

**FRIENDSHIP QUALITY MODEL AMONG COLLEGE STUDENTS****Mae Jean M. Achocoso,****Joemaris D. Buguis,****Glaydin E. Bungalan****Richard John A. Isales,****Gaudencio G. Abellanos, Ph.D**College of Development Management Graduate Program,  
University of Southeastern Philippines, Mintal Campus, Davao City, Philippines**ABSTRACT**

The purpose of this study was to construct and validate a Friendship Quality Model in college students. Specifically, it was designed to find out the dimensions and indicators of quality friendship and to develop a measure of friendship quality, and to test the reliability and validity of the proposed model. The study employed a quantitative research design with 300 college students from the University of Southeastern Philippines – Mintal Campus using convenience sampling technique. Data were collected using a five-point Likert scale structured questionnaire which had 40 items. For data analyses and model validation, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) were used. Findings revealed five major dimensions of friendship quality: (1) Trust, Support, and Collaborative Friendship; (2) Security, Respect, and Mutual Care in Friendship; (3) Reliability and Conflict Resolution; (4) Open Communication and Emotional Disclosure; and (5) Conflict and Communication Strain. The results of EFA showed that the total variance of the extracted factors was 56.57% and CFA results showed that the two-factor model that had the best fit was "Trust, Support, Collaborative Friendship and Security", and "Respect, Mutual Care in Friendship". Goodness-of-fit indices indicated that the final model demonstrated excellent fit and reliability. The study concluded that friendship quality among college students is strongly influenced by trust, emotional support, respect, communication, and mutual care. The developed framework and instrument may serve as useful tools for educators, counselors, and researchers in promoting students' social and emotional well-being within higher education institutions.

**Keywords:**

Friendship Quality, College Students Trust, Conflict, and Security

**INTRODUCTION**

As individuals lived in a setting where social connection is a must, not just for open access to professional opportunities but as well as for individual personal trust, true friendship is what most people are looking for. According to Bukowski, Newcomb, and Hartup (1996), friendship is commonly defined as a voluntary, a reciprocal relationship between individuals characterized by mutual affection, trust, support, and shared experiences. It involves a close bond where individuals are engaged in a companionship and thus provide emotional and social support to one another. Similarly, Hays (1988) described friendship as an interpersonal relationship made through intimacy, mutual liking, and a willingness to invest time and effort to maintain the connection to each other. This emphasizes that friendship is not merely social interaction but a meaningful relationship which contributes to an individual's emotional and social development.

Friendship plays a significant role in the social and psychological development of most individuals. From the early stages of every childhood going to the academic track of professionalism, friendships offer unique support that builds confidence throughout life's journey. Especially in college, when the pressure to become professional young adults is high, friendship seems to be a vital tool for staying on track. A friendship becomes a source of emotional support and increases the sense of belongingness and general life satisfaction amongst college students in coping with academic adjustments according to Demir & Özdemir (2010). It was then expressed that high-quality friendships are largely linked to positive mental health outcomes, contribute to greater life satisfaction, and are associated with better coping with stressors in school and in personal life. As the students transition into higher education, the quality of their interpersonal relationships becomes an important factor that influences their personal growth and academic perseverance.

Although the quality of a friendship is important, it is difficult to measure, as it is a multi-dimensional phenomenon. According to Hofstede G., Hofstede G. J., & Minkov (2010), some existing friendship assessment tools were often developed for adolescents or the Western population, which may not fully capture the culture and contextual realities of college students in different regions, thus, the cultural norms, the social expectations, and the communication styles may influence how friendship is formed and maintained, particularly in group of societies where the interpersonal relationships and the social harmony are highly valued. That being the case, there is a need to develop contextually appropriate instruments that accurately measure friendship quality among specific population such as college students in the Philippines.

Additionally, in the Philippine higher education context, there is limited research that has focused on developing standardized instruments specifically made and designed to measure friendship quality among college students. Most of the existing studies rely on the adopted scales from international literature, in which may not fully reflect the local dynamics and the interpersonal values among Filipino students. Moreover, given the importance of interpersonal relationships in Filipino culture, developing a culturally sensitive measurement tool is essential to produce accurate and meaningful research findings.

Furthermore, this study can be aligned with Sustainable Development Goal 3 - Good Health and Well-Being, as friendship quality is said to promote students' mental health and well-being, and Sustainable Development Goal 4 - Quality Education, as this can boost and elevate the students' daily confidence in school, which can lead to academic achievements and successes. Moreover, studying provides a dependable tool for assessing friendship quality, thereby helping to create a supportive educational context and improve the well-being of college students.

#### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

This research addresses the following specific objectives:

- 1) Identify the key dimensions and indicators of friendship quality among college students;
- 2) Develop a framework that explains the instrument that measures the level of friendship quality among college students; and
- 3) Determine the reliability and validity of the developed framework in assessing friendship quality among college students.

