

**My Friendship Story: Tanzanians' Tales of Friendship analyzed through Knapp's  
Relational Model**

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**Dedication**

My Lord; Christ Jesus

You have brought me further than I imagined possible. Thank you for teaching me we can never  
out imagine you.

To my parents: Charles Mutumba & Gertrude Mutumba

For the assiduous effort you have invested into who and where I am today. I appreciate your  
sacrifices tremendously.

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## Abstract

From both theoretical and practical considerations, there is a critical need to study friendship development processes within different sociocultural worlds, because today's world has become a crossroads for a diversity of cultures. To date, research in friendship development mainly addresses cognitive and psychological implications to the process and rarely gives attention to the stages/ processes individuals of different sociocultural backgrounds experience as they build friendship. The present study aimed at comparing friendship development in a non-Westernized group to the stages of relational development suggested by a Western psychological theoretical framework. Tanzanian friendship experiences were analyzed through Knapp's Relational Model to see what patterns emerged as Tanzanians developed friendships. It aimed at gauging how similar or dissimilar the pattern that emerged was to the escalation stages listed in Knapp's Relational model. The purpose of this undertaking was to address the deficiency in the literature in the area of friendship formation, especially in non-Western social worlds. A quantitative study was employed in which a 14-item survey was used to ask participants to compare their friendship experiences to the characteristics found in the theoretical framework's escalation model. The data provide a rich picture of the underlying cultural influences on how individuals develop friendships within the Tanzanian sociocultural world. The model is validated, but only to the extent that its structure is universal, but the meanings and significance of the stages deviates from what the model suggests. The findings of this study extend previous research by broadening understanding of relationship development within different sociocultural worlds. **Keywords:** Friendship, Friendship Development, Friendship Formation, Sociocultural Worlds, Tanzanian Friendships, Tanzanian Friendship Development Experiences. Knapp's Relational Model, Coming-Together Stages, Escalation Stages.

## My Friendship Story: Tanzanians' Tales of Friendship analyzed through Knapp's Relational

## Model

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## Chapter 1 - Introduction and Overview

In a world that is now a crossroads for various cultures, it is clear that McLuhan's "global village" becomes a reality with each passing day. As such, there is a need to understand one's "global neighbors." It has been said many times and in many ways that in order to influence and make connections with people, there is a need to develop relationships in ways that are suited to the environment and individuals with whom one seeks to establish shared experiences. The researcher proposes that this can be achieved through the study of specific people groups and their relational experiences within a particular sociocultural environment. This communication study seeks to explore how individuals in a non-western context i.e. an East African group: Tanzanians develop friendships. Before examining at this phenomenon, it is important explain the ideas surrounding friendship, friendship development, and the need for the study thereof.

Relationship development, like many other human experiences, can be understood through the comparison of individual experiences. For the purposes of this study, relationship development and all its categories, especially friendship, will be defined as the study of stages that identify and develop understanding about the communication experiences that interpersonal communicators experience with regard to intimacy levels (Beebe et al. 28).

Developing relationships with an understanding of context and individuals in that context, can contribute to effective communication and in the long term, the establishment of strong ties. This involves understanding other people's experiences. Friendship development as a part of human interpersonal relationships is nuanced, complex and influenced by a number of factors. Human relational experiences suggest the interaction of sociological, psychological, and cultural anthropological systems as factors in friendship development (Desai and Killick 6). To further complicate the matter, these factors are multilayered, which makes it complicated to

subjectively characterize human relational experiences as similar. Desai and Killick note, “Friendship is interesting precisely because it evades definition: the way in which friendship acts to express fixity and fluidity in diverse social worlds is exciting and problematic for the people that practice friendship, and for the social scientists who study it” (2).

It is because of the above sentiment that this study pursues the study of friendship development from a cultural perspective. In any given social-world, friendship development or the formation thereof is likely to take on a different form as dictated by the rules and structure of the state social-world. Desai and Killick point out that there is diversity in the meanings of friendship across cultures, thereby complicating both the understanding that it is “characterized by autonomy, sentiment, individualism, lack of ritual and lack of instrumentality” (1). They support the idea of studying friendship development from an anthropological cultural perspective presenting the criticism that the previously mentioned qualities of friendship in literature are the requirements of modern Western friendship which might not necessarily apply to other social worlds.

“Friendship” as a term is plagued with problems of definition and an extensive study that explores the development of friendship outside of Westernized contexts would be valuable to producing more rounded definitions of the term. It is an important subject of study in a world in which individuals seek to build social, political, diplomatic and economic connections in cultural contexts different from their own.

The pursuit of such a study is very important for potential international students and missionaries crossing from one culture into a different one. It is important that a realization is made of the differences that appear in relational development across cultures. Aspects of relational development in a Westernized contexts may seem foreign and uncomfortable to

individuals foreign to the culture. Likewise, the sharing of personal information during first meetings might be foreign to a Westerner. There is a need to understand individuals and their sociocultural context in order to develop and adapt one's relationship building styles to a sociocultural context. Brandt and Heuser point out,

The idea of an affective interpersonal relation that goes beyond the ties of family or kin can be found across different cultures and historical epochs and emerges in varying forms of socio-cultural expression. Indeed, different conceptions of friendship can be found within a single society depending on such diverse factors as age, gender, and social status. (146)

This suggests diversity in friendship and friendship formation and the need to study its meanings in different contexts.

*Purpose and scope.* Friendship is a universal experience that permeates and precedes, not all, but many human relational experiences. Often times, friendship crosses the boundaries of kinship, caste, and even age and gender. Friendship is important to people as Desai and Killick note, "The hope of individuals entering into friendships is to cultivate social relations of permanence, endurance, and irreversibility" (110). This means, in friendship, individuals seek to create friendships like kinship, and espouses the central role of friendship in human relational development, which places the idea at the center of academic exploration and study from different perspectives.

People use their friendships as a means of integrating into social life. Individuals integrate into society by way of relationships they make and how they go about doing that. While the different aspects of friendship such as its varied meanings and its influences on individual lives have been the focus of different studies, there still remains a gap in literature as to the

processes involved in friendship development in regard to different sociocultural worlds.

Various historical research and more recently Hays (1985), Fehr (1996), Hruschka (2010), and Desai and Killick (2010), agree that friendship is an understudied phenomenon. Fehr notes that the study of the idea of friendship, its developmental processes and related ideas is scant and has only recently been given attention in scientific study (27). Similarly, Hays argues that there is deficiency in social psychology literature regarding the way real friendships develop in natural settings. He points out that most research has aimed its focus on the variables that influence the attraction of individuals to each other at the initial meeting. He notes, “Very little data exists on the processes by which individuals in the real world move beyond initial attraction to develop a friendship; even less is known about the way developing friendships are maintained and how they evolve over time” (305). Hruschka says there is a need to explore friendship out of the classical view and the literature is lacking in this area. Desai and Killick similarly suggest that there is a need to study friendships in the context of, “Spaces, histories and ideologies that allow and shape its constitution as a particular type of relationship (in the context of other types of relationships) in different places in the world” (1). This would provide a better understanding of the idea of friendship as opposed to dissecting it.

It is important to understand that friendship is not a subjective experience which falls under one construction for all individuals, to do so would present numerous pitfalls. Desai and Killick present one, ‘By subsuming friendship under a general category of relatedness, we miss what friendship does differently to kinship for the people who practice it, and the different ways in which the two general forms of relationship might be constituted in a particular society’ (5).

Based on these findings, it is essential to explore friendship and its processes by looking at the experiences of individuals from different social worlds. Knapp and Vangelisti note that

within every society and culture merge guidelines or “teachings” that influence how individuals behave in different types of relationships (96). So, challenging the norm where friendship development is concerned expands the idea to include unique descriptions such as “ritual friendships” as studied by Desai in central India where families are the involved in arranging ritual friendships between young men or boys. “Men will arrange friendships between their sons or grandsons, establishing and maintaining ties between themselves and their families” (31). Situations like these present interesting research questions as to how these individuals progress through this particular kind of friendship.

Examining friendship in various contexts is significant in today’s “global village” where individuals are constantly seeking to build relationships outside of their own cultural contexts. Understanding the friendship development styles of social worlds different from a one’s traditional archetypes is fundamental in providing know-how in building socio-economic/ political relationships around the world. Brandt and Heuser point note, “The increasing interconnectedness of our contemporary world(s) has led to a new variety of social relationships, in which individual actors engage in diverse and flexible ways” (146).

Desai and Killick state that friendship studies have taken usually taken one of three paths: looking ‘through’ friendship instead of ‘at’ it, relegating it to ‘the informal negative to kinship’s formal positive’ and ‘purifying’ or romanticizing it (199). They suggest that, diverse kinds of directions can, and should be taken in studying this phenomenon. Looking through friendship, rather than at it, they warn presents the danger of:

“[a]n over confident assumption that we can form mutually comprehensible bonds of friendship in the field as a means of gathering data, of unraveling the mysteries of such well-established topics as, say, Kinship and ritual. Friendship in its

ubiquity can be taken for granted as a methodological lens, a tool through which we gain “in depth” information about the world we study. (198)

Relegating friendship as “the informal negative to kinship’s formal positive” gives it a non-institutionalized status, and deems it the “poor relation” of kinship without giving it what is due it as a relational experience (199). Finally the idea of purifying or romanticizing friendship, which Desai and Killick note is most influential in Westernized discourse, presents friendship as an idea that, “contains positive characteristics rather than merely existing as a kind of reverse parasite in relation to other social roles” (201).

The present study seeks to apply an American theoretical framework which proposes five stages when developing or building interpersonal relationships to the friendship experiences of the Tanzanian people group, whose culture exists outside of a Westernized context.

The study is important because a disparity exists regarding the processes of friendship development in societies outside of Westernized social contexts. Most literature has explored the idea of friendship, and friendship development from a Western perspective. While friendship is a universal social process, it might manifest differently in practice and beliefs in different places on the globe. Hruschka maintains that most studies have provided the psychological and social processes that characterize the aspects that surround friendship—including feelings of closeness, love, and trust, as well as ways of communicating these feelings. He suggests that while these provide a fine base for the concept, most studies:

[T]hat permit such a fine grained understanding of feelings, behavior, and communication among friends are concentrated in a narrow range of societies (i.e., the U.S. and other industrialized nations), making it difficult to extend these

findings to understand what friendship might be like for the vast majority of humans living today and those who have lived in the past. (12)

It is important to study and compare relational experiences whenever culture is a variability in communication. Gamble & Gamble indicate that, it is crucial to annihilating intercultural ignorance and fostering cross-cultural understanding in the development of relationships with individuals from outside of one's own social worlds:

To engage in effective interpersonal communication with members of other groups, it is important to enhance your knowledge of the norms and rules that characterize person-to-person interactions. The lessons taught to you by your culture are not necessarily the lessons others have been taught by theirs. (22)

In choosing the Tanzanian people group for the study, the research though it worthwhile to study the phenomenon of friendship development by drawing on the experiences of individuals that come from a part of the world, East Africa, similar to the researcher's, and one where the relational social processes are familiar. The researcher also chose to include both male and female participants in the study to examine the how friendship development relates to the issue of gender and the impact of the latter on the process. When looking at culture's influence on the way individuals develop friendships or any interpersonal relationship, it would be remiss to avoid gender because as Gamble and Gamble note, "Culture also shapes gender, and gender shapes communication" (24). This suggests that, depending on the socio-cultural environment, different roles are assigned to men and women which dictate the way they move through the relational stages an idea the study will be examining.

In response to this academic reality, the researcher with a perspective that friendship development ought to be studied by comparing experiences of different socio-cultural worlds to

expand the understanding of its formation and meanings, shall in the present study, with the aid of a survey, conduct a statistical analysis in which individuals from a non-western country are asked to narrate friendship development experiences through the pattern presented in the escalation stages of Knapp's relation model.

According to West and Turner, Knapp's relational model is a suitable framework to study interpersonal relationship development, because it makes allowances for the scientific, humanistic and value systems in examining the progress of a relationship (63).

Knapp's relational model has been used as an instrument of study in multiple relational contexts. As one of the stage models, it proposes stages of interaction in relationships which include five coming-together and coming-apart stages. The present study will focus on the coming-together stages, that is, initiating, experimenting, intensifying, integrating and bonding. The model suggests a unique "bonding" stage which most studies have assigned to romantic relationships only, which happens when partners undergo a public ritual announcing to the world a contract or commitment i.e. an engagement or marriage. But in a friendship, the bonding stage, would constitute a formal, sometimes legal, announcement of the relationship is made. Examples include "best friend" ritual, or business partnership agreement and few relationships reach this level (Galvin & Cooper 124).

In the next chapters, a literature review is presented. It reviews a range of literature on friendship, including the definitions attached to the term, the contexts in which friendship processes and development have been studied, literature on the theoretical framework, and how it has aided other studies is presented. The study will be guided by the following research questions:



### **Research Questions**

RQ 1. Is there a recognizable pattern in the formation of the individuals' friendship experiences in Tanzanian culture?

RQ 2. How similar or dissimilar is the Tanzanian friendship formation pattern to the coming-together stages of Knapp's relation model?

This particular topic is not only worthy of academic exploration, but is important in a broader global community that has individuals increasingly crossing into different sociocultural worlds to build all kinds of strategic relationships.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

The literature review presented features literature on friendship, the concepts which surround the term, and studies that have researched friendship development. It then introduces Knapp's ideas on how interpersonal relationships operate and moves on to give a full description of Knapp's relational model. Studies that have applied the model to different aspects of interpersonal relationships are presented, and research on friendship in African contexts as well as a description of the Tanzanian sociocultural world are reviewed.

### Friendship

*Definitions and Meaning.* Rawlins defines a close friend is defined as “somebody to talk to, to depend on and rely on for help, support, and caring, and to have fun and enjoy doing things with” (271). He asserts that friendships, like most interpersonal relations are connections characterized by the ongoing communicative management of dialectical tensions, such as those between idealization and realization, affection and instrumentality, and judgment and acceptance (271).

Weiss asserts that like marriage, friendship is a relationship individuals choose: It is voluntary. Friends come and stay together primarily through common interests, a sense of alliance, and emotional affiliation (21). But, Rawlins argues that “unlike marriage, friendship lacks religious and legal grounding, rendering the creation, maintenance, and dissolution of friendship an essentially private, negotiable endeavor.... friendship “implies affective ties” (12). Rubin further supports the idea by positing that, “[I]n friends, we seek trust, honesty, respect, commitment, safety, support, generosity, loyalty, mutuality, constancy, understanding, and acceptance” (28). Tillmann-Healy advances the idea that friendships are not only emotional resources but also provide identity resources. She maintains that, “[C]onceptions of self and

other are formed, reinforced, and altered in the context of ongoing relationships. Friendships tend to confirm more than contest conceptions of self because we are prone to befriend those who are similar to ourselves, those more “self” than “other” (731). Rawlins affirmed this idea:

Throughout life, friendships have a pronounced likelihood of developing within (rather than across) lines such as culture, education, marital and career status, and socioeconomic class. One consequence of this, is that friendships are more likely “to reinforce and reproduce macro level and palpable social differences than to challenge or transcend them. (274)

Fehr advocates for expounding on the meaning of the term friendship by examining definitions of the relationship in conceptions given by both social scientists and laypeople. She says, “There are virtually as many definitions of friendship as there are social scientists studying the topic” (5). This creates the puzzling question of whether the subject can be studied with no real definition attached to the term, but maintains that the answer is to be found, largely in one’s theoretical position.

