

# Love or Transaction: The Difference Between Sugar Dating and Conventional Dating

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## Abstract

*Conventional dating is a traditional date between two individuals who have the potential to form a romantic relationship while sugar dating is a relationship where one party provides financial support to the other. The main objective in this study is to explain the factors that cause sugar dating and the differences between conventional dating and sugar dating. This study uses qualitative methods, involving observations and in-depth interviews with 10 informants aged between 19 and 55 years, to explain the phenomenon. The results of the study explain that there are several factors for sugar dating, including financial problems, a luxurious lifestyle, and loneliness. The differences between sugar dating and conventional dating are also seen in the motivation for the relationship, the age of the couple, the time spent together, the duration of the relationship and the views of society. Sugar dating is more focused on financial gain as the main thing, the age difference between couples is often very significant, relationships tend to be temporary and relationships are seen as controversial by society.*

**Keywords:** *Conventional Dating, Sugar Dating, Different Motivations, Emotional Connection, Society's Views.*

## INTRODUCTION

Interpersonal interactions in today's modern era are increasingly diverse. Among the various forms of interpersonal interaction, romantic relationships are one of the most important aspects of human life (Jackson-Dwyer, 2014; Vangelisti, 2002). However, the definition and form of romantic relationships are constantly evolving, giving rise to various types of relationships such as conventional dating, sugar dating, friendzone, statusless relationships, brother-sister relationships, one night stand relationships and several other relationships.

Sugar dating is a phenomenon that is currently popular, as evidenced by a survey conducted in 2021 by the dating site Seeking Arrangement showing that Indonesia is one of the ten countries with the highest number of sugar daddies in Asia. The number of sugar daddies in Indonesia reached 60,250, which is the highest number in all of Asia. Sugar dating is defined as a relationship in which a financial transaction is one of the reasons for a person to enter into this relationship (Ellis et al., 2022; Gunnarsson, 2023; Gunnarsson & Strid, 2021; Kirkeby et al., 2021; Recio & Recio, 2021). A sugar daddy or sugar mommy is someone who can provide financial support to a younger person, in this case a sugar baby, in exchange for attention and even intimacy (Kuate Defo, 2004; Nayar, 2017; Pepi, 2021).

The phenomenon of sugar dating is not only a global trend, but Indonesia is also not spared from its influence as explained above. Online platforms, specialized applications and even relationships have made sugar dating easier. There are various reasons why people choose to engage in sugar dating relationships such as financial hardship, luxurious lifestyles and even feeling so much readiness that they need someone to confide in and be there for them.

Although sugar dating and conventional dating have similarities in that they often involve romantic interactions such as holding hands, intimate calls, the fundamental difference between the two relationships lies in the motivation for the relationship. Conventional dating is based on love and affection and emotional attraction while sugar dating is based on financial transactions and material benefits.

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Research on the differences between sugar dating and conventional dating is important because the dynamics of romantic relationships in the modern era have changed significantly. We conducted this research to gain a deeper understanding of new phenomena like sugar dating, which are becoming increasingly popular and impacting both individuals and society. This research is important in order to find out the motives and expectations of a person in a sugar dating relationship and to analyze the positive and negative impacts on social, psychological and economic well-being. In addition, this research can also provide more insight to individuals in making relationship choices that suit their needs and values.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Sugar Dating**

Sugar dating is a phenomenon where there is someone who is older and has a high socio-economic ability then establishes a relationship with someone who is younger and has a lower socio-economic ability or it can also be said as a phenomenon that shows a mutually beneficial relationship between sugar daddy / sugar mommy who has wealth and is able to provide financial resources for his sugar baby (Daly, 2017; Miller & Miller, 2011; Scull & Scull, 2020; Upadhyay, 2021).

