# COMPARISON OF SAME-SEX FRIENDSHIPS, CROSS-SEX FRIENDSHIPS AND ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

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# ABSTRACT

## COMPARISON OF SAME-SEX FRIENDSHIPS, CROSS-SEX FRIENDSHIPS AND ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

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This study compares same-sex friendships, cross-sex friendships and romantic relationships in young adulthood in terms of the negative effects of various conflict issues, the different conflict management strategies and relationship maintenance strategies employed in these relationships, as well as the perceived rewards and costs, the integration of the networks, and perceived overall quality. The main purpose is to investigate cross-sex friendships and discern its similarities to and differences from romantic relationships and same-sex friendships, as well as the gender differences that emerge. Data is collected by means of questionnaires, from a sample of 298 Middle East Technical University Students. Cross-sex friendships were rated as the poorest relationship in terms of quality, rewards/costs, or the frequency of maintenance behaviors and conflict occurred at very low levels in these friendships. Women employed more relationship maintenance strategies in their same- and cross-sex friendships compared to men. In addition, men preferred the dominating and women the accommodating strategies of conflict management in their same-sex friendships. It was concluded that same-sex friendships remain to be

the accepted and approved form of friendship among this sample of Turkish young adults and cross-sex friendships were distant and inferior to the other two relationships. Finally, there were some differences across these relationships as to what predicted relational quality, yet in general the rewards and maintenance strategies predicted quality better than costs and conflict behaviors.

Keywords: same-sex friendship, cross-sex friendship, romantic relationship, relationship maintenance, conflict management, conflict issues.

# ÖZ

## AYNI CİNS ARKADAŞLIK, KARŞI CİNS ARKADAŞLIK VE DUYGUSAL İLİŞKİLERİN KARŞILAŞTIRMASI

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Bu çalışma, genç yetişkinlikteki aynı cins (hemcins) arkadaşlıklar, karşı cins arkadaşlıklar ve duygusal ilişkileri, çeşitli tartışma konularının etkileri, farklı çatışma yönetimi stratejileri ve ilişki sürdürme stratejileri ile ilişkide algılanan fayda ve maliyetler, sosyal çevreyle bütünleşmesi ve ilişki niteliği açılarından karşılaştırmaktadır. Temel amaç, karşı cinsle arkadaşlıkların duygusal ilişkiler ve aynı cins arkadaşlıklarla olan benzerlik ve farklılıklarının yanısıra, bu ilişkilerdeki kadın-erkek farklarını incelemektir. Veri, 298 Ortadoğu Teknik Üniversitesi öğrencisinden anketler yoluyla toplanmıştır. Karşı cins arkadaşlıklar, ilişki niteliği, fayda/maliyetler, ya da sürdürme davranışlarının sıklığı açısından en zayıf ilişki olarak değerlendirilmiş; öte yandan bu türden arkadaşlarda çok düşük çatışma olduğu görülmüştür. Aynı cins ve karşı cins arkadaşlıklarda, kadınlar ilişki sürdürme davranışlarını erkeklere kıyasla daha sık gösterdiklerini belirtmişlerdir. Bunun yanısıra aynı cins arkadaşlıklardaki çatışmalarda, erkekler hükmedici, kadınlarsa uyum gösterici davranışları daha sıklıkla tercih etmektedirler. Genç yetişkin ve Türk öğrencilerden oluşan bu örneklemde, aynı-cins arkadaşlıkların kabul edilen ve tanınan arkadaşlık biçimi olarak ortaya çıktığı, karşı cins arkadaşlıkların duygusal

ilişkilerden ve aynı cins arkadaşlıklardan daha uzak ve düşük kalitede olduğu sonucuna varılmıştır. Son olarak, ilişki kalitesini yordayan değişkenler açısından bu ilişkiler arasında bazı farklılıklar olmasına karşın, genel olarak faydalar ve sürdürme stratejileri, ilişki kalitesini maliyetler ve çatışma davranışlarından daha iyi yordamıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: aynı cins arkadaşlık, karşı cins arkadaşlık, duygusal ilişki, ilişki sürdürme stratejileri, çatışma yönetimi, çatışma konuları.

To Serap, Nedim, Oya, and Sinan,
With Love and Faith

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I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

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# CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION

Relationships and especially close relationships are perhaps the most important phenomenon in a human being's life. People are born into, and live their lives within a web of relationships, which may be very intimate, such as the family, or less intimate, like the more distant figures in that network. These close relationships are of utmost importance throughout every individual's life. The adolescence and young adulthood is such a period where two of these relationships, friendships and romantic relationships, take on important roles and become two of the most significant of these relationships. According to the prevalent developmental theories (e.g. Erikson, 1968; Sullivan, 1953), during these periods, autonomy is established and the individual separates from the family, and has not yet married or formed a family of her/his own. Friendships and romantic relationships help the establishment of one's identity, provide help, support, and companionship, and fulfill the needs of intimacy and affiliation.

The close relationships literature has most of the time been concerned with marital, familial, and romantic relationships. These are the more important relationships that usually rank higher in the hierarchy of relationships of adults. Although friendships and peer relationships have been studied during childhood and adolescence, they have largely been ignored for adults. Within this frame, cross-sex friendship is even a less common topic, especially until the last10-20 years.

In addition, research on conflict is almost not studied in the context of adult friendships, with a few exceptions (e.g. Argyle and Henderson, 1983; Healey and Bell, 1990), Same-sex and cross-sex friendships were typically not studied in terms of conflict management or the different conflict issues in these relationships. So is

the case for relationship maintenance, an emerging topic. Relational maintenance, or the behaviors engaged in to sustain a satisfactory relationship[1], has almost exclusively covered marriages and romantic relationships. The aim of the present study is to address this lack of literature on close relationships; by adding two more 'close' relationships (same- and cross-sex friendships) to the picture of close relationships during young adulthood, and comparing these friendships and romantic relationships in a single study. The focus will especially be on conflict and maintenance in friendships, two of the important topics that are studied within marital or romantic relationships. The objective is to compare same-sex friendships, cross-sex friendships, and romantic relationships, in terms of the 'costs' incurred and 'rewards' provided, relationship quality as perceived by partners, relationship maintenance strategies employed by partners, conflict issues that occur in these relationships, and finally, the conflict management strategies endorsed in each relationship. Moreover, the experience of maintenance behaviors and conflicts may indeed be perceived as some form of reward and cost in a relationship. Therefore the direct effects of these strategies on relationship satisfaction, closeness, and perceived quality will be examined, as well as through the effects of rewards and costs.

Furthermore, this study also seeks to address the gender differences in the context of a relationship other than marriage or romantic relationships. Therefore, the present study has a special focus on cross-sex friendships, particularly in terms of conflict issues, conflict management, and maintenance strategies and behaviors. How do women and men act differently (or construct/negotiate their friendship differently) from their same-sex friendships as well as from their romantic relationships? Cross-sex friendships share characteristics with both relationships, but are distinct from the two. What behavior patterns women and men 'bring from' their friendship experiences with their same-sex buddies and what they bring from their romantic relationships with the other sex (assuming heterosexuality) is the focal point of interest in examining the similarities and differences across relationships.

[1] The definitions of these concepts will be discussed extensively in Chapter 3.

How women and men's issues/behaviors/strategies change across the three relationships can give important clues as to the characteristics, nature, and experience of these relationships, as well as those characteristics related to gender roles of women and men. As McWilliams & Howard (1993) argue, "Cross-sex friendships provide an ideal analytical case for the study of gender dynamics with fewer of the complicating effects of sexual attraction that characterize cross-sex romantic relationships" (p. 191). Although the reported gender differences on several relationship related behaviors –such as conflict management or maintenance behaviors- are far from being 'profound', some of the reported differences may stem from the different roles assumed by women and men in their heterosexual romantic relationships, which may not be present in their cross-sex friendships. Therefore, whether differences will emerge in the context of cross-sex relationships, and if so, in what ways will they surface or combine in these relationships, will be a question this study will seek to answer. What a cross-sex friendship shares in common with respective same-sex friendships of women and men, and what is constructed differently and unique to this friendship are interesting questions when approached from the friendship perspective.

In addition to all these, Turkish society is one that can be described as "modernizing" but where gender-segregation and role-distinctions are still prevalent, and premarital sexuality is viewed inappropriate. In the rural and more traditional areas of Turkey, the violation of a "family's sexual honor" (e.g. the daughters having extramarital or premarital sex) is a reason for feuds that might continue for years. Male-female relationships or friendships are not at all acceptable in this respect, provided that these persons of the opposite sex are not relatives. The terms "lover, boyfriend, girlfriend" are considered inappropriate. In this respect, how cross-sex friendships and romantic relationships will be managed in a sample from a metropolitan area, who are receiving higher education, will be studied as well given this traditional point of view. How are these relationships constructed and maintained? How will the involvement of social networks differ for instance, among the three relationships? As mentioned, Turkey contains both elements of modernity and traditionalism: how these friendships/relationships are similar to those reported

in the dominantly Western literature is still another issue this study will try to address. There is really very small literature on conflict or maintenance behaviors in friendships –either same-sex or cross-sex– thus the current study will shed light on these aspects of the three relationships of interest.

# CHAPTER 2

# CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS IN YOUNG ADULTHOOD

In order to set the conceptual framework of the study, the literature review will be presented in two chapters. This chapter begins with an overview of close relationships in young adulthood, its importance, and the similarities and differences between the three types of selected close relationship same-sex/cross-sex friendships and romantic relationships. The discussion will narrow down with the next chapter on the two specific aspects of these close relationships: conflict and maintenance.

## 2.1 Importance of Close Relationships

Friends, lovers, and the broader social network that expands rapidly especially in adolescence and young adulthood have an extremely important place in an individual's life and development. These close relationships, in addition to family, provide a context in which some very basic human needs are satisfied for a full-fledged human development (Davis and Todd, 1985). Close relationships, especially friendships, serve the functions of intimacy and social support –providing aid, affect, and affirmation- (Monsour, 2002). Providing companionship and enjoyment and self-definition can be listed among the primary functions of friendships (Furman and Buhrmester, 1992). Wright (1978, cited in Davis & Todd, 1985) identifies four main benefits of friendships, based on a conception of the self: ego-support, self-affirmation, stimulation, and utility. Fulfilling intimacy needs and protection against loneliness are among the other functions of friendships as well as romantic relationships (Monsour, 2002).

According to Erikson's (1968) developmental theory, the main targets or sources of intimacy, especially after adolescence, become romantic partners (Furman & Buhrmester, 1992; Furman & Wehner, 1993) replacing family who had been the

primary source of intimacy during childhood. The main task of adolescence is to develop close relationships and fulfill needs of intimacy. Separation from the family, establishing autonomy and identity follows, at least in the Western countries. According to Sullivan's (1953) theory, 6 basic needs exist: *tenderness, companionship, acceptance, intimacy, and sexuality.* Through the 6 development stages in which emerging needs are identified and satisfied, a crucial relationship is believed to play a key role. During the course of development, the main source of satisfaction of these needs shift slowly from parents to peers, same-sex friends, friendship gangs, and finally romantic partners and opposite-sex friends. However, this developmental path may not be universal, and the influence of culture will be discussed in the last section of this chapter.

From a dialectical point of view –taking relationships as processes– identity and intimacy, and especially self-disclosure, are intertwined not only in adolescence but along the lifelong process of forming and re-forming relationships. Duck, West, and Acitelli (1997) approach relationships from a dialectical perspective and hold a transactional view of self-disclosure. They contend that what an individual does during self-disclosure is not merely open one's doors and present an "already formed self" to the other. By sharing the self's thoughts, actions, and biography with another, one constructs an identity for the self *in relation to the other*, an identity within that relationship at that point in time, one "talks an identity into existence". Dindia (2000) maintains: the processes of self-identity/human development and relationship identity/development are interrelated with the process of revealing the self, while also developing intimacy. As she succinctly summarizes, just as individuals are not intact, contained, whole, or static, but their identities are in a continual formation, change, and re-formation; so are relationships not intact, contained, whole, or static and in a continuous 'negotiation'. In this respect, identity and personal relationships become entangled once more, this time in the context of multiple constructions and representations of one's self.

What friendship signifies may even be more important compared to the past within the context of a modern society, contrary to the belief that modernization caused the

decline of friendships (Allan, 1998). Reisman (1981) concluded that although friendships are important for many adults, they seem to be less important than concerns for family, marriage, or career. Nevertheless, Allan (1998) puts forward that friendships can prove to be very important in the "modern world" by providing solidarity and a source of identity, in a world where the nature of employment and frequent change of occupations hinder the occupational identity and dissolving families and divorces break-up family identity. Hence, the identity issue surpasses adolescence and extends to adulthood, further increasing the importance of close relationships, and especially friendships in adulthood.

## 2.2 Friendships and Romantic Relationships: Similarities and Differences

Braiker and Kelley's (1979) definition of intimate relationships cover same and cross-sex close friends as intimate besides lovers and mates. Yet, most of the research on intimate relationships cover marriages and as Cahn (1990) drew attention to, more studies of close friends are needed besides mates.

Romantic relationships have been a main focus of attention among researchers, as they constitute 'the normative relationship' between men and women. These relationships are relatively institutionalized (in the US) and are instrumental, by means of leading to marriage, and forming the basic constructing unit of a society (O'Meara, 1989; Rawlins, 1982, 1994; Werking, 1997). Friendships, especially same-sex friendships, have been studied extensively as well, and as Rawlins (1982) notes, "friendship" usually refers to same-sex friendships, as it is the prevailing form of friendship in the US society (see Rose, 1985) where gender-socialization and gender-role segregation is still prevalent (Winstead, Derlega, and Rose, 1997), and may apply even more to Turkey. However, the research on cross-sex friendships is only recently emerging, possibly due to the increased opportunities that women and men find to establish and sustain cross-sex friendships, as the number of women pursuing careers and university education increase (Sapadin, 1988, cited by O'Meara, 1989). Thus the literature on cross-sex friendship has been growing

rapidly (e.g. Monsour, 2002; Rawlins, 1982, 1994; Swain, 1992; Werking, 1997, 2000) especially in the last decade.

Cross-sex friendship constitutes an irregular form of friendship, running against norms of ideal woman-man relationships (Rawlins, 1982; Swain, 1992). Because of the dominant heterosexual romantic ideology, events and information concerning the relationships between men and women are interpreted on the basis of gender according to cultural expectations and gender-role socialization. Thus, there is general consensus that cross-sex friendships "should" have a romantic or sexual nature, if not overt, then it "must" be covert (Monsour, Harris, Kurzweil, & Beard, 1994; O'Meara, 1989; Swain, 1992; Werking, 1997).

In this section, the similarities and differences between romantic relationships, same and cross-sex friendships in the literature will be reviewed. It is again important to note that the view of friendships and romantic relationships taken here is based on a Western conception of close relationships and (expected) points of divergence are presented at the end of the chapter.

## Choice

First of all, both friendships and romantic relationships are based on free choice. In Rawlins's (1982) terms, friendship entails "a voluntary, mutual, personal and affectionate relationship devoid of expressed sexuality". Unlike kinship or familial relationships, at least in the Western societies, friendship is typically a voluntary relationship, with ease of entering and exiting (Werking, 1997, p.15). On the other hand, it is usually more difficult to establish friendships, possibly because of in and out-group sensitivity and the tightly bound social networks, but when secured they probably last longer (Goodwin, 1999). As Goodwin (1999) notes, people choose their relationships in more individualistic cultures, whereas they are born into a web of relationships /obligations in collectivistic culture.

## Equality

Friendships have an egalitarian nature, in contrast to romances and marriages that usually entail a more unequal power structure. 'Equality' is considered as a defining characteristic of friendship (Paine, 1974, cited in O'Meara, 1989). Friends interact with one another at the same-level-roles (friend-friend), whereas in romances/marriages complementing roles are exhibited (wife-husband; girlfriend-boyfriend). In friendship, the behavior opportunities, as well as the evaluation standards for men and women are equal (Werking, 1997). On the other hand, men and women have different behavioral opportunities and meanings in romantic relationships, with partners occupying different statuses.

This egalitarian nature may especially be relevant for same-sex friendships, because different genders might induce an element of inequality in cross-sex friendships, with the balance of the equality scale in tilting towards the men. Building upon the premise that because of the relatively 'scriptless' nature of these relationships, the participants are more likely to utilize their gender role typifications of maleness and femaleness that they formed previously (at least until new scripts and experiences are generated), O'Meara (1989) presents this as one of the challenges adding to the ambiguous nature of cross-sex friendship. This may actually add a notion of asymmetry in cross-sex friendships, as the partners bring their prior experiences with their same-sex friendships to the situation, where these same-sex friendships of men and women are found to be different from each other. This issue of asymmetry/inequity in several aspects of friendships such as intimacy, support, company, or other benefits will be explored further in the following sections. For instance Rose (1985) found that women's expectations were not fulfilled in their cross-sex friendships to the same extent as in their same-sex friendships.

O'Meara (1989) mentions the equality challenge also in the context of exchange versus communal relationship orientations. He asserts that cross-sex friendships should be 'communal', rather than 'exchange' relationships, since an exchange orientation might render the relationship susceptible to male-domination, as men hold more of the valued social resources (O'Meara, 1989; Rose, 1985).

## Ambiguity and institutionalization

Friendship is more of a "vague" relationship. It is not institutionalized –to the degree of romantic relationship and marriage. It is fluid, can take many forms and can cover a wide range of relationships (used in a generic manner for relationships with coworkers or siblings), and is the most common form of relationship (Werking, 1997). However this lack of institutionalization leaves it fragile at the same time, lacking the institutional "comfort" of marriages and romantic relationships (O'Meara, 1989; Rawlins, 1982, 1994; Werking, 1997.) Informal rules and expectations of friendships rest on the negotiation of the participants to a high degree. This element of ambiguity and "negotiation" (of the identities / relationship) appear to be more pronounced for cross-sex friendships (Rawlins, 1982; O'Meara, 1989; Werking, 1997).

Although friendships are not 'established' to the degree that romantic relationships are, Argyle and Henderson (1985) extracted the 'rules' for several relationships, including same-sex friendship, marriage, work relationships and the like. They found 4 basic rules related to same-sex friendships that applied to both close friends and acquaintances, consisting of respecting privacy, keeping confidences, avoiding public criticism and helping in times of need.

Romantic relationships, on the other hand, are established in the USA (though not in Turkey); they have a set of very clear scripts, boundaries, and cultural expectations (Werking, 1997). The dating or courtship process includes very clearly defined roles and scripts, separate for males and females on which a high degree of agreement exists (Furman & Wehner, 1993; Rose & Frieze, 1993). Males take a proactive role in initiating the first date, arranging the activity/location, initiating physical contact and so on while women acting more reactively either accepting the initiations or rejecting them (Rose & Frieze, 1993). Although not legally binding, the romantic relationship is binding as a result of the pressure of social networks and friends.

Cross-sex friendships, from this perspective, constitute perhaps the most "unsettled" form of relationship (O'Meara, 1989; Rawlins, 1982, 1994; Swain, 1992). Swain

even describes cross-sex friendship as a "social anomaly that is overshadowed by cultural emphases on same-sex friendships, and heterosexual love and sexual relationships" (p. 153).

**Rewards (support, acceptance, and companionship)**

Receiving help, assistance or companionship is relevant for both romantic relationships and friendships. Companionship is one of the major facets of courtship/romance (Cate & Lloyd, 1992). Generally, romantic relationship is considered to be the relationship that embraces most rewards and most costs, in proportion to its increased level of interdependence and investment.

For acceptance, support, and assistance, Davis and Todd (1982) found that best friends (same-sex or cross-sex) were more likely to champion/advocate an individual compared to romantic partners. Moreover, cross-sex friends were conceived to be more trustable and accepting than romantic partners. Trust and mutual assistance categories appeared for cross-sex friendships, and not for romantic relationships (Davis and Todd, 1982).

Cross-sex friendships included less help and less loyalty than same-sex friendships, especially for women (Rose, 1985). In terms of maintaining the relationship, acceptance, communication, effort, and common interests characterize same-sex friendships more than cross-sex ones. Rose (1985) concluded that cross-sex friendship formation and maintenance were different with respect to same-sex friendships in that statements about unwillingness, lack of interest, difficulty in informing and maintaining these relationships were mentioned more frequently. In terms of shared interests (shared activities, discussion of personal problems, shared friends, working together) same-sex friends scored higher than cross-sex friends (Argyle & Furnham, 1983). Likewise, Davis and Todd (1985) report that same-sex friends did more things together and were closer than cross-sex friends. Alternatively, cross-sex and same-sex friends were evaluated to be similar in terms of trust, respect, acceptance, spontaneity, and enjoyment (Davis and Todd, 1985).

The notion of asymmetry has to do with whether cross-sex friendships are characterized by inequity in terms of its benefits for the woman and man, compared to their same-sex friendships. Do their cross-sex friendships provide equitable benefits for women and men? In what ways are they similar to/different from the same-sex friendships? In what ways do women and men relate to their same-sex friends? I will be bracketing a brief discussion of the differences in –especially same-sex– friendships of women and men. This discussion rests on the premise that women and men have basically different relational orientations: women emphasizing talk, affection/expression and men activities and instrumentality; women's friendships being face-to-face and men's side by side; reciprocity characterizing women's friendships versus commonality characterizing men's, or more popularly, women's relationships being communal and men's being agentic (See Duck & Wright, 1993 for a review). However, Wright (1988) and Duck and Wright (1993) caution that the differences found in friendships of women and men seem to be exaggerated in the sense that within group variability is assumed to be less than between group differences. Duck and Wright (1993) argue that the available evidence is not sufficient to construct the "expressive versus instrumental" dichotomy. Supporting Duck & Wright, Parker and de Vries (1993) found that men and women emphasize similar affective and structural dimensions in their friendships and defined intimacy in almost identical ways. Burleson, Kumkel, Samter, and Werking (1997) found that although women and men differ in the value they place on different communication skills, they value similar core skills in their partners to possess in a friendship or romance. In same-sex friendships, although women rated affectively oriented communication skills (ego support, conflict management, comforting, and regulative skills) and men rated instrumentally oriented skills (narrative and persuasion skills) to be more important, both women and men valued affective skills as more important than instrumental skills; and this was true for opposite-sex romances as well. In addition, these skills were rated to be more important in romances suggesting that communication may have a more important role in romantic relationships than same-sex friendships (Burleson et al., 1997).

Men' same-sex friendships were of different quality than their cross-sex friendships or women's same-sex friendships and involved giving and receiving less. Men gave more and received more when with a female friend compared to a male friend, whereas women gave more and received more with a female friend compared to a male friend (Buhrke & Fuqua, 1987; Parker & de Vries, 1993). Yet overall, men evaluated their cross-sex friendships to be closer than women did, and were more satisfied with them (Buhrke & Fuqua, 1987). Moreover, friendships with men (either same-sex or cross-sex) were characterized by less reciprocity. Intimacy, emotional expressiveness and self-disclosure, as will be discussed later, seem to characterize women's friendships to a higher extent than men's, which are characterized by mutual activities (Barth & Kinder, 1988; Bell, 1988; Caldwell & Peplau, 1982; Duck & Wright, 1993). Women reported receiving more companionship from their male –than female- friends, on the other hand (Rose, 1985). Yet cross-sex friendship brought new understandings and perceptions of the other sex (Sapadin, 1988, cited in Werking, 1997; Monsour, 2002) and fulfilled the functions of help, availability, and recognition in cross-sex friendships (Rose, 1985) equally for females and males. Werking (1997) concludes that although men and women might perceive, represent, and experience their cross-sex relationships differently, they receive equitable rewards from their cross-sex friendships.

## Commitment/trust, exclusivity, stability, and satisfaction

Long-term goals, coupling, reduced freedom typically describe romantic relationships in comparison to cross-sex friendships (Werking, 1994, cited in Werking, 1997). Romantic relationships usually have marriage as an end goal, and are expected to be exclusive, at least in 'committed' relationships. Interestingly, Davis & Todd (1982, 1985) found that best same-sex or cross-sex friendships were viewed as more stable than romantic relationships, contrary to what one would expect. In addition, same-sex friendships were more common and were viewed as more stable compared to cross-sex friendships (Davis and Todd, 1985; Parker and de Vries, 1993).

Romantic or dating relationships are actually a means for the 'ultimate' goal: marriage. On the other hand, cross-sex friendship is (ideally) an end in itself. Yet,

many heterosexual couples start their relationships as platonic friends, thus cross-sex friendship can be seen as a stage in the process of coupling (Swain, 1992; Werking, 1997) at least to the parties outside the relationship. Therefore, it would not be absurd to say that the orientations towards or attitudes about the future would probably be different for friendships and romantic relationships.

Concerning satisfaction, Argyle & Furnham (1983) found that same-sex friends were evaluated to be high on overall satisfaction (best after spouse) and the topics that were especially satisfying for same-sex friends were emotional support and shared interest (sharing same friends, doing things together, and discussing problems). For same-sex friends, providing and receiving financial support and owning property were the areas where lower satisfaction was scored. Opposite sex friends were similar to same-sex friends, but they scored lower in overall satisfaction; the areas that were evaluated to be most satisfying were shared interests (doing things together, discussing personal problems, sharing same friends, and working together).

### Interdependence/dependence

Regarding commitment and the general nature of relationships, one is tempted to conclude that romantic relationships involve a higher degree of interdependence than friendships. No study to my knowledge has compared same- and cross-sex friendships with respect to the level of interdependence or commitment. It appears that the level of intimacy and shared resources rather than the gender of participants or the nature of relationship contribute to interdependence. From this point of view, as a romantic relationship develops through time: intimacy increases, the social networks fuse and jointly develop, and a long-term perspective ("seriously dating") and exclusivity enters the picture. Even the material and economic resources may become combined or shared. In other words, the couple becomes more invested and interdependent (Rusbult, 1980). As interdependence increases, the potential for satisfaction as well as conflict increases, as demonstrated by Argyle and Furnham's study (1983) where highest satisfaction and highest conflicts are reported for spouses. Hence it appears that romances involve more interdependence than friendships.

## Intimacy

Relationship development is marked by increases in self-disclosure and emotional expressiveness according to social penetration theory (Altman and Taylor, 1973, cited in Hinde, 1997; Winstead et al., 1997), whether for romantic relationships or (same-sex/cross-sex) friendships. Romantic relationships are usually the most intimate relationships and intimacy seems to be "taken for granted" in the context of romances. Erikson (1968, cited in Hinde, 1997) has regarded sexuality, or physical intimacy as the full realization of intimacy. Self-disclosure has frequently been used as a measure of intimacy, especially when comparing women and men; yet intimacy entails more than that.

Concerning the similarities and differences among same-sex and cross-sex friendships in terms of intimacy, Monsour (1992) found that same and cross-sex friends were substantially similar in terms of how they define intimacy: intimacy meant self-disclosures, emotional expressiveness, unconditional support, physical contact, and trust. On the other hand, sexual contact was regarded to be a part of intimacy within cross-sex but not same-sex friendships, tilting it towards romantic relationships.

The symmetry versus asymmetry issue in terms of intimacy has received attention especially incorporating gender into the analyses while comparing friendships of men, women, and men and women. Women's same-sex friendships seem to be characterized by more intimacy (Bell, 1981; Buhrke & Fuqua, 1987; Caldwell and Peplau, 1982), more involvement, and depth (Barth & Kinder, 1988) compared to that of men. Correspondingly, Rose (1985) found that women reported receiving more companionship and less acceptance and intimacy from their cross-sex friends compared to their same-sex friends, while men's evaluations of their same and cross-sex friendships were similar. Men described their cross-sex friendships as closer than women did (Buhrke and Fuqua, 1987; Rubin, 1985, cited in Monsour, Harvey, & Betty, 1997); women wanted to give more in their cross-sex friendships (Buhrke & Fuqua, 1987). So, indeed there existed some consistent differences for the women and men engaging in cross-sex friendships, such that cross-sex

friendships seemed to be more advantageous for men than women with respect to intimacy, acceptance and support, whereas women seem to benefit from the companionship aspect of their cross-sex friendships.

