’s in. Showing support for the decision being made.
	Keeping Private Matters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making things confidential and not shared to others.
	Open Mindedness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considers those from other spectrum. Empathetic towards other.

worthwhile relationship. In respecting someone’s decision it signifies the trust that people put in them. Also, the understanding that underlies within it and the situation they are in forcing them to make that decision. To testify: “Sakin wala ok lang kasi parang nirerespeto ko naman sila tas nagbibigay din naman sila ng respeto sa kin na parang hindi sila gumagawa ng bagay na maout of place ako para iparamdam sa kin na hindi ako belong at kapag magkasama sila hindi naman nila pinapaano sa kin na parang hindi ako

belong dun sa relationship nila kasi sa group of friends ko kasi kahit mayroong boyfriend/ girlfriend parang isang barkada pa din kami parang hinihiwalay nila yung relationship nila kapag silang dalawa nalang pero kapag magkakasama kami parang isang barkada kami.” (It is okay with me because I seem to respect them and they also give me respect as if they do not do things that would make me look out of place, to make me feel like I do not belong, and when they are together they do not make

me do things like I do not belong to their relationship because I am in my group of friends because even if I have a partner, we are still like a friend. It is like they separate their relationship when it is just the two of them, but when we are together, we are like a friend).

(F2, Line 205-214)

“Based on experience naman kasi para sakín kakausapín ko muna yung friends ko kumbakít ganon yung nagging sitwasyon pero irerespeto ko kung ano yung ano niya kasi parang special someone din naman iyon kaya kagaya ng sabi ko kanina parang respetuhan lang kung may boyfriend/girlfriend dapat irerespeto mo iyon kasi kaibigan mo siya kaya tinatanggap mo yong papasok sa buhay niya.” (Based on my experience, I will talk to my friends first about the situation, but I will respect what he has because he seems to be someone special, so like I said earlier, it seems like if you have a partner, you should respect it. That is because he is your friend, so you are accepting him into his life.)

(F2, Line 229-235)

“Oo naman kasi kung san sila magiging masaya siyempre kung saan ito susuportahan ko sila.” (Whatever the source of their happiness, I will support them).

(F3, Line 256-257)

“Siguro malungkot ako pero iintindihin ko yung side nila kumbakít maspinili nila mapalayo sakín pero bago muna mangyari yun papaliwanag ko muna yung side ko tapos papakinggan ko yung side nila para maintindihan ko baka maayos pa.” (Maybe I will be sad, but I understand their side no matter how hard they choose to stay away from me but before that happens I will explain my side first and then I will listen to their side so I can understand maybe it will be alright).

(TB2, Line 83-87)

“Never ako magiging against sa kaibigan ko kasi may sarili din siyang buhay at paguisip na alam naman niya kung ano ang tama at mali at kung ano ang gagawin, andito ako para sumuporta sa lahat ng magiging pasya niya at sa tama hindi sa maling gawain.” (I will never be against my friend because he also has his own life and thinking that he knows what is right and wrong and what to do, I am here to support all his decisions and the right not the wrong thing).

(TB 3, Line 108-111)

As stated above, respect plays a significant role in maintaining a good foundation for every relationship. Thus, this would also be crucial in times when conflicts seem to arise, especially when peer relationships are being affected. As disclosed by Esperas (2022), each relationship has its highs and lows, thrilling instances and dull ones, and even times when one simply wants to give up. But if respect were the most significant component in a relationship, it would be much simpler to triumph over difficulties in life together. When love, trust, and patience are added to respect, the relationship can be sure that will last.

In the same spirit, informants stressed the need of maintaining the privacy of intimate details in every connection. Limitations and boundaries should be

understood properly in order to avert any instances of unconcerned affairs in a relationship. To attest:

“May isang tao kasi pero diba dapat may time kami sa isat isa pero meron kaming isang kaibigan na personal usapan pero sumisingit talaga siya habang naguusap kami na wala naman siyang karapatan na malaman yung pinag uusapan namin.” (We should still have time for each other. There was this one friend of ours who really insist in butting in to our intimate conversation in which he does not have the right in the first place to know what we are discussing).