#### **SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY**

This study focused on developing and validating a Friendship Quality Model among college students at University of Southeastern Philippines. It specifically focused on the quality of friendship through dimensions such as trust, support, communication, respect, care and conflict resolution. This study adopted quantitative research methodology with 300 college students who were conveniently sampled. The data were gathered by using a 40-item structured questionnaire and will be analyzed using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to determine the reliability and validity of the model that will be developed. The study will focus on the students' experiences relating to trust, support, communication, mutual care, and conflict resolution in friendships.

A limitation of the study was noted as the respondents were selected through convenience sampling, which may introduce bias and limit the generalizability of the findings. The study is focus only on 300 college students from University of Southeastern Philippines, which may not fully represent students from other institutions. The study offers some insights into the nature of friendships among college students and may help inform the creation of programs and interventions that foster the establishment of healthy and supportive interpersonal relationships among college students.

#### **METHODOLOGY**

The design used in this study is quantitative research design, which was used to develop and validate the instrument to measure friendship quality for college students. A total of 300 college students from the University of Southeastern Philippines – Mintal Campus were selected through a non-probability convenience sampling method. The participants in the study were those who were available and voluntarily participated in the survey. The sample size was deemed sufficient for the factor-analytic procedures commonly employed in instrument development studies. The data were collected using a structured questionnaire with 40 items that measured different aspects of friendship quality, such as trust, emotional support, communication, companionship, and help. All items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, anchored from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

The researcher used Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) to determine the factors that underline the relationship between the statements of the survey in the instrument. Eddy S., Knehta E., & Runyon C. (2019) argue that EFA can be used in the early stages of instrument development. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) is also used to establish and validate if the factor structure obtained from the exploratory factor analysis phase can fit the data collected. CFA is most used to assessing if the hypothesized factor structure correctly reflects the relationships between observed measures and latent variables (Roos & Bauldry, 2021). The results of these analyses substantiated the constructing validity and reliability of the developed instrument to measure friendship quality for college students.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section provides analysis and interpretation of the data collected for the study. It elaborates on the results and findings obtained from the statistical analyses carried out with the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), specifically the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. This section also reports the findings of the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) along with interpretation of the data. A total of 300 respondents from college students participated in the study.

### KMO and Bartlett's Test

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Measure of Sampling Adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were utilized to determine the suitability of the data for Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). According to Kaiser (1974), KMO values range from 0 to 1 and are interpreted as follows: "Marvelous" for values above 0.90, "Meritorious" for 0.80–0.89, "Middling" for 0.70–0.79, "Mediocre" for 0.60–0.69, "Miserable" for 0.50–0.59, and "Unacceptable" for values below 0.50. As presented in Table 1, the computed KMO value is 0.956 as presented in Table 1 which is categorized as "Marvelous", meaning that the data are highly suitable for factor analysis.

Table 1. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.956
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	6925.035
	df	780
	Sig.	.000

**Total Variance Explained.** A p-value of 0.050 or lower indicates a substantial correlation between the variables, thereby supporting the application of factor analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity tests whether the correlation matrix is an identity matrix, indicating that the variables are not correlated (Bartlett, 1951). For this study, Bartlett's Test yielded a chi-square value of 6925.035, degrees of freedom (df) of 780, and a p-value of .000. The p-value being less than 0.050 indicates that factor analysis is valid and that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix.

The EFA was used to estimate the total variance explained, which indicates how much of the data is accounted for by the extracted variables. Table 2 shows the components, initial eigenvalues, extraction sums of squared loading, and the rotation sums of squared loading

Table 2. Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	16.97	42.424	42.424	6.573	16.432	16.432
2	1.918	4.794	47.218	5.779	14.448	30.881
3	1.436	3.589	50.807	4.97	12.424	43.305
4	1.18	2.95	53.757	3.184	7.96	51.265
5	1.125	2.813	56.122	2.122	5.305	56.57

### Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

The first component accounts for 16.432% of the overall variance, which is the largest amount of variance in the data after rotation. The second component makes up 14.448%, the third component 12.424%. The contributions of the fourth and fifth components are 7.960% and 5.305%, respectively, and are quite significant.

Overall, the percentage of variance explained decreases gradually from the first to the fifth component. The first 3 components account for a relatively high percentage of the total variance, while the latter components (mainly the 4th and 5th) account for a smaller percentage of the total variance, suggesting decreasing contribution for the successive components.

