

The present investigation deals with the roles values and personality play in the course of friendship development. A six-month longitudinal study of same-sex, college roommates' friendship was conducted. Three separate issues were addressed in the attempt to explain inconsistent findings in previous research, namely, (1) the distinction between actual vs. perceived similarity effects, (2) the influence of socially desirable dimensions (angel effects) on relationship growth, and (3) the conceptualization of friendship at individual level vs. in dyadic level. A total of 131 pairs of roommates were included for the final data analyses. A considerable discrepancy between actual and perceived similarity was reported, with generally more variance of friendship strength explained by the perceived effects. The implications of each similarity effect and their functions in relationship development were discussed. Furthermore, the perceived angel effect, which accounted for 40% of the variance of friendship strength, has demonstrated its significance in same-sex friendship, indicating that a stronger relationship was often characterized by higher perceived partner's ratings on the socially desirable personality traits. Finally, the comparison between the findings based on individual friendship analyses and dyadic level analyses (reciprocated friendship and reciprocated non-friendship) generally supported the argument that conceptualizations of friendship at different levels produce different results and finally lead to different conclusions drawn.