**“Family Communication and its effects to Cross-Sex Friendship Maintenance of an Individual within a Nuclear Family”**

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**CHAPTER I: The Problem and Its Background**

Introduction……………………………………………………………………………………….3

Background of the Study……………………………………………………………....…..……4

Theoretical Framework………………………………………………………………………….7

Conceptual Framework……………………………………………………………………........9

Statement of the Problem……………………………………………………………..………11

Objectives of the Study………………………………………………………………………..11

Hypotheses………………………………………………………………………….………….12

Significance of the Study………………………………………………………………….…..12

Limitations of the Study…………………………………………………………………..……13

Operational Definition……………………………………………………………….…………13

**CHAPTER II: Review of Relevant Literature**

Family in the Philippines………………………………………………………………………15

Friendship……………………………………………………………………………………….19

Family Communication Patterns……………………………………………………………..22

Relational Maintenance……………………………………………………………………...27

Family Communication Patterns and Relational Maintenance……………………….….32

Synthesis………………………………………………………………………………………36

**CHAPTER III: Design and Procedure**

Research Design……………………………………………………………………………..38

Research Method Used……………………………………………………………………...39

Sample and Sampling Technique Used……………………………………………………39

Instrumentation………………………………………………………..………………………40

Data Collection Procedure………………………………………………….……………….41

Statistical Formula Used…………………………………………………………………….42

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**…………………………………………………………………………….44

**CHAPTER I**

**The Problem and Its Background**

This chapter serves as an overview of the study “Family Communication and its effects to Cross-Sex Friendship Maintenance of an Individual within a Nuclear Family.” It includes the introduction and background of the study, theoretical and conceptual framework, statement of the problem, objectives of the study, hypotheses, significance and limitations of the study, and the operational definitions.

**Introduction**

Family is the core unit of society. Whether defined as biological, legal, or sociological, comprises a large connotation on how an individual makes sense of the world. Every individual come from different types of family and desires to have the most pleasurable kind of family in the future so as to develop their interpersonal skills. As noted from (Fitzpatrick and Caughlin, 2002), “the family is where most of us learn to communicate and, even more important, where most of us learn how to think about communication.”

Family is an important unit because it plays an important role not only in the society but also in the vast world of communication. Family, in communication, was defined as to being a “fundamental source for learning basic interpersonal communication skills and rules” (Koerner& Fitzpatrick, 2002a, 2002b; Kunkel, Hummert, & Dennis, 2006; Whitchurch& Dickson, 1999).

These learned interpersonal communications skills serves as the foundation of the family in building their own structured culture. To support this idea, Reiss (1981) argued that “these value and belief systems have far-reaching consequences for how family members perceive their social environment and their family’s place in it and, as a consequence, how they communicate within it.”

As per stated by Le Poire (2005):

“Like families, however, definitions of communication are complex in that some definitions of communication include all types of behavior, even when no communicative intent was included. Some scholars find it important to recognize communication as contextualized—that is, communication within the family is different and distinct from other communication event because it is occurring within the family structure.” (page 12)

Thus, communication is central to familial relationships whatever type of communication exists, from nurtured and control to conflicts and struggles. Through this, communication patterns within the family is essential as it influences these core units of the society individually through behavioral and interactional ways such as that helping each member on socialization, relationship maintenance, and other interpersonal activities.

Furthermore, this study aims to determine how all these family communication patterns affect in the friendship maintenance of cross-sex friends.

**Background of the Study**

Filipinos are known as having close family ties. Traditionally, each member resides within his own family until marriage compared to other cultures that tend to separate from their parents at the start of legal age, meaning that they spend most time with their family before the time of building their own. In the Philippines, several values and practices are still done in preservation of its familial heritage such as doing “mano po” or kissing hands of elders as sign of respect, men courting the parents before having the hands of the maiden, and the undying respect of children to their parents regardless of what age they have. Evidently, it is within the family that a Filipino individual builds his own self.

The most important customs affects an individual’s behavior is built within the family. According to Article 15 Section 1 of the 1987 Philippine Constitution, "the state recognizes the Filipino family as the foundation of the nation. Accordingly, it shall strengthen its solidarity and actively promotes its total development." These customs serves as a fundamental source of every individual wherein they apply it as a single unit of society.

According to a Philippine Cultural website, family is one of the most significant parts that a Filipino individual values regardless of any Western influence. An example of this trait is when an Overseas Filipino Worker (OFW) experiences homesickness while being away with his family in the Philippines. (Retrieved from <http://www.philippinecountry.com/philippine_culture/common_family_traits.html>)

On a data based from The World Family Map website, children in the region of Asia and Middle East “are especially likely to live with two parents and extended family members.” Statistics shows that more than 80% of children in the given regions live with two parents, specifically 85% in the Philippines. (Data collected from 2000-2012) (Retrieved from http://worldfamilymap.org/2014/articles/world-family-indicators/family-structure)

Family is probably the biggest influence of an individual. Family is where we learn how to communicate with other people. Through this, an individual adapts what they perceive in their family and applies it in their socializing. Thus, an individual creates a relationship with people other than their family because of the socializing skills that their respective families instilled to them.

One of the things that we get from these socializing skills is our friends. Aside from family, “friendships are the most common close relationships individuals engage in during their lifetime.” (Dainton, Zelley, &Langan, 2003) While the family serves as the foundation of the basic personal aspects of an individual, friendship also serves as one of the factors that helps an individual to build his or her own character and personality that widens the values of an individual that is instilled by their respective families.

All of us have experience having a friend. A friend is someone an individual formed a bond with. An individual usually see them the way they see their family or anyone whom they are close with. Individuals find their friends because of different factors like **“Common interests, History (experiences that are similar with each other), Common values (values that both friends adhere or believe in) and Equality (support system).”** (Lickerman, 2013) These factors serve as camaraderie between individuals in order to maintain their friendship.

In a study made by Ledbetter in 2009, it stated that Koerner and Fitzpatrick (2002a) claimed that “parent-child communication socializes children into the skills and cognitive orientations necessary for future relationship.” Since the primary interpersonal skills are learned within the family, every individual adapts it and uses it in their non-familial relationship, specifically in friendship. Thus, this study will discuss about the effects of the adaptation of basic structures learned within the family in application towards their friendship maintenance.