These five components account for 56.57% of the variance in the entire dataset, capturing more than half of the total variability and providing a reasonably good representation of the dataset's structure. The scree plot further supports these findings, showing that the first few components with higher eigenvalues account for the most variance

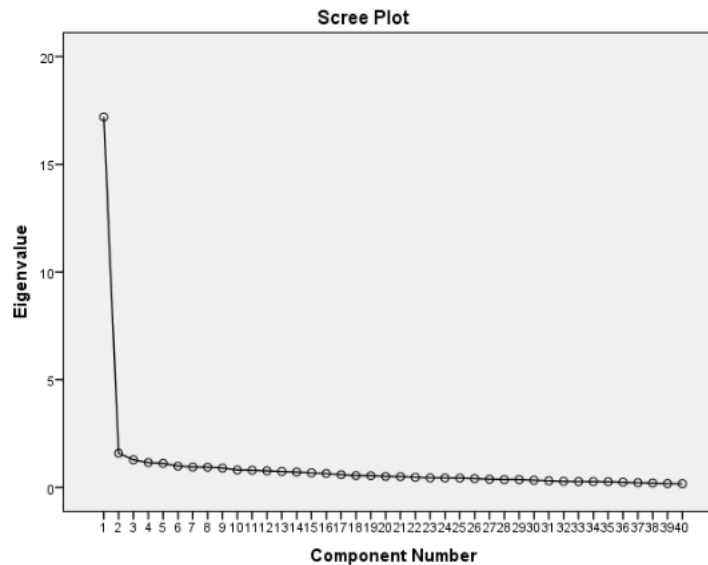


Figure No. 1. Scree Plot Rotated Component Matrix

**Rotated Components Matrix.** The first factor, which has nine (9) items, shows how Trust, Support, and Collaborative Friendship affect friendship quality. This also goes with the second factor which have six (6) items showing Security, Respect, and Mutual Care, the third factor which have four (4) items showing the Reliability and Conflict Resolution contribute, the fourth factor which have two (2) items reflecting the Open Communication and Emotional Disclosure, and the fifth factor which also have two (2) items showing Conflict and Communication Strain, all affecting and influences friendship quality. Nonetheless, all forty (40) items were retained in the factor structure as they demonstrate meaningful relationship within their respective components and were considered valid for inclusion in the final model.

#### Rotated Component Matrix with group attributes.

**Trust, Support, and Collaborative Friendship.** The table 3 demonstrate the rotational matrix reflecting the nine (9) items that made the topic "Trust, Support, and Collaborative Friendship" into groups. As observed in the table, the item 28 has the largest loading factor of 0.698, and item 31 has the lowest of 0.546. Relatedly, these numbers revealed a strong relation to each item, signifying that they all reflect a common dimension related to trust, support, and collaboration in friendship among college students.

*The items associated with this factor include the following: "I feel valued for my opinions and ideas" (0.698); "My friend offers practical advice when I ask for help" (0.671); "I trust my friend with sensitive information" (0.608); "We depend on each other for creative suggestions" (0.595); "I believe our friendship is dependable and lasting" (0.586); "We collaborate to accomplish shared goals" (0.577); "I feel free to be my authentic self around my friend" (0.562); "We exchange ideas to complete tasks more effectively" (0.562); and "My friend defends me if I am mistreated" (0.546)*

These findings have indicated that the factor of trust, support, and collaboration in friendships is high, which signifying that people feel appreciated when friends give trust and give and receive practical advice from each other, significantly establishes emotional safety and respect. The study of Jiang, Y., Zhang, B., Zhao, H., and Shi, L. (2025), supports this as they found that students who perceived higher levels of social support and appreciation have experienced stronger feelings of gratitude and psychological well-being. This proved that receiving appreciation makes students valued and respected, and that strengthens friendship quality, social well-being, and interpersonal relationship.

Meanwhile, Melian, N., Cheng, T., and Carey, R.M. (2026) presents that academic support and the similarity within friendship networks were strongly associated with producing better well-being among college students,

particularly among first generation and low-income students. Friends who provide guidance, advice, and assistance help the students to cope with academic challenges and strengthen social bonds. In addition, Niu, J., Jin., and Meng, L. (2023), have revealed that interpersonal trust significantly predicts friendship quality and mental well-being. Their findings showed that students who trust their friends tend to experience healthier and more supportive relationships, which positively affects emotional adjustment and life satisfaction, proving that friendship trust is another important factor affecting friendship quality among students.

**Table 3. Rotated Matrix with Grouped Attributes under Trust, Support and Collaborative Friendship.**

Dimension	Item No.	Attributes	Factor Score
Trust, Support, and Collaborative Friendship	28	I feel valued for my opinions and ideas.	.698
	22	My friend offers practical advice when I ask for help.	.671
	21	I trust my friend with sensitive information.	.608
	29	We depend on each other for creative suggestions.	.595
	39	I believe our friendship is dependable and lasting.	.586
	40	We collaborate to accomplish shared goals.	.577
	23	I feel free to be my authentic self around my friend.	.562
	24	We exchange ideas to complete tasks more effectively.	.562
	31	My friend defends me if I am mistreated.	.546

**Security, Respect, and Mutual Care in Friendship.** The table 4 shows the rotational matrix, which puts the six (6) items that made the topic "Security, Respect, and Mutual Care in Friendship" into groups. The item 11 has the largest loading of 0.639, while item 13 has the lowest of 0.508. These numbers indicate that the items are strongly related to each other, which suggests that they reflect a common dimension of Security, Respect, and Mutual Care in friendship among college students.