Sugar dating, also known as sugaring, is a relationship where an older, wealthier person secures an intimate relationship from a younger, usually poorer person in exchange for financial support, gifts, or other material benefit. The older person is often referred to as a "sugar daddy" or "sugar momma," while the younger person is called a "sugar baby". Sugar dating has many forms, and the partners decide how it works. Seeking Arrangements, the largest online sugar dating site, has over 20 million users worldwide. Sugar dating is not prostitution, as it often involves a more complex emotional connection between the partners

The term sugar dating was very popular in 2021 and is still a hot topic of conversation on social media today. Although only popular during the pandemic, the existence of this sugar dating relationship is not new, the term sugar dating has long existed since the 1920s. In Indonesia itself, there is no clear and definite research on when this kind of sugar dating relationship entered Indonesia, but what is certain is that sugar dating relationships have long existed but with different terms, for example, for sugar daddy has slang om senang or gadun, sugar mommy has slang tante girang in Indonesia while sugar baby has slang ani-ani in Indonesia.

### **Sugar Daddy and Sugar Mommy**

Sugar daddy has several meanings, in America alone sugar daddy is often interpreted as one of the caramel lollipops commonly found in the market while sugar daddy can also be interpreted as an older man who often provides financial or material support to younger women.

De Soto (2018:69) explains that a sugar daddy is a rich older man who is able to provide many things for his partner, especially younger than himself, especially money (financial). The definition of a sugar daddy is nearly identical to that of a sugar mommy. The only difference is the gender of the sugar daddy and sugar mommy.

A sugar daddy is a man who is older and has money, material or power while a sugar mommy is a woman who is older and also has power. Sugar daddy and sugar mommy are someone who is older than the sugar baby and has a special relationship with the sugar baby who not only provides money to meet the needs of life, but some also provide college tuition and provide luxury goods.

### **Conventional Dating**

Conventional dating is the traditional dating of two individuals who are romantically attracted to each other (Manasikana & Noviani, 2021; Murti & Handoyo, 2023). On a conventional date, the couple will usually meet in person to get to know each other, spend time together and try to build a relationship based on compatibility and emotional attraction.

In conventional dating, couples who spend time in person often go to places such as restaurants, parks, cafes, or gardens to have a date. The purpose of conventional dating is to build a meaningful and deep relationship and some of them want to continue the relationship to a more serious level in the future such as marriage.

The concept of conventional dating may vary based on the culture and social norms of certain societies but in general conventional dating emphasizes romance, open communication and mutual understanding, in contrast to sugar dating where financial or material transactions play a major role in the dynamics of the relationship.

## METHOD

This research was conducted from June 2022 to February 2023 using a qualitative research approach lies in how to understand the phenomenon of sugar dating in depth, through observation, in-depth interviews that have been conducted I as a researcher get a deep understanding of various aspects related to individual motivation to undergo sugar dating to perceptions of sugar dating. In addition, by using this approach method I can understand the cultural context, norms that influence sugar dating and I get richer insights into the initial dynamics of sugar dating and understand the complex problems in sugar dating. The informants of this study consisted of 10 people aged 19 to 55 years old with different roles, namely 2 sugar daddy, 1 sugar baby, 5 sugar baby female and 2 sugar baby male. The characteristics of the research informants can be seen in **Table 1** below:

No.	Name	Age	Job	Role
1.	Daddy Dean	40 years old	Entrepreneur	Sugar Daddy
2.	Daddy Dustin	55 years old	Officer	Sugar Daddy
3.	Mommy Melinda	32 years old	Housewife	Sugar Mommy
4.	Baby Fanya	31 years old	Entrepreneur	Sugar Baby
5.	Baby Felicia	23 years old	Students	Sugar Baby
6.	Baby Felly	20 years old	Students, Model	Sugar Baby
7.	Baby Fia	22 years old	Students, Selebgram	Sugar Baby
8.	Baby Flora	30 years old	contractor	Sugar Baby
9.	Baby Mark	19 years old	Students	Sugar Baby
10.	Baby Max	27 years old	Employee	Sugar Baby

We collected Baby Max, a 27-year-old employee of Sugar Baby, through observation and in-depth interviews. We conducted in-depth interviews to explore the factors that lead to sugar dating relationships and the differences between sugar dating and conventional dating relationships. In this study, I made observations while adhering to ethical principles, a crucial aspect that guarantees the research's respect for the rights and comfort of the informants. Consent is an important first step that I receive from informants.