**Theoretical Framework**

The major foundations the researchers used in explaining the phenomenon of the study are the Social Cognitive Theory by Albert Bandura and Family Communications Pattern Theory by Ascan F. Koerner.

***Social Cognitive Theory***

There have been studies about Family Communication Patterns that utilized social cognition. Gottman’s study of Metaemotion discussed that the belief of parents associate with how they use their parenting styles and how their children behave on their own ability. These patterns can lead into outcomes, such as in the area of peer relationship, academic, and health.

According to Stamp (2004), there are several concepts under the Social Cognitive Theory narrowed down to categories such as: Cognition, Personal, Substance, and Family. But the researchers focused only on the first two categories (Cognition and Personal). Wherein Cognition stated that gender, emotion, and personality constitutes to the complex communication that exists in a particular family. Personal concept, on the other hand, explains relationship to other people, interaction within the family members, and the communication present within the boundary of familial relationship.

It is clearly stated in the Social Cognition in Family Communication by Ascan Koerner, that social cognition and family communication are interrelated, that the understanding of parents, whether in conflict or understanding of their children, is associated with different family patterns present in any situation.

Supporting the idea that Social Cognition and Family Communication are correlated, a research by Burgleson, Delia, and Applegate (1995) studied the different regulating and comforting messages parents use with their children. It explains the person-centered messages, where parents’ motivation, feelings, and intentions to their family is associated with their children’s complex mental representation and social relationship that leads to success in peer relationship and school-related performances. It also explains position-centered messages, where parent’s position is associated with lesser complex mental cognition and lesser success in the areas of school and social relationship.

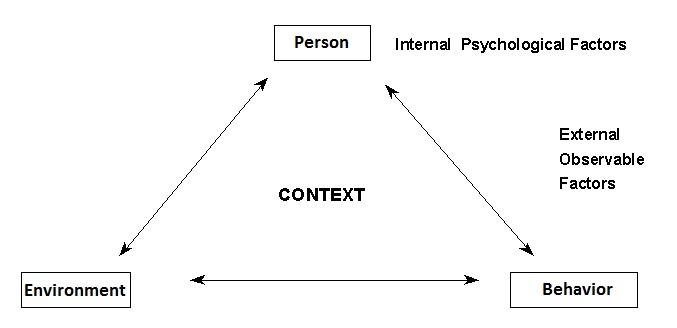
Moreover, the Model of Causation involving Triadic Reciprocal Determinism (shown below) was used as the very concept of the study since it is where the Social Cognitive Theory was founded.

Figure 1

**Model of Reciprocal Causation**

***Family Communication Patterns Theory***

Fitzpatrick and Ritchie (1990) reconceptualized Mcleod and Chaffee’s Two Ways to come to Agreement in Families into Revised Family Communication Patterns as important aspect of Family Communication Pattern to family relationship. The idea was further developed from concept orientation and socio orientation to conversation orientation and conformity orientation.

Conversation orientation involves an open communication between the family members and the exploration of behaviors by discussing wide array of topics. It includes sharing one’s personal experiences and ideas, and involves the expression of the members’ personal emotions.

Conformity orientation emphasizes the construction of familial cultures. It involves the establishment of a family’s own rules, value, belief, and norm setting where members of the family involved in conformity are expected to practice.

**Conceptual Framework**

In order to relate the Model of Causation involving Triadic Reciprocal Determinism (shown in Figure 1), the model was adapted in the context of the study.

The Model of Reciprocal Causation, described by Albert Bandura, involves behavior, cognition and personal factors, and environment influences all as determinants that influence each other bidirectionally.

In this model, P↔B of reciprocal causation shows one’s personal thoughts and action towards behavior. The E↔P of reciprocal causation shows that a person’s characteristics may affect the environment’s influences and vice versa while the B↔E reciprocal causation shows that there may be influences between the environment and a person’s behavior. But it is emphasized by Bandura that “Reciprocal causation does not mean that the different sources of influence (i.e. person, behavior, and environment) are of equal strength.” (Bandura, 1989)

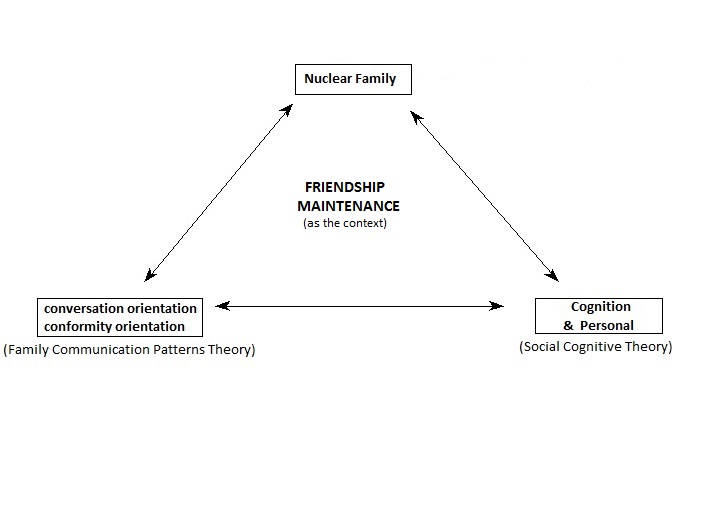
 In the study, the researchers applied the different elements of the model (shown in Figure 1.1) to the major variables used such that: P (person) as the Family, B (behavior) as Cognition and Personal as a concept of Social Cognitive Theory, and E (environment) as conversation orientation and conformity orientation as a concept of Family Communication Patterns Theory.

Figure 1.1

**Conceptual Application of the Model of Reciprocal Causation**

Since the study is about Family Communication, the researchers considered family as a single unit and so it is applied as element P. Cognition and Personal was applied as element B. Cognition is about personality, gender, and emotion, while Personal is about relationship, interaction, and communication where it acts as a behavioral factor that interacts with the person and environment. Conversation orientation and conformity orientation were applied as element E since it is the environment taken when family communication takes place.

**Statement of the Problem**

Family is the core unit of society that individual’s interpersonal skills. Every individual adapts the cognition and personal and family orientation within the family members that affects the relationship type schema built to friendship quality.

Since Ledbetter’s article (2009) “Family Communication Patterns and Relational Maintenance Behavior: Direct and Mediated Associations with Friendship Closeness” focused only on the effects of family communication patterns in same sex friends. The researchers would like to venture more on identifying the effects between patterns in family communication and friendship maintenance focusing on cross-sex friends.