**Security, Respect, and Mutual Care in Friendship** is a coherent dimension of friendship quality as it reflects a moderate to strong factor loadings from 0.508 to 0.639, reflecting an internal consistency among the items. The highest-loading item has highlighted the shared time, which suggests that regular interaction between friends strengthens relational security. Meanwhile, the respect for personal boundaries and confidentiality highlighted the importance of trust and psychological safety. In addition, the inclusion of academic support points to the functional role of friendship in the college context, thus the feelings of security and appreciation also reflect its emotional outcomes.

This finding suggests that friendship quality is therefore sustained through a combination of **shared experiences, mutual respect, and reciprocal support**, which do foster emotional stability and trust. This aligns with the work of Demir and Özdemir (2010), Hays (1988), and Bukowski et al. (1996), who emphasize that supportive, respectful, and trusting relationships are essential to high-quality friendships and well-being among young adults.

*The following items associated with this factor are: "We spend time together during breaks or free periods" (0.639), "My friend respects my personal space and limits" (0.613), "I offer my friend assistance with academic tasks" (0.604), "I feel secure and confident in our friendship" (0.571), "I feel appreciated by my friend" (0.564), and "My friend keeps the private things I share confidential" (0.508).*

**Table 4. Rotated Matrix with Grouped Attributes under Security, Respect, and Mutual Care in Friendship.**

Dimension	Item No.	Attributes	Factor Score
Security, Respect, and Mutual Care in Friendship	11	We spend time together during breaks or free periods.	.639
	6	My friend respects my personal space and limits.	.613
	14	I offer my friend assistance with academic tasks.	.604
	12	I feel secure and confident in our friendship.	.571
	7	I feel appreciated by my friend.	.564
	13	My friend keeps the private things I share confidential.	.508

**Reliability and Conflict Resolution.** Table 5 shows the four topics under “Reliability and Conflict Resolution” grouped together under the heading of the rotational matrix. Items 32 has the highest factor loading with 0.667 while item 35 has the lowest factor loading with 0.519. These values demonstrate a high interrelationship among the items and that they are a composite factor of reliability and conflict resolution for college students.

The results of this study show that reliability and conflict resolution are important components of friendship quality among college students. The high factor loadings suggest that students appreciate the friendships in which they experience efficient resolution of conflict, support in times of uncertainty and commitment when it is needed. This is consistent with Kloo (2025) who states that good friendships have low levels of conflict and many positive qualities, including trust, support and loyalty. The results also indicate that friendships that are meaningful are based not only on trust and dependability, but also on the capacity to handle the misunderstandings positively and keep friendships alive through constructive conflict resolution.

Furthermore, apology and emotional support is a vital sign that students appreciate friendships where people recognize their errors and comfort each other when needed. Being able to bounce back quickly from disagreements and stay in the relationship in a trusting way helps create emotional safety and stability. The supportive interactions in friendships are highly correlated with positive emotional outcomes, while conflictual interactions are correlated with negative emotional outcomes (Shin & Gyeong, 2022). Similarly, the other three, Parvathy A., Lakshmi P and Kanth B. (2026) found positive problem-solving and emotional responsiveness were positively correlated to friendship quality among young adults and these are effective conflict-resolution strategies. The foregoing findings underlined the importance of empathy, accountability and good conflict management in developing healthy and fulfilling friendships.

The items that are associated with this factor are: “We recover quickly after disagreements” (0.667), “My friend reassures me when I doubt myself” (0.571), “I can rely on my friend to follow through on commitments” (0.534), and “My friend apologizes when they make a mistake that hurts me” (0.519). These indicators emphasize both behavioral consistency and emotional responsiveness within friendships.

**Table 5. Rotated Matrix with Grouped Attributes under Reliability and Conflict Resolution**

Dimension	Item No.	Attributes	Factor Score
Reliability and Conflict Resolution.	32	We recover quickly after disagreements.	.667
	3	My friend reassures me when I doubt myself.	.571
	4	I can rely on my friend to follow through on commitments.	.534
	35	My friend apologizes when they make a mistake that hurts me.	.519

**Open Communication and Emotional Disclosure.** Table 6 below presents the two items under the heading of open communication and emotional disclosure and their associated rotational matrix. The highest factor loading

is at item 1 (0.799) and the lowest at item 36 (0.504). The values indicate a high correlation between the items and support open communication between college students and emotional disclosure as a dimension.

This research reveals the emotional disclosure and open communication to be the important components in the quality of friendships of college students. High factors suggest that pupils are more likely to have good relationships if they feel they can talk about problems with friends and share personal problems. This means that being open and expressive are important aspects of fostering trust and connection, enabling individuals to feel understood and supported. This enables the free expression of thoughts and feelings, which deepens the understanding between individuals and enhances the friendship. The overall message of this aspect is that it is important to communicate openly and honestly to foster positive and meaningful relationships.