## Taboo topics

"Taboo topics", or specific issues on which explicit discussions are avoided can be an indicator of the level uncertainty, as well as the need for openness and privacy in a given relationship (Baxter and Wilmot, 1985; Afifi and Burgoon, 1998). In contrast to the prevalent 'ideology' of openness and self-disclosure, taboo topics might be especially relevant for dating and cross-sex relationships (given the "assumption of heterosexuality") and can be used to protect and maintain a relationship. For instance, Baxter & Wilmot (1985) found that avoidance of certain topics was higher in cross-sex relationships that involve a potential for romance compared to dating relationships. The topics that were typically avoided in cross-sex friendships or romantic relationships were discussion of the relationship's current or future state, extra-relationship activities, relationship norms, prior relationships, conflict-inducing topics, and negative information. Afifi & Burgoon's (1998) results indicated that cross-sex friends avoided discussions of relationship relevant issues (such as relational state or norms) more than daters, whereas dating couples avoided discussions of past relationships and current cross-sex friendships more than cross-sex friends.

## Attraction and Sexuality

Romantic relationships include an element of physical attraction and sexuality. Thus "romantic love" relationship becomes distinguished from "friendship love" (felt for friends), "platonic friendship" (felt for a cross-sex friend but no sexuality is involved (Rawlins, 1982). Just as some degree of attraction and liking –at least on the part of one person- is necessary to establish a personal relationship (excluding blood ties, of course), *physical attraction* is assumed to be the starting point for a romantic relationship, and sometimes for a cross-sex friendship as well (Morton & Douglas, 1981).

The issue of sexuality in cross-sex friendships received considerable portion of research efforts as well as the management of this sexuality/attraction; with researchers chasing the question "can men and women be friends?" (Afifi & Burgoon, 1998; Afifi & Faulkner, 2000; Reeder, 2000; Kaplan & Keys, 1997; Messman, Canary, & Hause, 2000; Monsour, 2002; Werking, 1997) This topic is most relevant to distinctions between romantic relationships and cross-sex friendships, since the norm of heterosexuality prevails, rendering the same-sex friendships "free of doubts/concerns" regarding the "platonic" nature of the relationship.

Even from the definition of male-female friendship, a distinction can be made: while O'Meara (1989) notes that the relationship is nonromantic, but sexuality and passion may be present but not emphasized, Rawlins' (1982) definition more strictly excludes sexuality "a voluntary, mutual, personal and affectionate relationship *devoid of expressed sexuality*" (emphasis added). Werking (1997, p.30) also notes that "an attraction of the spirit" exists in cross-sex friendship, and sexuality is not allowed to be part of the relationships; even if it exists, it would be actually transforming the relationship to a romantic one –at least in ideal/typical cases. Yet Afifi and Faulkner's (2000) finding contrasts this assertion: they found that 56 percent of the sexually active cross-sex friend pairs do not assume a romantic characteristic and remain as friends. Messman et al. (2000) appear to take the "platonic" nature of a cross-sex friendship as granted. They state that most cross-sex friends manage their *passionate impulses* to keep their relationships as platonic, and search for the reasons for not "developing" their friendships.

Sexual tensions in cross-sex friendships are sometimes welcome by the participants "adding spice" to the relationship (e.g. Afifi & Faulkner, 2000), and sometimes regarded as an important challenge/problem in the relationships, the failure to manage which may cause the termination of the relationship (O'Meara, 1989; Rawlins, 1982). At least slight levels of romantic/sexual interest (Afifi & Burgoon, 1998; Monsour, 1992), if not often (Kaplan & Keys, 1997) were reported by participants for their cross-sex friends. The evidence regarding whether sexual

overtones in a friendship are problematic or pleasurable has been mixed, though. In Sapadin's (1988, cited in Monsour, 2002) study, 20 percent of men and 28 percent of women reported that sexual tensions were the least-liked feature of their cross-sex friendships. On the other hand, Afifi and Faulkner (2000) demonstrated that sexuality was frequently experienced in otherwise platonic friendships, with 51 percent of their participants reporting having engaged in sexual activity with a cross-sex friend at least once, and 34 percent reporting that this happened more than once. Furthermore, 67 percent of their participants found that this increased the quality of their relationships, without necessarily developing into a romantic relationship.

These findings blur the waters as to the boundaries of cross-sex friendships and romances. Sexual activity and exclusiveness in cross-sex friendships might add other concerns to the relationship, such as jealousy (Werking, 1997). Then, conceptual definitions of friendship and romance may also confuse, with the blurring boundaries between the two. Finally, Reeder (2000) brought conceptual clarity to attraction. She distinguished among physical/sexual, friendship, and romantic attraction. She found that 'friendship attraction' was much more common compared to physical/sexual attraction, with a 'relieving' conclusion that women and men can enter into relationships that have other bases from romance and sex and view each other not only as (potential) mates but as buddies as well.

## Conflict/jealousy

Closely related to the issue of attraction and sexuality is possessiveness and jealousy. Jealousy is an issue in romantic relationships as well as friendships, although to a lesser extent (Hinde, 1997). In other words, it is less tolerated in friendships, and is seen as one of the causes for ending friendships (Argyle and Henderson, 1985; Metts, 1994). Jealousy gains importance especially within relationships that involve/have the potential to involve sexuality, and when exclusivity of a relationship is of concern by the individuals (Werking, 1997). The issue of conflict will be given special attention in the following section.

## 2.3 Friendships and Romances: Influences of Culture

As has been reviewed, friendships and romantic relationships serve many functions, and help the establishment of one's identity especially during young adulthood period. Besides providing help, support, and companionship, they fulfill the needs of intimacy and affiliation. Friends and lovers gain importance especially beginning with adolescence and during the young adulthood period where the individuals establish their identities and separate from their families.

However the mentioned processes of identity development (separation-individuation) and the transfer processes of closeness and intimacy from parents to friends do not follow a universal path (Goodwin, 1999; Rothbaum, Pott, Azuma, Miyake, and Weisz, 2000). In non-western or in more collectivistic cultures, the developmental path may differ: Rothbaum et al. (2000) note that during adolescence in Japan, protecting the harmony with family appears to be more important than peer relationships. They define the developmental path that parent-child and adult close relationships follow in Japan as one of "symbiotic harmony" whereas in US the path is characterized by "generative tension". Therefore for some cultures, like ours as well, family and kinship may protect its importance throughout the life course, and become a defining feature of the self (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Moreover, the establishment of identity and autonomy need not necessitate emotional separation from the family and these two might entail different dimensions of development (Imamoglu, 1998; Kagitcibasi, 1996). Accordingly, family might indeed have a more important place in an individual's life, and friends and peers occupying a less important role. Furthermore, the differences between ingroups and outgroups are especially marked in collectivistic societies (Triandis, 1995) and as family constitutes the basic ingroup, members of the family and relatives may preserve their importance throughout one's life when compared to friends (outsiders). In her study that compared the different relationships of Turkish and US adolescents in terms of satisfaction of several needs, Hortaçsu (1997) found that Turkish adolescents rated mothers as more functional than their US counterparts. Moreover, Turkish adolescents differentiated between parents and friends in ascribed importance of these relationships (parents more satisfactory than friends and

siblings) whereas US adolescents did not (siblings less satisfactory than parents and friends). Therefore it might be inferred that the family/nonfamily dimensions are important for Turks in evaluating their relationships.

Above and beyond, in more traditional or collectivistic societies, or in societies of rapid transition like Turkey, the meanings of friendships and romantic relationships may be different than those constructed in the West. Romantic love is less valued as a basis for marriage in more collectivistic societies, and not a necessity or prerequisite for it (see Goodwin, 1999). Approval of the family and appropriateness are more valued, as can be seen in the practice of arranged marriages. Although there have been significant shifts in these practices (Hortaçsu, Bastuğ, & Muhammetberdiev, 2000), it is still reasonable to argue that the concept of dating and romantic relationships or the scripts about them are not established and newly emerging in Turkey. This is also reflected in the difference of attitudes towards romanticism and cross-sex friendships in Turkey from those in the USA (Hortaçsu, Medora, & Dave, 2003; Medora, Larson, Hortaçsu, & Dave, 2002). Hortaçsu et al.'s (unpublished manuscript) findings regarding the comparison among different friendships point to similar evaluations of same-sex friendships, in other words the superiority of same-sex friendships over different-sex friendships in terms of perceived quality, intimacy, stability, satisfaction and rewards, for India, Turkey, and the US. On the other hand, the appropriateness of different friendship norms were rated somewhat differently for same-sex friendships and opposite-sex friendships (with no previous romance) by Indian and US youths. Turks were in between the two or were more similar to Americans.

The importance of "namus" (honor associated with the women's sexual purity) of a family (Magnarella, 1982), makes cross-sex friendships more unacceptable as well, let alone romances. In addition to this view of "inappropriateness", men and women have only recently begun to find the opportunities to form cross-sex friendships in the metropolitan areas especially, such as educational institutions and larger business organizations. In general cross-sex friendship is perceived as some 'pre-romantic' stage to a "normal" man-woman relationship. It is mostly inappropriate to

use words such as boyfriend, girlfriend, or lover; instead the word “friend” is used, which refers to lover where the friend is opposite-sex. Therefore the partners and the third parties might perceive the cross-sex friend as resembling more to a romantic partner. Therefore, cross-sex friendship might even be a more ambiguous relationship, where expectations from the relationship and its boundaries are less clear.

Following these, it is important to note that the nature and significance of friendships and romantic relationships may be different than those reported in the literature, given the more collectivistic culture of Turkey including elements of both traditionalism and modernization.

# CHAPTER 3

# CONFLICT AND MAINTENANCE IN CLOSE RELATIONSHIPS

Issues of conflict and conflict management strategies will be reviewed in the second section, with a focus on gender differences as well as differences across relationships. In the third section that follows, relationship maintenance strategies and again the role of gender and relationship will be reviewed. Finally, the expectations concerning this study are presented in the last section of this chapter.

## 3.1 Conflict in Close Relationships

Conflict occurs in all types of personal and social relationships, from spouses and friends to neighbors and bosses (Argyle & Furnham, 1983; Canary, Cupach, and Messman, 1995); given the emotional aspect of intimate relationships conflict takes a different meaning or value in close relationships. Family, marriage or romance has usually been the context while investigating conflict in close relationships (Cahn, 1990, 1992; Hinde, 1997). This interest is in line with the previously mentioned ideology that a heterosexual romantic relationship is the ideal form of relationship that can exist between women and men, thus deserves most attention (Rawlins, 1982; Werking, 1997). It can also be attributed to the growing concern for the instability in marriages in the USA (Canary et al., 1995). According to Braiker and Kelley's (1979) definition of intimate relationships on the basis of closeness, mutual dependence, and joint activities, same-sex and cross-sex close friends can be classified as intimate, as well as lovers and mates. However, investigation of conflict in same-sex and cross-sex relationships has been rare (Cahn, 1990).

However, before moving on to explain several definitions and dimensions of conflict, an important note should be made on the "inevitability" of conflict in personal relationships. If we assume totally independent and autonomous

construction of the selves, we conceptualize the relationship as a coming together of two separate entities with goals of self-interest. The needs of the self will have contrast with those of the other, and therefore conflict inevitable. On the other hand, with an interdependent construal of selves, in connection to and concerned about one another, we conceptualize a relationship based on being responsive to each other's needs prior to own. In this case, harmony is a must value. Mind reading and cohesion may take the place of conflict, which is unacceptable to a degree (Markus and Kitayama, 1994; Rothbaum et al., 2000). So conflict is not necessarily inevitable given a different set of assumptions to begin with.

### 3.1.1 Conflict: Definitions and Dimensions

Conflict is an integral part of human social life. However, there is no consensus on its definition. It has an element of incompatibility, but for example it has also been conceptualized as interruptions, disagreements, tension, defensive versus supportive communication, anxiety tension and emotions, antagonism, negative interpersonal expressiveness, and contradictions between verbal and nonverbal messages (Printz 1976, cited in Hall 1987, cited in Canary et al., 1995). It involves interactional behaviors of minute nature as well as general dissatisfaction towards one's relationship, and is studied from as many perspectives as the number of researchers studying it. Yet, its significance comes not from the specific problem or differences but because of the emotional nature of conflict in intimate relationships (Cahn, 1992).

Researchers have distinguished among the dimensions and levels of conflict. For example, Argyle & Furnham (1983) specified two dimensions of conflict: *emotional conflict*, which is frequent in more intimate relationships (which includes items such as competing for control, attention or affection, conflict over beliefs/values, emotional help and support) and *criticism*, which is based on problems with partner's behavior (e.g. concern that the other is behaving unwisely, habits and lifestyles.) In similar lines, Braiker & Kelley (1979) classified conflict at three levels: *behavioral conflicts* (e.g. over recreation and specific sexual behaviors), *normative conflicts* (e.g. over household duties, economic-support responsibilities,

and authority), and *personal conflicts* (life-values, selfishness and inconsiderateness, and affectional relations). From the perspective of communication studies, Cahn (1990) identifies three types of conflict: *specific disagreements* (difference of opinions or views, complaints, criticisms, defensive behavior or unpleasant actions), *problem-solving discussion* (bargaining or negotiation in an ongoing manner so that it may include more than one issue), and *unhappy/dissolving relationships* (general pattern of communication of dysfunctioning couples, stormy marriages and the like).

### 3.1.2 Conflict: Theoretical approaches

In his commentary, Cupach (2000) recaps that the study of conflict has been investigated episodically, (in a particular encounter), relationally (management of conflict in distressed or non-distressed couples), and developmentally (management of conflict in time and its influence on relationship characteristics). Cahn (1992) reviews three of these research paradigms, or dominant perspectives, from which conflict research can be approached. Two of them relevant to the current study are reviewed here[2].

The first one is "systems-interactionist" (Cahn, 1990 or "interactional" paradigm, Canary et al., 1995). This paradigm usually deals with particular communication patterns that partners use during a particular problem-solving session. This corresponds to the episodic –and to some degree to the relational- investigation of conflict (Cupach, 2000). In this perspective, conflict is viewed as emotional expressions of opposing views by partners who employ certain communication patterns. The systems-interactionist approach highlights escalation of negative conflict communication behaviors of a couple and classifies the negative or positive effects according to its harm on couple's intimacy. Systems–interactionist perspective has been inspired by theories of social learning, cybernetics, information, and general systems (Cahn, 1992).

[2] The rules-interventionist perspective takes conflict as a rule-governed process and emphasizes negotiation for a reasonable outcome to both parties. Divorce mediation and the role of third parties in resolving disputes is a major concern of investigation in this framework; thus considered not to be directly relevant to the current study.

In the second one, or the cognitive-exchange paradigm, perceived rewards and costs and their influence on especially the development of relationships is of concern, parallel to relational and developmental investigations of conflict stated by Cupach (2000). Conflict is viewed in terms of strategies involving perceptions and intentions; and its effects on broader relationship characteristics, rather than the specific communication behaviors exhibited and observed during an interaction period, are typically analyzed. Therefore, even in the lack of overt disagreement, conflict may still exist in a relationship, as an internal state of which explicit expression is avoided. Behind this line of research lie social exchange theory and especially interdependence (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959) and investment theories (Rusbult, 1980).

Since this study mainly takes a cognitive-exchange perspective, setting the frame with interdependence and investment theories, for conflict, maintenance, and the concept of friendships a brief overview would be appropriate at this point.

Two major characteristics of intimate relationships relevant to this context are satisfaction and commitment. According to the social exchange theory, and interdependence theory in particular, people enter in voluntary relationships, and sustain a "satisfactory" relationship as long as they receive more rewards in return for the costs they incur (Canary & Stafford, 1994; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959). Satisfaction depends on comparing one's outcomes from a specific relationship to the individual's *comparison level CL*, (or what one believes that he/she deserves in that relationship.) The CL, constructed by previous relationship expectations, is the qualitative expectation that people have about their relationships. Conflict, from this perspective, is a "cognitive" construct, and is mainly an internal state, which cannot be observed, but reported by the partner. As Braiker and Kelley (1979) has mentioned, love and maintenance may constitute the perceived internal "rewards" of a relationship, whereas conflict and ambivalence can be the "costs" to incur. Therefore, conflict may be 'increasing' the costs but may not affect satisfaction as long as they are not surpassing the reward level and the CL.

Investment model is an extension of interdependence theory by Rusbult (1980), in which the second important concept of commitment enters the picture. From this point of view, first of all, there is a difference between how much satisfied one feels with a relationship and how dependent one is on that relationship. Besides the level of interdependence, the psychological state of commitment pertains to this interdependence. Moreover, the amount of investment in a relationship is a measure of commitment to the relationship. Consequently, people are to remain in their current relationships as long as the outcomes of their current relationship exceed that of the best alternative, determined by the *comparison level of alternatives ($CL_{alt}$)*. With increasing investment (time, emotional energy, effort, mutual friends, shared confidences, and even memories) in the relationship over time, partners become more interdependent. The existence of conflict is an extension of this interdependence, resulting from conflicts of interests. By the same token, the desire to maintain a relationship as well as can be a result of this increased investment and interdependence[3]. (Dindia & Canary, 1993)

### 3.1.3 Conflict Issues

Although specific topics or sources of conflict has been less of a concern in the cognitive-exchange perspective, areas of concern such as communication, sex, jealousy, in-law relations and household chores are mentioned in studies of marital discord and divorce (Gottman, 1979, cited in Cahn, 1992). Violating the relational rules such as having sex with another person, deceiving the partner, wanting to date other people, violating confidence, breaking an important promise, not reciprocating the partner's expressions of love, affection, or commitment, or physical abuse are among the many behaviors that Metts (1994) found to be among important relationship rule violations. Alberts (1989, cited in Canary et al., 1995) collected the types of complaints that took place between romantic couples, and found five types of complaints: behavioral, personal characteristics, performance, complaining, and personal appearance. She found that dissatisfied couples were more likely to engage in complaints of personal characteristics and reciprocate it more.

[3] On the other hand, the reverse holds as well, maintaining and taking care of a relationship may result in increased investment and interdependence

Besides these specific topics and issues of conflicts, the broader themes such as *sources* of conflict include perceived inequity in the relationship, unequal power distribution/ imbalance, and general relationship dissatisfaction (Cahn, 1992). Baxter (1988) introduces three main sources of conflict in close relationships from a dialectical viewpoint in relationships. Relationship dialectics state that relationships are in constant transition, changing between opposing forces and constant contradiction, trying to reach a balance between them. These most important of these forces are autonomy versus relatedness (independence versus connectedness), openness (self-disclosure) versus closeness (privacy), and predictability versus novelty. Therefore, at points of increased imbalance between partners regarding these poles of contradiction, conflict may arise. These sources of conflict may or may not be visible to the participants directly, and may be experienced merely at a level of tension with no specific overt "issue" at hand to discuss.

Argyle and Furnham (1983) pinpointed 15 conflict issues that are relevant for different relationships. The emotional conflict included conflicts over jobs and promotion, attention/affection of others, control over others, money/possessions, different beliefs and values, independence form each other, emotional help and support, during daily activities, being able to understand each other, attempts at emotional blackmail, demands on each other's time, and finally, each other's friends and social group. The criticism factor comprised of concern that the other is behaving unwisely, each other's habits and lifestyles, and not being able to discuss personal problems. Occurrence of conflict seems to be highest with spouses (accompanying overall satisfaction) followed by same-sex and cross-sex friends. Conflict topics with spouses include independence, whereas with same-sex friends the main conflict issues were competition for jobs/promotion, competition for attention and affection of others, and having different values/beliefs. Interestingly, conflict topics with cross-sex friends included not being able to discuss personal problems and not being able to understand each other.

Kurdek (1994) grouped conflict issues collected from a sample of gay, lesbian, and heterosexual couples into 6 categories: power (e.g. being overly critical), social

issues, personal flaws, distrust, intimacy (e.g. sex, affection), and personal distance (other commitments). Besides overall frequency of conflict, power and intimacy were the issues that influenced the relationship most negatively, probably because those are the areas of greatest interdependence between partners.

Yet, before closing the section on conflict issues and moving on to conflict management, I would like to insert Hinde's (1997) remark that properly fits in between: "…the basic issue is often the relationship itself rather than the overt topic of disagreement" (p.153).

### 3.1.4 Conflict Management

As mentioned, what is critical for relationship quality is how conflict is actually handled by the partners; and this is an area that has captured considerable attention in the relationship conflict research. (See McGonagle, Kessler & Gotlib, 1993 for a different perspective.)

Cahn (1990) makes a distinction between conflict resolution and conflict management in this handling process of conflict. *Conflict resolution* implies confrontation and bringing a successful end to the conflict, especially in broken-down relationships. *Conflict management*, on the other hand, includes dealing with the conflict in alternative ways, including totally avoiding it, when the relationship is more important than the resolution of conflict.

Several typologies of conflict management have been offered. Some of them have a more episodic approach to conflict. They are measured by observation of a conflict interaction, charting the characteristics of the actual responses during conflict communication, (e.g. Gottman & Krokoff, 1989). Other typologies involve more cognitive responses to conflict. These include self-report measures of more general responses partners give to the perceived troublesome issues in their relationships or as a response to general dissatisfaction (e.g. Rusbult & Zembrodt, 1982).

Canary & Cupach (1988) classified conflict communication strategies into three categories: *integrative strategies* that are prosocial, cooperative, and relationship and mutuality oriented, corresponding to 'working with partner'; *distributive strategies* that are competitive, destructive, and self-oriented, corresponding to 'working against partner'; and finally *avoidance strategies* that minimize discussion of conflict, denying that it exists, shifting the focus of conversations, and communicating indirectly about them, corresponding to 'working away from partner' (See also, Canary & Spitzberg, 1989). In similar lines, Kurdek (1995) classified the conflict behavior into three styles, namely *Engagement, Withdrawal,* and *Compliance*. Prager's classification (1991) included *Cognitive* (Problem focused), *Affective* (Emotion-focused), and *Coercive* strategies in conflict situations.

Rusbult & Zembrodt's (1983) typology of cognitive reactions to dissatisfaction in relationships (and not specific conflicts) includes four responses. *Exit* involves ending the relationship, or acting in a destructive manner, like breaking up or threatening to end the relationship. *Voice* means engaging in active and constructive behavior, in an attempt to improve conditions, like discussing issues and offering suggestions. *Loyalty* is a passive strategy, waiting for the situation to improve and remaining loyal to the relationship. Finally, *neglect* is comprised of passively allowing the situation to get worse, such as ignoring the partner, criticizing, and refusing to discuss problems. From this point of view, exit and neglect lie on the destructive dimension whereas voice and loyalty fall along the constructive dimension. The specific antecedents and consequences will be reviewed in the section on relationship quality.

At this point, it is important to mention what Rusbult et al. (1991) label as *accommodation*, or trying to respond constructively instead of reciprocating the destructive behaviors of the partner. Commitment to the relationship as well as feelings of satisfaction from the relationship affected accommodation tendencies. In a way, accommodation resembles loyalty strategy, and to avoidance to a certain extent. These strategies help refrain from openly discussing issues when it may be best not to assert one's needs, interests, goals, or values; when a desired change in

the partner is not possible or the partner perceives change as a threat to her/his core values, interests, or needs; and standing on the issue would upset the relationship very much. Cahn (1987, cited in Cahn, 1992) has identified two strategies of accommodation, *productive ambiguity* (intentionally not making clear one's interests and choices to the partner) and *reorganizing one's priorities* (changing, eliminating, or reordering one's own interests, values, or goals). Moreover, Rusbult et al. (1991) found that the more the male partner (rather than the female partner) was willing to accommodate, the better was the couple's functioning.

A final typology that I will mention is "The Organizational Conflict Inventory," developed by Rahim (1983). This typology is based on Kilmann and Thomas's (1977, cited in Cahn, 1992) Management of Differences Exercise (MODE instrument), which pertains to the business administration and management domain. Rahim's conflict styles consisted of five conflict styles, along two dimensions, which are concern for the self and concern for the other. These five styles comprise of *competing/ dominating* (high concern for self, low for the other), *collaborating/ integrating* (high concern for both self and the other), *compromising* (medium concern for self and the other), *avoiding* (low concern for self and the other), and *accommodating/smoothing* (high concern for the other, low concern for self). Buunk, Schaap, & Prevoo (1990) report using a similar scale comprising of five conflict management styles: aggression-pushing, avoidance, soothing, compromise, and problem-solving. Although Rahim's 5-factor measure has been used in organizational settings, Hammock et al. (1990, cited in Cahn, 1992) cautioned for the use of Rahim's instrument in non-organizational settings. A four-factor solution emerged in these settings, and compromising and collaborating items were combined.

These typologies have been analyzed with respect to several relational characteristics, especially satisfaction, commitment, or adjustment/functionality, and accordingly, the constructive responses versus the destructive ones are identified. The antecedents and consequences of these conflict tactics/styles typologies will be discussed in the section on relationship quality.

### 3.1.5 Conflict Across Relationships

Conflict has been studied widely in marital and romantic contexts, and to a lesser extent in the realm of friendship, at least in adult friendship (Argyle and Furnham, 1983; Blieszner & Adams, 1992). Conflict in the context of siblings, and children's peer groups has also been studied extensively (see Schantz and Hartup, 1992 for a review). I will concentrate on friendship and romantic conflict as they pertain to the current study. Canary et al. (1995) contend that after adolescence, friendships start to lose their significance, fade away, and concerns about romantic relationships intensify. They mention that this is claimed as the reason for lack of adult friendship studies. Adult friendship –and especially cross-sex friendship- seems to remain as an overlooked relationship for the domain of conflict (Canary et al., 1995; Monsour, 2002).

Conflict seems to increase in time in romantic relationships as commitment and interdependence increases (e.g. sexual intimacy, norm of exclusivity, jealousy increasing as relationship turns into serious dating) (Werking, 1997). This romantic or sexual element may influence how conflict is experienced and handled in friendships and romantic relationships (and especially marriage) and which topics/issues qualify as 'proper' topics of conflict. Rawlins (1982) points out to the potential "mortality" of friendships. Friendships lack the legal/ economical/ religious sanctions or blood ties. Thus they might actually be more prone to the response of "simply walking away" when faced with problems (Canary et al., 1995, p. 94). Romantic relationships are similar to friendships in this sense. However, if the relationship is taken as a "serious dating" with some long-term goal towards marriage, the expectations (of partners from each other and of their family and friend networks from them) might bind it to a certain degree. It may be argued that given their "irregular" nature, cross-sex friendships would be even more prone to this avoidance of conflicts and termination. In similar lines, Baxter (1979, cited in Canary et al., 1995) found that friends prefer avoidance of confrontation and direct discussion when ending their relationships.

Regarding the different topics of conflict in friendship and marriages, Argyle and Furnham (1983) found that spouses had most conflict over independence, and less for competition for jobs. Same-sex friends reported more conflict related to competition for jobs and promotion, attention/affection, and different values and beliefs, but experienced less conflict on the criticism factor. Finally, opposite-sex friends had most conflicts over not being able to discuss personal problems and not being able to understand each other whereas they had less conflict over competition for jobs and experienced less emotion-based conflict.

Healey and Bell (1990) adapted and analyzed Rusbult's exit/voice/loyalty/neglect typology in friendships and sought ways that these responses are related to a collaboration effort resulting from a concern over presentation of conflict to social networks. The results failed to establish Rusbult's typology for friendship context, and neglect and exit responses could not be distinguished reliably. What predicted the destructive responses of exit and neglect were the seriousness of problems and availability of attractive alternatives.

### 3.1.6 Gender and Conflict

Females are typically perceived as being more relationally oriented (communal) and less agentic than males, relationships being more important to women compared to men (e.g. Eagly & Steffen, 1984; Hinde, 1997; Winstead et al., 1997). Women are socialized to be more affiliative and expressive, and men more independent (Basow, 1992). Thus women may feel more threatened by separation while men by loss of independence (Hinde, 1997). Cultural expectations concerning women are that they are more relationally sensitive than men. Therefore, different evaluative standards might exist for women, which in turn may apply to perceptions of and expectations from relational partners (Deaux & Major, 1987). Likewise, women are expected to be the more "accommodating" or complying party, as a result of the socialization process.

Women tended to use more emotional appeal strategies (Gryl, Stith, & Bird, 1991), distributive strategies of personal criticism and anger (Canary, Cunningham, &

Cody, 1988), perceived themselves to express negative feelings more openly (Buunk et al., 1990), and to respond to dissatisfaction more with loyalty than men (Rusbult et al., 1986a). Men tended not to confront openly and withdraw more compared to women (Christensen and Heavey, 1990), to avoid emotional discussion and prefer soothing over differences (Buunk et al., 1990), to use denial tactics more during conflict episodes (Canary et al., 1988), and to respond to dissatisfactions more by exit and neglect and less by voice and loyalty than women (Rusbult et al., 1986b). This tendency that men tended to withdraw and women to engage was found to be associated with marital dissatisfaction (Christensen & Heavey, 1990.) That might be a reason why the functioning of couples was found to be more related to male than female partner's accommodation (Rusbult et al., 1991). Because the woman may be seen as mainly responsible for relationship maintenance, the man's even small acts towards accommodation may have a greater effect.