**Objectives of the Study**

This study aims to identify the following statements:

1. To know the profile of the informants
2. To know the family communication patterns used through:
   1. Conversation Orientation
   2. Conformity Orientation
3. To determine the level of friendship closeness of the participants
4. To know the factors affecting the maintenance of cross-sex friendship
5. To determine the effects of family communication patterns in friendship maintenance

**Hypotheses**

1. There is a positive association between conversation orientation and cross-sex friendship maintenance.
2. There is a positive association between conformity orientation and cross-sex friendship maintenance.
3. The level of friendship closeness directly affects the friendship maintenance of an individual.
4. The cross-sex friendship maintenance of an individual has a positive association with Relational Maintenance behavior.

**Significance of the Study**

This study is significant as it contributes and benefits the following sectors:

**To the Families**: This study will help the families to be aware that the communication patterns that exist within a family can greatly affect an individual in terms of personality and behavioral development, specifically in friendship maintenance.

**To the Academe:** This study will help contribute to the existing body of knowledge about Family Communication. It also serves as an addition to the dynamics and understanding of the Family Communication Patterns. Furthermore, there are only a few studies published on online journals on Family Communication contextualized in the Philippines.

**To the Future Researchers:** This serves as a reference for future studies and researches on Family Communication, Family Communication Patterns, and Relational Maintenance.

**Limitations of the Study**

The scope of the study focused only on identifying the effects of family communication patterns in cross-sex friendship maintenance. The Family Communication Pattern was identified using conversation orientation and conformity orientation as its dimensions. Furthermore, this study also aims to determine the friendship maintenance of an individual. This was measured through Oswald, Cark, and Kelly’s (2004) Four-factor typology: (1) positivity, (2) supportiveness, (3) openness, and (4) interaction.

The researchers focused on college students with an age range of 16-21 years old. The qualified respondents came from a nuclear type of family.

**Operational Definition**

For clarification purposes, the following terms that were used throughout the study were defined:

**Family Communication –** is the interaction between and among family members

**Cross-sex Friendship –** a non-romantic relationship between individuals that are of different biological sexes

**Individual –** a member who’s part of a larger group

**Relational Maintenance –** a way or strategy to keep a stable relationship among individuals

**Nuclear family –** a type of family composed of parents (mother and father) and children whom are living together

**Family –** a core unit of society where an individual learns the basics of interpersonal communication and influences an individual’s behavior and overall personality

**Family Communication Patterns –** a representation of communication built within the family that uses family knowledge as basic foundation, conversation orientation and conformity orientation are used as dimensions which are then adapted by individuals applying them in non-familial relationships

**Conversation Orientation –** involves the presence of interaction and exchange of information, knowledge, and experiences within the members of a family

**Conformity Orientation –** involves the presence of building a culture within a family (i.e. setting of rules, attitudes, beliefs, and norms)

**Level of Friendship Closeness –** the degree that determines how deep is the relationship between individuals

**CHAPTER II**

**Review of Relevant Literature**

This chapter discusses prior researches and studies that are related and relevant to the current research being undertaken. In order to elaborate the discourse of the studies, the researchers divided this chapter into several themes that are parallel to the context being covered in this study. The themes used in this study are: Family in the Philippines, Friendship, Patterns in Family Communication, Relational Maintenance, and discussion about Family Communication Patterns and Relational Maintenance.

*Family in the Philippines*

Being colonized by many countries, and being influenced by western and other cultures, one thing that has never changed is the way everyone sees and treats their family. Family is the basic unit of society in the Philippines. Although a lot of complex types of society have risen, family is still the most distinct out of all kinds of society. Aside from religion, family is the only social institution that is developed. Family is considered as a social institution that can build and develop another society.

According to Basbas Et Al. (2007), as the highest form of animal, man can establish a society composed of different types of people and families that are bound by the same norms and beliefs. Because of this, family becomes the first type of society that an individual feel the sense of belongingness.

An individual's foundation is their family. The parents are the ones who instilled values, norms and other basic types of communication patterns that a child adapts in their lives. Family is the first society that an individual belongs to, they are an individual’s first friends, thus, they are the first ones to influence an individual's way of thinking.

Through families, an individual learns to communicate with others, establishing a relationship and living in harmony with them. An individual acquires different skills such as social, moral beliefs, and practices that can influence him to be a better person and a member of society.

Even though family is the smallest unit of society, because of this, the society is able to achieve its goals since family is the basic foundation of an individual to become a member of the society.

Philippines is known for its close family ties. The traditional Filipino family type is extended family. This type of family mostly consists of a mother, father, children, grandmother, grandfather, cousin, aunt and uncle. Whatever the family is going through, because of this strong kinship, the family gets through any problem together and makes God the center of the family. (Retrieved from http://usfcmc.tripod.com/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderfiles/filipino\_values.pdf)

Some families belonging to the extended type of family were moving to cities or works abroad because of economic problems. Other members move from rural areas to cities due to urbanism, for they believe that living in the city is much better than in rural areas where basic necessities are insufficient. Because of this, the extended family type is gradually shifting and becomes a part of a smaller family called a nuclear family. Basically, a nuclear family consists of a mother, father and children. (Retrieved from JRank Articles http://family.jrank.org/pages/1222/Nuclear-Families.html#ixzz3SrRd9bVh)

In the Philippine society, parents usually pass down their rules, norms and values to their children through suggestion, observation or modeling. Through sharing and interacting within the family, children will most likely get the behavior their parents are trying to pass down to them. Filipino customs and tradition are instilled to the members of the family because of interaction inside the family.

One of the common Filipino family traits is the respect for elders. Respect for the elders is still a common practice in the Philippines. Saying "po" and "opo" is a custom when addressing or answering an older member of the family like parents, grandparents and others. Another is addressing an older brother or sister as "kuya" and "ate", respectively. In doing so, it shows respect for the older ones. In the traditional Filipino family setting, showing respect to older people is an important custom. It shows that we are honoring them for their authority and wisdom.