In the classical view, previously agreed upon criteria and traits would define the relationship, and if it met those terms, it would be defined as such. Fehr states that this is where the problem lies in scientific literature; agreed upon, precise features defining friendship do not exist. (18). As observed by Allan, “[F]riend’ is not just a categorical label, like “colleague” or “cousin”, indicating the social position of each individual relative to the other. Rather, it is a relational term, which signifies something about the quality and character of the relationship involved” (16). Faced with this complication, Bradac; Wilmot and Shelen propose looking at friendship as a “prototype” concept and in a “more relaxed standard” keeping in line with the

unique and changing nature of friendship (141-162; 413-431). This supports Fehr's claim of examining friendship based on how social scientists and lay-people conceptualize the idea.

Regarding expert opinions, Fehr found draws from various research to make her point. She notes that, Hinde perpetuate the ideas of continuity built in a series of encounters and interdependence between two individuals who have the ability to impact each other which Fehr claims speaks to the "grows over a period of time" nature of friendship. But these she terms as generic definitions of the relationships. More specifically social scientists. Hays (1988), Reisman (1979), Wright (1984), Donelson and Gullahorn (1977), Rawlins (1992), and Allan (1989), have defined friendship as having a voluntary, intimate and personal, affectionate, assistance or mutual involvement/ shared activity, caring, equal nature in which two parties intentionally seek one another due to mutual attraction. Hartup presented a diverging and interesting conceptualization of friendship, in which he defines it as a "spontaneous" activity as opposed to a voluntary one where individuals seek, "proximity in the absence of strong social pressures to so" (11), implying friendship is an impulse of a socially non-oppressive moment. To these descriptions, Davis and Todd add the idea of "reliable alliance" used synonymously with "trust," an idea which resonated with Donelson and Gullahorn who also add loyalty and durability of the relationship over time to the definition of friendship. Davis and Todd exclusively introduce the traits authenticity, self-respect and conflict to the nature of friendship. Davis and Todd's definition of authenticity is closely mirrored in Wright's definition, "A relationship involving voluntary or unconstrained interaction in which the participants respond to one another personally, that is, as unique individuals rather than as packages of discrete attributes or mere role occupants" (119). This suggests that each friendship, like a fingerprint, has no parallel, an idea uncommon when describing friendship. Fehr asserts that the conflict element indicates that

friendships have stressors, which require individuals to engage in “maintenance efforts to preserve” it (8). Fehr maintains that most social scientists define friendship on the basis of what constitutes a friendship which could be argued against by defining what friendship is not.

Considering the layman’s conceptions of friendship, Fehr presented three groups: children, adolescents, and adults. Fehr employs these groups on the basis of Fischer’s work, which indicated “people use the term friend “loosely and often” different individuals have varying ideas in mind when the term is mentioned depending “on the age and to a lesser extent, the gender of the person asked” (8).

Concerning children, Fehr’s compilation of research revealed that children were in possession of a concept of friendship early on in life in which “[T]he typical features were concrete, observable characteristics” (9). But as children grow older, their conception of the idea of friendship becomes more abstract. The research did not reveal if the concrete features were completely abandoned or merged and co-existed with the abstract ones (9). In adolescents, Fehr found that the most important principles of friendship were, loyalty and intimacy. She notes that, “[I]t appears that once these features emerge, the concept solidifies with few age-related changes thereafter” (11). La Gaipa’s study reflects this idea. Among adults, the ideas on the concept of friendship included reciprocity in the form of dependability, caring, commitment, and trust. Also included and most frequent were: compatibility, openness, acceptance and similarity which crossed the lines between young adults and middle-aged adults. (210-13).

Two interesting aspects of friendship are introduced: levels of friendship and ideal friendship, which indicate a more complex cognitive process that defines adult friendship. Levels of friendships (mentioned in order of significance) include best friends, close friends and good friends. In all these levels, authenticity is the most valued trait (14). Fehr’s research in ideal

friendship procured interesting results. When it came to the ideal male friend women and men had similar attributes, i.e. honesty, loyalty, cooperation, etc. Males and females differed on the ideal female friend, with the men citing attributes that they valued in a male friend like honesty, loyalty and cooperation, while the women favored a good temperament, sacrificial, witty, and loyalty as traits of the idea female friend. While the ideals vary, the main themes attached to ideal friendship were “reciprocity” and “similarity” (14). This suggests that any two individuals who carried these traits were a potential match for an ideal friendship. Fehr posited that it is notable that there are similarities to be found in the definition of the idea of friendship between the experts and ordinary people, but concepts of friendship are shaped by different characteristics, such as age (16). The idea of studying the formation of friendships based on the various characteristics that are found in human experiences is in line with the current study which seeks to study friendship traits and formation from a socio-cultural perspective.

When individuals seek companionship with others, they have a concept of friendship already framed by experiences, which are preconceived ideas that are present within any social situation, which dictate the traits that they seek. Once these traits are observed in another individual, this may be the catalyst needed to start developing a friendship. It was important to examine the aforementioned ideas on friendship because people bring these notions prior to the initiating stage of the relationship, and seeing some of these characteristics in a person makes them a potential candidate for the stage of initiation.

*Friendship Formation.* The literature suggests that relational development is influenced by both personal and contextual factors and provides various models of friendship development. Friendship formation can and has been examined through a variety of perspectives to lend understanding as to how friendships develop.

In order for friendship, or any interpersonal relationship to exist, there must be a process in which the interactions of multiple variables lead two individuals into seeking out the other. Fehr asserts that when individuals are forming friendships, varied factors intertwine to create a setting in which an initiation process is instigated. First, it is fundamental that the two individuals meet, and for that to happen, they must share the same physical environment, which will be a prelude to making contact. This increases their chances of building a friendship (67).

Factors like residential proximity, sharing the same work and school space increase likelihood of people meeting. Likewise, individuals who have a broader social network are more likely to make more friends with individuals who are connected to those they know, that is, the probability that two individuals will meet increases to the extent that their social networks overlap. Once these individuals meet, Fehr says numerous additional dynamics are added to the process of friendship formation since not all people one meets are destined to make one's friendship group (69). On an individual level, each person will scrutinize the suitability of the other individual in what she terms as exclusion tests, drawn from Rodin's criteria of deciding whom individuals want as a friend and who they do not. This basically entails scrutinizing the other individual for dislikable qualities that point to his/her unsuitability as a friend.

Rodin maintained that "exclusion judgments precede inclusion judgments; we decide whom we don't want to be friends with before we decide whom we do want as a friend" (32). This process is termed as "dislike and disregard" criteria. If an individual has a characteristic one dislikes or is missing one that is desired, they are mostly likely to be discarded from the pool of possible friends. Also, Rodin suggests that "[W]e never like people who meet our dislike criteria regardless of what likeable characteristics they may possess" (32). This plays a key role in the early stages of relationship formation.

The second kind of exclusion or disregard entails no particular dislike of a person's character, just a perception that they would not make suitable friends. This is usually made on the premise of race, educational background, age, and manner of dress. Rodin claims that these "enable us to operate on actuarial or 'best-guess' strategies so that our energy and attention are not expended fruitlessly on people we are unlikely to like" (37). Ultimately, before making friends, individuals eliminate unlikely candidates before moving on to those they wish to include, which is executed on the basis of perceived mutual attractiveness, social skill, absence of shyness and individual similarities in more than one way.

Fehr asserts this is not the end. At this stage, situational factors may play a role in whether the friendship moves on or not: "Two people are more likely to develop a friendship if they anticipate ongoing interactions, if they are dependent on one another, if they see one another frequently, and if each person's 'friendship dance card' still has some room on it" (69).

Finally, Fehr mentions dyadic variables as a means of advancing friendship formation in which individuals like each other well enough and are prepared to sequence the appropriate depth and breadth of self-disclosure. While Fehr disseminates valuable information on friendship development, she like most researchers, provides no sequence through which individuals move progress in the formation of a friendship, just the conditions that surround the coming together of the relationship.

Hruschka suggests another element needed in a friendship development context: building defenses. He suggests that since there are many ways a friendship can go wrong, an important element of cultivating friendships is avoiding and deterring bad behavior (25). Like most researchers, he, too suggests that in the initiation of a friendship there are multiple interaction



contexts that provide opportunities to meet other people, and that is where it starts; the two individuals have to meet.

At that initial meeting, Hruschka says many social variables, such as wealth, occupation, and ethnicity interact to cause individuals to segregate among the individuals one meets. Being thrust in the same context is not enough. Individuals must be driven to wanting to cultivate a friendship, “Partners must also be motivated to interact with each other over the long term...indeed simply knowing that a person likes *you* is often enough to increase your liking for him or her” (149). This is aided by initial mutual attraction: “Mutual attraction serves a self-reinforcing context, one in which both partners have an interest in continuing to interact over time” (150). Mutual attraction, he asserts, creates incentive for future interactions in which individuals acquire more knowledge about the other person, build trust and adjust themselves and their motivations toward the benefit of each other. Mutual attraction has great implications on the future of the relationship where Hruschka says, “Moreover, mutual attraction gives some guarantee of repeated interaction on the future, an expectation that makes people, even relative strangers more likely to help one another, to trust one another and to cooperate” (150). This all happens when individuals first meet.

Once individuals have cemented their agreeableness, they then move on to engage in behavior that draws them closer to each other and feels prosocial. Hruschka maintains that they will increase the subjects of their communication and share more personal information with each other which usually leads into feeling more affiliated with the other person. Individuals will then engage in a kind of “framing” of the relationship in terms of “we” or “us,” a move mostly intended to isolate outsiders, characterized by the assigning of people to arbitrary groups, gossiping about others, or manipulating the perceived similarity between two people, which can

manifest in name giving. Another way persons grow closer is if one or both invoke the name of another good friend—invoking friendship. They feel connected by that individual, and using the term “friend” to address the other person, too, is shown to increase feelings of friendliness, as it speaks to liking the other person or esteeming them. This means “[T]hat people have many techniques at their disposal to frame a friendly situation and to compel a partner to start behaving in a way that might begin a friendship” (155).

Hruschka does a fine job of describing the dynamics of initiating a friendship and growing into the relationship, but he does not state how individuals move from one point to the other or what motivates changes in the relationship.

Adams and Blieszner noted that it is important when exploring friendship processes and development to take into account the sociological and psychological perspectives. They suggest an integrative conceptual framework in which the social structural and psychological aspects of the individual, merge to shape behavioral motifs which in turn influence friendship patterns (dyadic and network structure and phases). Dyadic and network structures are presumed to affect and influence each other during the interactive friendship process. The integrative framework is built on the basis of structural and cultural contexts, and therefore calls for an understanding of the diversity of experiences of friendship, and of influences on friendship patterns. They contend that when examining friendship, the interacting effects of social structure and psychological disposition as manifested in, and expressed through the effects of being a particular gender, age, race and class in a particular structural and cultural context must be considered. One friendship must not be treated as equivalent to another; this then lends a new means of understanding friendship development and why some individual interactions differ from those of other (163-184).

Friendship development has been examined in regards to computer mediated communication and electronic media influenced relationships—a growing phenomenon in today's tech-saturated world. These factors influence the stages of friendship formation differently when compared to face-to-face interactions.

Chan and Cheng compared offline and online friendship qualities at different stages of relationship development. They surveyed 162 Hong Kong internet users to identify two friends: one whom they interacted with face-to-face and the other through the internet. Participants were asked to describe the qualities of their offline and online friendships. They found that offline friendships involved more interdependence, breadth, depth, code change, understanding, commitment, and network convergence than online friendships. It was however discovered that although the qualities of both online and offline friendships improved as the duration of the relationship increased, the differences between the two types of friendships diminished over time. Furthermore, contrary to the evidence typically found for offline friendships, the qualities of cross-sex online friendships were higher than that of same-sex online friendship. These results suggest that the influence of the structural and normative constraints typically found in face-to-face interaction may be different in the online setting (305-320).

Sias et al. investigated the influence of information communication technologies and workplace friendship dynamics. Employee reports were used to identify factors that influenced the initiation of friendship with a coworker, patterns and perceptions of communication with their workplace friend via different communication methods. Results showed that personality, shared tasks, and perceived similarity were the most important factors to coworker friendship initiation, and the importance of physical proximity to workplace friendship is diminishing in the electronically connected workplace. Also, face-to-face interaction for workplace friendship

initiation and maintenance is primary. E-mail, phone calls, and texting also contributed immensely to interaction among workplace friends. The amount of time spent telecommuting affected workplace friendship initiation and communication. Finally, there were apparent generational differences with respect to internet-based communication methods (253-279).

New media, such as email and mobile phones have made it easier to build and maintain relationships over distances. Utz inspected which media was used often by individuals building and maintaining long-distance friendships. Principal emphasis was applied to the comparison of email and phone. Drawing from media choice theories like Media Richness Theory that assume that media can be classified according to their richness and that people choose the medium best fitted to the affordances of a specific task, the phone was identified as the richer medium preferred over email in the case of maintenance of long-distance friendships. It was easier to express emotions and to give immediate feedback via phone than via email. Email is an asynchronous medium, and communication via email is therefore independent of space and time. It can also be argued that email is preferred over the phone because it makes it easier to communicate across different work schedules or even time-zones.

In two studies conducted within the Netherlands and in Germany, media use in long-distance friendships was measured. Across both studies, email was the most frequently used medium. In Study 1, an interesting asymmetric influence of closeness of the friendship emerged. The closer the friendship, the more emails were written in total, but the less the relative use of email. Instead, the percentage of phone calls increased. Study 2 aimed to replicate and explain this finding and assessed also the content of the phone call or emails. Whereas the intimacy of the emails did not change with increased closeness of the friendship, the intimacy of the phone calls increased with increasing closeness of the friendship. This result indicates that

people use email primarily for staying in touch, whereas important personal matters are still discussed on the phone (700-713).

Another aspect that emerges in friendship development is similarity. It plays an important role in the development of any relationship. Friendship is no different. Griffin and Sparks examined the predictors of future closeness in non-romantic friendship pairs through a four-year long study. Their participants comprised 45 pairs representing male-male, female-female, and male-female (platonic) friendships. The first phase of data collection took place in 1983, and the follow-up study took place in 1987 and included 93 percent of the original subjects. The results revealed no significant predictors for closeness among female-female or platonic pairs. Several significant predictors emerged for male-male friendships, including status similarity, proficiency at password, prior roommate status, the number of topical areas that partners avoided in normal conversation, and geographical distance. The results support the notion of overall partner similarity as an important predictor of continued friendship (29-46).

Selfhout, Banje, and Meeus examined the idea of similarity as proponent to friendship development in dyadic mutual adolescent best friend interactions and explored the role of gender as a moderating factor in this similarity. The participants in this questionnaire-form study included 267 Dutch adolescent same sex best friends (mean age = 14.58 years). They found that both sexes displayed colossal similarity to their mutual best friend in the Big Five personality traits extraversion and agreeableness. Additionally, “only the girls were more similar to their mutual best friend than randomized pairs in problem behavior and perceived relationship characteristics” (45). In general, similarity seemed to play a larger role in mutual best friendships between girls than between boys (42-48).

Marmaros and Sacerdote too, using the number of emails exchanged between students from Dartmouth College, found that similarity in age, geographic closeness, race and interests increase the likelihood of two people becoming friends (85-117).

In regards to contextual factors, the most studied setting is the workplace. Sias, Smith, and Avdeyeva inspected employee reports of past friendships experiences with coworkers, which highlighted important development factors, and communicative changes as their friendships went through different transitions: acquaintance-to friend, friend-to-close friend, and close friend-to very close/almost best friend. Findings showed that in same-sex friendships, the influence of workplace contextual factors (for example sharing tasks and proximity) decreased and the influence of extra organizational influences increased as the friendships became closer. In cross-sex friendships, however, workplace contextual factors retained their importance over the development of the friendship, suggesting individuals in cross-sex friendships try to maintain the boundary between work and personal spheres by keeping their friendships defined as a “workplace” relationship (327-338).