The results indicate that openness and disclosure of emotions are significant aspects of the friendship relationship among college students. The high factor loading has led to the conclusion that when students are able to share their concerns and problems with their friends easily, they are able to build good relationships.

Recent studies have further emphasized the importance of emotional disclosure for relationship quality. For instance, Valerian J. Derlega and Sandra Metts (2018) stated that disclosure creates intimacy, trust, and relational closeness, especially when it comes to young adults. Likewise, Jeffrey A. Hall (2019) discovered close friendships are built and maintained through open communication and meaningful conversations. The studies uphold the idea that emotional expressions of thoughts and feelings are key elements in building supportive, meaningful and high-quality relationships among college students.

The items associated with this factor are: "I feel comfortable sharing my personal concerns with my friend." (0.799) and "I feel comfortable discussing my problems with my friend." (0.504).

**Table 6. Rotated Matrix with Grouped Attributes under Open Communication and Emotional Disclosure.**

Dimension	Item No.	Attributes	Factor Score
Open Communication and Emotional Disclosure	1	I feel comfortable sharing my personal concerns with my friend.	.799
	36	I feel comfortable discussing my problems with my friend.	.504

**Conflict and Communication Strain.** Table 7 shows the rotation matrix for two items that fall under the subscale of "conflict and communication strain." The highest factor loading is for item 19 (0.737) and the lowest is for item 27 (0.725). These values reveal a high level of correlation between the items, suggesting that they are a related dimension of conflict and communication tension among college students.

According to the results, conflict and communication stress is a very important aspect affecting the quality of friendships among college students. Strong factor loadings indicate a high frequency and impact of disagreements and feeling unimportant in relationships. In this pattern, arguing does not involve listening; this can lead to tension and strained friendships. Furthermore, when someone can't communicate verbally or is rejected by others, they can end up feeling frustrated and emotionally disconnected, which can affect their ability to interact well with others. Overall this dimension highlights the destructive effect of conflict and lack of communication on friendships and the need to listen and respect the other person to develop and maintain healthy relationships.

The results indicate one of the dimensions that has a significant impact on the quality of friendship among college students is conflict and communication strain. The factor loadings are large and suggest that conflict and feeling unheard are regular occurrences and have an impact on relationships. The results of these studies suggest that unresolved conflicts, including negative communication patterns, such as arguing without listening or not listening to a friend, can lead to tension and fray the bonds of relationships. This is often the time when people feel they are not being listened to, become frustrated and emotionally isolated and then are unable to manage relationships.

There are some recent literatures which highlight the importance of communication in sustaining relationships, and that supports this interpretation. Gauvain, Palbusa and Cheong (2019) have determined that peer communication is related to better adjustment and good friendship among young adults. Similarly, Golubeva (2023) explained that conflict is a natural and normal part of any relationship, but the impact of conflict on the relationship is influenced by communication practices, including empathy, listening, and respectful responses.

In addition, Laursen and Collins (2016) also emphasized that the lack of resolution of disagreements as well as low responsiveness is associated with worse relationship outcomes and higher levels of relational strain. Consequently, these articles discovered that constructive communication and effective conflict management is one key to healthy, long-lasting relationships amongst college students.

The items associated with this factor are: "I sometimes disagree or argue with my friend." (0.737) and "My friend sometimes ignores what I say." (0.725).

**Table 7. Rotated Matrix with Grouped Attributes under Conflict and Communication Strain.**

Dimension	Item No.	Attributes	Factor Score
Conflict and Communication Strain	19	I sometimes disagree or argue with my friend.	.737
	27	My friend sometimes ignores what I say.	.725

### Framework Developed Based on Findings

The findings of the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) then suggest a framework which illustrates the key factors of the Friendship Quality Model Among College Students. The figure 2 showcases the four factors or dimensions that emerged from the responses of: Trust, Support and Collaborative Friendship; Security, Respect, and Mutual Care in Friendship; Reliability and Conflict Resolution; Open Communication and Emotional Disclosure; and Conflict and Communication Strain.