At the onset of this research, I provide a detailed explanation of the research's purpose, the items under observation, the potential risks, and the informant's right to decline participation or withdraw at any moment if they feel uncomfortable. Anslem Strauss is one of the most recognized experts in explaining data analysis, which involves collecting transcriptions of in-depth interviews and observation notes. Anslem Strauss developed a method of data analysis that concentrates on the collected data. I followed the same approach, transcribing all recordings from in-depth interviews and comparing them with observation notes.

We identified themes by reading the data, which included the definitions of sugar baby, sugar daddy, sugar mommy, and sugar dating, along with the factors that distinguish sugar dating from other conventional relationships. The next step involved coding the themes. The next step involved categorizing the data according to these themes. We then proceeded with the interpretation and power analysis before ultimately formulating conclusions. We obtained the informants' consent to participate in the study by first agreeing to meet in person.

After consenting to the study, we asked if they would be interviewed. Before the interviews began, we asked the informants if they were willing to be recorded. However, none of them expressed this willingness due to feelings of insecurity, fear of shame spreading, and discomfort. All names used in this article are pseudonyms to protect their identities

## DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

## **Sugar Dating Factor**

There are various factors that lead to sugar dating. The findings of Seeking Arrangement show that there are three dominant factors that cause the number of sugar daddies in Indonesia, namely the inability to pay for their education, the social gap between rich and poor, and the influx of foreign investors into Indonesia. This ties in with The Jakarta Post's report that the reasons for the large number of sugar daddies in Indonesia are that Indonesian students are not accustomed to borrowing funds for education costs from banks, the social gap between the rich and the poor, and according to the World Economic Forum there is a very significant salary difference between men and women, especially for women under the age of 30 who earn 27.64 percent less than their male counterparts.

Chu & Laidler (2016: 49) explain that many people who enter into sugar dating relationships especially by becoming sugar babies are due to their psychological and sociological reasons, such as the fulfillment of materialistic desires, sexual curiosity, the need for recognition and the transformation of intimacy in modern times.

Lukmantoro explained that the environment is a major factor in sugar dating relationships. There is a tendency for sugar daddies to want to help the weak but do it in the wrong way. They want to show power, both bodily and financially. In such a patriarchal world, the sugar daddy is a figure and a way to express this desire for maleness. As for sugar babies, having a relationship with a sugar daddy is a practical way to acquire wealth even if it means they have to be ready to do whatever the sugar daddy asks.

In a sugar dating relationship, a sugar daddy often wants to demonstrate power, such as social status, money, or the ability to help the weak. According to Triyono, sugar daddies tend to want to 'help' the weak. However, certain desires accompany this tendency and make it unreasonable. In such a patriarchal world, the sugar daddy is a figure and a way that is considered appropriate to express this desire for maleness.

Some sugar daddies engage in sugar dating relationships as a means of supporting their sugar babies in their educational pursuits, particularly those who have ambitious educational goals. The rising cost of education and daily living expenses has made sugar dating culture more prevalent.

This sugar dating relationship is quite a lucrative avenue for sugar babies. Sugar babies who are mostly students often do not have much time to work to earn extra money to pay for their education. Being a sugar baby does not take up much of their time, but they earn enough money to pay for education and even living expenses (Daly, 2017). This means that being a sugar baby is considered a relatively easy 'job' to earn money.

Being a sugar baby is not only able to provide financial support, but also as social capital in the future because the sugar daddy's life or career experience is expected to help the sugar baby to more easily get a relationship in work (De Soto, 2018:35).

Chu & Laidler (2016:79) explain that many people enter into sugar dating relationships especially by becoming sugar babies due to their psychological and sociological reasons, such as the fulfillment of materialistic desires, sexual curiosity, the need for recognition and the transformation of intimacy in modern times. The need for lifestyle is one of the dominant factors for sugar babies who want to be in a sugar dating relationship.

In addition, many of the sugar daddies want to be in a sugar dating relationship because they feel that their lives are too busy so they need a sugar baby to fill their free time because they don't have more time to be in a serious relationship like dating. For them, being in a serious relationship, such as dating, takes up a lot of their time, and there is no time to look for someone to take seriously in a relationship (De Soto, 2018:78).