In a study that explored factors and communication changes associated with the development of workplace friendships, Sias and Cahill analyzed interviews with 38 individuals, representing 19 peer friendships. Results indicated that peer friendships experienced three primary transitions: from coworker/acquaintance-to-- friend, friend-to-close friend, and close friend-to-almost best friend. The co-worker-to-friend transition was perceived to be caused primarily by working together in close proximity, sharing common ground, and extra-organizational socializing. Communication at this transition became broader, yet remained relatively superficial. The friend-to-close friend transition was associated primarily with sharing problems in one's personal and work experiences. Communication at this transition became

broader, more intimate, and less cautious. The close friend-to-almost best friend transition was associated primarily with life events, work-related problems, and the passage of time.

Communication became less cautious and more intimate; this was paramount in the joint construction of relationship perceptions, and highlighted the impact of the workplace context on friendship development (279-296).

Gender is important in determining who individuals are, and as such, gender influences on friendship formation have also been at the center of substantial research. Parker and Vries examined patterns of friendships for women and men in same and cross-sex relationship in a study where 95 women and 95 men undergraduates rated each of their closest friends, and rated themselves with each of those friends on a Relationship Grid, evaluating both structural dimensions (that is, age, sex, duration of friendship and frequency of contact) and affective dimensions (that is self-disclosure, appreciation, assistance, empathic understanding, deepening others' self-awareness, shared activity, authenticity, trust, control, responsibility, connectedness, empowerment of others and satisfaction). Results indicated similarity in the rankings of the importance of those dimensions in the friendships of men and women, and that same-sex friendships were more common and of longer duration than cross-sex friendships. Two broad patterns of differences emerged on the affective dimensions: relationships with men friends were less reciprocal than relationships with women friends, and men's same-sex relationships were characterized by less giving and receiving. This study suggests similarities and differences in the nature, meaning and perceived function of friendship for women and men, and illustrates the importance of studying people's conceptions of themselves and their friendships in the context of their specific real-life relationships (620-624).

Yamanaka investigated same-sex friendship development within a small group of three male and eight female freshmen by the case study method. The participants completed a questionnaire, which comprised the following scales: first, the rating of each of the group members on a 21-point-scale measuring liking, and second, the rating of the frequency with which the subjects interacted with each member on a six-point-scale. The questionnaire also included open-ended questions in which the students were asked to describe each member's noticeable behavioral events, personality, and so on. Results suggested these implications: the group structure based on "liking" found at the early stage did not prevail. That is, the number of persons whom the subjects liked increased as the time passed. On the contrary, the group structure based on "interaction frequency" continued for three months. In effect, the persons whom the subjects liked best were different from those whom they were always together with. It suggested that they had "doubled friendships" (96-100).

Reeder investigated the impact of gender role orientation on factors related to same- and cross-sex friendship formation. The participants were asked to complete a version of the Bem Sex Role Inventory in which each was to list their closest friends, the sex of each friend, and the closeness level of each relationship. They also indicated whether they prefer same- or cross-sex friendship. The findings suggested that gender role orientation affects inclination for cross-sex friendship, particularly the relative frequency of cross-sex friendship. Feminine men had a significantly higher proportion of cross-sex friendships than did masculine men, and masculine women had a significantly higher proportion of cross-sex friendships than did feminine women. A significant number of participants indicated that they did not prefer one sex or the other for friendship. Therefore, gender role orientation had no impact on levels of closeness in either same- or cross-sex friendship. (146-152).



Benenson and Christakos conducted interviews with 60 females and 60 males between 10 and 15 years of age about difficulties in current and past close same-sex friendships. Considering prior studies, they postulated that females' closest same-sex friendships would be more fragile than those of males. Analyses comparing only the closest same-sex friendship of the two sexes demonstrated that females' current friendships were of a shorter duration, that females were more distressed than males when imagining the potential termination of their friendships, that more females' than males' friends already had done something to hurt the friendship, and that females had more former friendships that had ended than males had (1123-1129).

Situational factors that influence and impact the formation of friendships present interesting research as well. One example is of individuals developing friendships with others living in different geographical locations. This presents interesting assumptions for interpersonal research: the development of relationships, commitment to relationships, and friendships. Johnson et al. explored the implications of long distance on friendship formation. They conducted an analysis that compared turning points in commitment changes in young-adult geographically close and long distance same-sex friendships. Results revealed high and fluctuating levels of commitment over the history of the friendships for both types. Over 80 percent of those having long distance friends reported their levels of commitment were currently increasing, rather than decreasing. In these long distance friendships, women were more likely than men to report nonlinear trajectories for their friendships, more downturns in commitment to their friendships, and more turning points related to changes in commitment to their friendships (400-415).

Friendship formation has also been explored from intercultural and cultural contexts. Sias et al. examined intercultural friendship development through an analysis of in-depth interviews.

Interviewees in the study described relationships with friends from cultures different than their own. The analysis revealed four factors that respondents felt influenced the development of their intercultural friendship: targeted socializing, cultural similarities, cultural differences, and prior intercultural experience (10). There were also several ways in which communication hindered the development of intercultural friendships: lack of fluency in a common language made conversation difficult, providing evidence of the uniqueness and complexity of communication in these relationships. These difficulties hindered, or slowed down the increased breadth and depth of discussion necessary for relationship development. Language barriers were particularly important during the initial stage of development. Nevertheless, these friendships succeeded, suggesting perhaps that difficult mechanics of communication such as language proficiency and accent do not unduly hinder friendship development (9-13).

Kudoa and Simkina similarly examined the perceptions surrounding the formation of intercultural friendship by drawing from the experiences of Japanese students studying at an Australian university. Through an interpretive analysis of individual interviews based on the students' concepts of friendship and identities, the following factors emerged as influential in the development of intercultural friendship: frequent contact, which is subdivided into propinquity and shared network; similarity of personal characteristics and age; self-disclosure, which is composed of spoken English skills and openness of communication; and receptivity of other nationals, involving the sub-factors of cross-cultural orientation and empathy (100-112).

Through ethnographic data from New Zealand and Indonesia, Brandt and Heuser examined the socio-cultural embeddedness of friendship. They analyzed individual friendship experiences of the New Zealand Maori and Indonesian actors giving specific consideration to the interrelation of socio-cultural background and individual practice both within and across cultural

boundaries. The data reflected the concurrence and deep entanglement of multiple notions of relatedness and interaction in both societies. In their cross-cultural friendships, indigenous actors often had to juggle different, and sometimes conflicting friendship conceptions and norms. The relatively informal and open character of friendship relations allows for the construction of difference and sameness across various social dimensions. Additionally, actors are actively engaged in different types of sociality to meet different needs, and these relationships enabled them to both deconstruct and reconstruct different socio-cultural identities (153-174). The study highlights the importance of a critical reading of friendship that accounts for the specific socio-historical and cultural setting, and proposes the expansion of the European ideal of friendship in favor of a more inclusive concept.

The studies presented display the contexts in which friendship formation can and has been examined. Presently, a preamble to the theoretical frame is presented in which the theorists presents movement through the stages that will make the basis of this study.

Knapp asserts that when relationships are developing or deteriorating, they are influenced by and happen within some broad dimensions of communication behavior. He identifies 16 juxtaposed dimensions, eight attributed to the growth stages and eight for the decay stages. First, is the Narrow-Broad dimension, which explains that as relationships grow, individuals move from restricted modes of communication into extensive exchange or range as they become more attached, but when the relationship is headed toward termination, the individuals in the relationship are continuously negligent of the relationship. Exchange becomes tapered and less interaction is experienced, i.e., “[W]hen both parties are bent on destroying the relationship, they do not see the need to broaden the scope of their interaction” (15). Knapp maintains that sometimes though, efforts to extending the breadth of interactions may be a process of pacifying

hostile situations by engaging in less threatening topics in order to salvage a suffering relationship.

The second dimension is the Stylized-Unique in which individuals address individuals they perceive as close to them in a special way or in a less formal manner than they would ordinary members of society, that is, “a more idiosyncratic communication system is adapted to the peculiar nature of the interacting parties” (15). When a relationship begins to deteriorate, the “uniqueness” disappears and “formalities of stylized” communication, e.g. handshakes and false starts, begin to manifest again as the special nature of the relationship has disappeared.

Third is the Difficult-Efficient dimension in which the more a relationship develops and more of the communicators’ layers are removed, communication experiences a growth in accuracy, speed and efficiency, while the decay processes has less effort put into exchanges, which precipitates more difficult communication and therefore less efficiency.

Another dimension is Rigid-Flexibility which pertains to the varied expression of ideas or feelings in communication. “The more advanced the stage of growth the greater the flexibility. In the early stages of growth, and the later stages of decay, there is a greater demand for standardization of communication involving fewer channels” (16).

The Awkward-Smooth dimension pertains to the level of integration in a relationship as it grows. When individuals become close, “predicative ability also increases” and there is a synchronicity to the relation as each party is aware of what role is to be played in the relationship (16). Earlier stages of growth and later stages of decay, however, are defined by an awkwardness in which parties are out of sync and are unsure of their place in a relationship.

The Public-Personal dimension is mostly associated with depth in a relationship. When individuals have just met or are in initial stages of the relationship they only reveal a “public” or

almost superficial self, but as the relationship grows, and greater intimacy achieved then they are more comfortable revealing the “private” self or the core of who they are. This is depicted in both verbal and nonverbal communication. When a relationship is decaying individuals will start to “shut away” the private self and disclose less (16).

The Hesitant-Spontaneous dimension notes changes in the beginnings of relationships where individuals are naturally inclined to be more restrained and cautious in interactions with others. There is limited information about the other, and therefore uncertainty in how to engage with each other. Increased hesitancy is also characteristic of deteriorating relationships and is seen as an effort to save the relationship or terminate it (Knapp 17). Close relationships however, depict “a sort of communicative spontaneity-an informality, an ease of opening up oneself, a comfort in entering areas of the other person, a relationship that flows and changes direction easily” (17).

The last dimension is the Judgment Suspended-Judgment Given dimension in which individuals’ initial interactions comprise numerous covert judgments but these are withheld at the early stages of interaction until the advanced stages in a relationship. It is stated that excessive negative responses between individuals merely acquainted speaks to little interest in the creation of a bond as individuals save free feedback (positive or negative) for individuals with whom a close relationship has been established, and there is limited inhibition. Deteriorating relationships on the other hand are characterized by negative judgments, and as the relationships sinks into further decay, and “participants will move toward the suspension of overt evaluation again” (17).

Knapp and Vangelisti state that, “Relationships are not static; they change and shift slightly or greatly over the years” (151). They hypothesize that relationships are profusely

dependent on face-to-face interaction. They suggest different ways movement through the stages happens. First, movement within the model is considered predictable and happens over a period of time. Within the model, relationship progression is essentially systematic and sequential. It is assumed that each preceding stage includes groundwork for the next stage, a continuum in which information abets the process and lack of information can cause disruption in the stages which could put the relationship at risk.

Movement can involve forward movement in which individuals weigh the benefits and costs of the escalating the relationship. Any decision to develop the relation further is a forward movement in the stages of coming together.

Relationships can also have backward movement. This is noted in any action aimed to deescalate intimacy. Relationships are experienced as a new place and location. Once a relationship has traversed a certain issue or milestone, it is not the same relationship and it has changed forever, and so have the individuals in that relationship. Knapp notes that, "The continuous nature of communication implies that friends or partners cannot go back to the way they were. This is because communication is a process- irreversible and unrepeatable" (152).

Movement may be rapid or slow. Positive interactions breed rapid forward moment, and this is characteristic of the early stages of interaction, and interactions that have time constraints. Progression is slower when only on party is interested in escalation.

Finally, dialectical tensions serve as background to each stage. Ongoing struggles to attain specific goals are present at each stage. Knobloch maintains that although stages can be skipped, movement is typically orderly and sequential. Indistinct boundaries surround the stages because some behaviors overlap.

The proceeding section gives a description of the theoretical framework, and looks at literature that depicts how the model has been applied to different interpersonal contexts.

*Knapp's Relational Model.* The relational stage model was coined by Mark Knapp, and it was developed to scrutinize systematic patterns, strategies, and stages of communication, which characterize the building and tearing down of interpersonal relationships. The model falls under what is known as the "stage/development theories" of interpersonal communication. These theories aim at studying the changes in relationships over time. Mongeau and Henningsen note that these are "theories that attempt to describe how people initiate, escalate and dissolve relationships" (363). They maintain that the purpose of these theories is to explain how and why changes emerge in different interpersonal relationships as individuals move from limited disclosure to increased disclosure.

Another notable theory in this category is Altman and Taylor's social penetration theory, which is very similar to Knapp's relational model. Welch and Rubin indicate that the model was indeed patterned after some principles of the social penetration theory and like that theory "incorporated the communication features of disclosure and depth, in which relationships are seen as advancing through increased disclosure and increased depth" (2). The theory presents four stages through which a relationship advances: orientation, exploratory affective exchange, affective exchange, and stable exchange. Fehr notes that this theory's, "[E]mphasis on self-disclosure processes makes it particularly relevant to when discussing the formation of relationships" (30). Knapp's relational model, having been grafted from parts of this particular theory, takes on a very similar approach exploring what kind of communication or "talk" happens at different stages.

Other theories that lend understanding to the process of relationship development are: Stephen Duck's relationship filtering model which suggests a set of filters through which choices are made about the level of relationship individuals wish to pursue with others. The first filter, sociological or incidental cues, describes the constraints placed on meeting people due to where one lives or works. In other words, given the individual's sociological location, there are some people one sees a lot of and others one never meets.

The second filter is pre-interaction cues, which posits that individuals gain information about people before ever having an interaction, which leads them to exclude or include individuals with whom they wish to develop a relationship. The third filter is the interaction cues. Here, as individuals interact with others, judgments are made about whether to include or exclude them from possible relationships. The last filter is the cognitive cues, which posits that at the deepest level, individuals make judgments about people based on their personality, and the degree to which they think it will match theirs. As individuals reach this level, they will start considering the each other "best/close friends" (665-86).

Levinger and Snoek's Levels of Pair Relatedness also introduces four levels of pair relatedness: zero contact, unilateral awareness, surface contact, and mutuality. In this theory, at the first stage, two people are not even aware of each other, but once in contact, Levinger and Snoek infer that there are three stages to building a relationship. Those stages move along seven dimensions, an idea duplicated in Knapp's Relational model that also says that as relationships grow and change, there are eight communication dimensions that change. Levinger's ABCDE Model is like Knapp's in that it is developed to extend the pair-relatedness model to include the deterioration and dissolution of relationships as seen in Knapp's de-escalation stages.



Rivas also suggests a model toward the study of friendship selection through which friendship formation is modeled on the basis of a series of recurring acts of cooperation within a set of heterogeneous players. The model would analyze friendships on the basis of three fundamental factors: friends help each other, there is reciprocity in the relationship, and individuals typically pick a few friends. This model further asserts that, without assuming any taste for similarity, the more different two players are, the less likely they are to become friends. (528-538). These theories and studies establish the idea that interpersonal relationships of any kind move through specific processes, and that at each process, various variables interact to give the relationship different a texture.

Knapp introduces what he calls the interaction stages, which he establishes as characteristic of the growth and decay of interpersonal relationships. He identifies 10 stages of coming together and falling apart, five for each category. For the purposes of this study, priority is placed put on the coming-together or escalation stages with a brief mention of the de-escalation stages. The interaction or escalation stages define all the processes enacted by individuals when they meet new people.