According to an article about Filipino family, each member has a role that should be played to accomplish a common goal. When it comes to parental roles in the Filipino family, a father usually acts as the head of the family. Being the head of the family, he is the one who provides the basic needs of the family; food, shelter, clothing, and education. Another role of a father in the family is to be the decision maker. He is the one who makes decision especially if it concerns the welfare of the family. Although mother and children are a part of the decision making process, a father has still the upper hand in making the decision. The other half, the mother, is the home-maker of the family. She manages the whole family, acts as the manager-treasurer of the household, and coordinates home activities. Mothers are responsible for emotional growth and values formation of the children. Usually, the mothers are more bonded with their children than their fathers since they are the ones who are always at home with their children. (Retrieved from http://generalhowitzer.hubpages.com/hub/The-Typical-Filipino-Family)

Since the family is the first society that an individual feels the sense of belongingness, parents should impose a good example to their children. A child’s behavior is strongly influenced by his family. Elkin and Handel (1978) stated that “the family as the first unit with which children has a continuous contact and the first context in which socialization patterns develop.” An individual’s first social relationship is their families. It is where they acquire the basic knowledge of interpersonal skills that they will later use in non-familial relationships.

A parent has the fundamental role when it comes to shaping and constructing of a children’s personality. According to a study of Goldsmith (2000), if the family of an individual imposes positive experiences, he will also have a positive attitude and believed that they were in control of their lives.

According to an article: “Helping Teens Develop Healthy Social Skills and Relationships: What the Research Shows about Navigating Adolescence” (2002), an individual’s relationship with their parents are associated with their social development. Good parent relationship will reflect with the way an individual develops a non-familial relationship (friends and romantic partners). Also, non-parent adults but members of the family can also influence and be a role model to individual’s socializing skills. Specifically, grandparents can also be a source of support to an individual.

Family is where an individual first acquires all the fundamental skills that will help an individual build his own personality and build relationships outside the family. Parents should serve as the role models of their children since they are the people that can largely influence an individual by the kind of example they show. Filipino family is still a strong and important institution that is responsible for shaping an individual’s character. (Society and Culture by Isabel S. Panopio, Realidad Santico Rolda 2007)

*Friendship*

All family members have experience having a friend. Friendship can be defined as a positive relationship between two people and eventually forms a bond. (Hartup and Steven, 1997; Hinde 1987).

Friendships are one of the types of relationship an individual engage on their lives. Aside from that, a friend is someone whom we can call when we need help, for companionship, and for emotional support. (Dainton, Zelley, and Langan, 2003).

People see friendship as a form of interaction and relationship that has a distinct feature and has benefits to them. Aside from families, an individual often spends more time with their friends than to other people and wishing to do and make memories with them. (Rubin, Bukowski, Parker, 2006)

According to Cichocki, unlike family, friendship is a type of relationship that is formed voluntarily. For friendship to develop, interaction between two individual should happen over a period of time with a degree of consistency. In families, relations are controlled by familial rules. But in friendship, the individuals can end the relationship anytime that they want.

Philosophers, both ancient and modern, tried to understand friendship as one of the things that helps an individual to build his personality. (Badhwar, 1993)

Since all of us have our own set of friends, what are the factors affecting in choosing our friends? In making friends with other people, similarity is still one of the main factors that attract us to make friends with other people. In the beginning years of an individual, especially in the preschool years, children appear to be more drawn to a person who has similarities with them and eventually becoming their friends. (Rubin et al 2006) Common interests such as reading, listening to music and other leisure activities sure ties individuals together since the similarities they have closes the gap between them. (Lickerman, 2010)

Another factor that draws people together as friends is history. History is about how two individuals had gone through the same difficult experience in life. Once an individual finds someone who has the same experience as his, it is more comfortable to speak with them and open up their hearts since they share the same experiences in life. Common Values also serves as an important factor in choosing a friend. If two individuals share the same norms, values, and beliefs, creating and maintaining the friendship will be as easy as counting one two three since both of them are looking on the same page. Last factor is the Equality. Equality is about how friends support each other in times of sadness. One will support the other by giving emotional advice, and vice versa. (Lickerman, 2010)

It is said that an individual creates friendship since they were still an infant. The first friends’ children make was due to proximity or mutual interest in a certain toy or object. For a while, they became a part of someone else’s lives when they started to interact with others. By the age of three to seven years old, an individual creates friendship because of physical attributes (same hair type) and toys or candy. Then, adolescent period is when an individual begins to comprehend the value of sharing similar beliefs and values, developing understanding other people and learns to accept other people in his life. (Rawlin, 1992)

There are several types of friendship that are existing today. The most common are acquaintance, casual friend, best friends.

An acquaintance is someone that you have met somewhere randomly. Unlike stranger, this kind of relationship can blossom from stranger, acquaintance to close friends, if effort is exerted. A casual friend is someone that an individual talks to in a regular basis but the kind of messages sent to this is not enough to establish close relationships. The last one is the best friend. A best friend is someone that an individual shares his secrets, feelings; regularly sent through face-to-face interaction. In this kind of relationship, an individual freely shares his thoughts regarding his feelings without the fear of others that will judge you for what you are feeling. (Robinson, L., Boose, G., and Segal, J., Ph.D. 2013)

As stated above, there are many types of friendship that an individual can engage in. One thing that we must know is about the Relational Maintenance. Relational Maintenance is the way of preserving a stable and consistent relationship. An individual uses different maintenance behavior to keep a relationship in its harmonious state.

Relational Maintenance is very important, According to a study; friendship is where an individual practices his egalitarian and symmetrical relationship that is needed for the future. Because of this, positive outcomes are positively associated with future relationships especially in marital relationship. (Page 9-11, Relational uncertainty and interaction enjoyment as predictors of relational maintenance by Katherine Elizabeth Fearer, 2013)

The first society wherein an individual feel the sense of belongingness is in the family. The parents are the one responsible for the shaping and instilling values to a child’s way of thinking (Basbas et al). Since family is the first person that a child gets acquainted with, they learn and acquire socializing skills that can be an influence to an individual’s predisposition in socializing when he becomes a member of a bigger society. (Basbas et al)

Family is where an individual first starts to learn how to communicate with other people. Communication happening within the family plays an important role in the future socializing skills of their children. Parental communication patterns serves as a guide that influences an individual’s communication, social skills, and behavior.

An individual’s familial relationship is associated with their social development. Good family communication in the family is reflected with the way an individual acts in his non-familial relationships. Family is where an individual familiarize himself on how to communicate and socialize with other people outside of their family. Parents, being the most influential person in their child’s over-all development, should impose good example for their children can adapt the good characteristics in socializing and hopefully apply it when the time comes that they will socialize with other people.