When the issue is "gender differences" in marriages or romances, the typical case that comes to mind, around which a lot of research center –for heterosexual couples- is a classical pattern: where a partner (the woman) makes emotional demands and complaints and the other partner (the man) withdraws or behaves passively (Christensen & Heavey, 1990; Winstead, Derlega, & Rose, 1997). However, Rausch, Barry, Hertel, and Swain (1974, cited in Burggraf & Sillars, 1987) reported different patterns: where husband was more supportive and conciliating and wife was more coercive, used personal attack, and emotional appeals. In addition, they reported that husbands were more likely to engage in avoidance rather than engagement.

The pattern of wife-demand/husband-withdraw was related to lower levels adjustment in relationships and the gender difference –very well fitting to the stereotypic conflict behaviors expected of women and men– was supported at first (Christensen & Heavey, 1990). However, Christensen and Heavey realized that this was due to women's being the party that has consistently sought a change in the relationship whereas men were the party that usually wanted to maintain the status quo. In their subsequent analyses, conducted separately considering this, the

reversed gender pattern was observed, where husband demanded and wife withdrew when the roles shift and the men become the party that wanted a change. Furthermore, Christensen and Heavey (1990) point out that closeness can only be achieved jointly by the two sides in a relationship, whereas autonomy can be achieved by one side independent of the other. This puts the side that seeks closeness at a power disadvantage since a compromise would favor the autonomy-seeking party. Traditionally, women tend to seek more closeness and men tend to seek autonomy (and feel threatened by dependence) (Canary & Emmers-Sommer, 1997). This might be the reason why women want more change, and demand more; coupled with any other gender differences that might exist.

Burggraf and Sillars (1987) investigated the effects of sex on conflict styles and found that mutual influence processes during the conflict episode (i.e., reciprocity) and mutual marriage ideology are important for conflict styles, and not merely the biological sex of the partner.

Evidently, all these findings bring intriguing questions as to the nature of conflict and the responses to conflict in the context of intimate cross-sex friendships, as well as its similarities and differences with the romantic relationships. For instance it would be interesting to investigate the "woman demands, man withdraws" pattern in the context of cross-sex friendships, which are assumed to involve more equal (than complementary) roles. Moreover, what happens, how conflict occurs, and how it is handled in the same-sex friendships in heterosexual individuals is another issue of interest. From this perspective, the romantic relationships and same-sex friendships of gay/lesbian couples presents a further appealing topic although beyond the scope of the current study.

### 3.1.7 Conflict and Relationship Quality

Conflict is given special attention for its role in the development of relationships. The theorists that follow a developmental viewpoint of relationships stress conflict's critical role in relationship development. Uncovering the different perspectives and preferences during exchange, conflict provides an opportunity of the development of

relationship identity as well as the individual identities of partners since it poses the question "what kind of a person am I, what are my priorities, and what kind of a relationship do I prefer?" This is an opportunity for the emergence of new norms, mutual perspectives, and thoughts on the relationship (Braiker & Kelley, 1979). Indeed in contrast to the common-sense view that conflict is a mostly negative aspect of relationships Braiker & Kelley (1979) even assert "because of the information exchanged and the potential for change, the occasions on which the couple encounter conflicts of interest constitute some of the most significant events in the course of the relationship" [p. 159]. Therefore, it seems plausible to say that conflict can have positive as well as negative consequences, corresponding to Cahn's (1990) constructive versus destructive responses to conflict.

Yet, conflict is a complicated phenomenon at the same time; when it is associated with relationship problems or dissatisfaction, it can be both a symptom of problems or can itself be the cause of a problem. It is possible that the two aspects feed into each other when not handled properly. This may be especially true when conflict is reciprocated in a negative manner and allowed to escalate. To put it differently, how partners of a relationship manage conflict influences how the messages and the other person are evaluated, and how they will be reacted to; thus shaping the relationship's characteristics (Canary & Cupach, 1988). On the other hand, how one feels about and evaluates the relationship determines how one is going to respond to the conflict messages of one's partner.

Integrative tactics were positively related to *communication satisfaction* and *partner's competence perceptions*. In turn, greater communication satisfaction and perceptions that the partner is competent contributed to greater overall satisfaction, trust, intimacy and control mutuality (Canary & Cupach, 1988). Moreover, integrative tactics have also been positively associated with satisfaction with partner, relationship, and conflict outcomes (Gottman, 1982; Sillars 1980; cited in Canary & Cupach, 1988). Distributive tactics, on the contrary, were negatively associated with relational and communication satisfaction, as well as with perceived partner competence. Avoidance strategies seem to be related both positively and negatively

to relationship satisfaction and therefore may constitute either a prosocial or an antisocial strategy in conflict situations. An important point in this model is that, conflict does not directly influence satisfaction. The link between the two is mediated by perceptions of the communicator's competence. Thus whether partner's behaviors are perceived as effective and appropriate during conflict seems to filter the effects of the conflict (Canary & Spitzberg, 1989).

Gottman & Krokoff (1989) investigated conflict communication patterns in a longitudinal study. They found that while conflict engagement and expressions of anger were negatively associated with concomitant satisfaction, they were associated positively with satisfaction three years later, provided that the conflict does not involve defensiveness, stubbornness, and withdrawal (of especially husband). These behaviors might be dysfunctional in the sense that they are associated with concurrent distress as well as marital deterioration.

Rusbult's 'destructive' actions of exit and neglect were negatively associated with relational satisfaction, and were more likely to appear in distressed couples. The constructive response of voice and loyalty are positively associated with relational satisfaction (Rusbult et al., 1986). As for the antecedents of conflict management, prior satisfaction and investment in the relationships were associated with a stronger tendency to respond constructively with voice and loyalty, and with lesser tendency to respond destructively with exit and neglect. Better alternatives to the current relationships encourage exit and discourage loyalty. The severity of the problem promoted exit and voice, and inhibited loyalty. Accommodation was much more likely where the partner was committed to the relationship, and felt satisfied with it (Rusbult et al., 1991.)

There seems to be a general agreement as to which strategies, tactics, or behaviors constitute constructive, prosocial, cooperative, and relationship preserving responses and which ones constitute antisocial, competitive, relationship undermining, and destructive responses. On the other hand, the core of the discussion lies at the

strategy or behavior of avoidance: whether it is harmful or useful for the relationships, better to avoid or confront the issues?

The literature seems to favor engagement behavior, or direct confrontation, which constitutes a "good communication" model of close relationships (Canary et al., 1995; Fletcher, Thomas & Durrant, 1999; Gottman & Krokoff, 1989). From this viewpoint, if conflict can be openly discussed especially in a positive and constructive manner and if the problem can be resolved, then satisfaction would increase (Franzoi, Davis, & Young, 1985, cited in Cahn, 1992, p.24) Avoidance of conflict, from a traditional viewpoint, is dysfunctional since it does not lead to resolution and the individual avoiding conflict is less capable of solving problems and more constricted. Conversely, as mentioned by Alberts (1990), conflict avoidance was reported to be used by satisfied couples more frequently than unsatisfied couples in Park & Sillar's study (1985; cited in Alberts, 1990). In the case of an unresolvable issue, communicating might serve to intensify rather than reducing the conflict, it might be preferable to a partner to "let go" (Cahn, 1992; Alberts, 1990). This would be similar to the accommodation strategy (Cahn, 1992; Fletcher et al., 1999; Rusbult et al, 1991). Increased agreement and improved understanding in a relationship can actually improve satisfaction. However, perceived agreement might be sufficient and perhaps a less accurate view of the partner for the sake of positively and perceived agreement might lead to greater satisfaction. Therefore, whether to avoid or confront conflict issues might not be as important as when and how to avoid and engage them or with what motivation behind to engage or avoid them (Cahn, 1992; Canary et al., 1995).

For instance, some relational variables such as the level of intimacy might affect when partners confront and when they avoid conflict. As commitment increases partners may prefer negotiation and confrontation, whereas they might prefer avoiding the topic altogether in low committed relationships (Fitzpatrick & Winke, 1979; cited in Cahn, 1992). Motivations behind avoidance might change as the level of intimacy changes in a relationship (Cloven & Roloff, 1994). They investigated the motives behind withholding irritations (a form of avoidance). They found that

for the couples low in intimacy, unexpressed irritations and the reason *"lack of intimacy"* were correlated. However, this correlation disappeared when emotional commitment was high. For couples high in intimacy, the reasons of *"fear of consequences"* and *"lack of importance of problem"* were correlated with unexpressed irritations.

Moving from this point, what constitutes avoidance is another important question. McGonagle, Kessler and Gotlib (1993) found that couples that had the most disagreements reported conflict avoidance most frequently. In contrast, Rausch et al. (1974, cited in McGonagle et al., 1993) argue that conflict-engagers and conflict-avoiders are the opposite ends of a single continuum. Couples who reported most frequent conflict together with high avoidance had the highest risk for disruption, whereas the couples who never disagreed and avoided have the lowest risk. This is also in contrast to what Gottman & Krokoff (1989) asserts: that couples who never engage in conflict –referring to avoidant couples- might be at risk as well as those who engage in conflict very frequently. What constitutes "avoidance" for McGonagle et al. (1993) was avoidance of a specific issue because of the possible reactions of the spouse. For Gottman & Krokoff (1989), avoidance refers to acts of withdrawal during the conversation. Still other forms of avoidance/accommodation are productive ambiguity and reorganizing priorities (Cahn, 1992). These versions can also have positive effects on relationships, as mentioned previously.

### 3.1.8 Conflict: Concluding Remarks

Conflict is a critical element in personal relationships, and it assumes a different value especially in intimate relationships, because of the affective nature of these relationships. Conflict is assumed to be inevitable, at least in the Western approach to personal relationships, and how it is managed seem to take on importance, rather than the specific issue of disagreement or whether or not it occurs.

Still, we seem to lack some strong and encompassing definitions and classifications for conflict and conflict strategies. Although common perspectives and research paradigms may be discerned, the research seems to be more dispersed than coherent.

However, looking at these disperse findings, Rusbult's two-dimensional model seem to explain most of these strategies. First of all, there is the issue of engagement/confrontation versus avoidance, which captured quite attention, whether at the level of conflict communication behaviors or at the more cognitive and global level. The *integrative* and *distributive* tactics (Canary & Cupach, 1988), *engagement* behaviors, (Kurdek, 1995), *exit* and *voice* (Rusbult & Zembrodt, 1983), *dominating, collaborating,* and *compromising* (Rahim, 1983), and all of Prager's (1991) classifications, *cognitive, affective,* and *coercive* strategies fall under the first category, engagement/confrontation. In Rusbult's terms, this constitutes the *active* end. The avoidance –or passive- category includes the tactics of *avoidance* (Canary & Cupach, 1988; Rahim, 1983), *withdrawal* (Kurdek, 1995), *neglect* and *loyalty* (Rusbult & Zembrodt, 1983), and *accommodation/soothing* (Rahim, 1983). The second dimension can be labeled as constructive or destructive. The constructive category involves *integrative tactics* (Canary & Cupach, 1988), *voice* and *loyalty* (Rusbult & Zembrodt, 1983), *collaboration, accommodation,* and *compromising* (Rahim, 1983), and finally the *cognitive* strategies (Prager, 1991). The destructive category may include the *distributive* strategies (Canary & Cupach, 1988), *exit* and *neglect* (Rusbult & Zembrodt, 1983), *competing/dominating* (Rahim, 1983), and finally *coercive* strategies (Kurdek, 1995).

However, conflict in adult friendships has rarely been studied; there is no clear information on either specific issues, or different management strategies. The only evidence seems to be the propensity of friends to avoid explicit conflict, and prefer not to discuss some issues. In terms of gender, the evidence has been mixed as well. Although the woman demands/man withdraws pattern of conflict management appears to be prevalent, it might seem so because of certain roles in these relationships; for example the partner who seeks change in the other demanded more, and it was usually the female (Christensen & Heavey, 1990). Moreover, the marital ideology of the partners influenced the conflict behavior, and not merely gender (Burggraf & Sillars, 1987). Whether these gender differences will hold in friendships –especially cross-sex friendships- remains to be seen.

Different lines of thought exist in terms of avoidance. To sum up, there seems to be two different forms of avoidance, one in order to protect the relationship, one based on a concern of the partner –like fear of consequences and the reactions, and still another one based on concern with the self –avoiding negative feelings and stress associated with conflict. This distinction may indeed be associated with the differences in the results of "avoidance" as a withdrawing communicative act as well as avoiding conflict altogether. These motives of "concern for the other" and "concern for protecting the relationship" may be related to cultural norms and expectations of relational partners. As Triandis (1995) has summarized,

> Collectivists are expected to "read the other's mind" during communication, so the message is quite indirect, dependent on hints, the use of eyes, distance between bodies, and so on. Individualists say what is on their mind, even if it risks damaging the relationship. (p. 76)

Moreover, Trubisky, Ting-Toomey, and Lin (1991, cited in Triandis, 1995) found that Taiwanese and US respondents differed in that obliging, avoiding, integrating, and compromising styles of conflict resolution were employed more in the conflict situations in the former. Kirkbridge, Tang, and Westwood (1991, cited in Triandis, 1995) found that Chinese people were especially likely to avoid or compromise in conflict situations in organizations.

Valuing and holding the goals of autonomy and interests of the self prior to that of the relationship appear to be the case for more individualistic cultures (Goodwin, 1999). In collectivistic cultures the prioritization of the partner's interests and relationship might be expected. Moreover, open discussion of conflict may not be inevitable at all, since indirect forms of communication are preferred more in collectivistic cultures. Therefore, this form of avoidance of conflicts and accommodating to the partner would be expected more than other strategies.

## 3.2 Relationship Maintenance

Relationship maintenance is a topic that intrigues researchers, who study interpersonal relationships, from diverse academic backgrounds such as social psychology and communication in the past two decades. Previously, little attention

was given to the process of maintaining a relationship, and more of the efforts were dedicated to the initiation and termination stages of romantic relationships (Dindia & Canary, 1993). However, research on relationship maintenance has been proliferating especially for the last decade. Although defined and researched from several different perspectives, the most widespread definition of maintenance is: "actions and activities that are used to sustain desired relational definitions" (Stafford & Canary, 1991). To "sustain" a relationship lies at the core of relational maintenance; it means not merely to keep a dyad together without dissolving but to boost up the relationship as well. Relational maintenance involves either strategic or routine behaviors, ("actions and activities") without which the relationships are assumed to deteriorate and decline. The "desired relational definitions" involve some relational qualities such as commitment, intimacy, trust, control mutuality, liking, and satisfaction, which constitute the critical features of relationships, especially romantic relationships (Canary and Stafford, 1994).

Dindia and Canary (1993) identified four definitions of relational maintenance after reviewing the relevant literature: these were keeping a relationship in existence, keeping a relationship in a specified state or condition, keeping a relationship in satisfactory condition, and keeping a relationship in repair. The third one has been the most widely utilized definition, although the term "maintenance" has been used interchangeably referring to all these conceptions.

Two basic theoretical orientations set the framework for relationship maintenance research. The first one, reviewed previously is the social exchange theory, interdependence theory, and the investment model in particular (Thibaut & Kelley, 1959; Rusbult, 1980). The desire to maintain a relationship can be a result of this increased investment and interdependence. (Dindia & Canary, 1993)

The second theoretical framework for relationship maintenance research is relationship dialectics perspective, asserting that opposing but interrelated forces characterize relationships, making them highly dynamic. From this perspective, relational maintenance can be conceived as sustaining the existence of a relationship

or maintaining satisfaction “through the flux” (Baxter & Simon, 1993; Montgomery, 1993) between the constantly changing forces of autonomy and connection, novelty and predictability and closeness and openness (Baxter, 1988).

Canary and Stafford (1994, pp. 7-10) posit a series of assumptions and propositions while setting their conceptual framework for relational maintenance research:

1. All relationship require maintenance; otherwise they decline,
2. People are more motivated to maintain equitable relationships than inequitable relationships (based on the premises of social exchange theory),
3. Maintenance activities vary according to the developmental course and type of the relationship (based on couple types, relationships types, escalating versus de-escalating stages of relationships),
4. Maintenance behaviors may be used in isolation or in combination with other behaviors (other conceptualizations of maintenance) to variously affect the nature of the relationships,
5. Maintenance actions and activities can be interactive or non-interactive (involve the presence of the other party or not),
6. People use both strategic and routine interactions to maintain their relationships.

### 3.2.1 Relationship Maintenance Typologies

Several typologies of relational maintenance have been proposed from varying theoretical viewpoints, most of them emphasizing the communicative nature of maintenance behaviors. Braiker and Kelley (1979) used the term “maintenance” for the first time. They have conceptualized relationship maintenance as a dimension in the developmental course of relationships along with other dimensions such as love, conflict-negativity, and ambivalence. The five items they included in their maintenance scale tapped the extent of actual talk about relationship problems, quality, expectations and disclosure about intimate feelings. Thus they seem to emphasize the openness aspect of communication (talk) when conceptualizing maintenance.

Again one of the first typologies, developed by Ayres (1983, cited in Shea & Pearson, 1986), regarded maintenance as keeping the relationship in its given condition, neither escalating nor de-escalating the current state of affairs in the relationship. He developed three main sets of strategies for maintaining relationships, from a pool of 38 strategies. The first one was *avoidance strategies*: ignoring the other partner's attempts to change the relationship and avoiding behaviors that may change the current state of the relationship. *Balance strategies* involved stability, keeping favors or emotional support at a constant or balanced level. Finally, *directness strategies* included directly telling the other person that the current state of the relationship should be preserved.

A third typology was constructed by Bell, Daly, and Gonzales (1987), who focused on married couples, and especially wives' perceptions of using and receiving maintenance behaviors. They used the term "affinity-maintenance strategies" in order to refer to the behaviors couples engage in maintaining or enhancing affinity in their marital relationships. Nine of their exhaustive list of 28 strategies proved to be central to affinity-maintenance, in terms of correlating highly with marital quality. These were honesty, listening, openness, physical and verbal affection, physical attractiveness, self-concept confirmation, and supportiveness.

The typology developed by Baxter & Dindia (1990), again collected from a sample of married couples, was comprised of six sets of strategies. These were last resort strategies, satiation strategies, inward withdrawal strategies, problem avoidance strategies, destructive strategies, and constructive strategies. They organized these strategies around three dimensions: constructive versus deconstructive communication styles, ambivalence - based versus satiation - based conditional use and proactivity versus passivity. This typology embraces the broadest range of alternative maintenance strategies, similar to the Dindia & Baxter (1987) typology, including items such as 'sulking', or using 'ultimatums' with about 50 items of relational maintenance strategies. Repair tactics, which aim to prevent a relationship from dissolving, constitute another conceptualization of relational maintenance, yet in their study, Dindia & Baxter could not find any differentiation on the part of their

sample of married couples regarding the repair versus remedial nature of the maintenance strategies (1987, cited in Baxter & Dindia, 1990). It is interesting to note that most of the strategies Baxter and Dindia (1990) cover appear to be "antisocial" in nature, reflecting their dialectical emphasis of including the antisocial (or negative) strategies as well as the most prevalently mentioned prosocial (or positive) strategies.

Similarly, antisocial behaviors were part of Dindia's (1989, cited by Canary, Stafford, Hause & Wallace, 1993) three categories of relational maintenance when she factor-analyzed the items found in the literature. These were prosocial, romantic, and antisocial maintenance behaviors. Romantic behaviors involve being affectionate, fun, and spontaneous; prosocial behaviors involve cooperatively talking about relationship problems, and antisocial behaviors involve using coercion.

Among these different conceptualizations, perhaps the most widely recognized one is Canary & Stafford's (1992) typology. Their typology will be employed in the current study. They identified five main strategies of relational maintenance, deriving from the existing literature as well as from the responses of dating and married couples to open-ended questions (Stafford & Canary, 1991). The first strategy is *positivity*, or acting in a positive and cheerful manner, and using optimistic attempts like being polite and avoiding criticism of the partner. The second one is *openness*, including self-disclosure and having direct conversations about the nature of the relationship or sparing time to talk about them. *Assurances* refer to expressions of love and commitment, reducing uncertainty with an emphasis on the future. The use of *social networks* refers to creating a mutual network of friends, families, and other affiliations that support the relationship and spending time with them. Finally, *sharing tasks* means that the partners share the duties and responsibilities in a fair manner. These five strategies were collected from a sample of romantic relationships only; in addition they encompass only proactive and constructive behaviors.

A further distinction comes from strategic versus routine maintenance behaviors (Dainton & Stafford, 1993; Canary et al., 1993). In a strategic behavior, there is a certain amount of planning and the intention of maintaining a relationship involved, whereas routine maintenance behaviors are not specifically aimed at "maintaining a relationship" but involve the day-to-day activities of a couple, with less thought and intention (or a lower level of consciousness) in them. Accordingly, Dainton & Stafford (1993) as well as Canary et al. (1993) added routine maintenance behaviors to this typology of strategies, comprising joint activities, talk, mediated communication (cards, letters, and calls), avoidance, antisocial behaviors, affection, focus on self, and humor, besides the original five strategies of positivity, openness, assurances, social networks, and sharing tasks.

In general, there is a clear focus on romantic relationships or marriages in the study of relationship maintenance, as was the case for conflict. Very few studies focus on maintenance behaviors –either routine or strategic– in other types of personal relationships, such as friends, family, relatives, or acquaintances. We will handle that topic in the following section.

### 3.2.2 Relationship Maintenance Across Different Relationships

Following the basic assumptions of developmental models of relationships, perceptions as well as usage of maintenance behaviors varies during the course of relationships, as the rewards, costs, and the level of interdependence changes. As interdependence increases in romantic relationships, partners engage in more maintenance behaviors (Braiker & Kelley, 1979). Ayres (1983, cited in Shea & Pearson, 1986) found that individuals employed directness and avoidance when their partners wanted to escalate the relationship, whereas they used more balancing strategies when their partners wanted the relationship to deteriorate. Similarly, Guerrero, Eloy, and Wabnik (1993) found that frequent use of proactive/constructive maintenance strategies were related to escalation or stability in the relationship; while infrequent use of these strategies were related to de-escalation and termination.

However, very few studies had addressed the effects of relationship type, or the context of different relationships on the use of maintenance behaviors. Comparisons were made between friends and acquaintances, (Ayres, 1983; Shea & Pearson, 1986) yet no difference was found regarding the preference for different strategies (avoidance, balance, or directness). Dating, marriage, and romantic relationships of different-levels of involvement in between have also been compared (Dainton & Stafford, 1993; Stafford & Canary, 1991). However, with the exception of Canary et al. (1993), no study explicitly compared romantic relationships with friendships. Dainton and Stafford (1993) compared married and dating couples, and found that the two relationships were different only in the use of *tasks* and *mediated communication*. Married individuals reported more sharing of tasks whereas dating individuals reported more mediated communication. Stafford & Canary (1991) compared four types of romantic couples: married, engaged, seriously dating, and dating, and found that the relationship type affected perceptions of partner's maintenance only moderately. They found that engaged, seriously dating, and married individuals reported receiving more assurances compared to dating couples. Engaged and seriously dating individuals reported that their partners were more open than married or dating individuals. In addition, married individuals perceived their partners as utilizing their social network to a higher extent compared to seriously dating individuals.

In their preliminary investigation of maintenance behaviors in gay and lesbian couples, Haas and Stafford (1998) found that cohabiting homosexual couples used very similar strategies, yet shared tasks emerged as the most important maintenance strategy, followed by assurances. Moreover, the mutual social network as a supportive environment turned out to be very important in gay/lesbian relationships.

One study actually compared the *different types* of relationships in terms of maintenance. This study compared romantic partners, relatives, and friends (Canary et al., 1993). They found that the maintenance strategies of positivity, assurances, openness, sharing tasks, and cards/letters/calls were employed more in romantic and family relationships than friendships. Since friendships involve less

interdependence, people may not be too concerned about maintaining their friendships to the extent that they spend conscious effort for their romantic and family relationships. Rawlins (1994), holding a dialectical perspective, has conducted 56 interviews with individuals about sustaining their friendships in adulthood. He illustrated how friendships "grew apart" not because of psychological and personal incompatibilities, but because of the larger social contexts and structures these friendships were embedded in. Thus the question of how adults sustain their friendships, turns into a question of what social arrangements would people want to live and work together in. There is also one study (Afifi, Guerrero, & Egland, 1994, cited in Afifi & Burgoon, 1998) that has compared same- and opposite-sex friendships. They found that individuals generally report spending less effort maintaining their cross-sex, than same-sex, friendships. Duck (1988) notes that some relationships seem to require less effort to maintain, and the daily activities, interactions, and conversations that actually lack dramatic contents or any significant revelation of the selves may be enough to "glue" relationships together. Perhaps same-sex friendships (given their prevalence and the "norm of homosocial preferences" (Rose, 1985)) provide such a context of easier 'maintaining', compared to cross-sex friendships that seem to 'run against' the cultural norms and expectations (O'Meara, 1989; Werking, 1997). This may even be more pronounced for traditional cultures.

My focus in this research will be on the comparison of reports of maintenance in romantic as well as non-romantic relationships (i.e. friendships). This has been largely ignored until now and I take similarities and differences between these relationships as my center of attention.

### 3.2.3 Gender and Relationship Maintenance

Following the gender differences found in men and women's communication and relational styles, gender differences in maintenance behaviors as a form of communication has captured the attention of researchers. Given this communication emphasis on specific maintenance behaviors and building upon the gender

differences reported in the relationships area, the evidence for gender differences in maintenance has been mixed.

Dindia (1989, cited in Dainton & Stafford, 1993) found wives reported greater use of *romantic* strategies than their husbands. Stafford & Canary (1991) found that gender was a weak predictor of perceptions of partner's maintenance behaviors. Females perceived males as using more positivity, assurances, and networking. They concluded, "Although gender differences were significant, they were not an important source of variation regarding perceptions of relational maintenance strategies" (pp. 235-236). Yet, Canary & Stafford (1992) found that wives reported greater use of openness, network, and sharing tasks, when they were in equitable relationships. Husbands perceived that their wives used openness and sharing tasks. Men and women seem to give different responses to relational problems (Gottman and Krokoff, 1989). Dainton and Stafford (1993) found that women reported greater use of positivity, openness, use of talk, and antisocial behaviors. (Married women reported using especially more of these and avoidance; single women were more likely to use affection.)

Shea & Pearson (1986) found that not mere gender, but partner's intent and sex-composition of the friendship / acquaintance dyad had an effect on the use of Directness strategy; women were more likely used directness when a male acquaintance wanted escalation than when a female acquaintance wanted escalation. Likewise, women in this position were more likely to use the directness strategy compared to men in the same position (when a male acquaintance wanted escalation).

In addition to these, Weigel & Ballard-Reisch (1999a) found that, women's use of overall maintenance behaviors, and especially assurances, positivity, and openness were associated with higher couple-level experiences such as love, satisfaction, and commitment in marriages. Thus wives' use of maintenance strategies seem to be more critical in shaping the perceived quality of a relationship than those of husbands'. In a similar study, they found that although women's use of maintenance

behaviors seems to be influenced from perceptions of marital quality, men's use of maintenance behaviors seem to be influenced by other factors than the internal relational dynamics (Weigel and Ballard-Reisch, 1999b). Women seem to focus on, talk about, and attend to relationships and marriage more frequently than men do. On the other hand, men might be engaging in maintenance behaviors because of factors such as a socially desirable presentation of their image as a husband to third parties. This supports the view of role distinctions in terms of maintenance behaviors, with relationships and marriage being more important to women than men and women being more sensitive to relationship issues than men. (Eagly & Steffen, 1984; Ragsdale, 1996, cited in Weigel & Ballard-Reisch, 1999b)

On the other hand, the partners in Dindia & Baxter's study (1987) reported the same number of strategies when they listed the behaviors they engaged in to maintain their relationships. In addition, Baxter & Dindia (1990) found women and men conceptualized maintenance strategies in similar manners. In the two studies that studied non-romantic relationships with different intimacy levels (friendships and acquaintances), no gender differences emerged regarding the use of different maintenance strategies such as avoidance, balance, and directness (Ayres, 1983; Shea & Pearson, 1986).

