

Characteristics of Bonding between Genders in Same-Sex Friendships

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Abstract

The purpose of this observational study is to test the difference theory that relates gender to characteristics of bonding in same-sex friendships, controlling for the age of HBCU students at Clark Atlanta University. Past research on how men and women bond and communicate within friendships indicates that there is a difference in the ways that each gender expresses their affection for one another (Aukett et al., 1988; Nardi, 1992; Baumeister & Sommer, 1997; Vigil 2007; Hart et al., 2016; Monsour, 2017). This is a topic that is extremely important to explore because it emphasizes the major differences in how each gender maintains their same-sex friendships through different bonding methods although seeking the same level of acceptance and support. The hypothesis of the present study is that women are more likely to verbally express their affection whereas men demonstrate the strength of their bond through actions. The study consisted of 32 students from Clark Atlanta University, a Historically Black College/University. Of the 32 participants, only 27 completed the survey in its entirety, 7 males and 20 females. The data collection method included the use of an online survey, which primarily utilized a Friendship Quality Scale (FQS) (Ponti et al., 2010) to measure the participants' agreement to a list of given statements. The results indicate a marginal difference in the manner that males express affection within their same-sex friendships versus how females do, which showed that the characteristics were significantly related. The expectations were thus partially confirmed. Implications of the results for future studies include getting more males to participate in the study. The results of this study can contribute to the field of counseling psychology and help initiate positive change for individuals who want to better understand the best approach to cultivating bonds within male and female same-sex friendships.

Keywords: characteristics, bonding, methods, same-sex, gender