*Family Communication Patterns*

Family communication pattern is defined by McLeod and Chaffee (1972, 1973) “as the families’ tendencies to develop fairly stable and predictable ways of communicating with one another about information they received through media message”. These ways are grounded by each family member and uses family knowledge which will be adapted later on and apply it in social reality. It can be done through face-to-face or online mediated communication.

Conferring to McLeod and Chaffee (1972, 1973), “every family member can achieve a particular agreement of objects in two distinct ways: Concept orientation and Socio orientation”. Concept orientation focuses on how a particular thing is being conceptualized among the members of the family based on its attributes. The family can achieve this agreement by simply being involved in quality time, lengthy of conversation in a particular object, and free expression of ideas of every individual. Socio orientation focuses on another family member’s attitude towards a particular object, and later adapts that evaluation. Behaviors of socio orientation stressed conformity within families, building their own culture, particularly that of parent-child relationship. It emphasizes more on the relationship between individuals of the family rather than the features of a particular thing.

Later on, Fitzpatrick and Ritchie (1990) formed McLeod and Chaffee’s (1972) agreement into a more standardized concept of family communication behavior and called it Revised Family Communication Patterns (RFCP). The two agreements being used among the family can affect the non-familial relationship of each family member. As defined by Koerner and Fitzpatrick (2006), “Conversation orientation references the degree to which families create a climate in which all family members are encouraged to participate in unrestrained interaction about a wide array of topics while Conformity orientation describes the degree to which family communication stresses a climate of homogeneity of attitude, values, and beliefs”.

A family that practices conversation orientation can share experiences and ideas on a particular object and every member of the family is expected to participate. Information shared by every individual is valued and has an equal view of ideas and no assumption is greater than the other’s. Every individual strengthens their decision-making abilities as they engage one another in their convenient time. Conformity orientation, on the other hand, constitutes structured culture of beliefs and attitude. The reason of this orientation is for the harmony of each family member, avoiding conflicts in terms of family decision making and struggles encountered each day, and the tendency to depend to other’s ability. Parents of practicing this orientation are likely to create policies and expected to be followed by their children. Families of this orientation do not practice long-established family structure, hence, is not united as a whole.

Four typology of family from the orientations was identified (Koerner and Fitzpatrick, 2002b): “Consensual (both high in conversation and conformity orientation), Pluralistic (high in conversation orientation but low in conformity orientation), Protective (low in conversation orientation but high in conformity orientation), and Laissez-faire (both low in conversation and conformity orientation)”. These typologies are brought about the topics being introduced by the family member. Thus, topic is very essential in communication particularly in building the family culture.

To further define each typology, Koerner (2007) explain “Consensual families whereas communication is considered by the conflict between pressure to agree in their children’s decision but also to preserve hierarchical that parents should manage the decision of their children”. Parents of this family engage their children most of the time and explain the decision they have made to secure harmonious relationship. Children tend to adapt what they have learned from the interaction built in with their parents.

According to Koerner (2007), “Pluralistic families is where communication is characterized by open discussion, whether or not complies intent, exchange of information in a variety of topics. Parents of these families don’t have to be in control of their children when making decision nor do they need to approve with their children’s decisions”. Because of free exchange of each individual, the openness of their behavior hides the pressure to obey the rules. As each member appreciates interacting with one another, they also become more independent and free from conflicts they are meeting.

Another typology is the Protective families “where communication is characterized by a prominence in obedience, where parents really have to make policies and rules to their children and expect them to follow, and often listen to their children’s reasons about a particular rule” (Koerner, 2007). Because of the emphasis of conformity, conflicts are perceived negatively because each individual are expected to behave on the norms built in the family. Because communication skills are not of interest, the individual might lack confidence to employ problem solving, thus, distrust their own ability to decide and sees family conversation of little interest as well.

Laissez-Faire Families, as defined by Koerner (2007), described as “communication that is characterized by few and usually uninvolving interactions among family members that are limited to a small number of topics”. Both interaction between family members and individual’s decision making is not being focused. It’s like being present physically but mentally absent, thus, implies that neither the family member’s interests do not constitute their parents’ participation and avoid conflict to one another. Parents teach their children to make their own decision and because parents rarely support their children, uncertainty in their decisions is possible.

In a family context, every member has the right to disclose or avoid a particular topic, depending on the authority figure that they are interacting with. According to Baxter and Akkoor (2011), “an individual has a binary decision to engage in disclosure or avoidance”. Supporting this idea, a set of disclosure topics were presented between men and women: academic and work-related performances, household matters, romantic topics, song composition, movie clips, neighbors, foodstuff and dinner, vacation and travelling, and psychological issues. The examples predicted that in a typical conversation among family members, topics about family matters are usually bring warmth. They also presented avoidance topic between men and women: developing romantic relationship, dating relationship, friendships, cross-sex friendships, parent-child relations, sibling relationship, and step family relationship. The examples explain that family members have a lesser interest talking about relationship matters.

Topics that are being communicated about in families are dependent with dialogue and monologue family conversation. Dialogue family conversation is said to be a free-way of exchanging information with equal view of ideas and no presumption that every view is better than the other. While Monologue family conversation is said to be of legitimated type because even ideas are being presented by each family member, the viewpoint of the parent would be the last shot and others’ view will be of no importance (Bakhtin, 1984). Dialogue is said to be expansive, meaning, it has a possibility that a family can have a high social standing in every circumstances while Monologue is said to be contracted, connotes that an agreement and limitation of equality is being proposed in a family.

Since dialogue is expansive, it can be a way of maintaining non-familial relationship because it constitutes high conversation orientation and low conformity orientation, particularly in friendship closeness. Monologue does not constitute more in friendship closeness because it is dialogically contracted, with low conversation orientation but high in conformity orientation and is based on the parenting style that can affect the behavior of their children, thus, can pull down the self-esteem and mental well-being of the children.

According to Hamon and Schrodt (2012), the impact of conformity orientation is associated with the interaction of children with parents as perceived to be positive or negative which can affect individual’s self-esteem. The influence of conformity to children depends on how their parents interpret the disciplinary actions and adherence whether out of love, or out of anger or frustration. Therefore, family communication patterns and parental styles served as a moderator between family conformity and children’s self-esteem. From the parenting styles, parental demandingness and parental responsiveness was formed as dimensions that can explain its role as moderator in parent-child relationship.