### 3.2.4 Maintenance Strategies and Relationship Characteristics

Maintenance behaviors, whether used in an intentional and planned manner or in a routine, unintentional, and unplanned manner, have been associated with numerous relationship variables. Most common among those are control mutuality (an agreement of partners on who has the control –establishing relational goals and a right to influence the other), liking, commitment, satisfaction, equity, and love (Stafford & Canary, 1991; Canary & Stafford, 1992; Weigel & Ballard-Reisch, 1999). This is especially true for the conceptualization of maintenance as sustaining a relationship in a specified state or condition, usually to the satisfaction of the couple.

Within the developmental and dialectical framework, "maintenance" has especially been associated with change in the phases of a relationship, such as escalation or deterioration. Guerrero et al. (1993) found that escalation and stability was associated with the frequent use of proactive/constructive strategies[4] by partner, whereas relationship deterioration was associated with the infrequent use of these strategies (Guerrero et al., 1993). Specifically, perceptions of openness and assurances increase in escalating relationships, and perceptions of positivity, assurances, and sharing tasks decreased in de-escalating relationships.

Among Stafford & Canary's five-factor typology (1991), positivity was an important predictor of liking and control mutuality. But other maintenance strategies, namely sharing tasks, social networks, and assurances predicted control mutuality and liking as well. Commitment, or "one's desire to remain indefinitely in the relationship" (Canary & Stafford, 1992, p.247) was predicted by assurances in the first place, but mutual social network and sharing tasks predicted commitment as well (Canary & Stafford, 1992). Again, positivity and assurances predicted trust in the relationship. Moreover, couples employed maintenance strategies more in equitable relationships compared to relationships characterized by underbenefitedness (Stafford & Canary, 1991). Interestingly the maintenance strategy of openness turned out to be slightly negatively correlated with relational characteristics (Canary & Stafford, 1992, 1994; Stafford & Canary, 1991). (This probably resulted from the fact that when assurances and positivity were accounted for, openness was left with communicating only the negative aspects of the relationship.) Therefore, openness turned out to be less predictive of relational characteristics, overall. Weigel and Ballard-Reisch (1999a, 1999b) added love and satisfaction as an additional measure of marital quality, and found that overall maintenance was associated with commitment, satisfaction, and love reported by both partners. Bell et al. (1987) found that wives' marital satisfaction was moderately related to the frequency of affinity-maintenance behaviors of sensitivity, spirituality, physical affection, self-inclusion, and honesty, which were not necessarily rated as important. Dainton (2000) added measures of the expectations

[4] Corresponding to the five-strategy typology proposed by Stafford & Canary (1991).

that partners held about each other's maintenance behaviors and actually compared them to the perceived maintenance behaviors of the partner. She found that satisfaction was predicted better when the perceived use of assurances and positivity by partner exceeded one's expectations.

### 3.2.5 Relationship Maintenance: Concluding Remarks

Relationship maintenance is gaining more importance as researchers start to become interested in not only the initiation and termination of relationships, but with its course in between as well. Among its many conceptualizations, relational maintenance here is taken in the framework of the current study as the routine and strategic behaviors engaged in a relationship to keep it at a desired level. The main focus has been marriages and heterosexual romantic relationships, except a few studies. Canary et al. (1993) found that some of the maintenance strategies were employed less frequently with friends, compared to families and romantic relationships. There is mixed evidence as to the effects of gender on the use of maintenance behaviors. Some studies found weak evidence of gender differences in predicting the use of maintenance behaviors. On the other hand, some studies found that women engaged in maintenance behaviors more frequently than men, especially in equitable relationships, and when they perceived their relationships to be of good quality. Yet others found no gender differences in the use of maintenance behaviors by women and men. The use of relationship maintenance strategies was linked to the perceived quality of relationships, such as satisfaction, control mutuality, commitment, liking, and equity. A mutual influence seems to exist between these characteristics and relational maintenance as well, so partners who felt in a more equitable and satisfying relationship engaged in maintenance behaviors more frequently than those who did not. Moreover, not only a partner's actual use of maintenance behaviors, but both partners' actual as well as perceptions of each other's use of maintenance behaviors predicted relationship quality.

Finally, a few remarks will be made on conflict and maintenance, and their respective importance in relationships. First of all, both conflict and maintenance share the same theoretical backgrounds, social exchange, and especially

interdependence, as well as investment theories. According to Braiker and Kelley (1979), love and maintenance are the perceived rewards of a relationship whereas ambivalence and conflict constitute the costs. Both are related to the cognitive constructs such as satisfaction and commitment, and both involve communication as a crucial behavioral element in it. Conflict and maintenance can both be constructive/prosocial or destructive/antisocial. This strongly implies that not the specific conflict or maintenance behavior per se (sulking or avoiding some topics) but the motivation behind it and how it is perceived are more important. An interesting point to note at this point is the classification of avoidance as both a conflict behavior and a maintenance behavior. This supports the idea that sometimes the avoidance of certain controversial or sensitive topics may indeed help to maintain a satisfactory and balanced relationship. In this respect, conflict management and maintenance strategies seem to be two important and related aspects of close relationships.

## 3.3 Aims of the Study

As mentioned earlier, very few studies have compared friendships and romantic relationships. Moreover, the research on conflict issues, conflict management or maintenance in close relationships of adults almost exclusively focuses on marriages or romantic relationships; research regarding friendships is considerably insufficient in this respect as well. This lack of previous guidance makes it difficult to state precise expectations. However, the aims of the current study may be stated as follows.

1. Compare same-sex friendships, cross-sex friendships, and romantic relationships with respect to quality of the relationship, rewards and costs, relational maintenance behaviors, and conflict issues and management strategies.
2. Compare males and females with respect to the perceived quality of their three relationships, rewards and costs, relational maintenance behaviors, and conflict issues and management strategies within across their same-sex friendships, cross-sex friendships, and romantic relationships.
3. Investigate predictors of costs, rewards, and relational quality in same-sex friendships, cross-sex friendships and romantic relationships.

# CHAPTER 4

# METHOD

## 4.1 Participants

The participants were 166 female and 135 male single Turkish students taking different courses in the departments of: Business Administration, Psychology, Computer Engineering, and Mining Engineering in the Middle East Technical University. Their ages ranged from 18 to 33, the mean age was 20.91 years, with a standard deviation of 1.86. Most of the participants had fathers (73.8%) and mothers (65.7%) who had a high school or a university degree. All but three participants reported being heterosexual; one female and two male participants who declined to indicate their sexual orientations were excluded from the analyses. The remaining pool consisted of a total of 298 students (165 females and 133 males). The participants came from a wide range of departments and faculties (see Table 1).

Table 1. Distribution of Participants across Different Faculties

| | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Faculty of Engineering | 85 | 28.5 |
| Faculty of Arts & Sciences | 73 | 24.5 |
| Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences | 115 | 38.6 |
| Faculty of Education | 20 | 6.7 |
| Faculty of Architecture | 3 | 1.0 |
| Other | 2 | 0.7 |
| *Total* | 298 | 100.0 |

## 4.2 Questionnaire

The questionnaire comprised of several sections (See Appendices A & B, for Turkish and English versions). The first section included questions about social and demographic characteristics such as age, marital status, school and department, mother and father's education levels (Appendix A, Questions 1-8). The next three sections included questions about the existence and characteristics of the three relationships of interest (Appendix A, Questions 9-10), namely: a close same-sex friend, a close cross-sex friend with whom the participants were not romantically involved, and a romantic partner. The participants were asked to keep a specific person in mind for the three relationship partners and answer the following questions with those specific friends and romantic partner in mind.

These three sections included questions about the three relationships respectively (Appendix A: Boxes A, B, and C). Each section included a measure of relationship quality. There were questions on the duration, the quality (1=poor, 5=excellent), felt closeness (1=very close, 5=not close at all; reverse scored), satisfaction (1= not satisfied at all, 5= very much satisfied) and a question on the probability of lasting 10 years (1=very low, 5=very high). (For the section regarding the cross-sex friend, the participants were especially asked to specify a friend from the opposite sex (in their minds) with whom they were never romantically involved and are currently not so involved, thus a "cross-sex friend" was defined in these terms only. This was done in order to clarify the difference between "ex-romances", or "platonic romances" and plain cross-sex friends, and to eliminate the influences that may come from a possible "partly romantic" friendship. For the friend of the different sex, participants were also asked three questions about whether they would like to be romantically involved with this friend, whether they believed their friends would like to be romantically involved with them, and the probability of having such an involvement.)

The next five sections included questions about social network involvement with relationship, perceived rewards and costs, relationship maintenance strategies,

conflict issues, and conflict strategies. Participants were asked to report about all three relationships under each section.

The section about social network included a social network integration scale consisting of 7 items (See Appendix A, Box D). These questions asked about the proportion of the mutual social network (in terms of friends/partners/families) of the friendship/romantic relationship dyad (for each relationship) which the participants actually meet, interact, and know well, the proportion that knows about the given friendship or relationship, and approve of it (1= almost none, 5= almost all). In other words, it was a measure of the level of "integration" of the dyads into the respective social networks of the partners.

The next section contained questions with respect to the perceived rewards and costs for the three relationships. The rewards scale included 4 questions that asked about the frequency with which the participants have fun, receive help, advice, useful information, or emotional support from their friends or partners. The costs scale included 3 questions as to the frequency with which the participants felt irritated, bored, or felt like wasting their time when with this friend/partner. The Likert-type scale had five points, ranging from 1 = almost never, to 5 = almost always. Items for this scale were taken from a previous study (Hortaçsu, unpublished manuscript), details may be seen in Appendix A, Box E.

The fourth part included a number of scales related to maintenance strategies. These scales were Positivity, Openness, Assurances, Joint Activities, and Social Network Scales. The maintenance scales included a total of 29 behaviors, which were presented in mixed order (Appendix A, Box F). The scales were constructed and collected by means of: (a) items that were cited in the literature (Canary & Stafford, 1992), and (b) an initial pilot study that asked respondents to list the behaviors they engaged in to have satisfactory relationships.) The pilot study was conducted a year before the current study, in order to collect some preliminary data on the maintenance strategies and conflict topics in romantic relationships. Two open-ended questions were asked regarding maintenance behaviors (What do you do to

have a satisfactory relationship? What do you refrain from doing for a satisfactory relationship?) A total of 18 people with current romantic involvements answered the questionnaire (13 females, 5 males) and the items collected were used in the construction of the final questionnaire (together with items from the previous literature.)

(**1)** The Positivity Scale consisted of 11 behaviors such as be polite and nice, touch/kiss/hug/show affection, buy presents, make surprises, and make him/her laugh, make jokes. **(2)** In openness scale, there were 4 behaviors: try to be open about my feelings, tell things I don't tell others, give secrets, discuss problems of relationship, give and take advice. **(3)** Assurances scale included 6 behaviors such as help in times of need, comfort and support in his/her difficult times, say that I love him/her, or try to satisfy his/her needs. **(4)** Mutual social network scale included three items: spend time with mutual friends, get along with his/her family, and accept his/her friends that I don't know. **(5)** In the joint activities scale, 4 items were listed: spare time to talk, frequently speak on the phone when we cannot see each other, share joys and sorrows, share news and successes, and tell how the day was. A Joint Activities scale was included instead of the Shared Tasks scale that was used by Canary & Stafford (1992) in their original Maintenance Strategies scale. This change was based on both personal observation and the pilot study that showed that joint activities and talk, rather than shared tasks and chores, was a frequent form of maintenance strategy for the relationships of single Turkish students at these ages (at least in METU). The participants rated the frequency with which they engaged in the stated behaviors for maintaining their three relationships, from a scale of 1= almost never, to 5= almost always.

The fifth part comprised of the Differences, Neglect and Damaging Behaviors scales, constructed as subscales for measuring Conflict Issues. The listed thirteen topics, as part of these different issues, were presented in mixed order (See Appendix A, Box G). Again, the possible topics were gathered from the relevant literature (Argyle & Furnham, 1983; Canary, et al., 1995) as well as from responses to 4 questions on important conflict topics in the pilot study. (The questions were:

on which topics do you experience conflicts/incompatibilities? How often? How important is the topic to you? Its effect on your relationship: + or –?) The Differences Scale included 5 topics tapping differences in ideas, thoughts, or personalities, criticizing, and misunderstandings. The Neglect Scale included 3 topics: not calling sufficiently, not sparing time for joint activities, and not showing sufficient care & attention. Finally, Damaging Behaviors Scale included 5 topics for conflict that may harm the relationship such as jealousy, envy, competition, betraying trust, and perceptions of being treated unfairly. The participants are asked to indicate to what degree the conflicts they experienced in each of the given topics harmed their relationships. If the given topic made no damage (did not influence the relationship at all) or if the given topic was not a conflict issue at all, the participants rated is at "1". The scale continued as 2 = "somewhat affected", 3= "affected", 4= "quite affected", and 5= "completely affected". If a conflict experienced on a given topic had been actually helpful instead of harmful, and influenced the relationship positively, then the participants were asked to indicate this with a single "+" mark, for convenience, and this was later coded as "0". There were 4 extra topics at the end of the scale that added other friends & relationships, over-attentiveness and pampering, sexuality, and ex-boyfriends and girlfriends as other possible conflict topics, designed mainly for romantic relationships only.

The sixth and the last section consisted of three scales designed to measure the frequency and use of a number of conflict strategies. Strategy categories were based on Rahim (1983) and Kozan's (1994) conceptualization of conflict management strategies in organizational settings and adapted to personal relationships. A total of 11 items comprising the Conflict Strategies scale were presented in mixed order (Appendix A, Box H). The subscales were: Avoidance (e.g. "I refrain from open discussion"), Accommodation (e.g. "I show consideration and give in to his/her wishes"), Dominating (e.g. "I try to dominate to have my opinion or point of view accepted"), and Compromise (e.g. "I try that both of us compromise and agree on a midway solution"). Respondents were asked to indicate the frequency with which they engaged in these strategies on a five-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1= almost never to 5= almost always.

## 4.3 Procedure

The data was collected by means of 6-page questionnaires that were distributed to students in different classes in various departments of METU (including Psychology, Business Administration, Computer Engineering, and Mining Engineering), who filled it during class-time and returned it at the end of the classes. Students enrolled in the psychology and business administration classes received some course credit and others did not.

## 4.4 Scale Development and Scale Reliabilities

While responding to the Conflict Issues items, some respondents rated some topics as influencing their relationships in a positive way; the frequencies that each topic is rated as such are given in Table 2. Three of the 13 topics relevant to relationship conflict were rated as influencing the relationship positively by over 10% of the participants. As may be seen in the table, all three items were part of the Differences Subscale. The α-reliabilities of the Differences, Neglect, and Damaging Behaviors Subscales can be found in Table 4.

The last four items designed for the romantic relationships (other friends & relationships, over-attentiveness and pampering, sexuality, and ex-boyfriends/ ex-girlfriends) were not included in the current analyses to compare the three relationships, since either the occasion of having a conflict or discussion on these topics, or the actual impact of these topics, were very low for same- and cross-sex friends. The percentages of "no occurrence/no effect" respectively for Items 14, 15, 16, and 17 were: 67%, 85%, 93%, and 89% for the close same-sex friend and 64%, 79%, 83%, and 80% for the close cross-sex friend. This would make the comparisons among the relationships difficult; hence these items were not included for the current analyses.

Table 2. Percentage of Participants Rating Conflict Topics Positively

| | Same-sex | Cross-sex | Romantic |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Different ideas and opinions | 18.6% | 12.4% | 12.9% |
| 2. Different personalities | 13.9% | 10.2% | 12.2% |
| 3. Neglect, not calling sufficiently | 1.0% | 1.5% | 1.6% |
| 4. Jealousy | 1.0% | 0.8% | 3.2% |
| 5. Envy | 0.3% | 0.4% | 1.6% |
| 6. Harsh criticism | 11.0% | 9.8% | 11.2% |
| 7. Not showing sufficient concern / attention | 1.0% | 1.1% | 2.4% |
| 8. Betraying trust | 1.0% | 0.4% | 0.8% |
| 9. Not sparing the time for him/her | 2.1% | 1.5% | 0.0% |
| 10. Feeling of unfair treatment | 0.7% | 0.4% | 1.6% |
| 11. Competition | 0.7% | 0.8% | 0.8% |
| 12. Annoying or irritating behaviors | 2.1% | 1.5% | 3.2% |
| 13. Misunderstandings or being overly sensitive or touchy | 2.4% | 1.9% | 1.6% |

Because conflict management items were based on conceptualization of conflict in organizational settings, “Conflict Strategies” subscales were constructed empirically based on the results of factor analyses. Varimax-rotated factor analyses were conducted for each relationship with the conflict management items. A three-factor solution emerged for cross-sex friendship scale, and four-factor solutions emerged for same-sex friendships and romantic relationships. The fourth factor included only one item for these relationships, and these items were different for the two analyses as well. Since forcing the three-factor solution (for cross-sex friendships) to four factors was not possible, three-factor solutions were computed for all relationships in order to obtain a meaningful comparison across the three relationships.

The three-factor solution (or the emergent three scales, namely accommodation, avoidance, and domination) explained 53.9%, 55.7% and 56.4% of total variances for same-sex friendships, cross-sex friendships, and romantic relationships. The first factor included three items related to compromise, consideration, and giving priority to partner’s wishes, which loaded on the first factor for all three relationships and

the factor was named Accommodation. The second factor, Avoidance, consisted of three items about issue dropping and topic changing, postponing the conflict, and refraining from open discussion. The third factor pertained to dominate to have own point of view accepted and using persuasion power, and was named Dominance. (See Table 3.)

Three items (marked with asterisks) were not included in the final scales. One of them (behaving in a sullen and distant manner yet pretending as nothing has happened) loaded on different factors in the three relationships. Another item (asking for help or opinion of a third party) had low loadings (less than 0.30) on all factors. The last one (bringing out concerns openly to find an agreeable solution) had cross-loadings on almost all the factors. “Refraining from open discussion to prevent unpleasantness” cross-loaded on both Factors 1 and 2 (accommodation and avoidance) for all the three relationships but it was included in the second factor (avoidance) because of face validity.

The different structure of loadings for some items might be an indication that the strategies had dissimilar meanings in the context of different relationships. However, it was necessary to construct scales consisting of identical items in order to compare the three relationships. Therefore, only items that had significant ladings on the three factors were included in the scales. The scales were formed utilizing the remaining items. The reliabilities of these scales ranged between 0.64 and 0.82 for the three relationships (Table3.)

In the decision to discard an item from the scales (or even eliminating a scale altogether), the important principle was that of comparability. In order to be able to compare the three relationships, the scales (and their factor structures) needed to be at least minimally similar across the three relationships. Therefore, the items that have loaded on very different factors in the factor analyses for the three relationships have been discarded to ensure comparability of the constructs among the relationships.

Table 3. Conflict Management Strategies Across Relationships: Three Factors

| | Same-sex | | | Cross-sex | | | Romantic | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Factors:** | **Acc** | **Avo** | **Dom** | **Acc** | **Avo** | **Dom** | **Acc** | **Avo** | **Dom** |
| 2. I give priority to his/her wishes and accept his/her point of view | 0.63 | 0.35 | -0.06 | 0.66 | 0.20 | -0.05 | 0.75 | 0.21 | -0.09 |
| 3. I try that both of us compromise and agree on a midway solution | 0.76 | -0.04 | 0.07 | 0.70 | -0.07 | 0.15 | 0.74 | 0.02 | 0.05 |
| 7. I show consideration and give in to his/her wishes | 0.72 | 0.35 | -0.05 | 0.76 | 0.15 | -0.05 | 0.72 | 0.34 | -0.22 |
| 9. I either drop the issue or change the topic to avoid conflict | 0.16 | 0.80 | 0.01 | 0.38 | 0.69 | -0.05 | 0.20 | 0.79 | -0.01 |
| 8. I postpone the conflict (discussion) / wait for a better time | 0.18 | 0.65 | 0.06 | 0.35 | 0.64 | -0.03 | 0.12 | 0.68 | 0.00 |
| 1. I refrain from open discussion in order to prevent unpleasant exchanges | 0.41 | 0.54 | -0.04 | 0.54 | 0.43 | -0.06 | 0.57 | 0.51 | -0.04 |
| 10. I try to dominate in order to have my opinion or point of view accepted | 0.02 | 0.02 | 0.81 | -0.03 | 0.16 | 0.83 | -0.08 | -0.03 | 0.87 |
| 5. I try to use my persuasion power to get my own way | 0.08 | 0.04 | 0.84 | -0.01 | 0.23 | 0.82 | -0.02 | -0.07 | 0.88 |
| 6. I behave as if nothing has happened; but behave in a distant and sullen manner* | -0.27 | 0.44 | 0.50 | -0.17 | 0.73 | 0.25 | -0.09 | 0.52 | 0.42 |
| 4. I ask for the opinion or help of a third party or ask for mediation* | -0.04 | 0.39 | 0.30 | 0.03 | 0.54 | 0.20 | 0.01 | 0.05 | 0.25 |
| 11. I bring out my concerns openly in order for us to find a solution that is agreeable to both of us* | 0.44 | -0.36 | 0.40 | 0.44 | -0.24 | 0.50 | 0.60 | -0.35 | 0.30 |
| **Eigenvalues** | **1.98** | **2.07** | **1.87** | **2.29** | **2.10** | **1.74** | **2.37** | **1.93** | **1.91** |
| **% of total variance explained** | **18.03** | **18.84** | **16.98** | **20.82** | **19.07** | **15.81** | **21.54** | **17.53** | **17.37** |
| **Cronbach's α** | **0.67** | **0.65** | **0.73** | **0.65** | **0.68** | **0.75** | **0.73** | **0.64** | **0.82** |

Acc: Accommodation, Avo: Avoidance, Dom: Dominance.

The relationship quality scales consisted of the items on perceived quality, felt closeness, satisfaction, and probability of lasting for each relationship (the duration was not included in the scale).

Scale reliabilities of relationship quality, social networks, maintenance, conflict issues, and conflict strategies were computed separately for each of the three relationships. After discarding some unsatisfactory items from Maintenance and Conflict Issues scales, reliabilities ranged between 0.60 and 0.85, and were generally acceptable[5].

Table 4. Cronbach's Alphas for the Constructed Scales

| | **Relationship:** | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Same-sex** | **Cross-sex** | **Romantic** |
| **Relationship Quality** | 0.83 | 0.85 | 0.83 |
| **Social Network Integration** | 0.83 | 0.83 | 0.85 |
| **Rewards and Costs** | | | |
| Rewards | 0.75 | 0.81 | 0.82 |
| Costs | 0.67 | 0.60 | 0.65 |
| **Relationship Maintenance Strategies** | | | |
| Positivity | 0.81 | 0.75 | 0.71 |
| Openness | 0.72 | 0.74 | 0.62 |
| Assurances | 0.76 | 0.79 | 0.69 |
| Joint Activities | 0.76 | 0.80 | 0.76 |
| **Conflict Issues** | | | |
| Differences | 0.83 | 0.84 | 0.81 |
| Neglect | 0.82 | 0.79 | 0.85 |
| Damaging Behaviors | 0.85 | 0.79 | 0.76 |

Regarding the relationship maintenance strategies scale comprised of positivity, openness, assurances, and joint activities subscales. The mutual social network scale was removed from further analyses in comparisons across relationships because of

[5] One subscale of relationship maintenance strategies, namely "mutual social network" had unacceptable α levels: 0.481, 0.510, and 0.494; hence was completely discarded from further analyses and comparisons across relationships.

the unacceptable α level. The reason that a shared tasks scale (that was one of the main five categories in Canary & Stafford, 1992) was not included is because the participants were non-married university students that were expected to have a minimum of chores or joint must-tasks to be shared with their partners or friends. The maintenance strategies scale is thus constituted of only positivity, openness, assurances, and joint activities subscales. Items #13 (Listening to him/her without judging) and #21 (writing letters or cards) have been excluded as well. Question 13 had very low levels of item-total correlation (0.235) with the openness scale for which it was designed to be a part of. Question 21, or writing letters and cards, was employed at very low frequencies by the respondents (was rated as being used "almost never" by 49% for same-sex friends, by 54% for cross-sex friends, and by 29% for partners), and is thus removed from the joint activities scale.

# CHAPTER 5

# RESULTS

## 5.1 Information about the Relationships

All of the 298 participants had a same-sex friend that they kept in mind while filling the questionnaire. The duration of these friendships ranged between 1.5 months and 25 years, with a mean duration of 6.5 years, and standard deviation of 4.4 (years). Two hundred and seventy-one participants (91%) indicated that they had a cross-sex friend with whom they were never romantically involved. The mean length of these friendships was 4.8 years, ranging from 3 months to 17 years, with a standard deviation of 3.4 years. On the other hand, only 123 participants (41%) were involved in a romantic relationship: the mean length of these romantic relationships was 17.6 months, and it ranged from one week to 9 years, and the standard deviation was 20.6 (months). See Table 5 for the respective means and standard deviations.

For the cross-sex friend, the mean probability of having a romance was rated as 1.30 (over 5, with SD = 0.64), the means for the questions about whether the participant would like to be romantically involved with their friend and whether their friend would like to be romantically involved with the participant (1=not at all, 5=definitely) were 1.54 and 1.95 (SDs 0.92 and 1.13 respectively). So we can say that these cross-sex friends were actually perceived mutually as "*just friends*".

## 5.2 Relationship Quality

A 3 X 2 Relationship (same-sex, cross-sex, and romantic) X Gender repeated-measures ANOVA was conducted with Relationship as the repeated-measures factor and Gender as the between-subjects factor. The three relationship quality scales computed for each relationship served as the three dependent variables.

Significant multivariate and univariate effects of Relationship emerged, $F(2,107)=31.82$, $p<0.001$, $\Lambda=0.627$ and $F(2,216)=25.59$, $p<0.001$, $\eta^2=0.19$), respectively. Employing the Scheffé procedure (at 0.05 level), it was found that same-sex friendships were rated highest in quality, followed by romantic relationships, and cross-sex friendships were rated lowest. (See Table 5 for respective means)

Table 5. Means and Standard Deviations for Relationship Durations, Relationship Quality, Social Network Integration, and Probability of Lasting

| | **Relationship:** | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Same-sex** | **Cross-sex** | **Romantic** |
| **Duration*** | $6.5_a$ (4.4) yrs. | $4.8_b$ (3.4) yrs. | $17.6_c$ (20.6) mts. |
| **Relationship quality** | $4.42_a$ (.62) | $3.80_c$ (.70) | $4.15_b$ (.78) |
| **Social Network Integr.** | $3.69_a$ (.64) | $3.08_c$ (.70) | $3.47_b$ (.86) |
| **Probability of Lasting** | $4.40_a$ (.82) | $3.58_b$ (1.16) | $3.63_b$ (1.30) |

* Measure given in years for same- and cross-sex friends, in months for romantic relationships.

## 5.3 Social Network Integration

A 3 X 2 (Relationship X Gender) repeated measures ANOVA was conducted with Relationship (same-sex, cross-sex, and romantic) as the repeated measures factor, Gender as the between subjects factor, and the proportion of Shared Social Network as the dependent variable.

Significant multivariate and univariate effects for Relationship emerged, $F(2,110)= 37.17$, $p<0.001$, $\Lambda= 0.60$ and $F(2,222)= 24.34$, $p<0.001$, $\eta^2=0.18$, respectively. Employing the Scheffé procedure to compare the means, it was found that the integration (or sharing) of social network was highest for same-sex friendships (M=

3.69, SD= .64), followed by romantic relationships (M= 3.47, SD = .86) and the least in cross-sex friendships (M= 3.08, SD =.70), as can be seen in Figure 1.

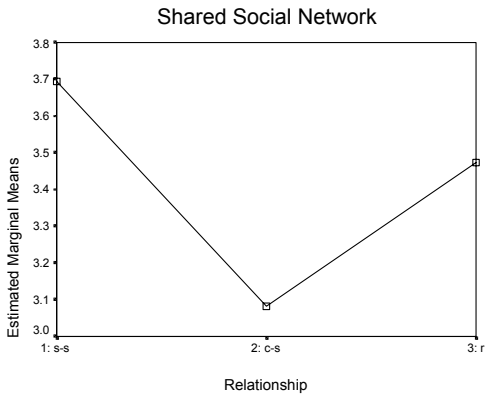



Figure 1. Degree of Shared Social Networks in Relationships

## 5.4 Rewards and Costs of Relationships

A 3 X 2 X 2 (Relationship X Gender X Rewards/Costs) ANOVA was conducted with Relationships as the within-subjects factor and Gender as the between-subjects factor where the amount of the rewards and costs (computed for each relationship) were employed as the dependent variables. The costs scale has been reverse-scored with higher means indicating a relationship with "less cost"; parallel to a relationship that is "more rewarding".