The first of the interaction stages is initiating. It is phatic, that is involves the use of conversational speech used to communicate sociability more than information, and involves all the mannerisms enacted when people first meet. It is a stage in which the other person is assessed for future interaction through the medium of personal stereotypes, prior knowledge of their reputation, and previous interaction. Welch and Rubin point out that “[A]ttraction and a search for an opening characterize this first level” (25). Knapp indicates that this is a stage critical for first impression formation, which is relatively short and happens in less than 15 seconds. Communicators will try to display their best attributes and observe others to reduce uncertainties

they are experiencing. The methods and messages used to navigate this first stage tend to vary by the nature of the relationship of the communicators, the time within which they can interact, the situational or normative constraints, and special codes of particular groups. Regardless, interaction is conducted with a good deal of caution and adherence to conventional formulas.

When communicators have through passed the initiation stage, then experimenting begins. This is a probing stage within which individuals make a further evaluation of each other or what Knapp terms “trying to discover the unknown.” Welch and Rubin state that “[c]ommunicators explore commonalities and generally increase breadth of topics, rarely delving into specific ones” (25). Small talk is very characteristic of this stage as it is a way to give communicators a chance to uncover more details about each other and extend the relationship’s current scope. Knapp indicates that at this stage the relationship is causal and places limited demands on the individuals interacting.

Communicators move into intensifying when they have achieved a certain familiarity with each other, this stage denotes a “close friends” relationship. It is characterized by increased depth of disclosure communication messages and behavior acknowledges that the relationship has progressed. Disclosure can happen within any topic area, but the most vital are the topics closely related to the relationship’s development. Topics expose communicators to vulnerability, and speech is more informal, defined by the personal plural “we” and “let’s,” and communicators most often will develop a personalized style of communication unique to them in the form of jargon and slang, all of which could be attributed private meanings. Furthermore, as the relationship intensifies, each person is unfolding his or her unique personality while simultaneously blending his or her personality with the others (20).

The next stage is integrating where the personalities of the individuals in the relationship are nearly meshed. Davis refers to this notion as “coupling” and describes it as, “[t]he extent to which each intimate tries to give the other his own self-symbols or to collect the other’s self-symbols measures the degree to which he wants to increase communion” (188). Individuals will take drastic measures for the relationship’s sake or are willing to come to satisfactory compromises for each other. As such, individuals’ verbal and nonverbal behavior distinguishes them as a pair and the lives merge. Davis points out, though, that not all individuality is lost at this stage. It is critical to display one’s distinctiveness, and this is still possible because the individual are bound together by stronger elements (21). Knapp’s summation of this stage is:

Thus, we can see that as we participate in the integration process we are intensifying and minimizing various aspects of our total person. As a result, we may not be fully conscious of the idea but, when we commit ourselves to integrating with another, we also agree to become another individual. (21)

The last step in escalation is bonding, in which some form of “public ritual that announces to the world that commitments have been formally contracted” is enacted (Knapp 21). It is the highest level of coming together or what is known as the “institutionalization of the relationship.” It is described by varied bonding rituals that characterize the numerous stages on the relationship. Knapp notes that “The normal ebb and flow of the informal relationship can be, and often is, viewed differently” (22). This is normally applied to mixed-sex relationships, and some bonding terms commonly used are, “going steady,” “engagement,” and ultimately “marriage” (21).

However, this stage could be applied to other interpersonal relations, to include, "best friend" ritual, kinship-like friendships, and/ or business partnership agreement. The consummation of which may involve promises, pacts and ritualistic commitment to the

relationship. Knapp asserts that this stage is a powerful force in changing the dynamics of the relationship, as the institutionalization of the relationships makes it difficult for one to break out of or take lightly. He says, “It is commitment to a common future, it is also a means to gaining social support for the relationship, and provides guidance for the relationships through specified rules and regulation” (22-23).

The model also addresses the stages on de-escalation, or “coming apart,” which take the sequence of differentiating in which individuals become “distinct or different in character” (Knapp 23). It is the main process of disengaging and is characterized by individualism. This stage is followed by circumscribing, in which information exchange qualitatively and quantitatively decreases. The relationship then declines into stagnating, in which it “remains motionless or inactive” and disintegrates into avoiding, where individuals eliminate physical proximity and any communication in the form of face-to-face or voice-to-voice is obliterated at all costs. (Knapp 25). Knapp asserts that: “[i]n a sense, then, avoiding suggests a much permanent state of separation than that communicated by most people in their everyday leave-taking” (26). At this point the relationship will proceed to terminating at which point the relationship completely comes apart and “conversations focus on farewell speeches” (Welch and Rubin 26). A substantial amount of research has incorporated Knapp’s relational model into the study of interpersonal relationships. It is important to note though, that literature applying the model to the study of friendship is meager.

Avtgis, West, and Anderson claimed that the model was largely undeveloped as an actual instrument of classification and ventured toward expanding the model through the creation of an inductive design depictive of cognitive, affective and behavioral dimensions (281). They advanced that relationships are more complex, and that there are other refined factors involved

which add subtle nuances to the stages of “coming together” and “falling apart.” Using focus groups, they tried to detect behavioral, cognitive, and affective dimensions indicative of the “staircase” model. The results showed a substantial existence of cognitive, affective, and behavioral aspects within each stage. Participants reported experiencing different thoughts, feelings, and engaging in different behavior at each stage. Also, different aspects of the cognitive, affective, and behavioral like, “discussing issues” “needing each other” manifested in more than one stage of the relationship creating an overlap situation. Interestingly some features such as “discussion of everyday things” were transcendent, crossing from the “coming together” into “falling apart” stages (285).

Baxter asserted that the disengagement of relationships, although a prevalent issue in interpersonal relationships, was usually the least studied. In order to provide a solution to the problem, she examined the model to find out if there was any validity in the model’s “Reversal Hypothesis,” which is the idea or expectation that, “[t]he dissolution process is simply the relational growth stages in reverse” (85). She asked individuals to recall their terminated relationships, or those that were in the process of decay. She mainly hypothesized that the reversal effect would be less prominent in familiarity based scopes of interaction than in other scopes of communication during the break down of a relationship. Indeed, she found that the reversal effect was particularized rather than global across communication dimensions. The aspects of communication most linked to one’s interpersonal knowledge of the other were less likely to succumb to reversals (89-96).

Knapp and Vangelisti emphasize face-to-face interaction as an important aspect of the relational interaction stages, but Fox, Warber, and Makstaller challenge the idea in their study of successive development of relationships through social networking sites (SNS). They applied

Knapp's relational stages model to the development of romantic relationships via Facebook, a popular SNS that is redefining how individuals in any kind of relationship interact. They explain that although romantic relations have always evolved in varied ways, "SNSs make it easier to cast information about the status of our romantic relationships to a wider network of people and to do so much more quickly than via traditional face-to-face" (722). The data revealed numerous confirmations that Facebook played a key role in users' romantic relationship development. The use of Facebook accelerated the initiation stage. While the initial interaction was offline, it could be continued online, where individuals mutually attracted to each other, would move into experimenting by collecting information about the other person by skimming their Facebook profile and "participants almost unanimously cited Facebook as their primary tool for interaction early in the experimenting stages of romantic relationships" (777). Facebook as a means of interaction was found to surpass traditional means of communicating such as phone calls and face-to-face. Facebook helped users escalate their romantic relationships because it proved to be "less direct and ego-protective than, say the traditional approach of asking for one's number" (778). Majority of couples also used Facebook in their integration and bonding stages. They announced their relationship status to their social groups by posting it on their Facebook timeline. It also spoke to commitment (interpersonal and social) to each other, which helped reduce uncertainty about one's availability in the social circle. Overall the use of SNSs,—Facebook in this case—did prove to be strong contender to the traditional forms of building a romantic relationship through Knapp's escalation stages.

Alberts stated that one of the principal ways to build relationships was through talk. He applied the first four initiation stages of Knapp's relational model to explore how heterosexual couples in 10 Harlequin romance novels used conversations to develop romantic relationships.

His intentions seemed directed to proving that at each stages of relationship building, messages are characterized by precise conversational features that enable the communicators to gain a certain perception of each other, which helps the relationship to move from one stage to another. He identified three major conversational features present in these novels' communication: face threatening acts (FTAs), meta-talk, and mitigation. Unlike in Knapp's initiation stages where a lot is done to protect "face" and individuals endeavor to display their most appealing side, in these scenarios conversation is characterized by FTAs that neglected a concern of self and other's face and meta-talk, which Albert calls unusual precursors to romance or any relationship at all. In stages two (experimenting) through to four, intensifying and integration conversations have limited FTAs/banter and more meta-talk instigated by the initiator of the FTAs as a means of making amends for the threat act or to soften the blow. The latter stages were characterized by intense mutual attraction, relational innuendo, and denial. However, innuendo became more explicit and direct. Also, the couple used less presupposition and more mitigation. Mitigation in the later stages was characterized by strategies intended to soften the declaration, "I love you" (134-137).

Dunleavy and Booth-Butterfield argued that idiomatic communication is a strategic and unique form of communication that is indicative of a close relationship. They investigated the relationship between idiomatic communication with solidarity and satisfaction to validate social penetration theory using Knapp's stages of escalation and de-escalation (Dunleavy 416). The findings showed that couples in de-escalation stages report less idioms and use idioms with less frequency than couples in the escalation stages. Couples in de-escalating stages use confrontation, nickname, and teasing-insulting idioms with more negative effects than escalating

couples. Finally, the use of idiomatic communication was found to be significantly related to solidarity and relational satisfaction.

Most research has used Knapp's relational model to study the romantic relationship context and suggested improvements that can be applied to the model. The model, however, is yet to be applied to the study of friendship formation as an interpersonal relationship in both Westernized and non-Westernized socio-cultural worlds. In consideration of this academic deficiency, the present study will analyze the developmental process of friendship among Tanzanians, an East African group of people, in an endeavor to scrutinize the validity of Knapp's escalation stages in the given context.

*The Tanzanian Socio Cultural World.* Tanzania is one of the East African community's five nations. It is slightly bigger than Venezuela. It consists of mainland Tanganyika and three low coral islands that lie off the coast in the Indian Ocean: Mafia, Pemba, and Zanzibar. About 45% of all Tanzanians are younger than age 15. Ninety percent of the population is African, coming from some 130 ethnic groups. Many of these groups are Bantu-speaking. The Nyamwezi-Sukuma (13 percent of the population) is by far the largest group. The merchant and trader populations are dominated by people of Lebanese, Palestinian, and Indian origin. Refugees from neighboring countries live in border. Kiswahili (also called Swahili), is the primary language. It is a mixture of various Bantu languages, Arabic, and English.

Tanzanian social systems are group oriented, regardless of ethnic affiliation. Individuals are expected to put themselves second to group welfare because group needs are considered more important than those of an individual. Consequently, Tanzanians are extremely polite and generous people, particularly in public. Any kind of verbal abuse or criticism, especially in public, is a major offense that negatively reflects on the person's upbringing and background.



Displays of negative emotion, except among close family and friends, are considered a sign of weakness and therefore highly inappropriate, especially among men (CultureGrams 2014).

Friendship studies, and especially friendship development research applied to African states or societies like Tanzanian, are scarce in literature. Most studies relate to peculiar practices surrounding friendship, its place in the cultural context or comparative studies on how friendships out of African socio- worlds are different from their Western counterparts.

Taking a social anthropology perspective of friendship, Tilo, Meier and Pelican examined the central dimensions of friendship in respect to African societies. They analyzed the relations of friendship to kinship, friendship to patron-client relations, and friendship in ritualized, and institutionalized structures. Their analysis portrays friendship in African settings as a cluster of social practices, comprising both emotional, and functional aspects and differing in its degree of intimacy. As a feature of social life, friendship is embedded in cultural, economic, political, and moral contexts, thus varying in its local practices and meanings (9-40).

Aguilar investigated friendship as a cultural, and specific notion within the geographical context of East Africa, and particularly within the cultural context of pastoral societies. She presents the idea that pastoral notions of friendship are mediated by different experiences of friendship present within a constant encounter between pastoral memories (traditions), pastoral diversification (modernity), and pastoral continuity (education). In an ethnographic study of the Boorana, three areas were explored in order to argue for a multi-vocal perception of friendship: the localized realm of household animal husbandry, the communication between pastoral friends outside grazing areas, and the friendship acquired with other non-pastoralists through participation in the social life of communities attached to churches and mosques. The resounding argument was that friendship as a social and human process is culturally and contextually

constructed, and cannot be equated with relations of self-conscious individualism, most predominant in Western societies. According to Aguilar, “The social importance of friendship within societies and groups of individuals varies, and does not necessarily conform to a liberal model of commodity value” (182).

### **Literature Summary**

The literature depicts diverse themes which comprise the idea of friendship and the formation thereof. From practical and theoretical perspectives, the study of friendship relationships is vital given the central role it assumes in human experiences. Decades of research can be cited to support the important role friendship takes among interpersonal relationships (Rawlins). To date, research on relational development has given minimal attention to the developmental processes associated with friendship relationships in Non-Western socio-cultural worlds. This situation needs rectifying given the integration of cultures in today’s “global village.”

The development of relationships by individuals by moving through different stages has many depictions in literature presented in quantitative forms. It is a precise way of investigating the complexities that surround and influence relational development and what that means for the players involved.

### Chapter 3: Methodology

Friendship can be studied through a number of avenues as illustrated by the literature review. While Knapp's Relational model has been used to discuss relational development, it has not been used as an investigative tool for examining the development of friendships in non-Westernized sociocultural contexts, and in this case Tanzanian friendship development. While the model includes both escalation and de-escalation stages, the study will only give attention to the escalation or coming-together stages of relational development. This is a simplistic and pragmatic approach which will allow the participants to draw comparisons between what Knapp's Relational model states about the development of relationships and their own friendship development experiences.

The methodology is presented in various sections which document the process through which the study was conducted. Listed in detail is a description of the sample population used in the study, how they were recruited, the ethical considerations, procedures, materials, measurement, instruments, and the manner through which the data analysis shall be conducted.

#### *Participants*

There were 21 participants in the study, 10 men and 11 women, from the Republic of Tanzania, an East African nation. Participants varied in age from 19-47 years. The majority of the participants (16) were students, between the 19-25 years of age. All but two reside in the United States currently. Participants were recruited via email, Facebook, and snowballing. This group was chosen on the basis that they did not have Western origins culturally, because the study is aimed toward understanding the development of friendship relations among people groups outside of a Westernized context. All participants conceded informed consent before proceeding with participating in the study.

### *Procedures*

Before the study was administered, it was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Liberty University. Qualtrics; a database building program; was used to build and administer the surveys via a personalized link, through which respondents gained access to the survey. Respondents completed the survey on a voluntarily basis. Participants were asked to watch a 7 minute video prior to completing the survey. The video explained Knapp's relational model in greater depth. The video highlighted features of the model that were not include in the survey. The participants were asked to give responses solely based on friendships experiences they have had with other Tanzanians. The survey was opened March 20, 2015, through April 5, 2015, and data collection was scheduled to ensue within any 24-hour period in that time frame.

### *Materials*

A video was used to explain the study to participants in detail and indicate to them what was required during the survey taking process. It also included a description of the relational model's escalation stages and the characteristics attributed to each stage. See video verbatim transcript in Appendix A.

The video was used for the purposes of adequately familiarizing the participants—among whom, none has had a communications background—with the model so that they could give accurate and effective responses to the survey questions.

The survey was made up of 14 questions, comprising of close-ended questions, opened-ended questions, and Likert-type scales. The survey was built in a manner that sought to examine any variation in the model and refine the framework to better reflect friendship development in Tanzanian culture. The following research questions will be the premise on which the study is based:

RQ 1. Is there a recognizable pattern in the formation of the individuals' friendship processes in Tanzanian culture?