Baumrind (1991) defines Parental demandingness as the willingness to confront the child who disobeys, that is, parents control the desire of the children. Parental responsiveness, on the other hand, is when parents are supportive and acquirement to achieve special needs and demands of their children. By this, he identified three parenting styles: Authoritative, Permissive, and Authoritarian. Authoritative is both high in demandingness and responsiveness, and people is said to be confident in their decision, know their guidelines, and monitor themselves. Permissive is more of responsiveness, so, parents are less likely to punish their children, and are not demanding in terms of responsibility in household chores and expectation to follow it. Authoritarian on the other hand, is very demanding in terms of their children’s need and offer less support.

The result of the study indicated that only parents’ authoritativeness and permissiveness can affect the mental well-being of children. Knowing this form of family conformity only concludes that conformity orientation does not imply the lack of self-esteem of children, it depends on how parents infer those actions, and family communication pattern plays a large role in knowing the effects of family knowledge to non-familial relationships.

*Relational Maintenance*

Aside from the family, friendship is one of the most common types of relationship an individual engages in during his lifetime. Relationships use different behaviors, practices, and strategies in order for it to be kept between and among individuals. In a natural sense, each individual uses different communication behaviors as a factor used whether in a conscious and/or unconscious manner, in order to maintain their relationships, specifically their relationships with their friends.

Relational Maintenance Behavior or RMB as defined by Dindia and Canary (1993) is often referred to as “to keep a relationship in existence, to keep relationships at a specific state or condition, to keep a relationship in satisfactory condition, or to keep a relationship in repair.” A given example for this behavior can be shown when an individual shares his personal insights and emotions on a recent tragedy that’s happening in his life. This behavior shows an individual being open about himself which fosters a behavior that may already be perceived as a way to maintain a relationship with whom he shared this information with.

In the past decades, communication scholars have been researching on for the understanding of individual’s motivation used in the relational maintenance for keeping their relationships. Some identified several typologies in order to classify the strategies used in relationship maintenance while others explained it through views coming from different theoretical perspectives.

Stafford and Canary (1991) used the Equity Theory as the theoretical framework for their study on relational maintenance. As per defined in the dictionary, equity is where there is a presence of “fairness or justice in the way people are treated.” Both have argued that people are more likely to maintain equitable relationships. To further explain the logic behind the relationship between equity theory and the studies on relational maintenance, Stafford and Canary stated these assumptions:

“People seek to maximize those who treat them equitably and punish those who treat them inequitably, inequity leads to distress, and people will attempt to restore equity as a result of distress due to inequity.” (page 244)

Given this assumption on a practical situation, an individual may appreciate a bidirectional interaction with his friend whenever he talks about what-I-have-been-up-to-lately stories and shares the same thing. Thus, the equity theory in relation to relationship maintenance tells that an individual is more likely to maintain a relationship when he feels that there is a reciprocation of action being done or there is equality being practiced within the relationship.

Another theoretical perspective related to relational maintenance is Aron and Aron’s Self-Expansion Theory (1986). Contrary to Stafford and Canary’s Equity Theory where reciprocation is involved in maintaining relationships, the theory of self-expansion involves a concept where an individual is motivated to expand his sense of self through sharing and/or involvement of bond between members within a relationship.

This theory involves an identity shift of an individual wherein his mentality of “I” and “me” will then be shifted to “we” and “our” mentality. With this theory, an individual’s idea of “others” will be merged with the self thus creating a relational connection with the other individual involved in the relationship.

The last theory being linked to relational maintenance is the Uncertainty Reduction Theory by Berger (1987). This theory involves information seeking between individuals to reduce one’s level of uncertainty.

Relational uncertainty as defined by Knobloch and Solomon (1999) is “the degree of confidence people have in their perceptions of involvement within close relationships.” The concept of relational uncertainty explains one’s uncertainty with himself, the individual involved, and their relationship. Uncertainty reduction theory and relational uncertainty can be connected when one’s level of uncertainty is lessened; the tendency is that an individual is more likely to share information with the person he is interacting with.

To connect this to relational maintenance, the researchers perceived relational uncertainty and its connection to Uncertainty Reduction Theory as a whole. Since one of the many fundamental goals in a relationship is “to describe, explain, and predict behavior by gaining understanding of one another”, there is a higher frequency that a relationship is to be maintained when the level of uncertainty is reduced since it opens up the exchange of communication between the individuals within the relationship. To further support this idea, Berger and Bradac (1982) also emphasized that “in order for a relationship to continue, it is important that the person involved in the relationship consistently update their fund of knowledge about themselves, their relational partner, and their relationship.” (page 13)

Scholars have also formulated typologies of maintenance behaviors, specifically in friendships. These typologies were used to classify the strategies used in relationship maintenance.

One of the earliest typology on relational maintenance behavior was Dindia’s typology which consists of three categories namely: (1) romantic- which are behaviors communicating fun, affection, and spontaneity, (2) prosocial- which are behaviors that makes people discuss about their relationship, and (3) antisocial- which are behaviors that integrate pressure in the relationship.

Another typology is Stafford and Canary’s (1991) five relational maintenance strategies. This typology is most known and often used by scholars. It includes five behaviors, which are then provided with explanations by Myers and Weber (2004): (1) positivity- it involves manners that are uncritical, being cheerful, and full of optimism, (2) openness- the discussing of the relationship and its nature, (3) assurances- emphasizes one’s willingness to continue the relationship, (4) social networks- these are the common grounds of interactions of individuals in a relationship, and (5) sharing tasks- this is where individuals distribute their responsibilities anchored to their relationships.

While Stafford and Canary’s typology are popularly known and most applied typology in different studies by communication researchers, some scholars have evaluated the reliability of using this typology. On the following studies conducted later on, it is revealed by Stafford et al. that “relationship types affect the relational maintenance behavior used to maintain the relationship.” Supporting this is the statement on Fearer’s (2013) study on “Relational Uncertainty and Interaction Enjoyment as Predictors of Relational Maintenance” saying:

“one weakness of the measure (Stafford and Canary’s five relational maintenance strategies) is that it was originally developed for the context of romantic relationships.”