Significant multivariate and univariate effects of Relationship and Rewards/Costs emerged: $F(2,111)= 39.01$, $p<0.001$, $\Lambda=0.587$ and $F(2,112)= 54.19$, $p<0.001$, $\Lambda=0.674$; $F(2,224)= 42.74$, $p<0.001$, $\eta^2= 0.276$ and $F(1,112)= 54.19$, $p<0.001$, $\eta^2= 0.326$ respectively.

In addition, the univariate effects for Gender and the interactions of Rewards/Costs X Gender and Relationship X Rewards/Costs were significant as well: $F(1,112)=$

11.58, $p<0.001$, $\eta^2= 0.094$, $F(1,112)= 14.72$, $p<0.001$, $\eta^2=0.116$ and $F(2,224)= 44.69$, $p<0.001$, $\eta^2=0.285$ respectively.

Table 6. Rewards and Costs of Relationships

| | **Relationship:** | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Same-sex** | **Cross-sex** | **Romantic** | ***F*(2,226)** | ***Total*** |
| **Rewards (presence)** | $4.19_{1a}$ (.73) | $3.44_{1b}$ (.85) | $4.36_{1a}$ (.77) | 54.99 | $3.99_{1}$ (.53) |
| **Costs (absence)** | $4.35_{2a}$ (.51) | $4.29_{2a}$ (.52) | $4.35_{1a}$ (.43) | n.s. | $4.33_{2}$ (.38) |
| ***Total*** | $4.27_{a}$ (.73) | $3.87_{b}$ (.56) | $4.35_{a}$ (.46) | | |

$p<0.001$. Different subscripts indicate significant differences: alphabetical subscripts within a row and numerical subscripts within a column.

Overall, cross-sex friendships were the less rewarding and more costly relationship compared to same-sex friendships and romantic relationships, as can be seen in Table 6. Yet all of these means were greater than the midpoint 3 of the scale, indicating generally positive evaluations (more frequent experience of rewards and less frequent experience of costs). Same-sex friendships and romantic relationships did not differ significantly from each other in terms of the rewards provided or costs incurred. Again, taken as a whole, the relationships were perceived to be higher in rewards than costs; and as may be seen in Table 6, the absence of costs were more frequent (scored higher) than the presence of rewards. Furthermore, women perceived their overall relationships to be providing more rewards and less costs compared to men, with respective means of 4.25 (SD= .37) and 4.02 (SD= .30).

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to explore the Reward/Cost X Gender interaction further. Women generally reported more rewards than men: $F(1,113)= 20.53$, $p<0.001$, with respective means of 4.16 (SD= .51) and 3.73 (SD= .45).. No

gender differences emerged for reports of costs, $F(1,113)= 0.18$, n.s. The respective means were 4.34 (SD= .38) and 4.31 (SD= .40) for women and men.

Two one-way ANOVAs were conducted comparing the differences in the presence of rewards and absence of costs across the three relationships, in order to explore further the interaction of Relationship X Rewards/Costs. Employing the Scheffé procedure at 0.05, we find that rewards was reported to be less present in cross-sex friendships, and more in same-sex friendships and romantic relationships, as can be seen in Table 6. On the other hand, the absence of costs did not differ across relationships, and the costs were experienced quite rarely across these relationships.

## 5.5 Conflict Issues

A 3 X 3 X 2, or Relationship X Conflict Issue (differences, neglect, and damaging behaviors) X Gender ANOVA was conducted. The first two were within-subjects factors and the latter was the between-subjects factor. The dependent variable was the degree of negative effect on relationships.

Significant multivariate as well as univariate effects emerged for Relationship and Conflict Issues: $F(2,110)= 19.07$, $p<0.001$, $\Lambda = 0.743$ and $F(2,110)= 57.61$, $p<0.001$, $\Lambda= 0.488$; $F(2,222)= 22.89$, $p<0.001$, $\eta^2= 0.183$ and $F(2,222)= 39.66$, $p<0.001$, $\eta^2= 0.263$ respectively. The univariate effect for Relationship X Conflict Issue X Gender was also significant: $F(4,444)= 3.28$, $p<0.05$, $\eta^2= 0.029$.

Overall, participants did not report highly negative effects of conflict on their relationships (M= 1.69, SD= .54). However, the negative influence of these conflicts was significantly higher in romantic relationships, compared to same- or cross-sex friendships. The respective means of negative effects of conflict issues were 1.55 (SD= .65) for same-sex friends, 1.51 (SD= .62) for cross-sex friends, and 1.99 (SD= .82) for romantic relationships. Among the specific issues, neglect was the most important issue that affected the overall relationships adversely (M=1.90, SD= .73),

followed by differences (M=1.72, SD= .73) and the least important or infrequent conflict issue was damaging behaviors (M=1.44, SD= .51).

In order to further analyze the triple interaction of Relationship X Conflict Issue X Gender, Relationship X Conflict Issue ANOVAs were conducted separately for each gender. The Relationship X Conflict Issue effect was not significant for women, but was significant for men: $F(4,160)= 4.65$, $p<0.001$. As may be seen in Table 7(b), conflicts because of Differences and Neglect affected the relationship more negatively than conflicts because of Damaging Issues in men's same and cross-sex friendships. However, men perceived Neglect as leading to more negative consequences than other issues within their romantic relationships. (This is especially visible in the second part of Figure 2(b), with the peak for Neglect in Romantic Relationships.)

In summary, romantic relationships seem to be the relationships that are influenced the most negatively from the various conflicts issues that surface, compared to same-sex or cross-sex friendships. Among the three issues, neglect turned out to be the conflict issue most negatively affecting all relationships, followed by differences, and the least negatively influencing topic was damaging behaviors. A triple interaction qualified these main effects. Women did not evaluate the negative effects of the three issues differently for the three relationships. On the other hand, men evaluated differences and neglect to have similarly negative effects on same-sex and cross-sex relationships but evaluated neglect to have significantly more negative effects on their romantic relationships.

Table 7. The Negative Effects of Conflict Issues across Relationships

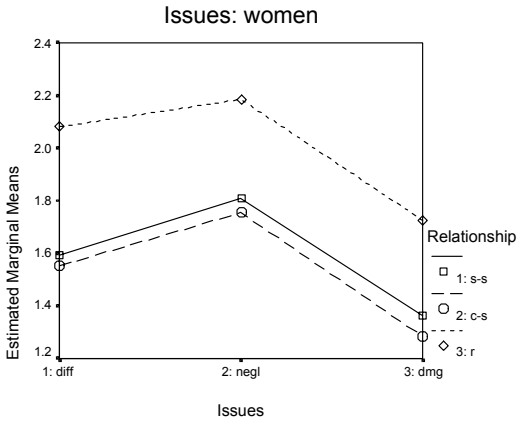
(a) For Women

| **WOMEN** | **Relationship:** | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Conflict Issue:** | **Same-sex** | **Cross-sex** | **Romantic** |
| **Differences** | $1.59_2$ (.74) | $1.55_2$ (.75) | $2.08_2$ (.94) |
| **Neglect** | $1.81_3$ (.98) | $1.76_3$ (.90) | $2.19_2$ (1.18) |
| **Damaging Behaviors** | $1.37_1$ (.65) | $1.28_1$ (.61) | $1.73_1$ (.80) |
| ***F* (2,142)** | 16.77 | 16.79 | 10.14 |

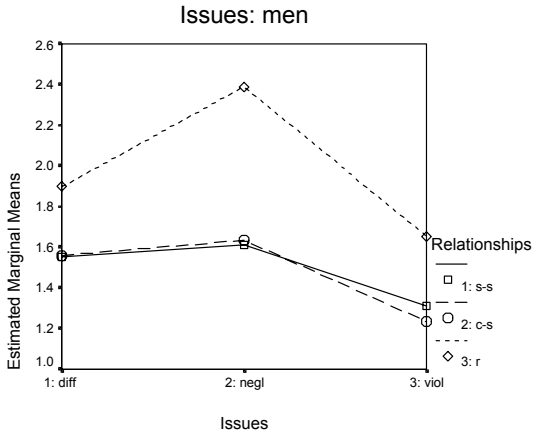
(b) For Men

| **MEN** | **Relationship:** | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Conflict Issue:** | **Same-sex** | **Cross-sex** | **Romantic** |
| **Differences** | 1.55 (.64) | $1.56_2$ (.72) | $1.90_1$ (.87) |
| **Neglect** | $1.61_2$ (.81) | $1.63_2$ (.79) | $2.39_2$ (1.21) |
| **Damaging Behaviors** | $1.31_1$ (.48) | $1.23_1$ (.42) | $1.65_1$ (.76) |
| ***F* (2,80)** | $4.70^*$ | 10.34 | 13.92 |

All $p$'s$<0.001$, $^*$: $p<0.05$. Different subscripts indicate a significant difference (in a column).




(a) Women's Relationships




(b) Men's Relationships

Figure 2. Negative Effects of Conflict Issues across Relationships For Men and Women

## 5.6 Conflict Management Strategies

A 3 X 3 X 2 (Relationship X Conflict Strategy X Gender) repeated measures ANOVA was conducted with Relationship (same-sex, cross-sex, and romantic) and Conflict Strategy (accommodation, avoidance, and domination) as the two within-

subjects factor, Gender as the between-subjects factor, and the frequency of using the different conflict strategies for each of the relationships as the dependent variables.

The multivariate and univariate effects for Relationship and Conflict Strategy emerged: $F(2,111) = 29.69$, $p<0.001$, $\Lambda = 0.65$ and $F(2,111) = 23.75$, $p<0.001$, $\Lambda= 0.70$; $F(2,224) = 33.54$, $p<0.001$, $\eta^2= 0.230$) and $F(2,224)= 14.17$, $p<0.001$, $\eta^2= 0.112$ respectively.

In addition, univariate effects for Relationship X Conflict Strategy and Relationship X Conflict Strategy X Gender were significant: $F(4,448)= 2.50$, $p<0.05$, $\eta^2= 0.022$ and $F(4,448) = 4.11$, $p<0.01$, $\eta^2= 0.035$ respectively.

We can see that the means for all strategies actually range between 2.47 and 3.45 (over a scale of 5), meaning that these strategies were not used very frequently. Generally, conflict strategies were employed least frequently in cross-sex friendships, followed by same-sex friendships, and they were most frequently employed in romantic relationships, $F(2,226) = 30.57$, $p<0.001$ (See Table 8.) Overall, accommodation was the most frequently employed conflict management strategy, dominance lied in the middle, and avoidance was the least frequently employed conflict strategy, $F(2,226)= 17.16$, $p<0.001$, and the means can be found in Table 8 as well.

In order to further analyze the Relationship X Conflict Strategy interaction, one-way ANOVAs were conducted for each conflict strategy, following the Scheffé computation afterwards. When the different relationships were compared with respect to the use of different strategies, we can see that Accommodation was employed most frequently in romantic relationships, second in same-sex friendships and least frequently in cross-sex friendships. The use of Avoidance, on the other hand, did not differ across the relationships. Domination was used most frequently in romantic relationships, but difference between same and cross-sex friendships was not significant with respect to this tactic (Figure 3).

Table 8. Conflict Strategies across Relationships

| | **Relationships:** | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Strategy:** | **Same-sex** | **Cross-sex** | **Romantic** | ***F*(2,226)** | ***Total*** |
| **Accommodate** | $3.16_{b1}$ (.75) | $2.98_{a1}$ (.81) | $3.39_{c1}$ (.84) | 18.74 | $3.17_{1}$ (.68) |
| **Avoid** | $2.59_{a2}$ (.92) | $2.51_{a2}$ (.93) | $2.65_{a3}$ (.95) | n.s. | $2.58_{3}$ (.85) |
| **Dominate** | $2.81_{a2}$ (1.01) | $2.71_{a}$ (.99) | $3.04_{b2}$ (1.09) | 10.84 | $2.85_{2}$ (.93) |
| ***F* (2,226)** | 13.52 | 8.41 | 18.56 | | |
| ***Total*** | $2.85_{b}$ (.59) | $2.73_{a}$ (.58) | $3.02_{c}$ (.61) | | |

All *p's*<0.001. Different subscripts indicate a significant difference; alphabetical subscripts between relationships, numerical subscripts between conflict strategies.

For interaction Relationship X Conflict Strategy X Gender, several one-way ANOVAs comparing the use of each strategy by women and men in each relationship were conducted (Table 9). Only two significant gender differences emerged: women accommodated significantly more frequently in the conflicts they faced with their same-sex friends compared to men. On the other hand, men dominated significantly more in conflicts with their same-sex friends than women. Apart from this, conflict strategies employed by men and women in their relationships did not differ at all (See Figure 5a, b, and c).

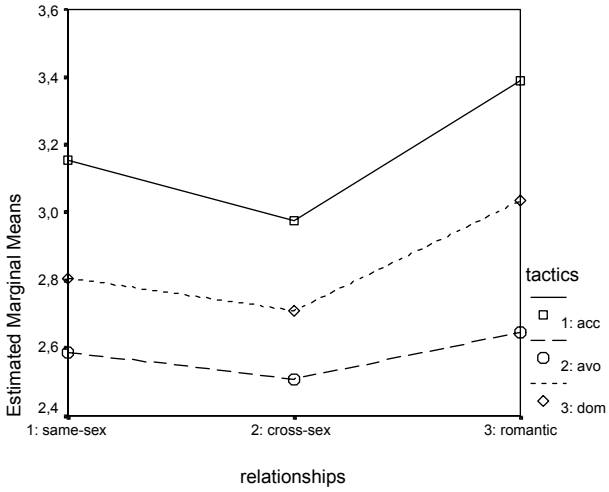
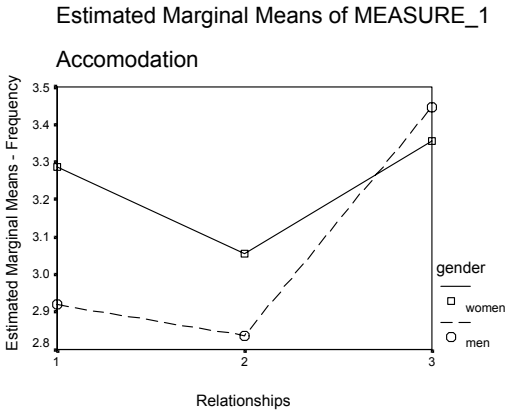



Figure 3. Conflict Strategies across Relationships

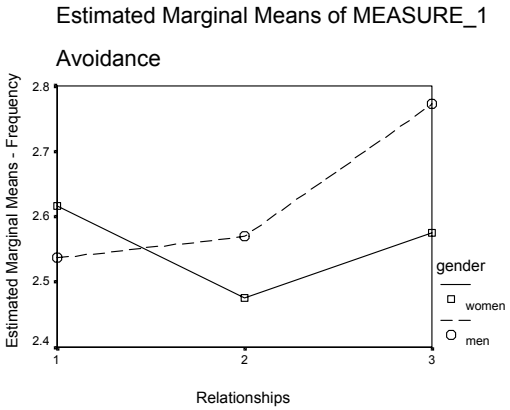
Table 9. Women and Men's Conflict Strategies across Relationships

| | | Relationships: | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Strategy: | | Same-sex | Cross-sex | Romantic |
| Accommodate | W | 3.29 (.63) | 3.05 (.77) | 3.36 (.79) |
| | M | 2.92 (.88) | 2.84 (.86) | 3.45 (.95) |
| | *F* (1,109) | 5.15* | n.s. | n.s. |
| Avoid | W | 2.62 (.91) | 2.47 (.91) | 2.58 (.98) |
| | M | 2.54 (.95) | 2.57 (.96) | 2.77 (.88) |
| | *F* (1,109) | n.s. | n.s. | n.s. |
| Dominate | W | 2.65 (.97) | 2.68 (.99) | 2.97 (1.03) |
| | M | 3.09 (1.05) | 2.77 (1.00) | 3.15 (1.20) |
| | *F* (1,109) | 6.27* | n.s. | n.s. |

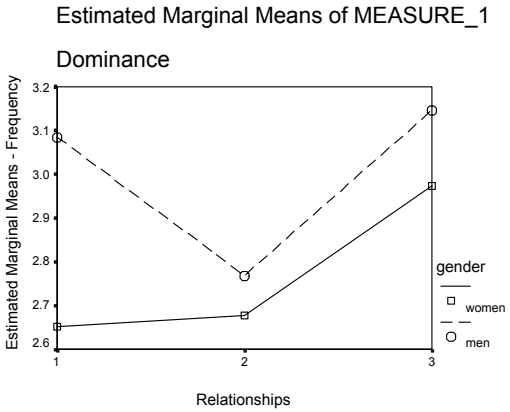
*: $p<0.05$




(a) Accommodation




(b) Avoidance




(c) Dominance

Figure 4. Women and Men's Conflict Strategies across Relationships

To summarize, overall conflict strategies were reported being used most frequently in romantic relationships, followed by same-sex friendships and the least in cross-sex friendships. Accommodation was the most preferred strategy, dominating the second, and avoidance was the least frequent strategy in general. Though, these findings were qualified by two interactions. First, while the dominating and avoiding were both used at similarly low levels with same- and cross-sex friends, dominating clearly increases with lovers (yet still falls second to accommodation). Second, women used more accommodation than men, while men used more dominating than women, in their respective same-sex friendships.

## 5.7 Maintenance Strategies

A 3 X 4 X 2 (Relationship X Maintenance Strategy X Gender) repeated measures ANOVA was conducted with Relationship and Maintenance Strategy (positivity, openness, assurances, and joint activities) as the within-participants factors and Gender as the between-group factor. The dependent variable was the frequency of usage of different maintenance behaviors (the subscales that have been constructed separately for each relationship.)

Significant multivariate and univariate effects emerged for Relationship and Maintenance; $F(2,110) = 92.22$, $p<0.001$, $\Lambda=0.374$ and $F(3,109) =56.11$, $p<0.001$, $\Lambda= 0.393$; $F(2,222) = 115.68$, $p<0.001$, $\eta^2= 0.510$ and $F(1,111)=12.82$, $p<0.001$, $\eta^2=0.104$, respectively.

Univariate effects of Gender, Relationship X Gender, Relationship X Maintenance, and Relationship X Maintenance X Gender were also significant: $F(3,333) = 47.09$, $p<0.001$, $\eta^2= 0.298$; $F(2,222) = 3.97$, $p<0.05$, $\eta^2= 0.035$; $F(6,666) = 22.89$, $p<0.001$, $\eta^2= 0.161$; and $F(6,666) = 4.55$, $p<0.001$, $\eta^2= 0.039$ respectively.

Overall, women engaged in maintenance behaviors more than men did, $F(2,111)= 12.82$, $p<0.001$ (Table 10). In general, maintenance strategies were most frequently

employed in romantic relationships, followed by same-sex friendships, and they were least frequently employed in cross-sex friendships; $F(2,224)=113.70$, $p<0.001$. Among maintenance strategies, positivity was employed less frequently than openness, assurances, and joint activities. Assurances were used more frequently than openness, and joint activities fell in between the two, failing to be significantly different from either one. (See Table 11, last column.)

Table 10. Women and Men's Maintenance Scores across Relationships

| | **Relationship:** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Same-sex** | **Cross-sex** | **Romantic** | ***Total*** |
| **Women** | $4.05_1$ (.50) | $3.48_1$ (.60) | 4.27 (.48) | $4.04_1$ (.37)[-] |
| **Men** | $3.55_2$ (.58) | $3.15_2$ (.62) | 4.21 (.48) | $3.75_2$ (.49) |
| ***Total*** | $4.00_b$ (.58) | $3.42_c$ (.68) | $4.40_a$ (.49) | |

[*]Standard deviations are in parentheses. Different subscripts indicate a significant difference in the respective means: numerical subscripts in a column and alphabetical subscripts in a row.

Two one-way ANOVAs comparing the report of different strategies by men and women for each relationship were conducted in order to further analyze the Gender X Relationship interaction. Women engaged in maintenance more frequently than men in both their same-sex and cross-sex friendships, *F*'s(1,112)=23.12 and 7.94, *p's*<0.01. On the other hand, no gender differences emerged in the use of maintenance strategies in romantic relationships (See Table 10).

In order to further analyze the Maintenance X Relationship interaction, one-way ANOVAs comparing different maintenance strategies across the relationships were conducted, followed by the Scheffé procedure (at 0.05) to compare the means. As can be seen in Table 11, for same-sex friendships, positivity was used less than openness, assurances and joint activities, with no differences among the latter three

strategies. For cross-sex friendships, giving assurances was used most frequently and positivity was used least frequently. Openness and engaging in joint activities did not differ in terms of their frequency of engagement, and they were used more frequently than positivity and less frequently than giving assurances. Finally, in romantic relationships, positivity was employed least frequently, followed by openness. Assurances and joint activities were the most frequent maintenance types that were used in romantic relationships.

Table 11. Maintenance Strategies across Relationships

| | **Relationship:** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Maintenance:** | **Same-sex** | **Cross-sex** | **Romantic** | ***Total*** |
| **Positivity** | $3.52_1$ (.66) | $3.23_1$ (.59) | $4.12_1$ (.51) | $3.62_1$ (.45) |
| **Openness** | $4.19_2$ (.70) | $3.40_2$ (.82) | $4.30_2$ (.70) | $3.96_2$(.53) |
| **Assurances** | $4.17_2$ (.72) | $3.68_3$ (.85) | $4.58_3$ (.55) | $4.14_3$ (.55) |
| **Joint Activities** | $4.11_2$ (.73) | $3.38_2$ (.87) | $4.58_3$ (.63) | $4.03_{23}$ (.56) |
| ***F*(3,336)** | 58.19 | 19.10 | 35.73 | |

All $p$'s<0.001. Different subscripts indicate a significant difference between the means in a given column.

Regarding the triple interaction of Relationship X Maintenance X Gender, the two genders were compared for all Maintenance Strategies X Relationship combinations. For same-sex and cross-sex friendships, women reported higher frequency than men for all the specific maintenance strategies (See Figure 5). However, no gender differences occurred within romantic relationships for any of the maintenance strategies (See Table 12).

Table 12. Women and Men's Maintenance Strategies across Relationships

| | | Relationship: | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Maintenance:** | | **Same-sex** | **Cross-sex** | **Romantic** |
| **Positivity** | W | 3.75 (.55) | 3.22 (.56) | 4.09 (.53) |
| | M | 3.10 (.63) | 3.06 (.59) | 4.16 (.48) |
| ***F* (1,111)** | | 33.18* | 5.53 | n.s. |
| **Openness** | W | 4.29 (.56) | 3.54 (.75) | 4.38 (.62) |
| | M | 4.01 (.87) | 3.16 (.89) | 4.18 (.82) |
| ***F* (1,111)** | | 4.47 | 5.94 | n.s. |
| **Assurances** | W | 4.29 (.66) | 3.81 (.82) | 4.59 (.51) |
| | M | 3.94 (.77) | 3.45 (.88) | 4.57 (.61) |
| ***F* (1,111)** | | 6.41 | 4.77 | n.s. |
| **Joint Activities** | W | 4.28 (.63) | 3.53 (.82) | 4.65 (.63) |
| | M | 3.82 (.79) | 3.12 (.89) | 4.48 (.61) |
| ***F* (1,111)** | | 11.77* | 5.95 | n.s. |

All $p$'s $< 0.05$, $^{*}p < 0.001$

To summarize, maintenance strategies were employed more frequently by women than men. Furthermore, maintenance employment was most frequent in romantic relationships, followed by same-sex friendships and least frequent in cross-sex friendships. Positivity was employed less frequently than the other strategies of openness, assurances, and joint activities. These main effects were qualified by a triple interaction, which revealed that women engaged in all the maintenance strategies more frequently than men within their same-sex and cross-sex friendships, but in romantic relationships men and women utilize maintenance at similar levels.

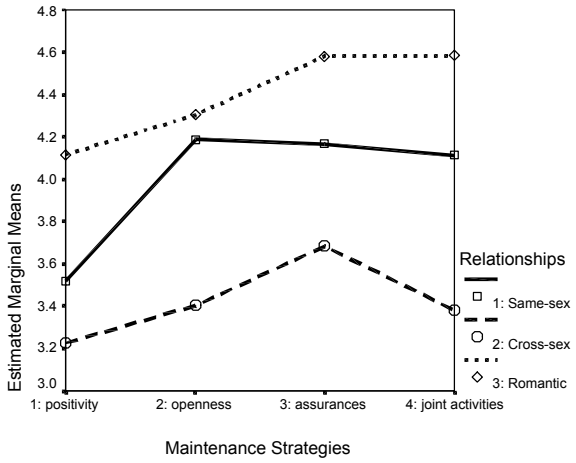



Figure 5. Maintenance Behaviors across Relationships

## 5.8 Regression analyses

In addition to comparisons of the three relationships on the specified dimensions, three sets of regression analyses were performed (one for each relationship) in order to predict evaluations of relational quality from the level of rewards and costs. These rewards and costs, in turn, were to be predicted from maintenance and conflict variables. Relationship maintenance behaviors are expected to predict quality through the mediation of rewards and conflict-related items are expected to predict quality through the mediation of costs. In each of these regression runs, duration of the relationship were entered in the first step in order to discard its effects on closeness and satisfaction (thus quality), since these compared relationships were all "close" friends or lovers, and the correlations of quality and length of relationship were significant and substantial (See Appendix C for the correlations.)

### 5.8.1 Same-sex friendships

First of all, rewards were predicted from maintenance strategies, mutual social network, conflict issues and management strategies. It is expected that the "positive" items, i.e. maintenance strategies and social network, would predict rewards, and "negative" items, i.e. conflict issues and management would predict rewards in the

next step. Duration of the relationship was entered at the first step. As may be seen in Table 13, the totality of these variables explained 58 % of the variance in perceived rewards in same-sex friendships. Duration of the relationship was indeed a predictor of rewards in the relationship, yet explained only 4% of variance in rewards. Longer-lasted relationships provided more rewards, and duration continued to be a predictor even after the second block of variables were entered into the equation. More integration of social networks and more use of joint activities predicted higher overall relationship quality. The conflict-related items did not predict rewards.