While sugar babies are in a serious relationship with one person for a long time makes them feel bored and too monotonous, even more so if they have to undergo a relationship with someone of the same age or not much different. The sugar babies choose to have a relationship with a sugar daddy who is older than them. In addition to feeling bored and monotonous, the sugar babies feel that being in a relationship with someone

their own age often makes them hurt and cannot fulfil their needs, especially financially. Therefore, sugar babies are more interested in and challenged to live in relationships with sugar daddies (Septiana, 2020: 555)

Another thing that makes sugar babies want to undergo a sugar dating relationship is a lifestyle that tends to be high or hedonistic. The amount of pressure from the environment that forces them to look the same as their surroundings makes them feel indirect demands that will affect economic factors, especially if the person has more living expenses than to meet secondary or tertiary needs or is unable to control finances. People who have such tendencies need a lot of material (money), so they will usually justify (rationalise) fulfilling all the pleasures, including being a sugar baby, because they don't want to work hard to meet their needs.

### Sugar Dating vs Conventional Dating

In this day and age there are various ways to find friends and love. Sugar dating and conventional dating are two of the most popular methods. Sugar dating is a relationship that involves two parties. One party provides financial support and/or gifts (sugar daddy or sugar mommy) to the younger partner (sugar baby), while conventional dating or traditional dating is a relationship in which there is often a mutual emotional connection, a romantic relationship without explicit financial transactions (Upadhyay, 2021:7) drama-free, casual, and mutually beneficial

In research conducted by sugar dating relationships are drama-free, relaxed, mutually beneficial and very different from conventional dating relationships, in order to make it easier to understand the differences between sugar dating relationships and conventional dating the following (see **Table 2**) will explain these things related to the findings of this study

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Sugar dating</b>	<b>Conventional dating</b>
Motivation	Commercial Relationship	Emotional Relationship
Age Difference	Significant age difference	Non-significant age difference
Time Together	Limited time	More time to meet up
Emotional Relationship	Does not always require deep emotional involemen	Requires deep emotional involvement and becomes one of the main focuses
Duration of relationship	May be temporary or have a specific time limit, has a short term, short term commitment	May be temporary but can be long term
Stigma or societal views	Relationships that are considered a disgrace in society	No stigma attached

### Motivation

Motivation is the drive or driving force to do something, either from within or from outside. In general, motivation is something that can encourage a person or group to do something, to achieve a goal. Motivation can also come from one's needs, parents, friends, companions, thoughts, feelings, or past experiences.

An agreement often initiates sugar dating relationships (Leclerc-Madlala, 2008; Silberschmidt & Rasch, 2001; Singer et al., 2006). We do this to ensure clarity and prevent unrealistic expectations. For example, whether in a sugar dating relationship there are material consequences (money and/or goods), sex (in heterosexual or homosexual relationships). In this kind of relationship, the sugar daddy/sugar mommy expects a sexual relationship, while the sugar baby expects material support in return for the time spent and/or the sex done together. In short, the motivation in sugar dating and conventional dating relationships are two different things if sugar dating revolves around getting financial support, luxurious lifestyle while conventional dating is more focused on emotional connection, mutual commitment and even finding true love.

Baby Fanya (31 years old, December 24, 2022), for example, initially entered into a sugar dating relationship because she was curious about her friend who often wore expensive items, such as the latest cellphones, branded bags, while she could not have them because she was still dependent on her parents. She later found out that her friend was a sugar baby. Baby Fanya finally found her current sugar daddy through her friend's intervention. Now, Baby Fanya can also buy various items that she wants. As compensation, Baby Fanya must be willing to follow her sugar daddy's wishes based on the initial agreement ranging from just accompanying him or having sexual intercourse.

Similarly, Baby Mark (19 years old, June 15, 2022) explained that his numerous siblings made it difficult for him to pay his tuition, leading him to work part-time at a hotel in the massage department, where he served as the therapist. One day he has a client who is an om-om, but it turns out that this om-om is interested in Baby Mark and asks him to get a plus-plus massage that involves a sexual relationship. Baby Mark accepted the offer and the relationship went from a customer-therapist relationship to a sugar daddy-sugar baby relationship that continues to this day. Her sugar daddy ended up paying for her life, such as paying for her housing bringing food, giving pocket money, etc. In this sugar dating relationship, Baby Mark plays the role of boti, while his sugar daddy plays the role of top. However, not only does Baby Mark have a relationship with a sugar daddy, but he also has other gay partners. Unlike the relationship with his sugar daddy, Baby Mark's relationship with his partner positions Baby Mark as versatile (vers), Sometimes he plays the bottom, sometimes he plays the top (see also, for example, Idrus; 2019). Therefore, Baby Mark has other partners besides his sugar daddy, and in order to avoid problems, Baby Mark ensures that they do not meet each other at his place of residence.