RQ 2. How similar or dissimilar is it from the coming-together stages in Knapp's Relation Model?

The survey was built to answer these questions and the questions that comprised it were as follows:

1. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

The first question was a demographic question, which will required participants to identify their gender. This was useful in breaking down data to compare male and female responses to the model. Wyse notes that demographics such as gender are useful "to breakdown overall survey response data into meaningful groups of respondents. Once the survey data is collected, the data can be divided into various data groups based on demographic information gathered from the survey" (n. pag). Demographics are also typical trait of any population, in order to understand a socio-cultural context, socio-demographics like gender ought to be included in a survey looking at socio-cultural behavior.

2. The relational model being examined suggests 5 stages that define the coming together of interpersonal relationships:

**Initiating** involves all the processes enacted when you meet new people like attraction to the other person, effort put into first impressions, stereotyping, checking for interaction opportunity, using specific social codes to interact.

**Experimenting** involves moving from the unknown. Involves a lot of small talk. It is the discovery stage where you acquire more details about the other person. It is causal and relaxed. You especially try to find similarities through the sharing of cultural, sociological and psychological information.

**Intensifying** at this stage, the relationship status between individuals is labeled “close friends”. Interaction has more self-disclosure i.e. revealing secrets and intimate verbal and non-verbal actions. E.g. endearments, informal speech, asking for favors etc. more direct expressions of commitment appear)

**Integrating** to this stage, the term “*coupling*” is applied to the friendship here; individuals share close to similar attitudes, interest, opinions etc. social circles merge, wear each other’s identity through “intimate” trophies e.g. pictures, pins, friends have a heightened synchronicity in behavior.)

**Bonding** At this stage commitments are made. Friendship pacts, public rituals to announce relationship to social circle. Individuals are seen as a package).

Would you say this is a model you’ve seen duplicated when you made friends with other Tanzanians?

- Yes
- No

The second question briefly reviewed the model that participants had been exposed to in the video, and asked them whether it is identical to their friendship experiences. This question aimed at establishing if this is a process that the participants had identified in the experiences they had recalled. It answered RQ 1 by indicating how familiar the model was to the participants. Positive responses acknowledged the model’s validity, while a negative responses suggested

presence of factors that the model does not take into account. It also answered the first part of RQ 2 which sought to find out the similarities between Tanzanian friendship experiences and the model's escalation stages. Responses helped affirm the claims of the escalation stages as universal.

**3.** If you responded in the negative to question 3, which of these factors contributed to this?

- Some of the staged were skipped. Which stage(s) and why?
- Time, situational and normative constraints adjusted the model in my friendship experiences.
- Prior interactions with this person adjusted the model so that our friendship progressed in a different pattern. Give a brief description of the circumstances.
- Other. Explain.

The third question was aimed toward examining what factors contributed to altering the model's stages as participants move through the stages, and identifying aspects of relationship building which the model failed to take into account in its escalation stages. This question was included for those participants who gave negative responses in question 2. It provided answers for RQ 1 which examines the pattern which arises as Tanzanians build friendships. By extension, it gave answers to RQ 2 by showing how those factors that lead participants to converge or deviate from the model's escalation stages account for the similarities and differences to the model.

**4.** At which of the stage(s), would you say the friendship was at its most significant stage. (This a stage you consider the most important). Why?

- Initiating
- Experimenting

- Intensifying
- Integrating
- Bonding.

The fourth question was aimed toward understanding which stages, according to their description contributed the most to the development of the friendship and why. Responses provided answers to RQ 1 which was aimed at evaluating what pattern is prevalent in Tanzanian friendship formation experiences, but it could also validate/ discredit some of the claims made by the model about the importance of these stages.

**5.** Depending on the different circumstances surrounding your friendship and its development process, which stage(s) would you say was the most irrelevant? Why.

- Initiating
- Experimenting
- Intensifying
- Integrating
- Bonding

Question five served the same purpose as question four only in reverse. In identifying stages that are considered irrelevant in their friendship formation experiences, participants bring in to question the validity of some of the stages suggested by Knapp's stage model. It provided answers to both RQ 1 in identifying a pattern Tanzanian friendships take on, and part two of RQ 2 by showing the dissimilarities to the model, by identifying which stages don't match the friendship experiences. It also provides a rationale as to why the identified stages qualify as irrelevant.



6. In your friendship experiences how would you describe the progression from one stage to another stage?

---

	Very Slow	Slow	Average	Fast	Very Fast
<b>Initiating to</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Experimenting</b>					
<b>Experimenting to</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Intensifying</b>					
<b>Intensifying to</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Integrating</b>					
<b>Integrating to</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Bonding</b>					

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Question six sought to examine the pace at which participants moved through the stages. The model gives suggestions on long it takes to move through each stage, or moving from one stages to another. This question scrutinizes how long it takes Tanzanians to move from stage one to five. Responses to this question provided answers to both RQ 1 and RQ2 in that it shows a pattern of movement through the stages, and also shows whether it matches with Knapp’s suggested pacing through the stages.

7. Considering gender, which category of friendship would you say the model represents suitably and why?

- Same-Gender friendships

- Cross-Gender friendships
- Both
- Neither

Gender is a definitive characteristic of any individual. Gamble and Gamble note that, “To be and an “I” is to be gendered” (28) which greatly determines how individuals relate. Question seven sought to address the impact gender can have on how individuals move through Knapp’s relational model. The question was mainly aimed toward answering RQ 1 that seeks to establish the pattern that Tanzanian friendship formations take on, but could suggest interesting implications for future research.

**8. What would you say are the shortcomings of this relational model?**

Question eight was aimed toward answering RQ 2 as it seeks those characteristics of the model that Tanzanians will point out as lacking in the model or account for the dissimilarities which arise between the model and Tanzanian friendship experiences. This is critical to pointing out what needs modifying in the model.

**9. Have the friendships you have built with Tanzanians in the U.S taken on a different pattern from those you built with Tanzanians back home in Tanzania?**

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Question nine sought to establish the likelihood that different sociocultural environments breed different processes in developing relationships. Since the participants have built

friendships in both Tanzania and the United States, this is a valid question in establishing which sociocultural climate is more conducive for the model, this question sets the stage for question 10.

**10.** In which of the above contexts would you say the model was best executed and why?

- Friendships built in Tanzanian
- Friendships built in the US
- Both
- Other

Question 10 sought to establish in which sociocultural climate the model works best and why. Responses to this question, it was anticipated, would suggested implications for what it means to develop friendships in a Westernized and non-Westernized contexts, or the differences in individualistic and collectivistic cultures friendship formation experiences.

**11.** Do you feel that there are stages that should be added to this model based on your friendship experiences?

- Yes
- No

This question provided answers for both RQ 1 and 2 because it asked participants to adjust the model based on to their friendship development experiences. In this question they indicated whether there might be stages critical the friendship development that are missing from the escalation stages. Positive responses would mean the model depictive of Tanzanian friendship formation experiences, negative responses would suggests missing stages and therefore a need to alter the model. This question scrutinizes the appropriateness of the model to Tanzanian friendship formation experiences.

**12.** If you responded yes to the above questions, list a stage/ stages that you would suggest be added to the model and briefly describe what would characterize the stage and why.

This question provided answers to both RQ 1 and 2 by highlighting stages that are characteristic of the Tanzanian friendship formation process, and by showing how it diverges from what the model stipulates.

**13.** Would you suggest that some stages be removed from this model based on your friendship experiences?

- Yes
- No

Question 13 asked in reverse what question 11 asked. Responses to this question provided answers to RQ 1 which sought to identify which pattern arose as Tanzanians form friendships and RQ 2 that aims to understand where the model's escalation pattern and Tanzanian friendship formation experiences converge or diverge. A positive response would indicate that, according to Tanzanian friendship formation experiences, the model include stages that are unnecessary, and don't depict their experiences. This would suggest that there exists a different pattern in the way Tanzanians build friendships which differs from Knapp's escalation stages. A negative response on the other hand, would suggest a likeness to the model and a validation of the stages.

**14.** If your response to the above question was yes, identify the stage/ stages that you would suggest be removed from the model and briefly explain why.

- Initiating
- Experimenting
- Intensifying

- Integrating
- Bonding

This question gave participants the opportunity to identify those stages that should not be included in the model. This question answered both research questions, in that it identified a pattern that is reflective of Tanzanian friendship formation experiences, and it also reflected how those experiences diverge from Knapp's escalation stages.

As reflected by the survey questions, participants were asked to indicate whether they recognized the stages of Knapp's Relational model—the escalation stages—and if their friendship experiences had taken on a similar pattern. The study also examined emerging differences between the genders as they moving through these relational stages. As such, participants are asked to specify their gender, identify if the model best suited their same-gender or cross-gender friendships and why. After responses to these questions had been retrieved, the data analysis process followed, and was handled as follows:

#### *Data Analysis*

The results of the study in descriptive statistics, were presented in percentages (%) and graphs, which were pulled from the available reports for each item found on the survey from Qualtrics, a database for accumulating survey results, which abetted the study. The relationships and differences between the two groups was be evaluated using appropriate descriptive statistics. These tests will seek to expound on the compatibility of Knapp's relational model with Tanzanian friendship experiences, and how the model could be modified should the need arise. The results of the survey were examined to see if there were consistencies with material found in reviewed literature, mitigating noticeable but minimal patterns in the friendship development of

Tanzanians compared to those of Knapp's relational model to find the answers to the fore stated research questions.

The analysis from the reported data will aid the discussion of the study, as well as the conclusions, limitations of the study, and implications for future research.

## Chapter 4: Results and Discussion

In this section, the results of the study are presented. A discussion is presented as well of what is implied by the results.

### *Results*

Question 1 sought to establish the gender of the participant, a factor which would be key in the analysis of the results for gender differences. The survey was sent to 22 respondents and out of those 21 completed the study. Of the 21 respondents who completed the survey, 10 indicated that they were male, while 11 indicated they were female. So, 48% of survey takers were male and 52% were female.

The next 13 questions were asked in order to examine what pattern emerged as Tanzanians developed friendships, to verify how identical or divergent Tanzanian friendship formation experiences were in comparison to Knapp's escalation stages, in order to validate the model or disqualify it as regarding the development of friendships in this particular socio-cultural context. In question 2, respondents were asked indicate whether their friendship experiences were a duplicated in Knapp's relational model (Coming-together Stages). It gives clues to what stages and patterns Tanzanians have experienced when forming friendships and compares these to the Knapp's five escalation stages. Out of the 21 respondents, 18 (86%) responded in the affirmative; the model's escalation stages did represent their friendship experiences while 3 (14%) responded in the negative. Of the positive responses to this question, 9 (90%) were male and 9 (82%) were female. One (10%) male and 2 (18%) females responded in the negative. This question established a baseline for how applicable the model was to the friendship formation experiences for individuals in this socio-cultural context.

Those participants who indicated that the model differed from their friendship experiences were asked in question 3 to indicate what accounted for this disparity. According to the results, 4 (100%) participants, 2 males and 2 females highlighted the second category (time, situational and normative constraints adjusted the model in my friendship experiences) as being responsible for the deviating from the pattern suggested by Knapp's escalation stages. The participants mentioned significant shared experiences (good or bad) that hastened the bonding process, finding a group that reflected one's self-identity in a foreign environment, and emergency situations as the differences in their individual experiences.

Participants were then asked to indicate what their progression through the model looked like. The questions in this category are, questions 4, 5, and 6.

In question 4, participants were asked to identify the stage at which their friendship was in its most important phase. Nineteen participants responded to this question. The second stage, experimenting, was highlighted as the most important with 6 (31.58%) participants stating that it was, to them, the foundational stage, or stage the where the longest time was used in order to lay the "building blocks" carefully. A number of things happened at this stage (experimenting): it is where, in the Tanzanian friendship formation experience, commonality was established, attitudes as per social norms identified, compatibility and decisions on whether to discard or keep the friendship were made. The intensifying stage was a close second with 5 respondents (26.32%) who indicated that it is here that relational partners determined if they could depend on each other, and that at this point friends are almost "intoxicated" with the affinity they share. Initiating and bonding were at 8 (15.79%), responses indicated that initiation was important because it was the less stressful and most "fun" stage because no masks had to come off yet, so no judgments were feared and individuals seem very alike. Bonding was important because an affirmation of



the individual's genuineness and commitment, and solidification of the friendship happened here. It is important to note that the experimenting stage was more important to the female respondent than it was to the male, who preferred the intensifying stage. This question was asked to examine participants' feelings about the friendship at the different stages in escalation, and the different rationales that are attached to why one stage might be more important than the other. The varied responses give insight into the different ways individuals perceive the stages.

Similarly, question 5 asked participants to identify a stage(s) they deemed irrelevant during the progression of their friendship experiences. Nineteen responses were given. Five (26.32%) respondents, 2 males and 3 females, indicated that they found all stages relevant and none was irrelevant, which means all 5 escalation stages were relevant and reflected their friendship formation experiences. Out of the remaining 14 responses, initiating was deemed the most irrelevant by 6 (31.58%) respondents, 2 males and 4 females. The idea of actively seeking out individuals based on attraction, stereotypes and then engaging in small talk, which is the basis of Knapp's initiating stage, seemed either foreign, uncomfortable or ridiculous in this socio-cultural context. In Tanzanian culture, participants stated: friendships are "allowed" to happen, and there is a belief in "fate" as a mediating factor, i.e., you'll be friends with whom you're *meant* to be friends. It was pointed out that appearance and attraction are not major factors in making friendships, rather, how similar individuals were in personality and attitudes in relation to their interaction within certain social groups. Integrating was deemed the second most irrelevant 5 (26.32%), 3 males 2 females. Most respondents indicated they had experienced the characteristics of integrating within the experimenting stage. Intensifying had 2 (10.53%). Most respondents argued that at the experimenting stage most Tanzanians friends are "almost family"

or are already there at intensifying, and that in Tanzanian culture rather than integrate through individual interests, individuals have already integrated by being part of the same social groups.

Question 6 asked participants to indicate the pace at which they moved from one stage to another stage on a Likert- scale. The results to this question are displayed in table form along with an explanation of the data given by the table. Participants were to indicate how fast or slow they moved through the stages. Overall, data revealed that both men and women in this study moved through the stages at either a neutral pace or somewhat fast pace. The slowest movement from one stage to another was at initiating to experimenting, and the fastest movement happened at integrating to bonding (See table 1).

Table 1:

Progression through Knapp's escalation stages in Tanzanian friendships for both male and female participants.

#	Question	Very slow	Slow	Somewhat Slow	Neutral	Somewhat Fast	Fast	Very Fast	Total Responses
1	Initiating to Experimenting	1	3	3	4	4	3	3	21
2	Experimenting to Intensifying	1	2	5	3	4	3	2	20
3	Intensifying to Integrating	1	2	3	5	4	1	3	19
4	Integrating to Bonding	3	1	2	2	6	2	3	19

For more clarity, the above information was converted into percentages on a chart. (See Fig. 1).