Table 13. Predicting Rewards in Same-sex Friendships

| | Rewards (1= low, 5= high) | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Step 1:*** | **β** | ***t*** | ***sr²*** |
| **Duration** | 0.19 | 2.04* | 0.19 |
| $R^2$ | 0.04 | | |
| **$F$(1,108)** | 4.16* | | |
| ***Step 2:*** | **β** | ***t*** | ***sr²*** |
| **Duration** | 0.18 | 2.68** | 0.17 |
| **Positivity** | 0.04 | n.s. | 0.03 |
| **Openness** | 0.10 | n.s. | 0.07 |
| **Assurances** | 0.11 | n.s. | 0.06 |
| **Joint activities** | 0.32 | 3.07** | 0.19 |
| **Social network** | 0.18 | 2.49* | 0.16 |
| **Differences** | –0.04 | n.s. | –0.03 |
| **Neglect** | –0.12 | n.s. | –0.08 |
| **Damaging Behaviors** | –0.12 | n.s. | –0.07 |
| **Dominate** | –0.06 | n.s. | –0.05 |
| **Accommodate** | –0.10 | n.s. | –0.08 |
| **Avoid** | –0.12 | n.s. | –0.11 |
| $\Delta R^2$ | 0.58 | | |
| **$\Delta F$(11,97)** | 13.35** | | |

* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

Secondly, the same block of variables were regressed on relationship costs, with the expectation that conflict issues and management strategies would predict the costs,

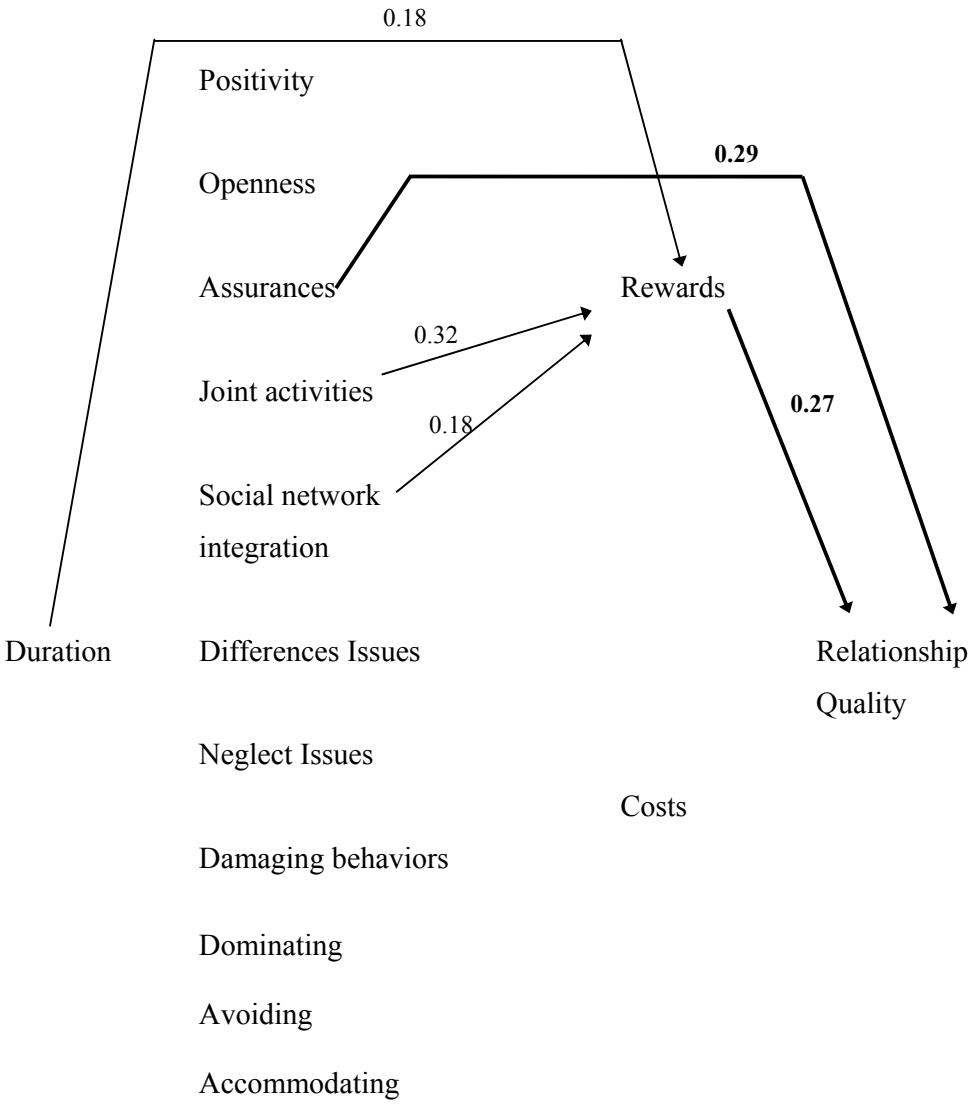
after the duration of relationship was controlled for. As may be seen in Table 14, friendship duration did not explain a significant amount of variance in predicting costs. The second block explained a 28% of variance in costs. However, none of the individual variables was significant in predicting costs (Table 14).

Table 14. Predicting Costs in Same-sex Friendships

| | Costs (1= high, 5=low) | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Step 1:*** | **β** | ***t*** | ***sr²*** |
| **Duration** | –0.05 | n.s. | –0.05 |
| $R^2$ | 0.002 | | |
| **$F$(1,108)** | n.s. | | |
| ***Step 2:*** | **β** | ***t*** | ***sr²*** |
| **Duration** | –0.09 | n.s. | –0.09 |
| **Positivity** | –0.08 | n.s. | –0.05 |
| **Openness** | 0.20 | n.s. | 0.13 |
| **Assurances** | 0.06 | n.s. | 0.03 |
| **Joint activities** | 0.14 | n.s. | 0.08 |
| **Social network** | –0.14 | n.s. | –0.12 |
| **Differences** | –0.26 | n.s. | –0.16 |
| **Neglect** | –0.06 | n.s. | –0.04 |
| **Damaging Behaviors** | 0.07 | n.s. | –0.04 |
| **Dominate** | –0.15 | n.s. | –0.14 |
| **Accommodate** | –0.06 | n.s. | –0.05 |
| **Avoid** | –0.07 | n.s. | –0.06 |
| **$\Delta R^2$** | 0.28 | | |
| **$\Delta F$(11,97)** | 3.39** | | |

** $p<0.01$

Finally, perceived relationship quality was predicted from rewards and costs from the relationship, with a three-step hierarchical regression analysis (Table 15). Duration was entered at the first step, and it explained 5% of relationship quality, with longer durations predicted higher-quality relationships. Within the second block, assurances and joint activities as well as duration positively predicted quality. None of the conflict-related variables predicted quality, and the total set of variables explained a variance of 43% in rewards. Upon the entrance of the third block of




(Note: Dashed lines show negative associations.)

Figure 6. Predicting Relationship Quality in Same-sex Friendships

variables, or rewards and costs, duration and joint activities lost their significance in predicting relationship quality; but assurances remained as a significant predictor of quality. The variables in the third set did not explain a significant amount of variance in relationship quality. However, rewards turned out to be a significant predictor of quality. Thus it can be said that the effects of joint activities and duration on quality were partially mediated by perceived rewards, due to the fact that their semi-partial correlations decreased (although not very largely) and betas ceased to be significant. More rewards predicted higher perceived friendship quality in close same-sex friendships. The overall model may be seen in Figure 6 above.

Table 15. Predicting Relationship Quality from Rewards and Costs in Same-sex Friendships

| | Quality (1= low, 5= high) | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Step 1:*** | **β** | ***t*** | ***sr²*** |
| **Duration** | 0.22 | 2.30* | 0.22 |
| **$R^2$** | 0.05 | | |
| **$F$(1,108)** | 5.30* | | |
| ***Step 2:*** | **β** | ***t*** | ***sr²*** |
| **Duration** | 0.20 | 2.51* | 0.19 |
| **Positivity** | –0.15 | n.s. | –0.10 |
| **Openness** | –0.06 | n.s. | –0.04 |
| **Assurances** | 0.32 | 2.29* | 0.17 |
| **Joint activities** | 0.26 | 2.11* | 0.16 |
| **Social network** | 0.07 | n.s. | 0.06 |
| **Differences** | –0.09 | n.s. | –0.05 |
| **Neglect** | –0.16 | n.s. | –0.11 |
| **Damaging Behaviors** | –0.10 | n.s. | –0.06 |
| **Dominate** | 0.07 | n.s. | 0.07 |
| **Accommodate** | 0.02 | n.s. | 0.02 |
| **Avoid** | –0.15 | n.s. | –0.13 |
| **$\Delta R^2$** | 0.43 | | |
| **$\Delta F$(11,97)** | 7.08** | | |
| ***Step 3:*** | **β** | ***t*** | ***sr²*** |
| **Duration** | 0.15 | n.s. | 0.14 |
| **Positivity** | –0.16 | n.s. | –0.11 |
| **Openness** | –0.09 | n.s. | –0.06 |
| **Assurances** | 0.29 | 2.10* | 0.15 |
| **Joint activities** | 0.17 | n.s. | 0.10 |
| **Social network** | 0.03 | n.s. | 0.02 |
| **Differences** | –0.07 | n.s. | –0.04 |
| **Neglect** | –0.13 | n.s. | –0.08 |
| **Damaging Behaviors** | –0.07 | n.s. | –0.04 |
| **Dominate** | 0.09 | n.s. | –0.08 |
| **Accommodate** | –0.00 | n.s. | 0.00 |
| **Avoid** | –0.11 | n.s. | –0.10 |
| **Rewards** | 0.27 | 2.31* | 0.17 |
| **Costs** | 0.01 | n.s. | 0.01 |
| **$\Delta R^2$** | 0.03 | | |
| **$\Delta F$(2,95)** | n.s. | | |

* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

### 5.8.2 Cross-sex friendships

The same analysis procedures were employed for cross-sex friendships to predict perceived friendship quality from costs and rewards. In cross-sex friendships, duration did not turn out to be a significant predictor of rewards. The variables of interest were entered at the second block and they explained a total of 53% of the variance in perceived friendship rewards. The only significant predictor for rewards was social network integration, (Table 16), with higher integration of networks predicting higher perceived rewards.

Table 16. Predicting Rewards in Cross-sex Friendships

| | **Rewards (1= low, 5= high)** | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Step 1:*** | **β** | ***t*** | ***sr²*** |
| **Duration** | 0.08 | n.s. | 0.08 |
| $R^2$ | 0.01 | | |
| **$F$(1,107)** | n.s. | | |
| ***Step 2:*** | **β** | ***t*** | ***sr²*** |
| **Duration** | –0.09 | n.s. | –0.08 |
| **Positivity** | 0.09 | n.s. | 0.05 |
| **Openness** | 0.20 | n.s. | 0.13 |
| **Assurances** | 0.21 | n.s. | 0.11 |
| **Joint activities** | 0.10 | n.s. | 0.05 |
| **Social network** | 0.26 | 2.77** | 0.19 |
| **Differences** | –0.14 | n.s. | –0.10 |
| **Neglect** | 0.01 | n.s. | 0.01 |
| **Damaging Behaviors** | –0.01 | n.s. | –0.00 |
| **Dominate** | –0.19 | n.s. | –0.04 |
| **Accommodate** | 0.04 | n.s. | –0.04 |
| **Avoid** | –0.03 | n.s. | –0.03 |
| **$\Delta R^2$** | 0.53 | | |
| **$\Delta F$(11,96)** | 9.75** | | |

* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

In the second regression run to predict overall costs in cross-sex friendships, duration did not turn out to be a significant predictor. In the second block that included all the positive and negative variables of interest, only the management

strategy of dominating predicted relationship costs significantly. Higher tendency to dominate during conflicts were associated with higher perceived costs in cross-sex friendships. As may be seen in Table 19, the second block of variables explained a total of 17% additional variance in perceived costs, and none of the relational maintenance strategies predicted costs.

In the final analysis, duration was entered at the first step again, followed by all the variables of interest, and finally rewards and costs as the expected mediating variables were entered, in order to predict relationship quality. In predicting quality, duration was significant (Table 18), explaining 11% of the variance, with longer duration predicting higher quality. From the second block, the totality of maintenance strategies, conflict issues and management strategies explained a 36% increment of variance over that explained by duration. From the second set of variables, openness, social networks, and accommodating during conflicts predicted quality, and higher levels and frequencies of them predicted increased perceived quality. This second block explained 36% of variance in friendship quality. Rewards and costs did not add extra explained variance over and above those explained by these individual variables. This significant predictors in the second step –namely openness, social networks and accommodation- remained to be significant after rewards and costs were entered to the equation. (Please see Figure 7 for the overall model.)

Table 17. Predicting Costs in Cross-sex Friendships.

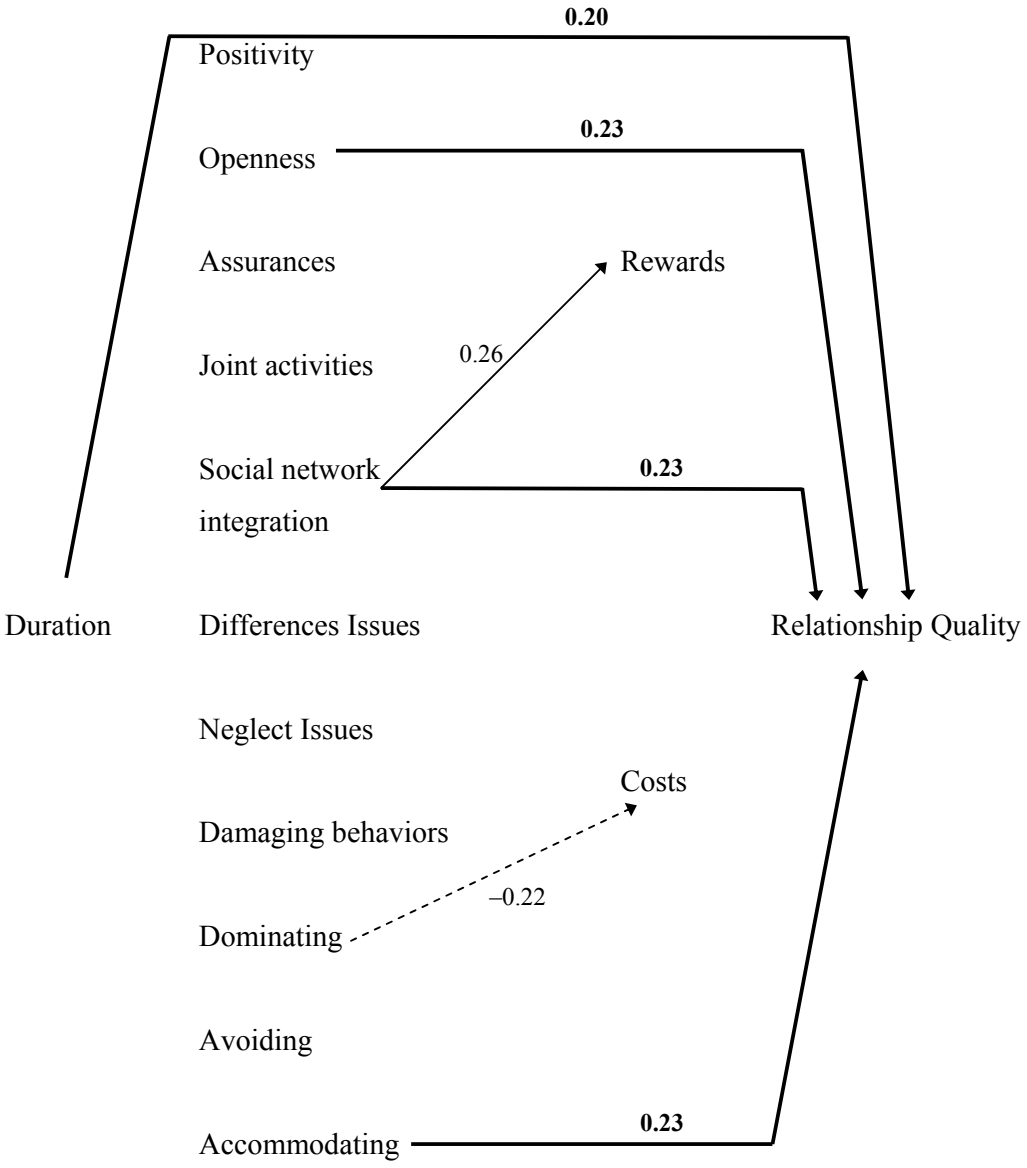
| | Costs (1= high, 5=low) | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Step 1:*** | **β** | ***t*** | ***sr²*** |
| **Duration** | 0.17 | n.s. | 0.17 |
| $R^2$ | 0.03 | | |
| **$F$(1,107)** | n.s. | | |
| ***Step 2:*** | **β** | ***t*** | ***sr²*** |
| **Duration** | 0.12 | n.s. | 0.12 |
| **Positivity** | –0.05 | n.s. | –0.03 |
| **Openness** | 0.01 | n.s. | 0.01 |
| **Assurances** | 0.32 | n.s. | 0.17 |
| **Joint activities** | –0.14 | n.s. | –0.08 |
| **Social network** | 0.07 | n.s. | 0.06 |
| **Differences** | –0.17 | n.s. | –0.12 |
| **Neglect** | –0.02 | n.s. | –0.01 |
| **Damaging Behaviors** | –0.14 | n.s. | –0.10 |
| **Dominate** | –0.22 | –2.37* | –0.21 |
| **Accommodate** | 0.01 | n.s. | –0.01 |
| **Avoid** | –0.00 | n.s. | –0.00 |
| **$\Delta R^2$** | 0.22 | | |
| **$\Delta F$(11,96)** | 2.59** | | |

* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

Table 18. Predicting Relationship Quality from Rewards and Costs in Cross-sex Friendships

| | Quality (1= low, 5= high) | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Step 1:*** | **β** | ***t*** | ***sr²*** |
| **Duration** | 0.33 | 2.30** | 0.33 |
| $R^2$ | 0.11 | | |
| $F(1,107)$ | 13.35** | | |
| ***Step 2:*** | **β** | ***t*** | ***sr²*** |
| **Duration** | 0.19 | 2.47* | 0.18 |
| **Positivity** | 0.10 | n.s. | 0.06 |
| **Openness** | 0.27 | 2.39* | 0.18 |
| **Assurances** | –0.03 | n.s. | –0.02 |
| **Joint activities** | –0.01 | n.s. | –0.01 |
| **Social network** | 0.29 | 2.83** | 0.21 |
| **Differences** | –0.08 | n.s. | –0.06 |
| **Neglect** | –0.15 | n.s. | 0.11 |
| **Damaging Behaviors** | –0.14 | n.s. | –0.09 |
| **Dominate** | 0.05 | n.s. | 0.05 |
| **Accommodate** | 0.22 | 2.54* | 0.19 |
| **Avoid** | –0.13 | n.s. | –0.12 |
| $\Delta R^2$ | 0.36 | | |
| $\Delta F(11,96)$ | 5.88** | | |
| ***Step 3:*** | **β** | ***t*** | ***sr²*** |
| **Duration** | 0.20 | 2.51* | 0.19 |
| **Positivity** | –0.09 | n.s. | 0.05 |
| **Openness** | 0.23 | 2.06* | 0.15 |
| **Assurances** | –0.10 | n.s. | –0.05 |
| **Joint activities** | –0.02 | n.s. | –0.01 |
| **Social network** | 0.23 | 2.24* | 0.17 |
| **Differences** | –0.04 | n.s. | –0.03 |
| **Neglect** | –0.15 | n.s. | 0.10 |
| **Damaging Behaviors** | –0.12 | n.s. | –0.04 |
| **Dominate** | 0.08 | n.s. | 0.07 |
| **Accommodate** | 0.23 | 2.67** | 0.20 |
| **Avoid** | –0.13 | n.s. | –0.11 |
| **Rewards** | 0.18 | n.s. | 0.12 |
| **Costs** | 0.09 | n.s. | 0.07 |
| $\Delta R^2$ | 0.03 | | |
| $\Delta F(2,95)$ | n.s. | | |

* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$




(Note: Dashed lines indicate negative associations. Costs: 1= high, 5= low)

Figure 7. Predicting Relationship Quality in Cross-sex Friendships

### 5.8.3 Romantic Relationships

In predicting overall rewards in romantic relationships, duration was again a significant factor. Duration explained 4% of variance in rewards in romantic relationships. Maintenance strategies, social network, and conflict-related variables explained a 50% additional variance of rewards in romantic relationships, and the effects of duration eroded when this second set was entered. Among these variables joint activities and avoidance were the significant predictors of perceived rewards, as may be seen in Table 19. Engaging more in joint activities and avoiding less were associated with higher perceived rewards in romantic relationships. It is interesting to note that a variable from the conflict set, avoidance, significantly predicted rewards while they were rather expected to predict costs.

Table 19. Predicting Rewards in Romantic Relationships

| | Rewards (1= low, 5= high) | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Step 1:*** | **β** | ***t*** | ***sr²*** |
| **Duration** | 0.20 | 2.06* | 0.20 |
| $R^2$ | 0.04 | | |
| **$F$(1,108)** | 4.23* | | |
| ***Step 2:*** | **β** | ***t*** | ***sr²*** |
| **Duration** | 0.11 | n.s. | 0.09 |
| **Positivity** | –0.03 | n.s. | –0.02 |
| **Openness** | 0.27 | 2.85** | 0.20 |
| **Assurances** | 0.00 | n.s. | –0.04 |
| **Joint activities** | 0.26 | 2.48* | 0.17 |
| **Social network** | 0.16 | n.s. | 0.12 |
| **Differences** | –0.06 | n.s. | –0.05 |
| **Neglect** | –0.15 | n.s. | –0.09 |
| **Damaging Behaviors** | –0.21 | n.s. | –0.13 |
| **Dominate** | 0.02 | n.s. | 0.02 |
| **Accommodate** | 0.10 | n.s. | 0.08 |
| **Avoid** | –0.20 | –2.32* | –0.16 |
| **$\Delta R^2$** | 0.50 | | |
| **$\Delta F$(5,103)** | 9.35** | | |

* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

As may be seen in Table 20, duration was significant in predicting overall costs in romantic relationships. Although it only explained 5% of the variance in costs by itself, its significance remains even when the second block of variables enter the equation. Relations that lasted for a longer period of time were associated with higher costs. The second block of variables explained 36% of variance. Interestingly though, what predicted costs in romantic relationships were three of the maintenance-related items (assurances, joint activities and openness) besides one conflict-related variable(the conflicts over differences) (Table 20). Whereas higher use of assurances and more frequent joint activities predicted lower costs, more openness predicted more costs in romantic relationships. Similarly, more frequent experiences of conflicts over differences predicted higher costs.

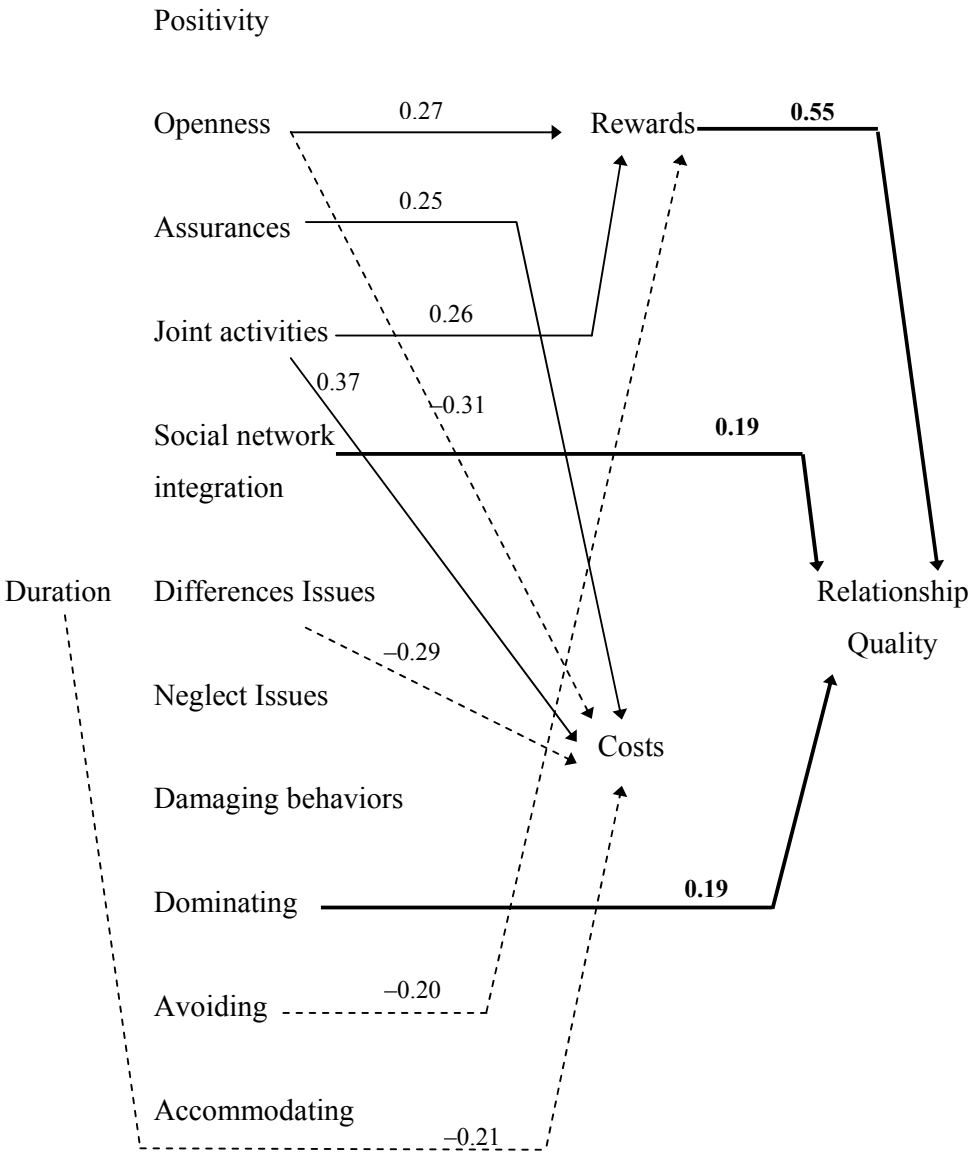
Table 20. Predicting Costs in Romantic Relationships

| | Costs (1= high, 5=low) | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Step 1:*** | **β** | ***t*** | ***sr²*** |
| **Duration** | –0.22 | –2.29* | –0.22 |
| ***R²*** | 0.05 | | |
| ***F*(1,107)** | 5.25* | | |
| ***Step 2:*** | **β** | ***t*** | ***sr²*** |
| **Duration** | –0.21 | –2.12* | –0.17 |
| **Positivity** | –0.05 | n.s. | –0.03 |
| **Openness** | –0.31 | –2.82** | 0.22 |
| **Assurances** | 0.25 | 2.04* | 0.16 |
| **Joint activities** | 0.37 | 3.19** | 0.25 |
| **Social network** | –0.18 | n.s. | –0.14 |
| **Differences** | –0.29 | –2.73** | –0.22 |
| **Neglect** | 0.11 | n.s. | 0.07 |
| **Damaging Behaviors** | –0.11 | n.s. | –0.07 |
| **Dominate** | –0.16 | n.s. | –0.14 |
| **Accommodate** | 0.07 | n.s. | 0.06 |
| **Avoid** | –0.03 | n.s. | 0.02 |
| **Δ*R²*** | 0.36 | | |
| **Δ*F*(11,96)** | 5.28** | | |

* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

Finally, to predict overall relationship quality, a hierarchical regression was conducted with duration entered at the first step; maintenance strategies, conflict issues and conflict management strategies entered at the second step, and perceived rewards and costs entered at the third step. As may be seen in Table 21, duration was a significant predictor of perceived quality in romantic relationships and it explained 10% of total variance by itself. As before, higher relationship length was associated with better evaluations of quality. After the second and the third blocks were entered, its significance was removed though.

The second block of variables explained a total of 36% of variance over and above that explained by the first block. Among them, integration of social networks, conflict issues on differences, and dominating in conflicts predicted perceived relationship quality (Figure 8.) Higher integration of networks and more frequent use of dominating predicted higher perceived quality. The higher the experience of conflicts over the issues on differences; the lower was the perceived relationship quality. The effects of social network and dominating remained after the third block –rewards and costs– entered the picture. However, the effect of differences issues was wiped out by costs. On the other hand, costs failed to predict relationship quality. The third block, or rewards and costs, explained an additional variance of 16%, and only rewards predicted quality, with higher rewards predicting higher perceived quality.




(Note: Dashed lines indicate negative associations. Costs: 1= high, 5= low)

Figure 8. Predicting Relationship Quality in Romantic Relationships

Table 21. Predicting Relationship Quality from Rewards and Costs in Romantic Relationships

| | Quality (1= low, 5= high) | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ***Step 1:*** | **β** | ***t*** | ***sr²*** |
| **Duration** | 0.31 | 3.34** | 0.31 |
| $R^2$ | 0.10 | | |
| $F(1,107)$ | 11.19** | | |
| ***Step 2:*** | **β** | ***t*** | ***sr²*** |
| **Duration** | 0.12 | n.s. | 0.10 |
| **Positivity** | –0.01 | n.s. | –0.01 |
| **Openness** | 0.17 | n.s. | 0.12 |
| **Assurances** | 0.02 | n.s. | 0.01 |
| **Joint activities** | 0.18 | n.s. | 0.12 |
| **Social network** | 0.25 | 2.55* | 0.19 |
| **Differences** | –0.25 | –2.38* | –0.18 |
| **Neglect** | –0.04 | n.s. | –0.02 |
| **Damaging Behaviors** | –0.01 | n.s. | –0.00 |
| **Dominate** | 0.18 | 2.09* | 0.16 |
| **Accommodate** | 0.08 | n.s. | 0.06 |
| **Avoid** | –0.01 | n.s. | –0.01 |
| $\Delta R^2$ | 0.36 | | |
| $\Delta F(11,96)$ | 5.86** | | |
| ***Step 3:*** | **β** | ***t*** | ***sr²*** |
| **Duration** | 0.09 | n.s. | 0.07 |
| **Positivity** | 0.01 | n.s. | 0.00 |
| **Openness** | 0.06 | n.s. | 0.04 |
| **Assurances** | 0.02 | n.s. | 0.01 |
| **Joint activities** | –0.01 | n.s. | –0.01 |
| **Social network** | 0.19 | 2.21* | 0.14 |
| **Differences** | –0.17 | n.s. | –0.12 |
| **Neglect** | 0.03 | n.s. | 0.02 |
| **Damaging Behaviors** | 0.12 | n.s. | 0.08 |
| **Dominate** | 0.19 | 2.60* | 0.17 |
| **Accommodate** | 0.02 | n.s. | 0.01 |
| **Avoid** | 0.10 | n.s. | 0.08 |
| **Rewards** | 0.55 | 5.88** | 0.38 |
| **Costs** | 0.14 | n.s. | 0.11 |
| $\Delta R^2$ | 0.16 | | |
| $\Delta F(2,94)$ | 19.28** | | |

* $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

To summarize the important findings in these regressions, rewards were predicted by relationship maintenance strategies (at least some of them) in same and different sex friendships whereas conflict-related behaviors did not predict costs very well. Contrary to the expectations, in romantic relationships, some of the relational maintenance items such as assurances, openness, and joint activities predicted costs and the conflict management strategy of avoidance predicted rewards. Moreover, costs did not predict relationship quality for any of the three relationships. On the other hand, rewards predicted quality for same-sex friends and romances, but not for cross-sex friendships. As for the mediation of rewards[6], we can say that rewards were very weak in mediating the relationship between relational maintenance and quality and it only partly mediated for the case of joint activities in same-sex friendships.