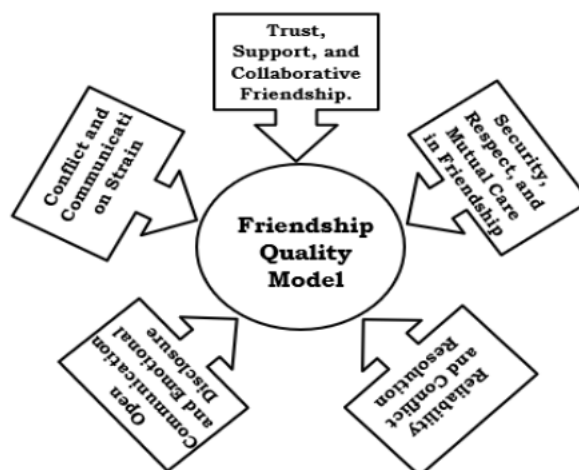
**Trust, Support, and Collaborative Friendship.** This factor reflects the building of good friendships through trust, emotional and practical support, and joint involvement. It emphasizes that there are important friends who are reliable, make promises they keep, don't share information, and can be helpful to calm down during times of stress or uncertainty. Further, this dimension emphasizes collaborative friendship where: people cooperate in solving problems; give positive feedback and support each other's development. These characteristics strengthen emotional connections and contribute to a feeling of safety and belonging in the connection. As pointed out by Li R., Xu W., Nie H. and Zhang W. (2025), Interpersonal trust and perceived social support are linked to positive outcomes like well-being and relational satisfaction in friendships that are high in interpersonal trust and perceived social support. As the study demonstrates, close friendships are another strong source of emotional support and are a gateway to trust, and therefore to quality of social relationships. These friendships also help to build resilience, because they allow individuals to solve problems more easily with their peers because of their understanding and encouragement.

**Security, Respect, and Mutual Care in Friendship.** This factor covers Friendship for Security, Respect and Mutual Care, and it refers to the importance of emotional safety in peer relationships. Security is comprised of acceptance and value; respect is comprised of boundaries, opinions and individuality. Mutual care: caring for each other and feeling empathy for one another among friends. Emotional security helps to foster stronger bonds and lasting friendship. Pupils' capacity to have satisfactory and rewarding relationships with others is promoted by respect and care. Based on the research of Alsarrani A., Hunter R., Dunne L., & Garcia L. (2022), Good friendships, supporting relationships, trust and intimacy with friends, is strongly linked to better adolescent well-being, life satisfaction and social isolation, highlighting the importance of emotional support and supportive peer relationships. These results confirm that respect and mutual care are fundamental aspects of healthy friendships. In addition, development of these attributes in students can improve their social interactions and psychological health.

**Reliability and Conflict Resolution.** This factor includes Reliability and Conflict Resolution, highlighting the importance of friendship consistency, dependability and handling disagreements well. Reliability is evidenced when people can count on their friends to keep their promises, be supportive when they are needed, and be there when needed during both good and bad times. This reliability can lead to feelings of security and trust within relationships, and stability. Conflict resolution, on the other hand, is about how friends solve conflict. Good friendships don't avoid conflict or allow it to run out of control, instead resolving it through transparent communication, understanding and a desire to value different views. Friends work together to find solutions, make compromises and re-establish the relationship if needed. Supportive interactions are linked to positive emotions in friendships, while negative emotions are linked to unresolved conflict, indicating that conflict management is important (Shin & Gyeong, 2022). So, the ability to confront and solve problems in a positive way is essential to maintain positive and stable friendships.

**Open Communication and Emotional Disclosure.** This factor has to do with Open Communication and Emotional Disclosure, which involves honest conversation and sharing of opinions and feelings. Sharing of emotions promotes closeness and deepens understanding of one's friends. Open communication enables people to share their thoughts, emotions, and concerns without judgment, fostering understanding and clarity. Emotional disclosure also enhances intimacy by allowing the sharing of personal experiences, vulnerabilities, and thoughts, fostering emotional connection and closeness. Costello M., Bailey N., Stern J., Allen J. Vulnerable self-disclosure was also shown to be an important predictor of the formation of emotional intimacy in friendships over time (2024). The findings suggest that in the context of inter-personal relationships, emotional openness is a mechanism that facilitates the development of friendship, intimacy, understanding, and satisfaction. Communication that is open and honest enables friends to help and support, to help clarify misunderstandings and to be sensitive to one another's needs. This transparency engenders trust and a sense of security for people to feel valued. Also, emotional disclosure helps increase empathy, as friends come to understand one another's point of view and feelings.