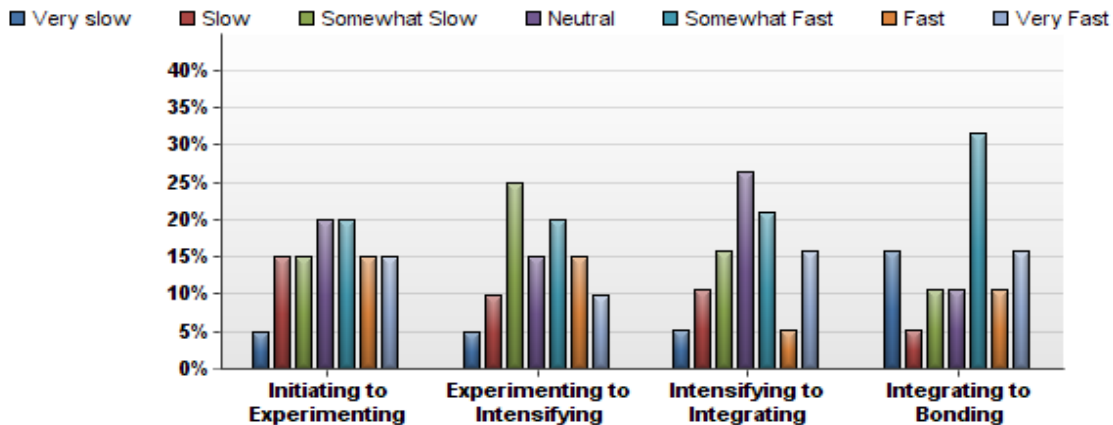


Fig. 1.

The data presented some gender differences in the speed at which men and women moved through Knapp’s escalation stages. The male participants’ data showed that male participants moved somewhat faster through the stages than the female participants, who were more neutral in their movement through the stages. A similarity that emerged however, was that both male and female participants moved slowest in the experimenting to intensifying stage. See Table 2 and Figure 2 for male variance, and Table 3 and Figure 3 for female variance.

Table 2:

Speed at which the male participants move through the escalation stages.

#	Question	Very slow	Slow	Somewhat Slow	Neutral	Somewhat Fast	Fast	Very Fast	Total Responses
1	Initiating to Experimenting	0	2	1	1	4	0	2	10
2	Experimenting to Intensifying	0	2	3	0	2	1	1	9
3	Intensifying to Integrating	1	1	2	1	2	0	2	9
4	Integrating to Bonding	0	1	1	0	4	0	2	8

The male variance illustrated as percentage see figure 2.

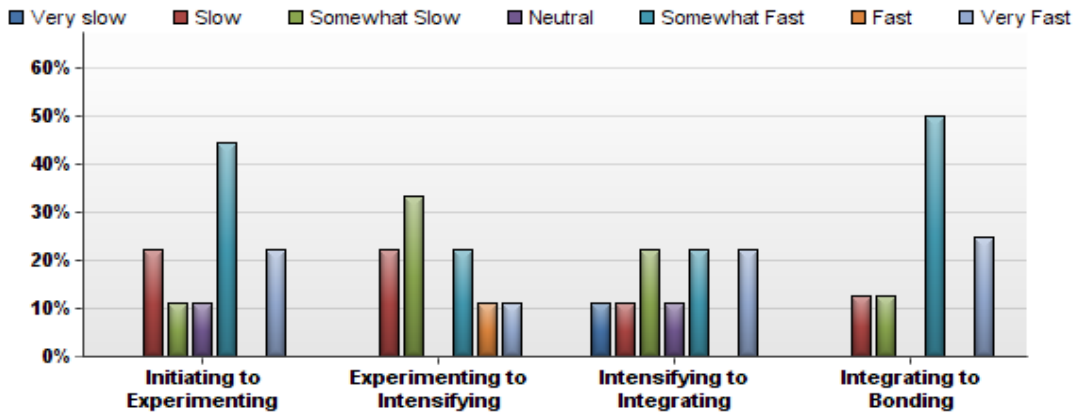


Fig. 2

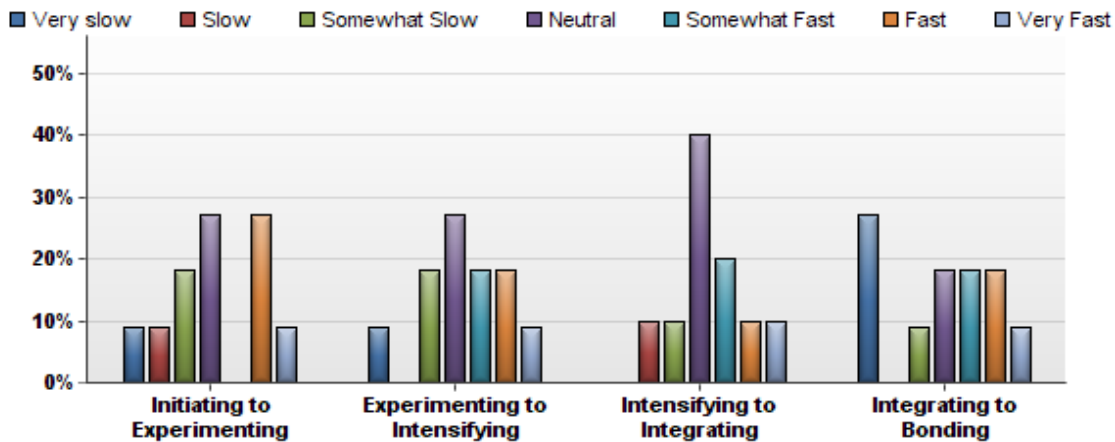
The above figure presents in percentage the pace at which the male participants move through the escalation stages. A noticeable feature is the fast pace at which the male participants move through the latter stages and the slow pace in the beginning stages.

Table 3.

Speed at which female participants moved through the escalation stages.

#	Question	Very slow	Slow	Somewhat Slow	Neutral	Somewhat Fast	Fast	Very Fast	Total Responses
1	Initiating to Experimenting	1	1	2	3	0	3	1	11
2	Experimenting to Intensifying	1	0	2	3	2	2	1	11
3	Intensifying to Integrating	0	1	1	4	2	1	1	10
4	Integrating to Bonding	3	0	1	2	2	2	1	11

Female variance illustrated in percentages. (See Fig. 3)



*Fig. 3*

The above figure presents in percentage form the pace at which the female participants move through the escalation stages. A noticeable feature is the neutral pace that female participants maintain through majority of the stages especially the initial stages.

Considering gender as major factor in determining how individuals relate to each other, question 7 asked the participants to identify in which of these gender categories: same-sex friendships, cross-sex friendships took displayed the most similar pattern to the model. They were also given the option of indicating whether the escalation stages pattern developed in both categories and neither. Out of the 20 participants who took this question, an overwhelming majority, 11 respondents (55%), indicated that the model's pattern was very similar to both their same-sex and cross-sex friendships. This was interesting because the researcher had anticipated that the model's escalation pattern would be more identical to same-gender friendships, and least similar to cross-gender relationships because of the complexities that arise as the different sexes interact with one another.

Participants stated that although gender influences are present, it was at an unconscious level, because usually gender was not a major determinant of who they made friends with, or how they approached friendships. When asked why, one participant noted: “when forming a friendship, it is on the basis of learning new things about one’s social environment, so both men and women are approached on neutral ground.” Most respondents though, gave no reason for this occurrence, and simply stated that had just been their experience; no reason whatsoever, another respondent said people are just friendly or appear to be so in the Tanzanian culture, and the socio-cultural environment propagates the idea, that it is easy to make friends without giving thought to another person’s gender. Six (30%) respondents said their same-gender friendships were most like the model. They found the model too simplistic for the complexities that arose in cross-gender friendships, they specified that had found it easier to move through the escalation stages presented by the model with someone they believed to be “wired” the same way as they were; culturally and gender-wise. Three (15%) participants said the model was most like their cross-sex friendships, but this was the case when other mediating factors such as family ties were present and the other person was considered as one would consider a relative. Also, participants noted that specific stages highlighted the differences that emerged with the different sexes at different points in the model within cross-sex friendship. One participant said, “Through this model it is clear to tell at which point the relationship is, and which lines ought not to be crossed.” Out of the 9 men who answered the question 1 said the model was most like his same-gender friendships, 2 (22%) said the model was most like their cross-gender relationships, and 6 (67%) said it applied to both same- and cross-gender friendships. Eleven women answered the question and 5 (45%) said the model was most like their same-gender friendships, 1 (9%) said

the model was most like her cross-gender friendships, and 5 (45%) said it applied to both same- and cross- gender friendships.

Question 8 asked participants to identify what they felt were the shortcomings of the model the responses according to their friendship experiences with other Tanzanians. This question sought to assess the dissimilarities to the model. The shortcomings:

- Remove the bonding stage. Because for two female friends intensifying and integrating stage are better suited.
- The model might slightly differ depending on where the friendships are built. It makes no mention of that. Friendships built by Tanzanians in the foreign environment like the USA seems to develop faster, with an initiation stage that is characterized by none of the motivations that the model mentions: to find a person from the same country or who speaks the same language invalidates biases, stereotyping or judgments in this stage, and speeds up the eagerness toward the friendship.
- Should include measures for honesty, trust, openness and what stages they are most evident.
- The integrating and bonding stages are fairly similar, and I could even say the same except for, depending on the situation, different personalities, etc. Different personalities may take longer or shorter times to move through stages.
- Lacks indicators for stress, self-disclosure and intimacy, which looks different in different cultures. For example I have friends from secondary school in Tanzania that I still talk to, and consider myself close to. But I

have probably never shared any secrets or had intimate moments with them. For some, I have no idea where they live, never met their parents etc. intimacy is doing regular life together. Feelings are rarely important as they are in Western relationships.

- It skips a few details in aspect (sic) that would affect the model. These include situations and scenarios that play a role on how all these stages play out.
- The model could be more accurate if it included: - Timing i.e. how long each stage might typically take especially for different age groups ages: the age boundaries of the people establishing friendships; younger people have a different lifestyle and thought process compared to people at older ages which affect how they establish friendships - Gender: The gender of the people establishing friendships has different effects on the model - Technology: The internet provides some level of anonymity which affects how relationships start or progress. - Also I would add in (SIC) future people will have more serious virtual friendships which will likely follow a different model.
- I believe the Initiating stage may not always be accurate if only relying generalization or stereotypes.
- You can cross the line if you move too fast i.e. consequences that happen a result of different kinds of movement through the stages, the model doesn't talk about this.
- Not enough stages



- Perhaps it's a bit simplistic? It seems to impose a very rigid structure.
- Changes that occur within the stages are not accounted for: once friends, or even close, people think they know everything about each other, but people change.
- It really does not matter what the stages are, one's personality is what will determine how fast you become friends, and I'm sure some steps can be skipped.

Since most of the participants in the study have been living or have lived in the United States for a substantial amount of their lives, question 9 asked them to evaluate whether the friendships they formed in Tanzania with other Tanzanians had a different pattern from those and they formed with other Tanzanians the United States. There were 20 responses to this question, in which 1 (5%) participant strongly disagreed, 3 (15%) neither agreed nor disagreed citing vast culture differences, especially mental process present as one forms a friendship: participants found this to be totally different. Nine (45%) participants agreed and 7 (35%) strongly agreed. Four (44%) and 3 (33%) of male participants agreed and strongly agreed respectively, and (5) 45% and (4) 30% of the females agreed or strongly agreed respectively.

Question 10 asked participants to identify which of the above experiences was most similar to the model: the friendships built in Tanzania, or those built in the United States and why. Out of the 19 responses to the question, the majority, 12 (63.16%) said their friendship experiences in the United States were most like the model, 5 (26.32%) indicated that the model was most like their friendship experiences in Tanzania and 2 (10.53%) were undecided and cited situational, cultural and personality complexities. Both male and female were generally in sync on this issue, there wasn't a major divergent. The resounding reason given was that the

simplicity of the model was better suited to the American environment, in which they participants realized, they acted on the basis of individualism, or out of personal need than they would have back home.

Question 11 asked participants if their friendship experiences necessitated additional stages in the model. Twenty participants responded to this question, a dominant 18 (90%) responded in the negative, indicating they wouldn't add stages to the model, and only 2 (10%) responded in the affirmative.

In question 12, those who responded in the affirmative in question 11 were asked to justify their responses. The reason for the need for additional stages was that there ought to be a "disengagement" or "cooling" stage added somewhere between the experimenting and intensifying stages for when individuals come to a point where they might have irresolvable differences, or circumstances in each other's individual lives draw them apart, and can't make the friendship work, and/ or a "re-association" stage for when they resolve differences and become closer.

Finally, question 13 asked participants if there were any stages they felt ought to be removed from the model according to their experiences. When asked if they would add stages to the model, most participants gave a negative response. In question 13, however, more affirmed that some stages needed to be excluded. Question 14 asked participants to identify which stages were disposable, and why. A total of 20 responses were given for question 13, in which 6 (30%) participants responded in the affirmative while 14 (70%) said no. Findings revealed that bonding 5(83%) was the most disposable stage because according to respondents:

- "It could easily be combined with integrating" and "it seemed limiting somehow."

- “Many friendships are anticlimactic.”
- “In most African contexts individuals don’t usually address their own deep personal interests while making friends. It is not something the culture encourages, so that you are never entirely sure you know the other person intimately”.

Intensifying and integrating were listed as well. In both cases, 2 (33%) participants noted that both stages could be combined with experimenting.

By presenting the data derived from the study in form of text, percentages, and tables regarding each question as it relates to the research questions, readers are able to pragmatically follow the intent of the study. They can analyze and interpret ideas that emerge out of this data, and come up with inferences regarding the formation of friendships in the Tanzanian socio-cultural world. Following the results, a discussion of the data’s implications from the researcher’s perspective is presented.

### *Discussion*

This statistical analysis draws on Knapp’s relational model to provide understanding regarding Tanzanian friendship formation experiences. The results of the survey brought up some interesting notions, and contradictory aspects in the way Tanzanians build friendships.

In the first question, participants were asked to identify their gender. Among the 21 respondents of the study, 10 indicated they were male, while 11 indicated they were female, the difference between the male and female is just 1 and therefore did not affect the data substantially.

In question two, the participants were asked to indicate whether their friendship experiences had been duplicated in the model’s escalation stages. Responses to this question

infer that, most of the participants were indeed familiar with the stages presented in Knapp's relational model. This indicates that the model presents a generally universal structure, one that is relatable, and can be assumed to reflect friendship formation experiences on the most basic level. None of the participants had ever come across the model's escalation stages, but once it was explained, they readily identified most of its stages' characteristics as being reflective of their friendship formation experiences. This validates the Relation Model's inclusive nature, this shows that, it is valid to include all Knapp's 5 escalation stages: initiating, experimenting, intensifying, integrating and bonding or some aspects of these stages in Tanzanian friendship formation experiences.

Question 3 asked participants to justify the negative responses in question 2. All 4 participants who indicated that the escalation stages were not an accurate representation of their friendship formation experiences, stated that, "Time, situational and normative constraints adjusted the model in my friendship experiences" were responsible for the deviation from the pattern suggested by Knapp's escalation stages. According to responses, meeting someone with significant shared experiences (good or bad) that hastened the bonding process, finding a group that reflected one's self-identity in a foreign environment, and emergency situations. Individuals who found themselves in these situations found that the speed at which they moved through the model's stages accelerated or they skipped entire stage all together. This was especially true for Tanzanians building friendship in a foreign place: finding a group of Tanzanians one could self-identify with, caused individuals to move through the stages quickly, or skip some stages in their pursuit of some kind of affinity. The same was true for individuals who found they shared the experience of a death in the family, or some other tremendously significant shared experience.

These individuals seemed to bond over such experiences which invalidated the model's claims in their experiences.

These responses illustrate that the model is somewhat linear in its presentation of how relationships are developed. It needs more flexibility in order to accurately represent the relationship formation process of individuals and take into account the unpredictability of human experiences.

Question 4 and 5 accomplish somewhat similar purposes. After establishing that the model's escalation stages were part of, and reflected Tanzanian formation experiences, the researcher sought to identify those stages in the model that were deemed the most relevant or irrelevant in Tanzanian friendship formation experiences. Responses indicated that, to Tanzanians, the second stage, experimenting, was the most important. Most participants stated that a lot of decisions about the friendship are made here.