In this love triangle, the relationship with the sugar daddy is more transactional, with a trade-off. In the context of the relationship between Baby Mark and the sugar daddy, the sugar daddy provides financial support for Baby Mark's life, while Baby Mark dedicates his time to the sugar daddy's sexual activities. On the other hand, the relationship between Baby Mark and other gay couples is more of an emotional one, with a lot of love and affection.

Baby Felly (20 years old, January 6, 2023) also told a similar story that when he went on sugar dating it was only to fulfil his desire to buy luxury goods, not based on love because he realised that sugar dating relationships were difficult to get to a serious level so in addition to having a sugar daddy he also had a boyfriend whom he cared about and hoped that someday he would stop being a sugar baby and take the relationship to a more serious level with his boyfriend.

### **Age Difference**

In sugar dating relationships, the age difference between sugar baby and sugar daddy/sugar mommy is the most significant aspect that distinguishes it from conventional dating. This is because in sugar dating relationships the couples involved generally have a considerable age difference. While in conventional dating the age difference between couples is often not too far and the difference varies quite a lot depending on each couple. Like the Baby Mark case described in the previous paragraph, he and his sugar daddy are approximately 30 years apart in age while he and his girlfriend are only 3 years apart in age.

Mommy Melinda (32 years old, December 24 2022), for example, explained that she got married when she had just graduated from high school and a few years later divorced, she has a child who is currently in junior high school. Mommy Melinda has a sugar baby who is currently 21 years old, very young and her sugar baby is still in college. Mommy Melinda first met her sugar baby on one of the dating apps Tinder, and continued on Instagram until now. Mommy Melinda and her sugar daddy are quite far apart in age (23 years) as her sugar daddy is currently 55 years old. Mommy Melinda's sugar daddy basically has a wife, but his wife is older than his sugar daddy. He felt sexually unsatisfied and was looking for a sugar baby and met Mommy Melinda. However, because Mommy Melinda also feels sexually unsatisfied with her sugar daddy, she also looks for a male sugar baby to fulfil her needs. This exemplifies the intricate dynamics between a sugar daddy and his wife, a sugar daddy and his sugar baby, and a sugar mommy and her sugar baby, highlighting the interconnectedness of these relationships. This was also explained by Baby Felly (20 years old, January 6, 2023), that her sugar daddy's age and her age are very far apart (30 years) because her sugar daddy is currently 50 years old and the same age as her father. However, Baby Felly is also dating a senior in college who is only two years older than her.

### **Time Together**

Another aspect that distinguishes sugar dating from conventional dating is the time spent together. A sugar dating relationship is a transactional dating relationship characterized by a richer, older person with a younger person and the couple in this relationship cannot spend time together freely and openly and there must be

prior agreement, On the other hand, couples in conventional dating relationships are more able to spend time together and are freer because there is generally no agreement about meeting times.

Similarly, Daddy Dean (40 years old, May 28, 2022) explained that he will meet his sugar baby when he feels he has free time and is not busy because he has to work. One of the reasons he has not been in a serious relationship so far is because he feels that he does not have time for things related to conventional dating relationships, such as seducing his partner when he is angry or making time specifically to meet up while when he is in a sugar dating relationship, he feels more free and his sugar baby is the one who tries to make time for him.

In relation to this, Baby Mark (19 years old, June 15, 2022) stated that in order to meet with his sugar daddy, he had to organize his time well and if he did meet, it could not be for too long because each of them had a partner. It is also difficult for Baby Mark and his sugar daddy to meet openly because their relationship is considered by most to be a homosexual one, which is very controversial in Indonesia.