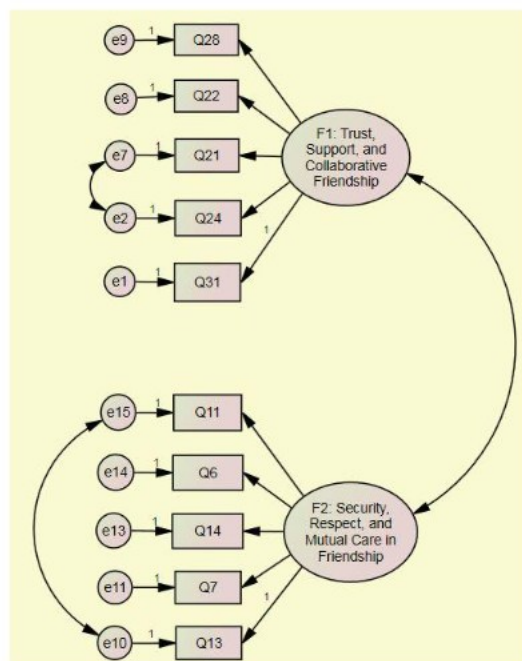
**Conflict and Communication Strain.** This factor focuses on Conflict and Communication Strain, which represents the negative aspects of friendship, such as frequent misunderstandings, poor communication, and unresolved conflicts. This factor includes Conflict and Communication Strain which involves problems with friendship like frequent misunderstandings, poor communication and conflict. Higher levels of strain can have a negative impact on relationships and friendship in general. When communication fails, there can be emotional disconnection and unhappiness; ongoing conflict can cause friendships to break down. The concepts of role strain and role conflict explain the development of tension when people cannot fulfill the expectations in the relationship, and when the conflicting demands make interpersonal harmony difficult. Varpio L., Ray R., Dong T., Durning S., Hutchinson J. (2018) define role strain as the inability of a person to cope with the demands of a role due to a lack of emotional, cognitive, or social resources, and role conflict as a discrepancy in expectations about the role within or across roles. Such dynamics may contribute to being frustrated, emotionally drained and unable to communicate easily, which are all indicators of poor quality of friendship. If these tensions are not resolved in a positive way, then they may build up, leading to more negative interactions, less empathy, and less bonds in the relationship. Hence, the importance of good communication and conflict management in minimizing stress, ensuring trust, and promoting friendship, quality and stability.



*Figure 2: Friendship Quality Model Among College Students, revealing the Five Factors or Dimensions*

#### Model Developed Based on the Framework

The final best-fit model, shown in Figure 3, includes two factors: Factor 1, with five corresponding attributes representing Trust, Support, and Collaborative Friendship; and Factor 2, with five corresponding attributes representing Security, Respect, and Mutual Care in Friendship. The model shows the relationship between the attributes, with the other attributes emerging together. Some attributes covariate with the other attributes regarding where the indicators of the dimensions belong.



**Figure 3: Best Fit Model**

The first factor, trust, support, and collaborative friendship, has five items that correlate with two indicators. This factor is measured by items 28, 22, 21, 24, and 31; however, only items 21 and 24 correlate with each other. The second factor, Security, Respect, and Mutual Care in Friendship, comprises 5 items (11, 6, 14, 7, and 13); however, only items 11 and 13 correlate with each other.

Based on the previous literature and the EFA performed in the analysis, a five-factor model was hypothesized. Vis-à-vis the model fit, the best fit was shown by all indices meeting the cutoffs. This confirms that the hypothesized model, which includes two key dimensions, Trust, Support, and Collaborative Friendship, and security, respect, and mutual care in friendship with their corresponding attributes, effectively represents the underlying structure of the friendship quality model

**Table 8. Summary of Goodness of Fit Measures**

Index	Criterion	Final Model
CMIN/DF	0 < value < 2	1.383
p-value	> .05	.073
NFI	> .95	.964
TLI	> .95	.986
CFI	> .95	.990
GFI	> .95	.973
RMSEA	< .08	.036
<u>Pclose</u>	> .05	.821

The goodness-of-fit measures of the final model indicate it is within an acceptable range and provides a good fit to the data. As indicated in the table, the CMIN/DF value is 1.383, below the acceptable limit of 2, indicating a good fit. The p-value for the observed data is 0.073, which is above 0.05, indicating that the model is not significantly different and can be accepted.

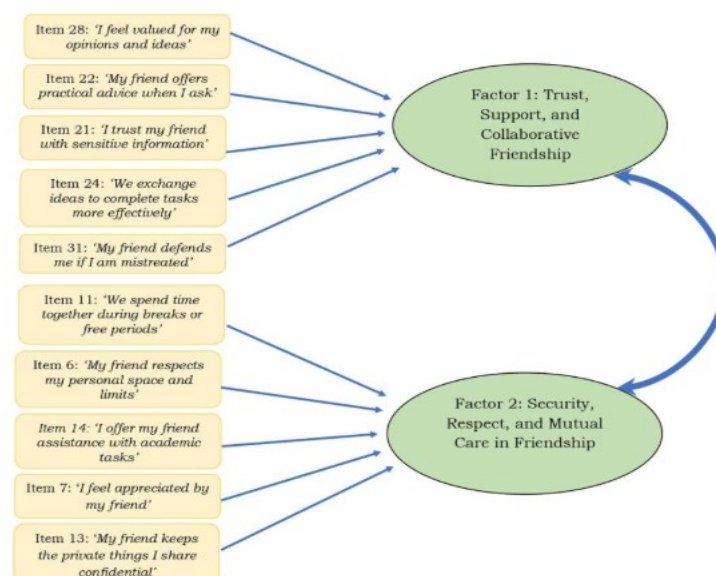
Moreover, the incremental fit measures like NFI (.964), TLI (.986), CFI (.990), and GFI (.973) all surpass the acceptable value of (.95), indicating a good and acceptable fit of the model. The RMSEA of the model is 0.036,

which is less than 0.08, which, according to Yuan et al. (2016), who proposed a more fine-grained set of descriptors that are associated with certain values of RMSEA (.01 = excellent, .05 = close, .08 = fair, and .10 = poor) thus demonstrating a near-perfect fit of the model to the data. Lastly, the Pclose value of .821 is greater than .05, further confirming that the model has a good fit.