This is similar to the model in that, experimenting is identified as the stage where individuals find compatibility with one another out of the information they share. The similarities end there though because the model suggests that at this stage individuals move from the unknown to the known. In Tanzanian friendship formation experiences, however, it was more about becoming compatible with others through what is already known, i.e. conforming to group structure of one's social circle. The model doesn't indicate which of its escalation stages is the most important, but suggests that "experimenting" is the stage most likely to be skipped, and that it is generally relaxed, causal and devoid of commitments. This is not the case for the Tanzanian. Even with other experiences altering the model, Tanzanians still experimented and made the most milestones at this point in the friendship, some even making and seeking commitment here. In this way, the Tanzanian friendship formation experience is different from Knapp's Relational

escalation stages. Also, the model indicates that at this stage it is hard to tell the progress of the relationship at this point. The data depicts this idea as the movement at this point in the friendship was either neutral or somewhat slow.

Interestingly, as a response to question 5, the highest number of participants stated that initiating was the least important. This response was made on the basis of the characteristics by which the model defines this stage i.e., (attraction, stereotypes, active seeking out of the other individuals to establish and encounter). These attributes seemed foreign to the participants who, coming out of a collectivist culture, attach fatalism to life's experiences: in which friendship arises inevitably out of one's social groups. This response posits the need to redefine the meaning and characteristics of the initiating stage in regards to this group.

Question 6 assesses the speed at which participants moved through the model. Most of the participants moved through the stages at a neutral pace. This shows that in this socio-cultural context, a lot of ground work is put into the initial stages, which later becomes the foundation of the friendship. The data also revealed that the male participants were somewhat faster in their movement through the stages than their female counterparts. This implies that men were more flexible and loose within the process, and probably attached less meaning to some traits than did their female counterparts who probably stressed out more about the details in the process. This is in line with Benenson and Christakos findings who researched the fragility of male and female closest same-sex friendships and found women's friendships to be more stressful and fragile than those of males (1123-1129). Males' bonding rituals usually include physical activity e.g. sports and functional traits, while women's bond rituals are characterized with more emotional expressions: this too could account for this trend that showed up in the data, which is a universal characteristic.

Question 7 was asked to examine where the model's escalation stages were most appropriate when it came to gendered patterns in friendships formations. Participants were asked to identify in which of these gender categories—same-sex friendships, cross-sex friendships—the model was most replicated. Majority of the respondents indicated the model's escalation pattern was very similar to both their same-sex and cross-sex friendships. This response shows that among this group, gender differences did not have a magnified influence on how the friendship is formed. This, the researcher posits, is a result of the socio-cultural environment that encourages a familial lens for building friendships more than any other form of relational building. Some of the participants mentioned that at the experimenting stage, in Tanzanian friendships, most friends seem like family.

Question 8 asked participants to suggest shortcomings observed in the model's escalation stages according to their experiences. Most of the replies indicated that the problems with the model were not so much problems of accuracy, but problems of in-exhaustiveness, and the failure to take into account the fluidity of interpersonal relationships. These replies suggest problems of compatibility of the model's escalation stages with Tanzanian friendship formation experiences, and the need to make adjustments in the model.

Question 9 asked participants to evaluate whether the friendships they formed in Tanzania with other Tanzanians had a different pattern from those and they formed with other Tanzanians the United States. This question is significant in assessing whether the socio-cultural environment alters individuals' behavioral patterns of friendship formation. Responses to the question imply that the cultural environment does have a vast influence on how individuals relate to each other. The socio-cultural rules regarding relational formation will be the lens through which individuals interact, and those lens for the most part, are different in any one socio-

cultural world. The response indicates that more the most part, when in a foreign environment, Tanzanian friendship formation patterns will change to adapt to the environment, but interestingly the motive, seeking to be affiliated with a group, remains the goal of the friendship despite the change in sociocultural environment. Only the method of how to get there changes.

Question 10 asked participants to indicate which friendships were most similar to the model's escalation stages: those built in Tanzania or in the United States. Out of 19 responses, the majority, 12 said their friendship experiences in the United States were most like the model, 5 indicated that the model was most like their friendship experiences in Tanzania, and 2 were undecided and cited situational, cultural, and personality complexities. Both male and female were generally in sync on this issue, and there wasn't a major divergent.

Responses to this question imply that the model's simple structure is more suited to a foreign environment where individuals have been left to their own devices, and fall into the flow of things. It is also used as a means of adapting to their socio-cultural environment: they do not have to do too much to attain their relation goals. Some of the responses however imply that it is not always easy to differentiate between two socio-cultural worlds as some individuals find they still have to process through a lot of cultural differences.

In question 11, the researcher sought to examine if the model needed to be adjusted by asking participants if they would propose additional stages. Out of the 20 participants who answered, the majority, 18, responded in the negative, indicating they wouldn't add stages to the model, and only 2 responded in the affirmative. This response indicated that for the most part Tanzanian friendship formation experiences do not diverge significantly from the model's escalation stages structure. This implies that there are no problems with the escalation structure, problems may lie within the definitions and characteristics of the stages themselves. Evidently,



the only differences to be found lie in the perception of the stages. The model's definitions differ from how Tanzanians perceive the stages.

For those participants who agreed that there was a need to add more stages, question 12 asked for a validation for that response. They were asked to describe what stages ought to be added and why. Responses indicated the need for what the researcher has called, a "disengagement"/ "extrication" stage to be added somewhere between the experimenting and intensifying stages for the point in the friendship when individuals find themselves with might be irresolvable differences, or circumstances arise in each individual's life which draw them apart, and therefore hinder friendship from further development. Another required additional stage is what the researcher has called the "re-association" stage in which individuals are able to resolve differences and become closer thereby building a stronger friendship.

Questions 13 and 14 do what questions 11 and 12 do, but in reverse. The questions asked the participants whether, according to their friendship experiences, there were stages that ought to be removed and which stages were those and why. Out of the 20 responses given to question, 6 participants responded in the affirmative while 14 said no. Of those who said yes, 5 individuals indicated that the bonding stages was the most disposable stage. Intensifying and integrating were listed as well by 2 participants respectively. In both cases it was stated that these stages could be combined with experimenting. Responses allude to the idea that the stages suggested by the model's escalation stages are indeed a part of Tanzanian friendship formation process, but the "way of experiencing" those stages is different from what the model suggests. Most participants find the stages disposal because, according to their experiences, the characteristics of those stages can easily be merged into another stage, or two stages may seem to be expressing a similar thought.

As displayed by the results and discussion, it is valid to say that the formation of friendships in the Tanzanian sociocultural context is not simplistic as suggested by Knapp's relational model, but there are traits in the model that can and do act as a representation of some of the processes experienced by Tanzanians as they go about forming friendships. Mostly though, friendships formation is determined by ideas nurtured by the cultural context, and ideas formulated about how actors should conduct themselves. Men and women diverge very little from the way they form friendships, and this is to be attributed to the association of kinship and a familial mentality to the way of approaching relationships in this sociocultural context.

Following the results and the discussion, the researcher draws conclusions by answering the research questions, presenting the limitations of the research, and proposes future research related to the topic at hand.

### **Chapter 5: Conclusions, Limitations, Future Research.**

The researcher posited that although friendship formation is a universal human experience, individuals from different socio-cultural worlds may experience it differently. In order to find out the answer to this proposition, the researcher conducted research on the basis of two (2) research questions. The first research question aimed at addressing what pattern emerged for Tanzanian friendship formation experiences in comparison to Knapp's Relational model escalation stages.

RQ 1: Is there a recognizable pattern in the formation of friendship in Tanzanian friendships?

The answer, based on the assessment of 21 Tanzanian participants in the study, is yes. The findings revealed that Tanzanian friendships take on a particular pattern as they progress. This question was related to a couple of items in the survey as seen in questions: 2, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14.

Tanzanian friendships formed in the United States had a pattern that reflected Knapp's escalation stages the most. This makes sense because Tanzanians are outside of their own sociocultural world. Tanzanians pick up habits that enable them to interact with a desired group as dictated by the present sociocultural setting. It is a "*when in Roman do as the Roman's do*" kind of situation. Interestingly, the motivation for forming a friendship is the same as it would be if they were in Tanzania, i.e. to become part of a group. So, the initiation stage is more characteristic of trying to affiliate oneself to a particular group than anything else. This is to be expected of individuals from collective societies, they need groups to structure their lives around. This reflects Gamble and Gambles' idea that individuals never leave their cultural inclinations behind, they are always present, influencing all action (30). Also, because the need to affiliate to

eliminate the sense of isolation was strong, individuals usually moved through the model very fast or skipped stages. The model then becomes much shorter with three stages that, for the most part, merge the model's escalation stages. This is because participants are actively looking for a place of belonging, i.e. others who are able to understand them. Once they have found the individual(s), they waste no time worrying about the trivialities: attraction, status, stereotypes, those things are secondary to finding a group to which to belong and individuals of cultural and attitudinal similarities. Things are sorted out as the relationship progresses, and most of the time the similarities outweigh the differences. This supports the idea of that similarity and affinity strongly influence how individuals form friendships as seen in the literature. Individuals are more likely and will initiate friendships with individuals similar to themselves. This is usually because it eliminates the stress created by apparent striking differences. If one assumes he/ she is in sync with the other individuals they interact naturally and with less discomfort.

Although Tanzanians friendship formation experiences reflect Knapp's escalation stages, data shows they attach different meanings to the stages, than the model does. As such, while the Tanzanian friendship pattern does include the Knapp's 5 escalation stages, these stages might have a different arrangement, characteristics, and meanings.

On the other hand, findings from the study showed that friendships developed in Tanzania with other Tanzanians seems to display a slightly different pattern. While in Tanzania, a lot of considerations have to be given to the cultural context, and the dictates it places on relational building for both men and women. The process here, is longer too, individuals find that they need to be careful, and not to rush through the stages. When they meet through their socio affiliations, they take a long time experimenting because they're figuring out if they belong to each other's social group(s) and weigh the cost and rewards of being associated with that

individual and/ or whomever else they are affiliated with. While the five (5) stages are still valid, they are more attuned to the Tanzanian sociocultural world.

In order to conform to Tanzanian friendship experiences the model needs adjusting. According to the results, it fails to take into account the obstacles/ interferences that happen as life occurs; this could be argued for all friendship experiences around the globe. It imposes a structure that feels rigid to the individual. A more flexible structure which would emerge out of the study's data, would include stage(s) that makes allowances for the disruption of the friendship formation and a stage that would mend the friendship if need be. These two stages the researcher proposes are, disengagement (extrication) and re-association. Two illustrations are presented below that suggest a more fitting model for Tanzanian friendships formation experiences in Tanzanian (See Figure 4) and within the United States (See Figure 5).

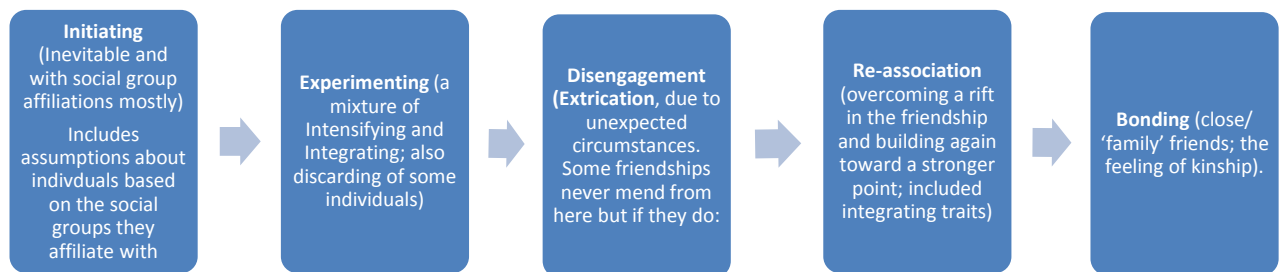


Fig 4. Model for Friendships between Tanzanians formed in Tanzania.



Fig 5. Model Friendships between Tanzanians outside of Tanzanian.

Based on the suggested models, it is clear that Tanzanian friendship formations do take on a specific pattern. While in Tanzania, the process is longer due to its collectivist setting. There are a lot of cultural loop holes to consider. Even within a friendship between individuals, there are a lot of outside influences from groups that will influence how the stages happen, while in the United States the process is shorter because the reasons for establishing the friendship, as indicated in the results, is to find a center of belonging.

Interestingly, it is also clear that there were no apparent differences in the above patterns when it came to the aspect of gender. This was an unexpected finding because the researcher's anticipation—one that is reflected in literature—was that there might be major differences in how the genders developed friendships in this sociocultural setting. This probably because, when forming friendships, Tanzanians consider this an automatic extension of one's family or social group before giving thought to the idea of the friendship leading to any other type of relationship. But it is also somewhat contradictory of Tanzanian's patriarchal society, where men have more dominant roles over women (Berkley Center for Religion, Peace and World Affairs n.p). In such a setting it would be expected that gender roles would be more influential in how individuals relate. A speculation which arises out of this contradiction is, individuals in the study have lived most of their lives between two sociocultural worlds, the merging of ideas from two sociocultural environments might account for the ideas that they carried into any interaction with the opposite gender, and the adoption of a more loose structure and flexibility in the way

they relate. Also, participants were mostly young people within the ages 19-25. These results suggest generational differences on the issue. The above models are also reflective of what stages are important in Tanzanian friendship formation experiences in regard to the stages suggested by Knapp. The aspect of initiation, in as far taking the initiative to seek out opportunities to start a friendship, is irrelevant in this sociocultural context. There seems to be no need for that in a group-oriented culture according to the data. Individuals are believed to socialize within already existing group systems. The moment they are born they are part of a group and their association will follow out of that group, so initiating in this sociocultural context becomes about meeting the right group. This explains why for the most part participants take the longest time experimenting and intensifying.

The second research question sought to understand where the model's escalation stages and Tanzanian friendship formation experiences converged or diverged with each other.

RQ 2. How similar or dissimilar is the Tanzanian pattern of friendship formation when compared to the coming-together stages in Knapp's Relation Model?

Based upon the findings of RQ1 and the quantitative data, the answer to RQ2 is best given in a series of variations based on personal and cultural expressions/ influences as reflected in the first research question. First, it was clear that although, there were variations in the model in some places, it was validated, because most of the stages were reflective of Tanzanian friendship experiences.

On the other hand, some of the model's stages were deemed irrelevant by Tanzanians because of their cultural friendship experiences. The pattern(s) that emerged through the study's findings were not too divergent from what Knapp's Relational model proposes, but there were variations and changes to be made as shown previously in Figures 4 and 5.

A critical note to this research is that friendships are—like most human experiences—determined by one’s cultural beliefs, which influence how individuals relate to one another. The model differed from Tanzanian friendship formation experiences in that it did not address the cognitive and psychological process present in cultural influenced relationships. This a shortcoming pointed out by Avtgis et al. who stated that the model needs adjusting in order to make allowances for other aspects of relationships i.e. cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions, and the researcher suggests adding a cultural dimension. Some participants pointed out that he model had no indicators and/ or measures for stress, openness and honesty, some of the aspects that are prevalent in friendships or any other interpersonal relationships.

Tanzanians found that, with their friendship formation experiences in Tanzania, the initiating stage attributes as described by the model, were either: remote, useless or ridiculous. This is so because friendships like most relationships in that cultural context are based in the idea of “fatalism”—you’ll be friends with whom you are *meant* to be friends with, therefore there is no need to make direct effort into seeking out individuals or “creating” an opportunity for interaction. This is in line with the cultural orientation toward collectivism in which one’s associations are expected to arise out of their group affiliations. In that element, the model’s description of the initiation stage doesn’t match with Tanzanians’ experiences and perception of what motivation lies behind the first stage of forming a friendship. While most Tanzanians indicated that it was the stage they would do away with, this should not be the case. The stage ought to remain, but the description of the stage’s characteristics has to change in order to fit Tanzanian friendship formation experiences.