### **Emotional Relationship**

Emotional relationships in sugar dating and conventional dating are two relationships that have different emotions. In sugar dating relationships, the main focus is more on agreements such as material agreements that affect emotional relationships. Emotional relationships in sugar dating are often temporary and highly influenced by explicit agreements between the two parties (Gunnarsson, 2023: 12) Conventional dating relationships have deeper emotional involvement between partners, are long-term and involve commitments that can reach a more serious level.

Gunnarsson (2023: 12 -13) explains that in conventional dating the feelings between partners can be too deep, so that it can cause deeper disappointment as well, while in sugar dating relationships there are boundaries in the relationship that have been discussed beforehand, so that the disappointment that arises can be minimized. This is related to what Baby Max (27 years old, May 27, 2022) said that at the beginning of his sugar dating relationship, he felt curious about having sex with people older than him, Baby Max felt that in a sugar dating relationship there was no "baper" (bring feelings).

Because her sugar mommy already had a husband, Baby Max had no serious intention to take their relationship to the next level. Baby Max and his sugar mommy also held the belief that it would be challenging to gain the approval of Baby Max's parents, given that his sugar mommy was significantly older than him.

Baby Flora (30 years old, June 9, 2022), for example, stated that when she first met her sugar daddy as a coworker, she did not have any feelings. However, as they engaged in conversation, their relationship began to blossom. This is what started the sugar dating relationship between the two. Baby Flora went into the sugar dating relationship solely for the money. But then the benefits of this relationship expanded, for example, she also gained knowledge on how to get projects and clients from her sugar daddy. However, as time went by, Baby Flora felt more comfortable with her sugar daddy, and vice versa. Because they enjoyed each other's company, they (Baby Flora and her sugar daddy) got married by marriage license Basically, there is guilt in Baby Flora in undergoing this sugar dating relationship and she also feels sorry but she also cannot take the risk of leaving her sugar daddy because she already loves him. Baby Flora likens her current sugar dating relationship to walking on thorns, it's painful, it makes her feel guilty but she still has to live with it.

### **Duration of Relationship**

The duration of sugar dating and traditional dating relationships can vary. Sugar dating is a transactional relationship and often has an agreed duration of time that they are in a sugar dating relationship. On the other hand, conventional dating has an unpredictable relationship duration because it varies greatly Gunnarsson (2023: 13) the length and continuation of the relationship to a more serious level depend on the development of the relationship itself.

The duration of a conventional dating relationship is influenced by various factors, such as the emotional connection between partners, compatibility, parental blessing, as explained by Baby Felicia (23 years old,

December 24, 2022) that her sugar dating was based on an agreement on the duration of the relationship. At the start of her sugar dating relationship, Baby Felicia and her sugar daddy agreed that the relationship would only last one month. But as time went on, the relationship persisted because Baby Felicia and her sugar daddy felt at ease with each other. If Baby Felicia wanted to get more money, gifts etc., then she had to be good at serving her sugar daddy. Baby Felicia persisted in the sugar dating relationship because her sugar daddy was not stingy or rude. For Baby Felicia, sugar dating and conventional dating relationships are similar in terms of the relationship's sustainability. In a conventional dating relationship, it can be lived as in general, if it is not comfortable, it can be separated and if it is comfortable, it can continue to a more serious level or marriage.

According to Daddy Dean (40 years old, May 28, 2022), his longest sugar dating relationship was one year but that was only once, while recently his longest sugar dating relationship was only about 6 months. Daddy Dean feels that being a sugar baby is not only about being beautiful, sexy, or good in bed (good at having sex and satisfying his sugar daddy) but also being smart in order to make his sugar daddy feel comfortable when he is with him. Daddy Dean also told me about his sugar daddy friends that some of them do not pay for their sugar baby every month, give her pocket money or pay for her living but buy their sugar baby a car in their sugar baby's name but paid in instalments by their sugar daddy so that the sugar baby must always try to make her sugar daddy comfortable so that the sugar daddy pays the car instalments. Daddy Dean feels that the sugar dating relationship is a relationship that depends on how the sugar baby treats his sugar daddy because for some sugar dating relationships like this it has a trial period and some even have contracts but usually for written contracts owned by sugar babies who join agents or management while other sugar dating relationships are only unwritten agreements at the beginning of the relationship.