The research questions were answered through Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). Initially, 40 attributes were assessed; 23 attributes were retained based on their factor loadings and theoretical relevance. Using the Kaiser criterion (eigenvalue > 1) and a scree plot, the data suggested a five-factor structure. Subsequently, a CFA was conducted to validate this structure, resulting in a refined two-factor model. These factors are: trust, support, and collaborative friendship, and security, respect, and mutual care in friendship.

#### Framework Developed Based on Findings

The utilization of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) of the responses of the 300 students then suggests a framework revealing conceptual grouping of friendship quality factors among college students into two (2) major dimensions. As illustrated in Figure 4, the key dimensions are: Factor 1: Trust, Support, and Collaborative Friendship; and Factor 2: Security, Respect, and Mutual Care in Friendship. Each of these two (2) key dimensions has five (5) corresponding attributes, shown in arrows, how specific friendship behaviors and experiences relate and contribute to each dimension, and influence the friendship quality model among college students.



**Figure 4: Dimensions and Attributes from CFA Contributing to the Friendship Quality Model Among College Students**

Factor 1: Trust, Support, and Collaborative Friendship have emphasized the importance of trust, emotional support, appreciation, and collaboration within the friendship. Items such as “I trust my friend with sensitive information”, “My friend offers practical advice when I ask”, and “We exchange ideas to complete tasks more effectively” has indicated that strong friendships among college students were built from being open, guidance and mutual appreciation to each other, and from the teamwork of in the friendship. This displays how friendships have become an important source of emotional security, especially for college students that are challenged by the pressure and social adjustments in transitioning to higher education. Additionally, Yang, M., Pérez-Rojas, A. E., and Miller, M.J. (2024) explained also that social support from friendships reduces a psychological distress and that helps students managed their emotional stresses effectively. This proved that college students who experience supportive and appreciative friendships are more likely to demonstrate optimism, resilience, and happiness throughout their academic journey.

Meanwhile, Factor 2: Security, Respect, and Mutual Care have highlighted the emotional safety, respect, confidentiality, and mutual care between friendship. Items such as “My friend respects my personal space and limits”, “I feel appreciated by my friend”, and “My friend keeps the private things I share confidential” have reflected the importance of emotional security and respectful interactions in maintaining quality friendships. According to Kirby, J.B., Stellino, M.B., Lewis, C., Humphrey, K., Gordon, K., and Lindsay, K.G. (2022), a

supportive peer relationship can create an inclusive and socially connected environment that can improve the students' emotional well-being and social engagement. A respectful friendship can help students feel more accepted and appreciated, which can strengthen their sense of belongingness within the university community. By establishing this, mutual care in friendship can be developed, and thus, this can contribute to positive social environments where students feel socially and emotionally connected rather than feeling alone and isolated. In addition, the confidentiality and the trustworthiness between friends appeared to be a significant qualities in friendship, in which students tend to value friends who can keep personal information private and that provide non-judgmental support, and that leading to much stronger mutual care and support whom promotes peace of mind in friendships.

#### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This study indicates that certain interpersonal dimensions affect the quality of friendship among college students, including Trust, Support, and Collaborative Friendship; Security, Respect, and Mutual Care in Friendship; Reliability and Conflict Resolution; Open Communication and Emotional Disclosure; and Conflict and Communication Strain. The dimensions illustrate that trust, emotional support, respect, open communication, and effective conflict resolution are the building blocks of strong friendships. The results of the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) further validated and verified the developed Friendship Quality Model for College Students as a valid and reliable measure of friendship quality among college students. The final best-fit model identified Collaborative Friendship, Trust, and Support as the three most significant factors contributing to meaningful and healthy friendships among students, in addition to Security, Respect, and Mutual Care in Friendship. The research highlights the essential role that positive friendships play in the emotional, social and learning well-being of students. In addition, the research highlights the importance of developing positive and respectful relationships between students in higher education institutions. The framework and instrument presented will be useful for researchers, counselors, and administrators in higher education to evaluate and study the quality of friendships among college students. The findings can be used in counseling programs, student support initiatives, and activities that foster emotional safety, trust, and care between peers. Fostering positive relationships among fellow students in college or university could improve students' feeling of belonging and self-confidence, and their emotional adaptability. Overall, the study will help develop a more supportive, inclusive and mentally healthy learning environment in college. The results also suggest the need for further research in friendship quality and how it relates to students in different cultural, educational, and social settings to better understand the role of interpersonal relationships in student development and student success.

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