To Tanzanians, experimenting is somewhat the initial stage, and the most significant stage. Individuals will have an “inevitable” meeting arising out of group association, and then



experiment; this takes the longest time. Most of the results stated that intensifying could and should be classified under experimenting. To Tanzanians experimenting and intensifying are part of one whole and the attributes of the one could describe the other. Here, Tanzanian experiences are similar and dissimilar to the model in this way: The model says these stages are given priority, and this is reflected in Tanzania friendship formation experiences, but that is where the similarity ends. While in Knapp's experimenting stage individuals are moving from the unknown to the known in Tanzanian friendships, it is not so because individuals are already well acquainted with each other through their groups and those similarities are what solidify the relationship, and there are not a lot of unknown areas apart from what the individual chooses to keep hidden. This does not matter, too, because some participants indicated that talking about one's individual interests is hardly encouraged, the commonality is what binds individuals together.

Integrating and bonding according to most Tanzanian friendships are also part of one whole. These two stages ought to have been meshed into one, because according to data from the study, by the end of experimenting Tanzanians find that they are practically "family friends/close friends." This means that at the integrating and bonding stage, individuals have already reached a point where they operate as one unit and there are no apparent differences. This differs from the model's description of these stages, where although there is a continual minimizing of the whole person, some individual aspects still stand out to mark the uniqueness of each individual.

The model differed from Tanzanian friendship formation in that it seemed inadequate or rigid in different aspects. It made no allowances for life "happenings," which would sway the progression of the friendship and texture thereof, giving indication of what point individuals

either completely discard it or return to the friendship at some point in life. This, of course, would call for an introduction of other stages into the “coming-together” stages of the model that would have to put into account timing, monumental changes in one person’s life and not the other which would affect the way they relate to each other and other normative situations, such as the interference of one’s associations in the friendship and the strain that would have on the friendship. Also, the model doesn’t clarify whether face-to-face interaction is paramount for a friendship to proceed to the next stages. In Tanzania friendship this did not seem to be the case.

Although the model gives no gender-based analysis on the movement through the stages, this study examined the differences or similarities that would arise as both genders moved through the stages. Interestingly, an overwhelming majority stated that the model reflected both their same-gender and cross-gender friendships, especially for those friendships they developed while in the United States. The researcher suggests that the reason for this was the presence of a general approach to friendship formation which presented little or no effect to how the genders build friendships. As a respondent notes, “Intimacy is doing regular life together. Feelings are rarely important as they are in Western relationships.” This statement is interesting because it gives a new definition to intimacy as functional rather than emotional. This mentality acts as an arbiter in the way individuals move through friendships and at what pace. Also, most Tanzanians viewed their friends as family almost from the beginning. If one is viewed as a “kinsperson” then it changes the dynamics of a relationships and the gender aspect is neutralized.

To a greater extent, the model reflected Tanzanian friendship formation experiences, but it is also valid to say that a number of moderations are required in order for the model to be an accurate portrayal of friendship as experienced by Tanzanians.

The preceding study was presented with considerable limitations, which necessitate the revisiting of the subject in the future. The following section notes the limitations of this study and makes suggestions for future research.

#### Limitations of the Study

This study took on a surface approach to the research and was guided by a quantitative study. Limitations can be seen along the lines of the methodology, and theoretical framework. The study would have benefited from a larger number of participants of varied age ranges; the total number of participants was 21, and the age demographic (most were college students) was not well balanced. Having a wider range of ages could have added more insight to how friendship changes as individuals age and mature out of some traits and beliefs.

Also, the study's results were based upon self-report on the survey questions. Although a video was available to aid participants in understanding the model, their understanding of the model was influenced by the researcher's own understanding of the model. It might have been more helpful to present the model to participants and physically interact with them to gauge their first impressions of the model, but time and situational constraints did not make allowances for this.

Another limitation of this study was that the survey questions were not meticulous and might have not been framed in a way that encouraged participants to give the most accurate responses. Also, the survey questions didn't delve into some of the complexities the model presents. This could be remedied in future by conducting follow up interviews, or using questionnaires based on the responses provided to the initial survey questions which would add to the reliability of the information and give more accuracy. Also, some of the participants had

trouble understanding some of the scenarios presented by and within the model which heavily altered the way they gave responses.

This was a pilot study. It therefore lacked references in literature that would have provided a control standard for the study to follow in order to accrue a more reliable process and validated measures of deciphering data and its meanings.

Finally, in regards to data collection and analysis, although the survey was adequate in providing noteworthy exposition of the tendencies toward which Tanzanians lean in friendship formation, the study could have benefited from a more sophisticated analysis: it could have possibly shown more than associations, and given more specific details.

Some theoretical limitations came to surface. While having been applied numerous times to a variety of topics, and the phenomenon of relational development, Knapp's Relational Model is to a greater extent outdated and inflexible. It is evident that the influences of cultural are not accounted for in the model, in this way it falls short, and limited the analysis of content. Most of the inferences made in the study were on the basis of logicity and could have contained several biases on the application of the model to present context. The research questions too, were built on the basis of what seemed to be lacking in literature and therefore could have contributed to limiting the direction the research could have taken.

#### Future Research

There are a few areas that would benefit from future research. The first area would be researching how Knapp's relational model could be adjusted to address most of the complexities presented by relationships formed on a sociocultural basis. As indicated, the framework is somewhat rigid and only suggests linear movement through a relationship.

Since the study advocated for comparisons between human experiences, a study comparing collectivistic and individualistic cultural friendship experiences based on an adjusted Knapp's relational model, which accounted for the cognitive, personal, social, and cultural aspects of relationships would contribute tremendously to research in especially in today's ever integrating world.

A study of the deterioration of Tanzanian friendship could be conducted using Knapp's de-escalation stages to examine the variations that arise as a friendship breaks down in Tanzanian culture.

A study that examined how individuals of different age groups, from different cultures built friendships as per the pattern pointed out by Knapp's relational model, would also act as good exposition on what differences and similarities emerge in generational friendships.

Future research could also apply the model to a study of the variations in friendship development processes that would arise within Tanzania's own 130 ethnic groups.

Future research also needs to explore the implications of gender differences on the progression through the escalation stages. The preceding study had no major findings as to why the model was reflective of both same-gender and cross-gender friendships. This could only be a trait in the examined sociocultural environment, but have different findings in another sociocultural environment.

Relational development within different sociocultural worlds is a subject that is hardly addressed in literature, and yet there is a profound need to study the fore mentioned across multiple disciplines as individuals continually and increasingly cross from one cultural context to another in today's world.

This study, as a part of the communication discipline, sought to explore how Tanzanians develop friendships with other Tanzanians whether in Tanzania or outside of Tanzania and the beliefs and ideas they attached to the process.

As the preceding results, discussion, and conclusions demonstrated, friendship development among Tanzanians has unique aspects -most of which are fostered by cultural upbringing and constructs- different from other individuals whose experiences have been documented in the literature. In today's culturally-merging world, it is a worthy effort to conduct research engineered toward understanding differences in relational development among individuals from various sociocultural worlds.

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## Appendix A

Video Transcript:

This video, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bQ4Ve\\_bVmH0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bQ4Ve_bVmH0), will explain the model after which this survey is built in order to enable you take this survey with better clarity of what the model's assumptions are.

### **Initiating:**

Includes all mannerisms i.e. communicatively and behaviorally enacted when you first meet a stranger/ new acquaintance.

Think about the following aspects/characteristics:

- Setting. Did you meet in a particular place e.g. library or party?
- Attraction was major motivator in seeking to initiate communication.
- Certain stereotypes were in play. You thought they fell into a certain category of people that appealed to you. Example, they appeared smart or stylish etc.
- You had prior knowledge about the individual with whom you now wanted to interact with.
- You had certain expectations as to how this situation was to go.
- You checked to see if the other person was open for interaction
- You wondered if you should initiate the conversation or have a third party introduce you.
- You made extreme effort to put forward the best impression of yourself.

Specific methods and messages used to initiate communication depended on:

- The kind of relation between the two interacts at the time of initiating; greetings (formal or casual) varied, depending on whether there was a prior setup to this interaction.  
(Complete strangers or been introduced before).

- The time allowed for interaction- the situation either allowed you to interact for prolonged periods of time or made for only minimal interaction till the next meeting.
- Situational or normative constraints- the environment allowed you to effectively communicate or vice versa.
- Existence of special codes particular to some groups e.g. a clan handshake, distance from the other person.

Most importantly you exercised caution and communicated according to conventional formulas.

### **Experimenting**

This is the stage when you actively try to discover the unknown about the other individuals.

Could happen on a second meeting or during a prolonged initiating period. It is the discovery period. Moving from strangers to acquaintances. The relationship is generally pleasant, relaxed, and overtly uncritical, and casual. Commitments are limited.

Consider the following aspects:

- Exchange of demographic information i.e. age, rank, background, hometown etc. frequent and controlled by a reciprocal norm i.e. give more information to get more information.
- Interacts diligently search for some common interest, experience that will integrate their lives.
- Sometimes the strain of this search approaches the absurd e.g. “You’re from Dar-es-Salam?” Do you know so and so?
- The degree to which you assist each other in finding a point of integration alludes to the degree of interest in and the pursuit of the relationship.

Three bases in interpersonal encounters used:

- With strangers, we primary depend on cultural information. If you're from the same culture, it is assumed that you have the same attitudes, behaviors and close to similar experiences and knowledge for cultural happenings. But the potential sources of error are many too.
- The more you get acquainted with each other, then sociological information is a used as a basis for conversational strategies and adaptations. You adapt your conversations to make inferences to groups and ideas the other person is affiliated with.
- Then psychological information comes into play. This kind of information marks the differences between the individuals' talk on many dimensions e.g. culturally, ideology-wise, the closeness of the relationship etc.
- Occurs between individuals better acquainted with each other.
- This is a stage likely to be skipped/ given the list amount of time if individuals have a prior established connection.
- It is hard to tell the progress of the relationship at this point.
- Above all, small talk is the sine qua non for experimenting, interactants must engage in small talk every day to build the relationship.

### **Intensifying:**

The relationship has intensified when people achieve a status in their relationship termed, "close friends". Active participation and awareness of the process typify this stage.

Behaviorally:

- Caution is exercised when probing for information aimed toward intensification of intimacy.
- Awaiting confirmation before proceeding.

- More intimate behavioral traits or gestures manifest e.g. hugging, holding hands, sitting close etc.
- Requests for physical or psychological favors sometimes invokes as a validation of the existence of intensity in the relationship.
- Amount of personal disclosure increases. Get glimpses of previously withheld secrets.
- Disclosure can now take up any topic area, but those dealing with the development of the relationship are most crucial.
- Disclosure places the speaker in a vulnerable situation.
- Sophistication in nonverbal messages increases.

Verbally:

- Forms of address informal e.g. use of nicknames, endearments etc.
- Common use of first person plural e.g. “we” and “let’s”.
- Private symbols begin to develop, sometimes in form of special slang and jargon or using conventional language terms to have private meanings.
- Verbal shortcuts due to assumed familiarity.
- More direct expressions of commitment appear.
- Increasingly individuals act as partners in aiding each other’s process of understanding as to what the relationship is all about.
- As the relationship intensifies, each person unfolds individual uniqueness while simultaneously blending personalities with the other.

### **Integrating**

Here, the relationship is at a point where the individual personalities are almost fused or coalesce. The term applied is “coupling”. i.e. the extent to which each individual tries to give the

other his/her self-symbols or change the other's self-symbols measures the degree to which they want to increase communion. E.g. may switch from an affiliation to that of the other.

Verbal and nonverbal manifestations of integration forms:

- Attitudes, opinion, interests etc. that distinguish the pair from form others are vigorously cultivated.
- Social circles merge and the two are treated by others as one whole.
- Intimacy “trophies” are exchanges so each can wear the other's identity- pictures, pins etc.
- Sometimes common property is designated e.g. “our song”, “our movie”
- Emphatic process peak so much that explanation and prediction of behavior is much easier.
- Body rhythms and routines achieve heightened synchrony
- Sometimes the love of a third person or object will serve as glues for the relationship.
- Doesn't mean the complete loss of individuality or loss of individuality. There's the intensifying and minimizing various aspects of the total person.

### **Bonding:**

Bonding manifests in some public ritual that announces to the world that commitments have been formally contracted. Involves different kinds of bonding rituals. The institutionalization of the relationship.

- For example introduce friend to parents. Family friends
- Loyalty pacts etc.



## Appendix B

### Survey

1. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

2. The relational model being examined suggests 5 stages that define the coming together of interpersonal relationships.

**Initiating** (involves all the processes enacted when you meet new people. Attraction to the other person, effort put into first impressions, stereotyping, checking for interaction opportunity, using specific social codes to interact etc.)

**Experimenting** (involves moving from the unknown. Involves a lot of small talk. It is the discovery stage where you acquire more details about the other person. It is causal and relaxed. You especially try to find similarities through the sharing of cultural, sociological and psychological information.)

**Intensifying** (the relationship status between individuals is labeled “close friends”. Interaction has more self-disclosure i.e. revealing secrets and intimate verbal and non-verbal actions. E.g. endearments, informal speech, asking for favors etc. more direct expressions of commitment appear)

**Integrating** (the term “*coupling*” is applied to the friendship here; individuals share close to similar attitudes, interest, opinions etc. social circles merge, wear each other’s identity through “intimate” trophies e.g. pictures, pins, friends have a heightened synchronicity in behavior.)

**Bonding** (commitment are made. Friendship pacts, public rituals to announce relationship to social circle. Individuals are seen as a package).

Would you say this is a model you've seen duplicated when you made friends with other Tanzanians?

- Yes
- No

3. If you responded in the negative to question 3, which of these factors contributed to this?

- Some of the stages were skipped. Which stage(s) and why?
- Time, situational and normative constraints adjusted the model in my friendship experiences.
- Prior interactions with this person adjusted the model so that our friendship progressed in a different pattern. Give a brief description of the circumstances.
- Other. Explain.

4. At which of the stage(s), would you say the friendship was at its most significant stage. (This a stage you consider the most important). Why?

- Initiating
- Experimenting
- Intensifying
- Integrating
- Bonding.

5. Depending on the different circumstances surrounding your friendship and its development process, which stage(s) would you say was the most irrelevant? Why.

- Initiating
- Experimenting
- Intensifying

- Integrating
- Bonding

6. In your friendship experiences how would you describe the progression from one stage to another stage?

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	Very Slow	Slow	Average	Fast	Very Fast
<b>Initiating to Experimenting</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Experimenting to Intensifying</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Intensifying to Integrating</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Integrating to Bonding</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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7. Considering gender, which category of friendship would you say the model represents suitably and why?

- Same-Gender friendships
- Cross-Gender friendships
- Both
- Neither

**8.** What would you say are the shortcomings of this relational model?

**9.** Have the friendships you have built with Tanzanians in the U.S taken on a different pattern from those you built with Tanzanians back home in Tanzania?

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither Agree or Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

**10.** In which of these contexts would you same the model was best executed?

- Friendships built in Tanzanian
- Friendships built in the US
- Both
- Other

**11.** Do you feel that there are stages that should be added to this model based on your friendship experiences?

- Yes
- No

**12.** If you responded yes to the above questions, list a stage/ stages that you would suggest be added to the model and briefly describe what would characterize the stage and why.

**13.** Would you suggest that some stages be removed from this model based on your friendship experiences?

- Yes
- No

**14.** If your response to the above question was yes, identify the stage/ stages that you would suggest be removed from the model and briefly explain why.

- Initiating
- Experimenting
- Intensifying
- Integrating
- Bonding.