Since this is a study focusing on the context of friendship relational maintenance, the researchers tapped in Oswald, Clark, and Kelly’s (2004) Four-factor typology specifically designed for the context of friendships. This typology includes four strategies: (1) positivity, (2) supportiveness, (3) openness, and (4) interaction. Positivity as a dimension refers to the showing of rewarding efforts and avoiding non-social behaviors. Supportiveness is similar to the five relational maintenance strategies assurances dimension but is collectively perceived behavior as showing the idea of support and assurance. Openness as a dimension involved conversations and disclosures. Last is the Interaction dimension which involves activities that the individuals within the relationship engage with.

The Four factor typology was also used by Ledbetter and Kuznekoff (2012) in their researches because “it possesses greater face validity for measuring friendship maintenance than maintenance in romantic relationships.” This typology will be used because of its congruity with the context of this study.

*Family Communication Patterns and Relational Maintenance*

Family communication patterns involved the ways on how family knowledge evolves within the family, being used as representation of a single unit, will be then applied in non-familial relationships. As Koerner and Ritchie’s (1990) Revised Family Communication Patterns defines the family’s interactions about a variety of topics, it stated that children’s perceived schema of another family member affects his/her mental well-being including self-esteem. From this pattern, two dimensions were formed: conversation orientation and conformity orientation.

Conversation orientation is where family members are engaged in unrestrained time and exchanges information of a various topics that strengthens an individual’s decision-making ability. Conformity orientation is where a fixed set of rules were constituted to create established family structure and expect every family member to obey. These orientations were subsequently divided into four typologies including Consensual (parents usually engage with their children, absorb their ideas and opinions, and explains that decision to their children), Pluralistic (parents do not regulate the decisions of their children, hence, openness hides their responsibility to conform), Protective (parents do not listen whatever decision their children desired, thus, pulls down the confidence to socialization), and Laissez-faire (interaction between parent and children is very often and very low expectation to follow each rule), where schematic behavior plays a vital role to maintain social equity.

Thus, Relational maintenance, being that as a way of keeping and maintaining a relationship intact, acts as a moderator between the patterns within a family and friendship maintenance, which uses the four-factor typology of behavior that every individual has. This typology was identified by Oswald, Clark, and Kelly (2004) which includes: positivity (where individuals within a relationship focuses on upbringing of the concept of optimism bringing a good aura as an effort to maintain the relationship), supportiveness (this entails the expression of support and guarantee in the relationship which is somehow similar to the assurances dimension), openness (this involves the presence of disclosure and the general conversation within members of the relationship), and interaction (is where individuals within the relationship does or attends to similar activities outside their relationship, i.e. attending a mutual friend’s birthday celebration or gracing a social event). This typology was developed from previous typologies on relational maintenance for it mainly focuses on measuring friendship maintenance, above all relationships.

Since Family communication patterns involves the dynamics of behavior shared within the members of the family and is used through the two dimensions: conversation orientation and conformity orientation, then, it is clear that relational maintenance is aided with family communication in order to upkeep the relationship an individual engages to, specifically in friendship.

As evidence to this, the researchers showed the relationship between Family Communication Patterns and Relational Maintenance. Under the family communication patterns, the dimensions: conversation orientation and conformity orientation, and the typologies under these dimensions: consensual family, pluralistic family, protective family, and laissez-faire family were used. While in relational maintenance, the Four-factor typologies were used namely: positivity, supportiveness, openness, and interaction, which strengthen the connection of family communication patterns to relational maintenance.

Positivity is a relational maintenance behavior which focuses on bringing optimism within the relationship. On a certain situation, when a family member experiences misunderstanding with his friend, positivity is shown through the expression of support by giving a positive outlook using interpersonal communication towards the given situation. Given that the behavior of positivity mediates the outcome of friendship maintenance from family communication patterns, thus a type of family which is likely to have this behavior is the consensual family and pluralistic family.

Supportiveness can be illustrated when an individual’s family tells to the member things such as “we’ll always have your back” or “we’re always there for you no matter what”. This implies that when there is lack of supportiveness used a behavior within the family, there’s a high tendency that a type of family involved is the protective family and the laissez-faire family.

Openness is a behavior wherein every family member is accountable to the other. This behavior is likely to be used through interpersonal communication, and involved disclosure of information among family members. A contextual example is when a family member and his friends skipped class to join a computer game competition. Even when the information can cause negative effects on the individual’s side, the individual is able to disclose this information since the family he’s belonged to is practicing the behavior of openness. Thus, making consensual family and pluralistic family as the type of family that practices high frequency of this behavior.

Interaction is a behavior where an individual attends to several events and social gatherings with his friend/s. Say for example, an individual asks permission to go on a midnight pool party with his friends. Belonging to the protective type of family would mean that you cannot attend that event with or without hearing out the individual’s explanation while in laissez-faire type, an individual will be caught in between deciding whether or not to attend that event since there is no one guiding that individual and there are no set of structured rules within his family.

Although these situations given with each type of behavior have already identified which family is like to perform each behavior because of the frequencies they represent (as per discussed under the theme of Family Communication Patterns), it is still uncertain and still depends upon the norms created within each family structure. Moreover, this only proves that the behaviors serve as mediators that connect family communication patterns in friendship maintenance of an individual.

To further support this idea, Baldwin’s (1992) “outline of relational schema component composed of three-level model relational knowledge: Generalized social knowledge (which is the highest and most intellectual level that is accurate among all types of relationships), Relationship-type schemas (where relational knowledge specific to different types of relationship an individual is likely to have), and the lowest level is an information about a type of relationship specific to individuals”.

Since family communication pattern is under a relationship type schema (Fitzpatrick, 2002a) and is being illustrated through the two dimensions, conversation orientation and conformity orientation, and “friendship is another relationship type schema which develops with relational partners” (Ledbetter, 2009). As friendship develops with the relational partners involved, the connection of family communication patterns and friendship underlies and is being mediated by relational maintenance conferring to Bauer’s (2003) statement: “relational maintenance behaviors provide an important avenue for examining the communication dynamics in families.”

**Synthesis**

The first theme of the related literature is about family. It is all about the context of the Filipino family and how it influences an individual’s behaviors and attitudes. This theme helped the researchers to determine the type of family the respondents belong to based on the background and description of nuclear and extended type of family.

The second theme is about friendship. Aside from families, every individual spend most of their time with their friends. Philosophers of both ancient and modern times said that friendship is one of the fundamental things that helps an individual to build his own personality. This theme helped the researchers in the framework of the study since the researchers chose friendship as the main context of the study presented on the previous model of causation.