[6] The mediation of costs was not in question anymore since costs did not predict quality at all.

# CHAPTER 6

# DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

## 6.1 Comparison of the Relationships

Three of the important relationships during young adulthood have been compared and several differences and similarities have been noted among these three relationships. In general the relationship type has been a significant factor of the conducted ANOVA analyses, and it indicated that a difference did exist indeed.

Contrary to what was expected, cross-sex friendship did not "lie in between" same-sex friendships and romantic relationships, i.e. carried elements from both of the two close relationships. Indeed, a same-sex friendship and a romantic relationship resembled each other more on the selected dimensions rather than any one of them to a cross-sex friendship. It is interesting to note at this moment that the friendships were especially chosen to be "close", and not just any friendship. Cross-sex friendships do not appear to be among the important close relationships in the lives of these university students, given the lower quality, less duration, less integration of networks, lower rewards and higher costs, fewer conflict experiences and management, and less frequent engagement of maintenance strategies reported when compared to same-sex friendships or romantic relationships. This was concurrent with the previous studies that found same-sex friendships superior to cross-sex friendships (e.g. Argyle & Furnham, 1983; Davis & Todd, 1985; Rose, 1985; Parker & de Vries, 1993).

Romantic relationships appear to be evaluated lower in overall quality and involve less integration of the networks of the pair in comparison to same-sex friendships but involve the highest level of problematic issues, conflict management behaviors and highest maintenance behaviors. This is in agreement with the more

interdependence to be associated with / assumed to exist in romantic relationships compared to the other two friendships. It is interesting to note that although more maintenance behaviors are exhibited in romantic relationships, they fall second to same-sex friendships in terms of perceived quality. This could be attributed to the different expectations of stability and the differences in their respective durations and histories. Same-sex friendships have been lasting for significantly longer periods of time; therefore an established level of quality perception, probably independent from the level of daily activities or maintenance behaviors might be persisting in the minds of the people.

An important finding was that conflict occurred or was reported to occur at very low frequencies in both same-sex and cross-sex friendships (less frequent management of conflict and less frequent reports of negative effects of conflict issues) compared to romances. This finding may be interpreted in two ways. Either an actual lack of conflict exists, stemming from the lower levels of interdependence that friendships entail compared to romantic relationships. It is reasonable and expected to have more interdependence within a romantic relationship where couple-level outcomes are more dependent on the individual behaviors of each partner (Rusbult, 1980). Or, the arising conflicts are mostly avoided in friendships. Since there were no clues of different levels of conflict avoidance across relationships, this avoidance might entail not admitting or even perceiving that a conflict exists, thus they are indeed experienced and reported at minimum levels in friendships. A reasonable explanation might be that romantic relationships can be sensitive to conflict and negativity compared to friendships. Nevertheless, this lower level of conflict in friendships appears to support Rawlins' (1982) and Canary et al.'s (1995, p. 94) arguments that friendships may have more potential for mortality and has less structure supporting it, whether we interpret this lack of conflict as a form of avoidance or as a form of lack of interdependence.

The degree of integration of social networks was highest for the same-sex friends. Although integration of social networks is one indication of interdependence, and could be expected to be highest in romances, this may be explained by the longer

duration of same-sex friendships and its prevalence among participants (all the participants had a same-sex friend but only 41% had a lover). The presence of more integrated social networks for same-sex friends appears to correspond to the later emergence of cross-sex friendships, dating and romantic relationships in the developmental path (Erikson, 1963; Furman & Buhrmester, 1992), and thus less deep and less integrated network formation in time. Also, it is possible that this lower integration of networks might be reflecting the 'less acceptable' nature of male-female relationships and the more approved nature of same-sex friendships for the Turkish culture, given the importance placed on chastity and to marriage (as the only appropriate relationship between a woman and a man) by the society.

A qualitative type of difference was also evident across the three relationships in the factor analysis results of the conflict management styles scale, where different behaviors meant different things for the three relationships. For instance, the item on 'bringing out concerns openly in order to find a solution that is agreeable to both of the parties' meant some kind of accommodation in romantic relationships (fell under the related factor), it meant something vague but similar to dominating for cross-sex friendships, and it constituted a separate factor on its own in same-sex friendships. Or, sulking and behaving distantly were similar to dominating in same- and different-sex friendships, but it was more like avoiding in the context of romances.

As for the specifics of the differences across relationships, differences did emerge with respect to the conflict issues, conflict management strategies and maintenance strategies. The generally low tendency to use dominating as a conflict strategy rises significantly for the case of romantic relationships. However, accommodating to the partner was reported to be the most prevalent strategy for all relationships. This is also in line with the more collectivistic tendencies to avoid confronting and to indirectly manage conflict by "reading other's mind" (Triandis, 1995). The three relationships differed only slightly with respect to the most preferred maintenance strategies. Assurances was the most preferred maintenance strategy in cross-sex friendships, openness, assurances, and joint activities were preferred equally in same-sex friendships, and assurances and joint activities were most preferred in

romantic relationships. In general conflict issues did not vary very much across relationships, and neglect and differences were the more important issues than damaging behaviors. The only difference was that issues of neglect emerged to be even more important than issues of differences for men in their romantic relationships (than their other relationships). As can be seen, romantic relationships were the "different" relationship on the specifics of these dimensions most of the time and same-sex and cross-sex friendships had more similar profiles with respect to the conflict issues, management strategies and maintenance behaviors, except for the overall differences in the reported frequencies of these behaviors.

### 6.1.1 Influences of Gender

A main effect of gender appeared only on the maintenance strategies factor, women engaged in relationship maintenance to a higher degree than men did. This appears to support the studies that report gender differences in the use of relationship maintenance (Canary & Stafford, 1992; Dainton & Stafford, 1993; Dindia, 1989), yet at a careful second look, it was found that women employed all of the maintenance strategies more than men *only* in their same-sex and cross-sex friendships. In romantic relationships, men and women did not differ in their employment of maintenance behaviors. There are two points that are worthy of attention. First, men engaged in relationship maintenance as much as women did in their romantic relationships, contrary to the previous Western literature that found women to be engaging in more maintenance in romances or marriages. The lack of accepted or established scripts about dating and romantic relationships in Turkey might be a reason behind this finding. Men in these relationships might be following women and their behaviors / rules as to relationship and 'how it should be like', thus engage in as much maintenance behaviors as women did. The second important point to note is that not merely gender but the type of relationship mattered more in the use of maintenance behaviors (as well as the in the use of conflict management strategies, to be discussed next).

The second finding related to gender was that women used more accommodation than men, while men used more dominating than women in their respective same-sex friendships. It is again interesting to note that gender differences emerged only in same-sex friendships of women and men, and not in their romantic relationships or cross-sex friendships. A plausible explanation might be on the part of reciprocity in conflict management. Rather than women and men exhibiting separate gender-stylistic conflict patterns, the context of the relationship and the reciprocity during conflicts shapes how they manage and behave during conflicts with partners or cross-sex friends, and the differences between women and men are minimized; women dominating more and men accommodating more (e.g. Burggraf and Sillars, 1987). For same-sex friendships, though, the friends seem to reciprocate their initial tendencies in conflict management, women more likely to be accommodating and men dominating, in line with the cultural and relational expectations. Thus the differences between genders increase across these relationships. This is also contrary to the expectations of "a different pattern" of relationship dynamics in cross-sex friendships than romantic relationships, as the interaction of gender by relationship did not emerge for romances or cross-sex friendships, but only for same-sex friendships.

Finally, a few words will be spent regarding the finding that issues of neglect was perceived to be a more important issue than the issue of differences for men (than women) in their romantic relationships (while the two issues were evaluated to have comparable negative effects for their other relationships.) Although "whose" issue this neglect was and who was more negatively affected by it were not sought, we may speculate women –reported in the literature to seek connectedness and closeness more likely than males who sought independence and autonomy (e.g. see Canary & Emmers-Sommer, 1997) – brought the issue of neglect, and that this conflict affected men's perception of the relationship to be influenced in a negative manner. This falls within the frames of the stereotypical woman-man romantic relationship pattern reported previously. However, we should still note that, women do not report a significant or important negative effect of neglect; it was not salient to them as an issue in their romantic relationships. This might have several reasons;

either neglect was the men's issue and men were negatively influenced by this topic (thus their relationships), or men had higher sensitivity regarding this topic in their relationships, perhaps because of its frequency, or perhaps men thought their relationships were in a decline because of the conflicts experienced in this topic whereas women did not. In either case, this might be an interesting topic to explore further in future research.

## 6.2 Predicting Quality

It was expected that the use of more relational maintenance behaviors would predict higher rewards in a relationship, which would then predict better quality. Also, more severe issues and experiences of conflict and more destructive conflict management styles would predict higher costs, which would in turn predict lower quality.

In predicting rewards, social network, joint activities, and openness were significant but they were not common for all relationships. Only social network significantly predicted rewards in cross-sex friendships, joint activities and social network in same-sex friendships, and joint activities and openness in romantic relationships. Besides these maintenance and network items, avoidance –as a conflict-related item– predicted lower rewards (but not lower quality) in romantic relationships, contrary to the expectations.

On the other hand, dominating and accommodating during conflicts predicted lower costs in cross-sex friendships and romantic relationships respectively. Besides these, costs in friendships were not very strongly predicted by the conflict-related variables. The conflicts over differences also predicted higher costs in romantic relationships. In romantic relationships, though, some maintenance items were associated with costs. Whereas more frequent use of assurances and joint activities predicted lower costs, the use of openness predicted higher costs. Openness was explained to have a slightly negative association with relational characteristics (Canary & Stafford, 1992, 1994; Stafford & Canary, 1991) since the positive aspects were usually disclosed in terms of assurances and positivity. However, it still remains unexplained why the conflict-related and maintenance-related variables

blend in predicting costs and rewards in romances. An explanation might lie in the nature of romantic relationships. Romantic relationships have been placed at the center of individuals' lives, and selection of a mate is strongly emphasized as a crucial decision that persons are to take in their lives. On the other hand, friendship is a relationship that 'happens' rather than that is 'made' with conscious efforts, especially for our culture. Therefore, in a romantic relationship, there is a possible concern of presenting the relationship to the self and justify it for staying in that given relationship to a higher degree than in friendships. This might be making the individual more sensitive to what is going on in the relationship and the experiences of conflict or maintenance as well as their influences on the rewards and costs. Consequently this information of rewards and costs might actually be more salient in romances in order to weigh constantly the positive and negative sides of the relationship and provide reasons for staying in that relationship. This might in turn be reflected in the influence of maintenance-related variables and conflict-related variables on the perception of both rewards and costs in romantic relationships.

The finding that dominating decreases costs in the context of cross-sex friendships is another interesting issue that needs to be explained, since dominating as a destructive conflict style should be increasing rather than decreasing the perceived costs and predict lower quality. Although neither the strategy of dominating nor the level of costs predicted quality, this finding may be interpreted as dominating being an indication of power in the relationship, initiating change, and a move towards getting what is desired, thus it might decrease the perceived costs for the party that dominates in this relatively distant relationship. In same-sex friendships and romantic relationships, exerting power would also bring about its costs.

In predicting perceived quality from costs and rewards, the first point to note was that *not* the "costs side" of relationships, namely the conflict management behaviors or the negativity of the conflict issues; but the "rewarding sides", namely the relationship maintenance strategies and the mutual social networks were more influential. One reason is that overall evaluations of rewards and quality were very high, and costs very low, thus this might have impeded the costs to predict quality.

In another sample where the relationships are evaluated to have higher conflicts and costs and lower qualities, the effects of costs could be discerned better. The relationships of concern are "closer" ones to begin with, and had these conflicts and costs been acknowledged, they would perhaps have already grown apart, been dissolved or ended. The negative items might be separated from the general evaluations of these relationships and are not let to rise to the level of quality to have an effect on it. Unless these costs and other negative behaviors exceed a certain 'threshold', they seem to be discounted. To put it differently, the way people perceive rewards and costs in their ongoing lives and experiences in a relationship or friendship might be something different from the general and cognitive evaluations of these relationships. Furthermore, rather than the day-to-day activities, events, or perceived costs and rewards as measured here; some other quality such as love, or feelings of solidarity might be influencing the quality evaluations of these relationships.

Conflict management was reported at very low levels and management styles rather weakly predicted quality evaluations. Dominating in romantic conflicts and accommodating to cross-sex friends predicted higher perceived quality; but an overall pattern could not be discerned encompassing all the three relationships. This finding once more runs counter to the previous literature that constructive responses would predict better and destructive responses poorer relationship characteristics (Canary & Cupach, 1988; Gottman, 1982; Rusbult et al., 1986). The destructive response of dominating appears to predict better quality as evaluated by the dominating party in these romantic relationships. This might be because the quality is evaluated by the person that dominates, and the effects of this behavior on the relationship cannot be captured completely without the other party's evaluations. However, at least for the dominating party in a romantic relationship, this act actually increases evaluations of quality. Lastly, avoidance did not predict either positive or negative outcomes in evaluations of quality, but only rewards. Therefore, this result fails to clarify any of the blur of the existing findings regarding avoidance. Similarly, reported effects of various conflict issues failed to predict perceived quality. Only, conflicts on differences predicted higher costs in romances.

In terms of maintenance items predicting quality, again an interesting finding emerged: positivity was the least preferred strategy and it did not predict either relationship rewards, or relationship quality. This appears to contradict Stafford & Canary's (1991) finding that positivity was the best predictor of liking, satisfaction, and control mutuality. Although the measured variable is different, namely quality, it is still interesting that positivity is not even correlated with quality. One reason might be the significantly less frequent employment of the positivity strategies, so that its effects could not be expressed or extracted. Another one can be culture; acting in a kind and positive manner would be directed to people who are not so close/intimate whereas the intimate and close others, such as the family members or close friends who might even be viewed as part/extension of the self and 'need no such rituals or formalities. Thus, positivity strategies might be perceived as an indication of a distance in relationships, and therefore are not seen in the current relationships.

The level of integration of social networks turned out to be very important in predicting perceived rewards (in same-sex friendships) or relationship quality (in romantic relationships and cross-sex friendships). This variable was not measured as part of the maintenance scale, yet it was assumed to be an 'external' factor that may facilitate the maintenance of a relationship, as well as an indication of interdependence. Interestingly, mutual social networks were predictive of relationship quality in relationships with opposite-sex relationships (romantic or nonromantic). This is important to note, since it might indeed illuminate the nature of relationships with the other sex in our culture: the approval of a supporting social network meant a lot more to these relationships than what it would mean to same-sex friendships. This is in accord with the cross-sex relationships as a less approved form of relationship by the society; therefore having a mutual social network might have been a very supporting factor to the perceived quality as well as the existence of the relationship.

Rewards were conceptualized as mediating the relationship between maintenance strategies and relationship quality; just as costs were conceptualized as mediating the relationship between conflict items and quality. Rewards turned out to predict quality for same-sex friendships and romances, but costs did not predict quality in any of the relationships. Moreover, costs were predicted only weakly by the conflict-related variables. It seems like the "pluses" and the "minuses" of a relationship constitute different dimensions, as predicted by social exchange theory, and the minuses do not predict less quality, but do not predict it at all. It is important to note however, that this can also be attributed to the reports of nearly non-existent overall costs and conflicts, thus these variables are unable to predict satisfaction because of a form of ceiling effect. Rewards were predicted by different maintenance strategies for each relationship as well. This supports that these relationships are indeed maintained differently. However, the expected mediation effects by costs and rewards could be discerned only very vaguely.

Duration has been controlled for during these analyses and was entered at the first step of the regression equations. It had significant correlations with rewards (.19) in same-sex friendships, and with both rewards (.20) and costs (-.22)[7] in romantic relationships. Moreover, duration was significantly and positively correlated with quality for all the three relationships (.22, .33, and .31 respectively for same-sex friendships, cross-sex friendships, and romantic relationships respectively). Once more, this might possibly be a two-way association in that these longer lasting relationships last since they provide more rewards and perceived to be satisfying, close, and high quality. At the same time, they provide more rewards and increase in perceived quality because of their stability and longevity.

Finally, it is important to note that for all these predictions, the directions of influence are most probably characterized by a two-way interrelation. In other words, it is reasonable to say that level of perceived quality, closeness, and/or satisfaction can very well be the reason why people behave the way they do, in

[7] Please note that the costs scale was reverse-scored; thus this negative correlation indicates an association of lower costs with longer durations.

terms of maintenance strategies or conflict management tactics. Thus, in relationships which are perceived as higher quality, the efforts to lower the level of conflicts by for instance more constructive strategies might increase as well as engagement in relationship maintenance behaviors to a higher extent to preserve this satisfactory relationship

In conclusion, these three relationships were constructed with similar as well as different aspects as evidenced by the factor and regression analyses. Cross-sex friendships did not fall "in-between" the two relationships on the dimensions of interest as expected but were perceived to be of 'lower' overall quality than the two. The profile of a "close" friend appears to fit to one of a same-sex friend rather than a cross-sex one. Moreover, the present sample is one of the most "modern" and "western" samples that can be found, the university students of an established and respected university in the capital city of Turkey. Therefore, we can more safely conclude that cross-sex friendships fall second to same-sex friendships, failing to provide a distinctive pattern of woman-man nonromantic relationships, in a more representative sample that will most probably be more traditional and less accepting views of cross-sex friendships.

## 6.3 Contributions of the Present Study

The most important contribution of this study is on the friendship literature, in that it provided an initial comparison of same-sex friends, cross-sex friends, and romantic partners in terms of conflict and maintenance behaviors. Conflict issues, conflict management, and relational maintenance have been predominantly studied in romantic relationships with a few exceptions (i.e. Argyle & Furnham, 1983; Canary et al., 1993; Healey & Bell, 1990; Rawlins, 1994). This study is first to be comparing these three relationships in terms of conflict and maintenance. Therefore, besides the research accumulated on the area of same- and cross-sex friendship, the findings also pertain to the areas of relationship maintenance and conflict, adding a different perspective to each by including two other forms of relationships in comparison.

Furthermore, the existing literature that report or fail to report gender differences in conflict management and relational maintenance has examined these differences in the context of romantic relationships. We were able to show that the gender differences might be stemming from other factors, and may even not apply to romances but might be more relevant in friendships for instance, as in the relational maintenance behaviors. Otherwise, reciprocity in certain behaviors might override the initial tendencies assumed to exist. This study did not report very strong and persistent gender differences across these various relationships, but investigating these in other contexts, such as same-sex or cross-sex friendships, was an important step towards integrating the findings within the area intimate relationships.

## 6.4 Limitations of the Present Study

This study has also some limitations that might constrain its generalizability. First of all, the same- and cross-sex friendships reported here are described as "close" friends, in order to provide a minimum of comparability with romantic relationships, which are assumed to be rather intimate. Therefore the reported findings apply to close friendships, and not necessarily to all same-sex and cross-sex friendships of men and women. Moreover, the cross-sex friendships were qualified as strictly non-romantic in nature. The reason behind was to be able to distinguish ex-lovers and potential romantic partners from platonic cross-sex friends. However, in real life, the two categories might be fused and overlapping, thus the experiences of friendships with the other-sex.

The conflict management and relationship maintenance behaviors were measured by self-report method only, without a specific episode to be remembered (for conflict management and maintenance items) and without any observation of actual behaviors; this is a limitation to the accuracy of findings. What the participants thought they were doing, what they remember they were doing, and what they report they were doing are separate things. Moreover, the self-report nature of the measures might have resulted in an overestimation of the 'typical' behaviors for men and women. On the other hand, the findings were far from the very 'typical' case of gender differences, so this limitation might not be true for this research.

Following Canary and Stafford (1992), the maintenance strategies or behaviors are taken here only in terms of the prosocial items and did not include antisocial items as in Baxter and Dindia (1990); therefore this might be half of the picture in terms of maintenance behaviors. Whether any differences between genders or across relationships will emerge remains an issue.

Finally, it should be mentioned that the conceptualizations of conflict and maintenance, as well as relationships were based on the Western literature, thus taking a more individualistic perspective and employing more individualistic definitions, as mentioned previously. Other issues or other maintenance behaviors might emerge from a different perspective, or even what conflict is and what maintenance is might be different from a more collective point of view. This is similar to the differences noted when constructing the scales for the three relationships, where one item meant one thing in a relationship and totally another thing in the context of another relationship. Future research needs to address what unique characteristics friendships and romances might have from a more 'Eastern' point of view, on a different sample of young adults than a metropolitan university student sample. This is important since Turkey is a modernizing country and METU is one of the largest universities in the capital city. In a more 'typical' Turkish sample, the results would probably be different; even to the degree that the terms conflict and maintenance may even not apply to this different set of relationships with the different rules governing the relationships.

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# APPENDICES

# APPENDIX A

## QUESTIONNAIRE (Turkish Version)

Bu çalışmanın konusu arkadaşlık ve duygusal ilişkilerdir*. Amaç, duygusal ilişkiler ile aynı ve farklı cinsiyetten kişiler arasındaki arkadaşlıkları (kız-kıza, erkek-erkeğe arkadaşlık ve kız-erkek arkadaşlığı), benzer ve farklı yönleriyle incelemektir. Sizden ilk olarak kendinizle ilgili bazı soruları yanıtlamanızı istiyoruz. Daha sonra ise mevcut duygusal ilişkiniz ile aynı cins ve karşı cinsten arkadaşlarınızla ilgili bazı görüşlerinizi belirtmenizi istiyoruz.
Yardımlarınız için teşekkür ederiz.

**Kişisel Bilgiler**

1) Ülke: _____
2) Yaş: _____
3) Medeni durum:_____
4) Okul: _____
5) Bölüm: _____
6) Cinsiyet: Kadın ☐ Erkek ☐
7) Annenizin eğitim durumu:
   - İlkokul mezunu..... ☐
   - Ortaokul mezunu..... ☐
   - Lise mezunu..... ☐
   - Yüksekokul / Üniversite mezunu... ☐
   - Yüksek lisans /doktora..... ☐
   - Hiçbiri.....
8) Babanızın eğitim durumu:
   - İlkokul mezunu..... ☐
   - Ortaokul mezunu..... ☐
   - Lise mezunu..... ☐
   - Yüksekokul / Üniversite mezunu... ☐
   - Yüksek lisans /doktora..... ☐
   - Hiçbiri.....
9) Cinsel tercih:
   - ☐ Heteroseksüel (Karşıt-cinsel; cinsel olarak yalnızca karşı cinse ilgi duyan)
   - ☐ Homoseksüel (Eşcinsel; cinsel olarak yalnızca hemcinslerine ilgi duyan)
   - ☐ Biseksüel (Cinsel olarak hem karşı cinse hem de hemcinslerine ilgi duyan)

*Duygusal ilişki: aşık olduğunuz ya da hoşlandığınız biriyle yaşadığınız; karşılıklı duygusal ve fiziksel bir çekim içeren; cinsellik içerebilen ya da içermeyen bir ilişkidir. Bu anlamda “sevgili”, duygusal ilişkiyi paylaştığınız kişi anlamında kullanılmaktadır.

**Lütfen aşağıda bulunan (A) kutusundaki soruları, hemcinsiniz olan yakın bir arkadaşınızı belirleyip, onu düşünerek yanıtlayınız. Bundan sonraki bölümlerde de (*anketin geri kalanında*)"aynı-cins arkadaş" ile ilgili soruları da bu belirlediğiniz arkadaşınızı ve onunla olan arkadaşlığınızı düşünerek yanıtlayınız.**

**Kutu (A):** *Kendi cinsiyetinizden (hemcinsiniz) olan yakın bir arkadaşınız için*

| |
|---|
| 1. Bu kişiyle ne süredir arkadaşsınız? _____ |
| 2. Arkadaşlığınızın niteliğini nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz?<br>(5 üzerinden bir puan veriniz: 1= kötü, 5= mükemmel) ___ |
| 3. Birbirinize ne kadar yakınsınız? (Bir sayıyı daire içine alarak belirtiniz)<br>1=çok yakınız, 2=yakınız, 3=yakın sayılırız, 4=pek yakın değiliz, 5=hiç yakın değiliz |
| 4. Sizce bu arkadaşlığın önümüzdeki 10 yıl boyunca sürme ihtimali ne?<br>(Lütfen 1-5 arası bir sayı yazarak belirtiniz:1= çok düşük, 5= çok yüksek)___ |
| 5. Arkadaşlığınızdan ne kadar memnunsunuz?<br>(5 üzerinden bir puan veriniz: 1= hiç memnun değilim, 5= çok memnunum) ____ |

10) Şu anda ya da geçmişte duygusal bir ilişki yaşamadığınız karşı cinsten bir arkadaşınız var mı?

Evet ☐ Hayır ☐

1. **Yukarıdaki soruya yanıtınız "EVET" ise, lütfen (B) kutusundaki soruları bu konumdaki yakın bir karşı-cins arkadaşınızı belirleyip, onu düşünerek yanıtlayınız. Bundan sonraki bölümlerde de (*anketin geri kalanında*) karşı-cins arkadaş ilgili soruları da bu belirlediğiniz arkadaşınızı ve onunla olan arkadaşlığınızı düşünerek yanıtlayınız.**
2. **Yukarıdaki soruya yanıtınız "HAYIR" ise, soru 11'e geçiniz.**

**Kutu (B)** *Geçmişte duygusal ilişkiniz olmayan, karşı cinsten yakın bir arkadaşınız için*

| |
|---|
| 1. Bu kişiyle ne süredir arkadaşsınız?_____ |
| 2. Arkadaşlığınızın niteliğini nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz? (5 üzerinden bir puan veriniz: 1= kötü, 5= mükemmel) ____ |
| 3. Birbirinize ne kadar yakınsınız? (Bir sayıyı daire içine alarak belirtiniz) 1=çok yakınız, 2=yakınız, 3=yakın sayılırız, 4=pek yakın değiliz, 5=hiç yakın değiliz |
| 4. Sizce bu arkadaşlığın önümüzdeki 10 yıl boyunca sürme ihtimali ne? (Lütfen 1-5 arasında bir sayı yazarak belirtiniz:1= çok düşük, 5= çok yüksek)____ |
| 5. Bu arkadaşınızla duygusal bir birliktelik yaşamak ister misiniz? (Lütfen 1-5 arasında bir sayı yazarak belirtiniz; 1= hiç istemem, 5= kesinlikle isterim) ____ |
| 6. Sizce arkadaşınız sizinle duygusal bir birliktelik yaşamak ister mi? (Lütfen 1-5 arasında bir sayı yazarak belirtiniz; 1= hiç istemez, 5= kesinlikle ister) _____ |
| 7. Sizce bu kişiyle duygusal bir beraberlik yaşama olasılığınız ne? Lütfen 1-5 arası bir sayı yazarak belirtiniz: (1= çok düşük, 5= çok yüksek)_____ |
| 8. Arkadaşlığınızdan ne kadar memnunsunuz? (5 üzerinden bir puan veriniz:1= hiç memnun değilim, 5= çok memnunum) ___ |

11) Şu anda karşı cinsten biriyle devam eden duygusal bir ilişkiniz var mı?
Evet ☐ Hayır ☐

**3. Yukarıdaki soruya yanıtınız "EVET" ise, lütfen aşağıda bulunan (C) kutusundaki soruları bu ilişkinizi ve bu kişiyi (sevgilinizi) düşünerek yanıtlayınız.**

**4. Yukarıdaki soruya yanıtınız "HAYIR" ise, 3. sayfadan devam ediniz. İlerideki bölümlerde duygusal ilişki ve sevgiliyle ilgili soruları geçiniz.**

**Kutu (C)** *Halen devam eden duygusal bir ilişki ve sevgili için*

| |
|---|
| 1. İlişkiniz ne kadar süredir devam ediyor? _____ |
| 2. İlişkinizin niteliğini nasıl değerlendiriyorsunuz?<br>(5 üzerinden bir puan veriniz: 1= kötü, 5= mükemmel) ____ |
| 3. Birbirinize ne kadar yakınsınız? (Bir sayıyı daire içine alarak belirtiniz)<br>1=çok yakınız, 2=yakınız, 3=yakın sayılırız, 4=pek yakın değiliz, 5=hiç yakın değiliz |
| 4. Sizce bu ilişkinin önümüzdeki 10 yıl boyunca sürme ihtimali ne? (Lütfen 1-5 arası bir sayı yazarak belirtiniz: 1= çok düşük, 5= çok yüksek)____ |
| 5. İlişkinizden ne kadar memnunsunuz?<br>(5 üzerinden bir puan veriniz:1= hiç memnun değilim, 5= çok memnunum) ____ |

Aşağıdaki sorular sizden A, B ve C Kutularında belirlemiş olduğunuz aynı-cins ve karşı cinsten arkadaşlarınızı ve sevgilinizi karşılaştırmanızı istemektedir. Lütfen size uygun olan sütun / sütunları kullanarak soruları yanıtlayınız. (Eğer karşı cinsten arkadaşınız veya devam eden duygusal bir ilişkiniz yoksa yalnızca kendi cinsiyetinizden arkadaşınız için olan soruları yanıtlayınız.)