### **Stigma or Societal Views**

What is society's perception of sugar dating when compared to conventional dating? While sugar dating is perceived negatively with material and/or sexual compensation, as well as being identified with prostitution and stigmatised, conventional dating is generally more socially acceptable.

Societal stigma against sugar dating relationships restricts sugar babies and their sugar daddy/sugar mommy from coming out to their friends or family without being judged or embarrassed. This is inversely proportional to conventional dating because in this relationship there is no stigma attached so that couples are free to present themselves openly as a couple.

In a sugar dating relationship, it is very difficult for sugar daddy and sugar baby to meet their sugar baby in public because the professions that some sugar babies and sugar babies live in make them often known to many people. Daddy Dustin (55 years old, May 28, 2022) is a sugar daddy who feels that in a sugar dating relationship he has limitations on meeting in a public or open place like the Mall although he feels that people may assume that if he walks with his sugar baby, he is considered walking with his child. However, the interaction between the two becomes very limited for mutual safety, i.e. they cannot display intimacy. Therefore, meetings in public are very limited. To meet, Daddy Dustin usually comes to where his sugar baby lives, or to a special café to minimise people recognising him.

On the sugar baby side, Baby Fia (22 years old, July 15, 2023), for example, revealed that it is very difficult for her and her sugar daddy to meet in public because she is a celebrity who has many followers, so she is afraid of being recognized by her followers. Additionally, she worries that her followers may become suspicious if she ventures out in public with her sugar daddy, as some of them are aware of her parents' divorce, making any deception easily detectable. Baby Fia also realizes that sugar dating relationships are limited and has to limit herself because of the negative connotations of such relationships. This meant that she could not introduce her sugar daddy to her friends or family, especially her mother because if her mother found out that she was involved in a sugar dating relationship, it could potentially make her mother sick. Therefore, she keeps her sugar dating relationship a secret so that no one knows about it, especially her mother.

### **IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION**



Conventional dating is a romantic relationship that starts from getting to know each other, building emotional bonds and then looking for compatibility between partners while sugar dating is a relationship where the older partner will provide financial support or gifts to their younger partner in exchange for emotional compensation, attention and even intimacy.

In this study, it is known that the causes of sugar dating relationships are financial problems, luxurious lifestyles, and loneliness, while the difference between conventional dating and sugar dating lies in several aspects.

First, the motivation in conventional dating is driven by the desire for a lasting relationship due to love and affection and emotional bonding while sugar dating motivation is often related to financial or material benefits obtained.

Second, there is a very significant age difference between couples in sugar dating while conventional dating involves couples whose ages are generally not very significant

Third, Conventional dating and sugar dating have different emotional states, conventional dating is often able to spend time together freely and openly and it is not difficult to set a time together while sugar dating is transactional dating where a richer or oldest person dates a younger person, and they have to come to an agreement beforehand to spend time together but often cannot do so freely and openly

Fourth, Conventional dating and sugar dating have different emotional connections. The emotional connection in conventional dating calls for a deep emotional connection while in sugar dating, the main focus is more on agreements such as material agreements that affect the emotional connection. The emotional connection in sugar dating is often temporary and heavily influenced by explicit agreements between the two parties.

Fifth, the duration of conventional dating relationships is relatively long while sugar dating is often temporary or transactional.

Last, the societal view of sugar dating is more negative than conventional dating because it is considered more in line with the social norms prevailing in society.

This research can provide a deeper understanding of the differences between conventional dating and sugar dating. In this study there are also many shortcomings so that further researchers can conduct further research specifically related to the influence of local culture and values specifically related to sugar dating, as well as the influence of technology and social media can affect romantic relationships, especially in conventional dating relationships and sugar dating.

**Funding:** The first and second authors were not funded by anyone, they used personal funds to carry out this research to fulfil the obligations of the institution as a lecturer.

**Acknowledgement:** The authors would like to all informants who have been willing to spend time in conducting interviews.

**Competing Interests:** The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

**Ethics Statement:** This research was conducted based on the permission of all informants by using pseudonyms and maintaining the confidentiality of informants' identities.

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