(P1, Line 356-360)

As claimed above, it is necessary to limit the disclosure of intimate information to those in the connection who need to know. Only the parties involved should deal with, discuss, and decide on it. Moreover, informants also discussed maintaining an open mind when thinking about a relationship. With this, the relationship would advance and be conflict-free whether it was a romantic or peer relationship. As declared:

“Oo, kilala ko na sila kasi sobrang liit lang naman yung circle of friends ko at sobrang maarte ako sa pagpili ng kaibigan kasi parang pag ka alam ko sa sarili kong hindi maganda yung magiging epekto mo sakín chaka parang parehas tayong magiging toxic sa isat isa parang magigive way na ko o parang magistep away na ko para hindi natin madamage ang isat isa.” (I have known them already given that I do only have a very small circle of friends, and I am very picky in choosing friends. Because if I know that a person’s influence to me would not be good and vice versa, and that we would be toxic to each other, I would give way and step away to avoid damaging each other).

(F2, Line 184-189)

“Hindi kasi bakít ka maíngít sa buhay ng ibang tao kung alam mo naman may sarili kang buhay chaka napakapangit magkaroon ng inggit sa sarili kasi bakít mo kailangan mo icompare yung sarili mo sa ibang tao basta ayaw ko yung concept ng inggit pang dinodown mo yung sarili mo na ito lang ang kaya mo na ito lang ang meron ka sila meron ganito ganyan, parang ang pangit ng concept ng inggit kaya hindi ako naiingit sa friends ko.” (Why would you be envious of other people’s lives if you know that you have your own life? It is very ugly to be envious within yourself because why do you need to compare yourself to other people? As long as I do not like the concept of envy, you are putting yourself down this is all you can do this is all you have they have this and that, it seems the concept of envy is not good so I do not envy my friends).

(F2, Line 215-222)

“Hindi, sa part ko hindi kasi ano parehas sila both side naiintindihan niya yung sitwasyon ko na kung meron may nauna kung meron kasabay na Gawain alam nila kung ano ang unahin ko siyempre yung naunahan mong sagutin pero kung pwede siyang isama naiintindihan ng friends ko kasi very open kami na kasama siya ok lang.” (Not on my part, on both sides, he understands my situation, that if there is a priority, if there is a concurrent task, they know what I will prioritize, of course, the one that you agreed upon first, but if my partner can come, my friends would

understand because we are very open with him).
(TB2, Line 72-77)

“Oo naman. Hindi naman maalis. Kasi pag may isa sa kaibigan mo may romantic relationship masaya ka na doon kung ano meron siya.” (It cannot be removed because when one of your friends has a romantic relationship, you are also happy for them).

(F4, Line 281-283)

As evidently mentioned above, having an open-minded perception creates a significant amount of peace and tranquility in a relationship. Ultimately, as stated by Adetayo (2021), being open-minded is having a willingness to consider or accept other viewpoints. This can access novel ideas and viewpoints by broadening thinking and cultivating more openness.

CONCLUSIONS

As this academic study has reached its culmination, the researchers came to the conclusion that there are underlying issues that can occur in a person's peer relationship when entering a romantic commitment. Thence, it's vital to bear in mind that:

- Romantic relationships are anchored in a realization that it is a matter of choice where a strong bond should be founded, trustworthiness should be transparent, it is part of adulthood, should think thoroughly, must set priorities, and keep personal business intimate.

- On the other hand, friendships or peer relationships are built via inescapable connections such as openness in taking critiques, retaining friendship as a cornerstone of life, being just a phone call away, working through difficulties together, and comfort with one another.

- Conflicts that may possibly ensue in entering romantic relationships towards their peer interaction may be understood when time, misunderstanding, and irrelevant issues are slowly appearing.

- However, the aforementioned conflicts can be mitigated or can be aided through remedies such as respect, keeping private matters, and open-mindedness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations have been proposed in light of the research's findings:

For couples. It is noteworthy that in entering romantic relationships, there are underlying consequences. Although these consequences might not be avoided, couples should still do their best to mitigate these conflicts that may arise.

For friends. A strong foundation of knowledge about each other is what separates friendships from romantic relationships. One should realize that someone's peer serves as their foundation at least once in their life and that there should be no conflicts that would put the connection on the line.

For future researchers. Researchers acknowledge that the sheer nature of this academic study has a gap. Researchers advise greater research on romantic partnerships that began as friendships in order to solve some of these

issues. Researchers would also like to suggest increasing the number of informants, and the themes that arose may be used to create a quantitative study.

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