The third theme discusses about Family Communication Patterns in terms of Conversation Orientation and Conformity Orientation. Conversation Orientation is about the interaction inside the family, while Conformity Orientation talks about the setting of culture within the family. Since the study is about Family Communication Patterns’ effects to relational maintenance, this theme helped the researchers to support the objectives of the study in terms of knowing the type of familial environment the respondents has.

The fourth theme discusses about Relational Maintenance which has behaviors that are used as factors helping in the maintenance of relationships. The Relational Maintenance served as the variable for measuring the friendship closeness.

The fifth theme is about Family Communication Patterns and Relational Maintenance. The last theme focused on discussing the relationship between these previous themes. In this theme, several previous studies were used to support its relationship, being relational maintenance as the mediator of family communication patterns and friendship maintenance. This theme helped the researchers in the conceptual framework, being that the Family Communication Patterns as the environment and Relational Maintenance as the variable used for measurement of friendship closeness.

These themes helped the researchers in designing the research study by knowing the variation of variables and their effects with one another. Hence, with all the themes and its relation to the other, adding the different studies and literature cited, explained the nature of the phenomenon in this study.

**CHAPTER III**

**Design and Procedure**

This chapter constitutes the design employed in the study. It includes the research study design and method used the sample and sampling technique, the instrumentation used for data gathering, the data gathering procedure, and the statistical formula used in the study.

**Research Design**

The study entitled: “Family Communication and its effects to Cross-Sex Friendship Maintenance of an Individual within a Nuclear Family” will use a quantitative approach and classified into a descriptive research design.

Quantitative approach uses methods that quantify the variation of the problem. According to Creswell (2003), “quantitative research employs strategies of inquiry such as experimental and surveys and collect data on predetermined instruments that yield statistical data (p. 18). This explains that the results in quantitative research are predictable, explainable as it provides the exact presentation of data, and confirms the results’ viability.” Being that as the description, the researchers intend to use this approach to test the reliability and validity and the measurement of the gathered information be more rigid and fixed to measure the accuracy of the classifying results.

Furthermore, the researchers will employ the descriptive-research to identify the attributes of the problem by identifying the effects of the variables of the study. Since the relational maintenance and family communication patterns already have an established relationship, this research aims to describe its application to the context of friendship where family is involved.

**Research Method Used**

This study will use the survey method as a source of primary data. It is a closed-ended type of questionnaire obtaining information about respondent’s demographics, level of orientation, level of friendship with the cross-sex friend the respondent is pertaining to, and the level of friendship maintenance.

Survey research has been used frequently in social science particularly in quantitative researchin order to select a sample of respondents from the population in kind of technique the researchers derived.

**Sample and Sampling Technique**

The researchers opted to use the data on the city having the most number of nuclear families gathered by the Philippine Statistics Authority.The researchers intend to use the cluster sampling in order to identify the number of respondents per barangay residing on the chosen city. However, the data was not yet collected by the researchers because of the limitations on time since the institution requires processed documents in order for the release of data. Furthermore, the researchers will immediately include the data once the institution release the data needed for the study.

To be able to identify the sample population, the researchers intend to use the Sloven’s Formula:

Where:

- sample size

N- Population size

e- Marginal error

1. Constant value

**Instrumentation**

To collect the data needed for the study, the researchers will use a standardized researcher modified instrument based on Oswald, Clark, and Kelly’s four factor typology of Relational Maintenance (2010),Ritchi and Fitzparick’s Revised Family Communication Patterns Instrument (1990), Vangelisti and Caughlin’s Friendship Closeness measure (2002), and Vagias (2006) Likert-Type Scale Response Anchors.

The questionnaire consisted four parts; first part is a set of questions to know the social demographic profile of the respondents (e.g. gender, civil status, age, number of family members, position in the family, and family monthly income), the second part is to know the level of friendship closeness or how close the respondent is to his cross-sex friend using the seven-point Priority Likert scale,the third part is to know the family communication patterns inside the family of the respondent “(Conformity Orientation and Conversation Orientation) using the 26 item Revised Family Communication Pattern Instrument” by Koerner and Fitzpatrick using the five-point Likert scale; and lastly, to know the relational maintenance behavior of the respondents using the 36 item Relational Maintenance Scale by Oswald et al., 2004 using the seven-point Frequency Likert-scale (Vagias, 2006).

Since the basis of the research instrument is from the international locale, the researchers’ intend to seek validation from a research analyst to authenticate the application of the instrument in the local context. The instrument though standardized will be pre-tested to 30 random communication research students from the PUP College of Communication to ensure the content and clarity of the survey questions and make adjustments if necessary for the validity of the instrument.

**Data Collection Procedure**

The researchers will use survey questionnaire as the primary data which was self-administered by the respondents. The researchers intend to visit the barangays of the selected city for the data gathering. The respondents will be asked to check the item that corresponds their answer for each question. The proposed schedule for the data collection will be on April 2015 to May 2015 to ensure the availability of respondents since students usually have their summer break on this period of time.

The researchers will also use books, published articles and research papers, and online journals such as: Journal of Family Communication and Journal of Social and Personal Relationships. These materials will be used as the secondary data of the study. It will serve as a basis which will help the researchers for the analysis and interpretation of the data gathered.

**Statistical Formula Used**

The researchers will use the descriptive data analysis in summarizing all the data gathered through the survey questionnaires.

For the variables employing the nominal scale measurement, the researchers will use the frequency distribution and percentage:

P=

Where:

P- Percentage

F- Frequency

N- Total number of respondents

This formula expresses the proportion of responding to a particular item whether the response is the majority choice of the respondents. In measuring the level involvement of the variables, the researchers will use the weighted mean formula:

Where:

Mean - the average weighted mean

∑fx - sum of all product of f and x

(where f is the frequency of each option and x is the weight of each option)

n - sample population

To determine the collective features and interrelationships of the variables in measuring the level involvement of the respondents, the researchers will use the equivalent weighted mean to interpret the majority result that the respondents answered for each item.

To address the effects of the independent variable (Family Communication Patterns) to the dependent variable (Friendship Closeness), the researchers will use the Simple Linear Regression Model:

Where:

- observed value of the dependent variable

- intercept parameter

– slope parameter

– explanatory variable

– error term

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