Lütfen, adı geçen arkadaşlarınız ve (geçerliyse) sevgiliniz için D Kutusundaki soruları yanıtlayınız.
Bu sorularda "sosyal çevre", arkadaş ve akraba çevrenizden, görüştüğünüz ve kendinize yakın hissettiğiniz kısmını ifade etmektedir. "Bu kişi" ile kast edilen ilgili sütunların başında belirtilen arkadaşınız ya da sevgiliniz; "ilişki" ile kast edilen de yerine göre, arkadaşlığınız ya da duygusal ilişkinizdir.

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1= neredeyse hiçbirini | 2=çok azını | 3= bir kısmını | 4= çoğunu | 5= neredeyse tamamını |

**Kutu (D)**

| | Aynı cins arkadaş | Karşı cins arkadaş | Sevgili |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Bu kişi sosyal çevrenizin ne kadarını tanıyor? | | | |
| 2. Sosyal çevrenizin ne kadarı bu kişiyle görüşüyor? | | | |
| 3. Sosyal çevrenizin ne kadarını bu kişi yoluyla edindiniz? | | | |
| 4. Sosyal çevrenizin ne kadarı bu ilişkiyi biliyor? | | | |
| 5. Bilenlerin ne kadarı bu ilişkiyi destekliyor? | | | |
| 6. Siz onun sosyal çevresinin ne kadarını tanıyorsunuz? | | | |
| 7. Onun sosyal çevresinin ne kadarı ile görüşüyorsunuz? | | | |

Lütfen aşağıdaki olumlu ve olumsuz durumların üç ilişkiniz için ne derecede geçerli olduğunu her maddenin yanına 1 ile 5 arasında sayılar yazarak belirtiniz. Sayıları yazarken aşağıdaki ölçeği kullanınız:

1= hiç 2= çok seyrek 3= bazen 4= sık sık 5= büyük ölçüde

**Kutu (E)**

| | Aynı cins arkadaş | Karşı cins arkadaş | Sevgili |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Onunla birlikteyken eğlenir veya rahatlarsınız | | | |
| 2. Bazen bazı işlerinize yardım eder | | | |
| 3. Ondan duygusal destek alırsınız | | | |
| 4. Ondan yararlı bilgi veya akıl alırsınız | | | |
| 5. Onunlayken sinirlenirsiniz | | | |
| 6. Onunlayken sıkılırsınız | | | |
| 7. Onunla boş yere zaman harcadığınızı hissedersiniz | | | |

Lütfen aşağıdaki davranışları yapma sıklığınızı her davranışın yanına 1 ile 5 arasında bir sayı yazarak, belirlemiş olduğunuz üç ilişkiniz için ayrı ayrı belirtiniz. Sayıları yazarken aşağıdaki ölçeği kullanınız.

1= hemen hemen hiç 2= çok seyrek 3= bazen 4= sık sık 5= hemen hemen hep

**Kutu (F)**

| | Aynı cins arkadaş | Karşı cins arkadaş | Sevgili |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Birlikteyken neşeli olmaya gayret etmek | | | |
| 2. Nazik davranmak | | | |
| 3. Ona iyilikler yapmak, önemsediğimi göstermek | | | |
| 4. Hediyeler almak, sürprizler yapmak | | | |
| 5. Espriler yapıp güldürmek, şakalaşmak | | | |
| 6. Onu rahatsız eden taraflarımı değiştirmeye çalışmak | | | |
| 7. Sinirleneceğini ya da üzüleceğini bildiğim davranışlardan kaçınmak | | | |
| 8. Duygularımla ilgili açık olmaya çalışmak | | | |
| 9. Başkalarına anlatmadığım şeyleri anlatmak, sır vermek, güvenmek | | | |
| 10. İlişkideki sorunları tartışmak | | | |
| 11. Tavsiye vermek ya da almak | | | |
| 12. Gerektiğinde yardım etmek | | | |
| 13. Onu yargılamadan dinlemek | | | |
| 14. Zor zamanlarında destek olmak, rahatlatmak | | | |
| 15. İhtiyaçlarını gidermeye çalışmak | | | |
| 16. Sevdiğimi söylemek | | | |
| 17. Ortak arkadaşlarla vakit geçirmek | | | |
| 18. Tanımadığım arkadaşlarını da kabul etmeye çalışmak | | | |
| 19. Sarılmak, öpmek, kucaklamak, dokunmak | | | |
| 20. Ailesiyle iyi geçinmek | | | |
| 21. Mektup yazmak, kart atmak | | | |
| 22. Konuşmaya vakit ayırmak | | | |
| 23. Görüşemediğiniz zamanlar sık sık telefonla konuşmak | | | |
| 24. İltifat etmek, güzel sözler söylemek | | | |
| 25. Anlayışlı olmak, gerektiğinde taviz verebilmek | | | |
| 26. Üzüntüyü, mutluluğu paylaşmak | | | |
| 27. Haber ve başarıları paylaşmak, gününün nasıl geçtiğini anlatmak | | | |
| 28. Borç ve iyilikleri ödemek | | | |
| 29. Yokluğunda onu savunmak | | | |

Aşağıda, arkadaşlıklar ve duygusal ilişkilerde yaşanan bir takım anlaşmazlık ve tartışma konuları verilmiştir **[Kutu (G)]**. Lütfen, bu konularda yaşadığınız tartışmaların ilişkilerinizi ne derece olumsuz etkilediğini 1-5 arasında bir sayı yazarak belirtiniz.
Eğer bu konuda hiç tartışma yaşamadıysanız ya da ilişkinizi etkilemediğini düşünüyorsanız **1** yazınız. Eğer olumlu bir etki söz konusuysa, lütfen ilgili yere sadece bir "**+**" (artı) işareti koyarak belirtiniz.

1= bu konuda tartışmamız olmadı
ya da ilişkimizi etkilemedi
2= ilişkimizi biraz etkiledi
3= ilişkimizi etkiledi
4= ilişkimizi oldukça etkiledi
5= ilişkimizi tamamen etkiledi

**Kutu (G)**

| | Aynı cins arkadaş | Karşı cins arkadaş | Sevgili |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Farklı fikirler ve görüşler | | | |
| 2. Farklı kişilikler | | | |
| 3. İhmal, arayıp sormamak | | | |
| 4. Kıskançlık | | | |
| 5. Çekememezlik | | | |
| 6. Eleştirmek | | | |
| 7. İlgi göstermemek | | | |
| 8. Güvenini zedelemek | | | |
| 9. Yeterince görüşememek, vakit ayırmamak | | | |
| 10. Haksızlık yapıldığı hissi | | | |
| 11. Rekabet | | | |
| 12. Kızdıran ya da sinir bozan bir takım davranışlar | | | |
| 13. Yanlış anlama ya da alınma | | | |
| 14. Diğer arkadaşlar, ilişkiler* | | | |
| 15. Üstüne fazlaca düşmek* | | | |
| 16. Cinsellik* | | | |
| 17. Eski sevgililer* | | | |

* Not: Bazı konular yalnızca sevgilinizle olan ilişkinizde geçerli olabilir. Her halükârda, bu durumu lütfen gerekli sütunlara ilgili seçenek olan **1**'i (tartışmamız olmadı / ilişkimizi etkilemedi) yazarak belirtiniz.

Lütfen, adı geçen arkadaşlıklarınız ve (varsa) duygusal ilişkinizde çıkan anlaşmazlık ve tartışmaları gidermek için başvurduğunuz yöntemlerin sıklığını aşağıdaki ölçeğe göre 1 ile 5 arasında bir sayı yazarak belirtiniz.

1= hemen hemen hiç  2= çok seyrek  3= bazen  4= sık sık  5= hemen hemen hep

**Kutu (H)**

| | Aynı cins arkadaş | Karşı cins arkadaş | Sevgili |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Tatsızlık çıkmasını önlemek için tartışmaktan kaçınırım | | | |
| 2. Onun isteklerine öncelik veririm, söylediklerini kabul ederim | | | |
| 3. İkimizin da bazı isteklerimizden fedakarlık ederek orta noktada uzlaşmamız için uğraşırım | | | |
| 4. Üçüncü bir kişinin fikrini alırım ya da ondan arabuluculuk, konuşma vb. gibi yardım isterim | | | |
| 5. Benim isteğimin olması için ikna gücümü kullanırım | | | |
| 6. Bir şey yokmuş gibi davranırım ancak bozuk atarım ya da surat asarım | | | |
| 7. Alttan alırım ve anlayış gösteririm | | | |
| 8. Tartışmayı (konuşmayı) ertelerim / daha uygun bir zaman kollarım | | | |
| 9. Anlaşmazlığa düşmemek için konuyu kapatır ya da değiştiririm | | | |
| 10. Kendi görüşümü ya da fikrimi kabul ettirmek için bastırırım | | | |
| 11. İkimizin de kabul edebileceği bir çözüm bulabilmemiz için isteklerimi açıkça ortaya koyarım | | | |

**Anketimiz burada sona ermiştir. Yardımlarınız için çok teşekkür ederiz**. ☺

# APPENDIX B

## QUESTIONNAIRE (English Version)

This study is about friendships and romantic relationships*. The purpose is to study the similarities and differences among romantic relationships and same-sex and opposite-sex friendships. We would first like you to answer a few background questions about yourself. Then, we would like you to respond to questions about your existing romantic relationship and same-sex and opposite-sex friendships.
Thank you for your cooperation.

**Demographic Information**

1. Nationality: _____ Ethnicity: _____
2. Age: _____ Parents' marital status: _____
3. Marital status: _____
4. School: _____
5. Department: _____
6. Sex: Female ___ Male ___

7. Mother's education:

| | |
|---|---|
| Primary school degree..... | ☐ |
| Secondary school degree..... | ☐ |
| High school degree..... | ☐ |
| College/University degree..... | ☐ |
| Post-Graduate degree..... | ☐ |
| None..... | ☐ |

8. Father's education:

| | |
|---|---|
| Primary school degree..... | ☐ |
| Secondary school degree..... | ☐ |
| High school degree..... | ☐ |
| College/University degree..... | ☐ |
| Post-Graduate degree..... | ☐ |
| None..... | ☐ |

9. Sexual preference:
___ Heterosexual (Sexually interested only in opposite-sex partners)
___ Homosexual (Sexually interested only in same-sex partners)
___ Bisexual (Sexually interested in both same-sex and opposite-sex partners)

Romantic relationship: involves a relationship in which there is an emotional attachment, physical attraction and maybe but not necessarily sexual involvement with a person that you are in love with or that you like. This relationship is characterized by a feeling of intimacy and some degree of commitment.

**Please answer the following questions in Box (A) for a particular close same-sex friend of yours. In the following sections (*throughout the questionnaire*), please refer to this particular friend and your relationship with him/her while answering the questions on "same-sex friendship".**

**Box (A):** *For a particular close same-sex friend*

| |
|---|
| 1. How long have you been friends with him/her? _____ |
| 2. How would you evaluate the quality of your friendship?<br>(Please give a score over 5 points: 1= poor, 5= excellent) ___ |
| 3. How close are you? (Circle a number)<br>1=very close 2=close 3=somewhat close 4=not close 5=not close at all |
| 4. What is the probability of this friendship lasting 10 years from now?<br>(Please indicate by a number between 1 to 5: 1= very low, 5= very high) ___ (Give a percentage between 0-100)____ |
| 5. How satisfied are you with your friendship?<br>(Please give a score over 5 points: 1= not at all satisfied, 5= very much satisfied) ___ |

10. Do you have an opposite-sex friend that you have never been (and are not, for the moment) romantically involved*?
Yes ___ No ___

5. **If your answer to the above question is "YES", then please think of a particular close opposite-sex friend while answering the questions in Box (B). In the following sections (*throughout the questionnaire*), please refer to this particular close opposite-sex friend and your relationship with him/her while answering the questions on "opposite-sex friendship".**
6. **If your answer to the above question is "NO", please go to question 11.**

**Box (B)** *For a particular close opposite sex friend with whom you are not romantically involved*

| |
|---|
| 1. How long have you been friends with him/her? _____ |
| 2. How would you evaluate the quality of your friendship? (Please give a score over 5 points: 1= poor, 5= excellent) ___ |
| 3. How close are you? (Circle a number) 1=very close 2=close 3=somewhat close 4=not close 5=not close at all |
| 4. What is the probability of this relationship lasting 10 years from now? (Please indicate by a number between 1 to 5: 1= very low, 5= very high) ___ |
| 5. Would you like to be romantically involved with this friend? (Please indicate by a number between 1 to 5, where 1= not at all, 5= definitely) ___ |
| 6. Do you think your friend would want to be romantically involved with you? (Please indicate by a number between 1 to 5, where 1= not at all, 5= definitely) ___ |
| 7. What, in your opinion, is the probability of a romantic relationship with this person? (Please indicate by a number between 1 to 5: 1= very low, 5= very high) ___ |
| 8. How satisfied are you with your friendship? (Please give a score over 5 points: 1= not at all satisfied, 5= very much satisfied) ___ |

11. Do you have an ongoing romantic relationship* with an opposite-sex partner?
Yes ___ No ___

9. **If your answer to the above question is "YES", then please think about the particular person and your romantic relationship while answering the questions in Box (C).**
10. **If your answer to the above question is "NO", then continue from page 3 and omit the questions related to romantic relationships in the following sections.**

**Box (C)** *For a particular ongoing romantic relationship and partner**

| |
|---|
| 1. How long have you been in this romantic relationship? _____ |
| 2. How would you evaluate the quality of your romantic relationship? (Please give a score over 5 points: 1= poor, 5= excellent) __ |
| 3. How close are you? (Circle a number)<br>1=very close 2=close 3=somewhat close 4=not close 5=not close at all |
| 4. What is the probability of this relationship lasting 10 years from now? (Please indicate by a number between 1 to 5: 1= very low, 5= very high) ___ |
| 5. How satisfied are you with your relationship?<br>(Please give a score over 5 points: 1= not at all satisfied, 5= very much satisfied) ___ |

The following questions request that you compare your relationship with the same-sex friend, opposite-sex friend, and your romantic partner (if applicable) which you have determined in Boxes A, B, and C. Please use the column(s) appropriate for you. (If you do not have an opposite sex friend or a current romantic relationship, answer the questions for your same-sex friend only.)
Please answer the questions below in **Box (D)** for your given relationships. "Social network" comprises of the portion of your friends and relatives that you interact frequently and feel close to.
1= almost none, 2= very few, 3= some, 4=most, 5= almost all

**Box (D)**

| | Same sex | Opposite sex | Romantic partner |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. What extent of your social network did this person meet? | | | |
| 2. What extent of your social network interacts with this person? | | | |
| 3. What extent of your social network did you meet through this person? | | | |
| 4. What extent of your social network knows about this relationship? | | | |
| 5. What extent of those who know about the relationship approve it? | | | |
| 6. What extent of his/her social network did you meet? | | | |
| 7. What extent of his/her social network do you interact with? | | | |

Please indicate indicate how often the following costs or benefits apply to your three relationships by writing a number between 1 and 5 next to them. Use the 5-point scale below and write the appropriate numbers beside each item for each relationship:

1=almost never 2=rarely 3=sometimes 4= often 5= almost always

**Box (E)**

| | Same sex | Opposite sex | Romantic partner |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. You have fun and/or relax when you are with this friend | | | |
| 2. There are times you receive help with a task when you are with him/her | | | |
| 3.You receive emotional support from this friend when you are with him/her | | | |
| 4. There are times when you receive useful information and/or advice when you are with this friend | | | |
| 5. You feel irritated when you are with this friend | | | |
| 6. You feel bored when you are with this friend | | | |
| 7. You feel like you are wasting your time when you are with this friend | | | |

Please indicate how often you engage in the following behaviors in your three relationships by writing a number between 1 and 5 next to each behavior. Use the 5-point scale described below and write the appropriate numbers beside each behavior for each relationship that applies to you.

1=almost never 2=rarely 3=sometimes 4= often 5= almost always

**Box (F)**

| | Same sex | Opposite sex | Romantic partner |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Try to be cheerful when we are together | | | |
| 2. Be courteous | | | |
| 3. Make favors, show that I care | | | |
| 4. Buy presents, make surprises | | | |
| 5. Make jokes, make him/her laugh | | | |
| 6. Try to change my behaviors and habits that disturb or irritate him/her | | | |
| 7. Avoid doing things that I know will make him/her annoyed or distressed | | | |
| 8. Try to be open about my feelings | | | |
| 9. Tell him/her things that I do not tell others | | | |
| 10. Discuss the problems of the relationship | | | |
| 11. Give or take advice | | | |
| 12. Help when necessary | | | |
| 13. Listen to him/her without judging | | | |
| 14. Comfort and support in his/her difficult times | | | |
| 15. Try to satisfy his/her needs | | | |
| 16. Say that I love him/her | | | |
| 17. Spend time with mutual friends | | | |
| 18. Try to accept his/her friends that I do not know | | | |
| 19. Hug, kiss, touch | | | |
| 20. Get along well with his/her family | | | |
| 21. Write letters or cards | | | |
| 22. Spare some time for talking | | | |
| 23. Frequently talk on the telephone when we cannot see each other | | | |
| 24. Compliment, say nice things | | | |
| 25. Be understanding, compromise when necessary | | | |
| 26. Share joys and sorrows | | | |
| 27. Share news and successes with each other, tell about your day | | | |
| 28. Repay debts and favors | | | |
| 29. Stand up for him/her in his/her absence | | | |

Below are given some conflict topics that are experienced in friendships and romantic relationships. **[Box (G)]**
Please indicate the significance with which the conflicts you experience on each topic affect your relationships negatively by scoring it between 1 and 5 according to the scale given below. If you do not experience any conflict on a given topic, or if the conflict does not affect your relationship, please put the number **1**. If there is a positive effect, then please indicate by putting a "**+**" (plus) sign in the appropriate cell.

1= not a conflict issue
or not affected
2= somewhat affected
3= affected
4= quite affected
5= completely affected

**Box (G)**

| | Same sex friend | Opposite sex friend | Romantic partner |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Different ideas and opinions | | | |
| 2. Different personalities | | | |
| 3. Neglect, not calling sufficiently | | | |
| 4. Jealousy | | | |
| 5. Envy | | | |
| 6. Harsh criticism | | | |
| 7. Not showing sufficient concern / attention | | | |
| 8. Betraying trust | | | |
| 9. Not sparing the time for him/her | | | |
| 10. Feeling of unfair treatment | | | |
| 11. Competition | | | |
| 12. Annoying or irritating behaviors | | | |
| 13. Misunderstandings or being overly sensitive or touchy | | | |
| 14. Other friends or relationships* | | | |
| 15. Over-attentiveness or pampering* | | | |
| 16. Sexuality* | | | |
| 17. Ex-boyfriends or ex-girlfriends* | | | |

* Note: These topics may only apply to romantic relationships and not to your same and opposite sex friendships. **In any case**, please indicate this by writing **1**, which is "**not a conflict issue or has no effect**"

Please indicate the frequency of the behaviors that you use in order to manage the conflict that arises between you and your friend(s) and romantic partner by writing a number between 1 and 5 using the scale below:

1= almost never 2= rarely 3= sometimes 4= often 5= almost always

**Box (H)**

| | Same sex friend | Opposite sex friend | Romantic partner |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. I refrain from open discussion in order to prevent unpleasant exchanges | | | |
| 2. I give priority to his/her wishes and accept his/her point of view | | | |
| 3. I try to arrive at a compromise and agree on a midway solution | | | |
| 4. I ask for the opinion or help of a third party or ask for mediation | | | |
| 5. I try to use my persuasion power to get my own way | | | |
| 6. I behave as if nothing has happened; but behave in a distant and sullen manner | | | |
| 7. I show consideration and give in to his/her wishes | | | |
| 8. I postpone the conflict (discussion) / wait for a better time | | | |
| 9. I either drop the issue or change the topic to avoid conflict | | | |
| 10. I try to dominate to have my opinion or point of view accepted | | | |
| 11. I bring out my concerns openly in order for us to find a solution that is agreeable to both of us | | | |

# APPENDIX C

# CORRELATION TABLES

| | Duration | Network | Reward | Costs | Quality | Pos. | Open. | Assur. | Jo. Ac. | Differ. | Neglect | Dmg B. | Domin. | Acc. | Avoid |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Duration** | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Network** | 0.02 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Reward** | 0.19* | 0.46* | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Costs** | -0.05 | 0.02 | 0.25** | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Quality** | 0.22* | 0.31** | 0.59** | 0.24** | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Pos.** | 0.04 | 0.24** | 0.46** | 0.15 | 0.24* | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | |
| **Open.** | 0.11 | 0.39** | 0.54** | 0.30** | 0.34** | 0.50** | 1.00 | | | | | | | | |
| **Assur.** | 0.10 | 0.32** | 0.63** | 0.33** | 0.53** | 0.67** | 0.62** | 1.00 | | | | | | | |
| **Jo. Act.** | -0.00 | 0.44** | 0.65** | 0.28** | 0.47** | 0.55** | 0.65** | 0.68** | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| **Differ.** | -0.10 | -0.07 | -0.39** | -0.40** | -0.42** | -0.26** | -0.25** | -0.49** | -0.18 | 1.00 | | | | | |
| **Neglect** | 0.03 | -0.22* | -0.40** | -0.28** | -0.43* | -0.10 | -0.08 | -0.30** | -0.26** | 0.57** | 1.00 | | | | |
| **Dmg B.** | -0.10 | -0.12 | -0.40** | -0.32** | -0.43** | -0.16 | -0.10 | -0.37** | -0.14 | 0.71** | 0.71** | 1.00 | | | |
| **Domin.** | 0.05 | 0.10 | -0.10 | -0.21* | 0.03 | -0.08 | -0.05 | -0.07 | -0.06 | 0.07 | 0.00 | 0.10 | 1.00 | | |
| **Acc.** | -0.11 | 0.02 | 0.20* | 0.04 | 0.08 | 0.39** | 0.11 | 0.31** | 0.13 | -0.19* | -0.10 | -0.19* | -0.07 | 1.00 | |
| **Avoid** | 0.10 | -0.06 | -0.10 | -0.12 | -0.14 | 0.19* | -0.05 | 0.04 | -0.06 | -0.06 | -0.02 | -0.01 | 0.13 | 0.30** | 1.00 |

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table C1. Correlations of Variables of Interest in Same-sex Friendships

| | Duration | Network | Reward | Costs | Quality | Pos. | Open. | Assur. | Jo. Ac. | Differ. | Neglect | Dmg B. | Domin. | Acc. | Avoid |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Duration** | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Network** | 0.19* | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Reward** | 0.08 | 0.59** | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Costs** | 0.17 | 0.19 | 0.34** | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Quality** | 0.33** | 0.52** | 0.50** | 0.28** | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Pos.** | 0.17 | 0.51** | 0.54** | 0.19* | 0.46** | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | |
| **Open.** | 0.17 | 0.56** | 0.59** | 0.19* | 0.53** | 0.54** | 1.00 | | | | | | | | |
| **Assur.** | 0.15 | 0.59** | 0.63** | 0.29** | 0.49** | 0.73** | 0.67** | 1.00 | | | | | | | |
| **Jo. Act.** | 0.17 | 0.59** | 0.60** | 0.16 | 0.46** | 0.70** | 0.69** | 0.77** | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| **Differ.** | -0.11 | -0.07 | -0.23* | -0.35** | -0.16 | -0.14 | -0.12 | -0.18 | -0.08 | 1.00 | | | | | |
| **Neglect** | -0.02 | -0.08 | -0.14 | -0.25** | -0.05 | -0.10 | -0.01 | -0.10 | -0.08 | 0.62** | 1.00 | | | | |
| **Dmg B.** | -0.09 | 0.03 | -0.14 | -0.32** | -0.16 | -0.14 | -0.09 | -0.17 | -0.03 | 0.67** | 0.61** | 1.00 | | | |
| **Domin.** | 0.06 | 0.03 | -0.03 | -0.21* | 0.03 | 0.03 | 0.01 | 0.05 | -0.01 | 0.08 | 0.08 | 0.03 | 1.00 | | |
| **Acc.** | 0.03 | 0.14 | 0.13 | 0.11 | 0.28** | 0.33** | 0.16 | 0.29** | 0.21* | -0.04 | -0.09 | -0.10 | -0.15 | 1.00 | |
| **Avoid** | -0.05 | 0.00 | 0.01 | -0.02 | -0.00 | 0.13 | 0.08 | 0.07 | 0.03 | -0.02 | 0.09 | -0.05 | 0.11 | 0.34** | 1.00 |

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table C2. Correlations of Variables of Interest in Cross-sex Friendships

| | Duration | Network | Reward | Costs | Quality | Pos. | Open. | Assur. | Jo. Ac. | Differ. | Neglect | Dmg B. | Domin. | Acc. | Avoid |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Duration** | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Network** | 0.31** | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Reward** | 0.20* | 0.41** | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Costs** | -0.22* | -0.16 | 0.11 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Quality** | 0.31** | 0.51** | 0.69** | 0.10 | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Pos.** | 0.25** | 0.27** | 0.31** | 0.10 | 0.35** | 1.00 | | | | | | | | | |
| **Open.** | 0.35** | 0.41** | 0.54** | -0.12 | 0.49** | 0.50** | 1.00 | | | | | | | | |
| **Assur.** | 0.28** | 0.43** | 0.42** | 0.20* | 0.43** | 0.64** | 0.53** | 1.00 | | | | | | | |
| **Jo. Act.** | 0.18 | 0.40** | 0.52** | 0.23* | 0.43** | 0.52** | 0.54** | 0.63** | 1.00 | | | | | | |
| **Differ.** | -0.07 | 0.02 | -0.28** | -0.33** | -0.25** | -0.10 | -0.09 | -0.08 | 0.01 | 1.00 | | | | | |
| **Neglect** | 0.16 | -0.19* | -0.43** | -0.27** | -0.27** | -0.18 | -0.15 | -0.31** | -0.29** | 0.51** | 1.00 | | | | |
| **Dmg B.** | 0.15 | -0.15 | -0.42** | -0.28** | -0.22* | -0.03 | -0.13 | -0.19* | -0.11 | 0.57** | 0.71** | 1.00 | | | |
| **Domin.** | 0.02 | 0.31** | 0.05 | -0.34** | 0.21* | 0.04 | 0.16 | 0.05 | 0.01 | 0.25** | 0.08 | 0.13 | 1.00 | | |
| **Acc.** | 0.05 | 0.17 | 0.16 | 0.17 | 0.21* | 0.48** | 0.22* | 0.38** | 0.18 | -0.12 | -0.13 | -0.10 | -0.14 | 1.00 | |
| **Avoid** | 0.18 | 0.21* | -0.10 | 0.01 | 0.10 | 0.28** | 0.02 | 0.16 | 0.01 | -0.00 | -0.08 | 0.02 | -0.07 | 0.45** | 1.00 |

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table C3. Correlations of Variables of Interest in Romantic Relationships