

Nurturing the Self: How Interpersonal Relationships Foster Individual Development

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to find out how interpersonal relationships can foster individual self-development. The research method uses a qualitative approach with a literature review through research searches with the selected keywords, namely "Interpersonal", "Interpersonal Relationships", and "Individual Development". From the research that has been done, it can be concluded that interpersonal interactions have a positive impact on personal development. Studies indicate that having positive interpersonal relationships can enhance self-confidence, communication skills, and understanding of others' emotions. Additionally, good interpersonal relationships help build social support networks, improve the ability to express oneself, avoid conflicts, and promote cooperation with others. Therefore, it is important to support and strengthen positive interpersonal relationships to enhance overall individual development.

Keywords: Interpersonal, Interpersonal Relationships, Individual Development

1 INTRODUCTION

In today's fast-paced and interconnected world, the significance of interpersonal relationships in fostering individual development cannot be overstated. As humans, we are inherently social beings, and our interactions with others play a pivotal role in shaping our personal growth and overall well-being. Human beings, being affected by their environment and affecting their own environment, continue their living and fulfill their basic needs with the help of the relationships they develop. Individuals as biopsychosocial beings know and define themselves through their interpersonal relationships. Another factor indicating the importance of interpersonal relationship analysis is its connection with problem solving skills as individuals avoiding interpersonal relationships are known to have lower problem solving abilities (Koçak & Önen, 2014). This article delves into the profound impact that nurturing interpersonal relationships can have on individuals, emphasizing their crucial role in facilitating personal development. Interpersonal relationships are a crucial aspect of human life that involve social interactions among individuals within a group or community. With the rapid advancement of technology and globalization, social interactions are increasingly prevalent and vital in everyday life. Interpersonal relationships involve real interactions between two individuals or the mental representation of the relationship between oneself and others (Wilde & Dozois, 2019). These relationships are influenced by the principles of complementarity, which encompass mutual dependence and relationship satisfaction (Cartwright, 2019; Wilde & Dozois, 2019). Relationship satisfaction refers to the state where individuals feel content with the current state and dynamics of their relationship, perceiving that their needs are consistently met (Cartwright, 2019). This satisfaction signifies the fulfillment of the innate human desire to belong to a fulfilling and gratifying relationship. The level of relationship satisfaction serves as a significant indicator of overall well-being, which can be influenced by interactions, perceptions, and behaviors within the relationship (Murray et al., 2003). Therefore, understanding interpersonal relationships becomes highly important in maintaining a balance in social life. There are several fundamental concepts in building a relationship, namely *Attachment*, *Connection and separation*, *Negotiation*, *Unconscious fears*, *Power*, *Maintenance of balance*, *Changes in the balance*, *Health-facilitating balances*, *The optimal balance*, *Values* (Lewis, 1998). Theories about intimate relationships examine how the interconnection between actions and their evaluation influences emotional experiences and the corresponding behaviors within the relationship. Individuals assess

interpersonal relationships by evaluating and assigning causes to them (Schoebi & Randall, 2015). These assessments reflect the significance of the relationship to the individual and whether it is perceived as positive or negative (Fitness et al., 2005). Various factors can contribute to an interpersonal relationship, but the primary causes in describing positive and negative relationships are the self, the other person, the situation, the environment, the interaction between the self and the other person, and the relationship itself (Stephanou, 2012). In a study conducted by (Pung et al., 2021), it was found that interpersonal relationships mediate the relationship between emotional competence and prosocial behavior in adolescents. Good relationships with others, including peers, family, and teachers, play a crucial role in connecting emotional competence with prosocial behavior. Positive interpersonal relationships provide a supportive environment for adolescents to express their prosocial behaviors. Another study conducted by (Pietromonaco & Collins, 2017) indicates that individuals who have close interpersonal relationships, such as stable romantic relationships or strong social support, tend to have better health outcomes. Close and positive relationships can provide emotional support, practical support, and a sense of social connection, all of which can contribute to the physical and mental well-being of individuals. Moreover, positive interpersonal relationships can also enhance individuals' motivation to adopt healthy behaviors, such as maintaining a good diet, engaging in physical exercise, and practicing healthy sleep habits. Furthermore, (Niu et al., 2022) also revealed that students who have positive interpersonal relationships tend to have higher levels of emotional intelligence. Good interpersonal relationships can influence an individual's ability to recognize, understand, and manage their own emotions as well as the emotions of others. They also explained that positive interpersonal relationships are associated with better mental health in students. Students who feel supported and connected to others tend to have lower levels of stress, lower levels of anxiety, and higher life satisfaction. On the other hand, (Stephanou & Athanasiadou, 2020) discuss negative interpersonal relationships. They argue that negative interpersonal relationships can have a significant impact on individuals' cognition, emotions, and expectations. Individuals involved in negative relationships tend to make negative judgments about their partners, the situation at hand, or themselves. These judgments can reinforce negative attitudes and contribute to negative emotions. Negative interpersonal relationships can trigger unpleasant emotional experiences. Individuals in negative relationships often experience negative emotions such as anger, anxiety, sadness, or frustration. These emotions can have a negative impact on emotional well-being and mental health. Negative interpersonal relationships can diminish individuals' expectations. Individuals trapped in unhealthy or toxic relationships may lose hope for improvement, growth, or future happiness.

Interpersonal relationships have been widely recognized as influential factors in individual development and well-being. The quality of these relationships significantly impacts various aspects of one's life, including personal growth, emotional stability, and overall life satisfaction. Understanding the role of nurturing interpersonal relationships in fostering individual development is crucial for promoting positive outcomes in individuals' lives. Interpersonal relationships are an essential part of individuals' social lives. Healthy and positive interpersonal relationships can provide significant benefits for individuals' physical and mental health, while poor interpersonal relationships can have detrimental effects on individuals' physical and mental well-being. Therefore, paying attention to interpersonal relationships becomes crucial in maintaining balance in social life. Healthy and meaningful interpersonal relationships have been proven to significantly contribute to the growth and development of individuals. In this journal, we aim to further investigate this relationship and identify the mechanisms involved in how interpersonal relationships foster and support individual development. Through this research, we hope to provide a deeper understanding of how interpersonal relationships influence individual development. The findings of our study can offer valuable insights into the mechanisms involved in these relationships and provide a foundation for the development of interventions or programs aimed at enhancing the quality of interpersonal relationships and individual development.

2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

Interpersonal relationships are defined as the mutually supportive social and emotional exchanges between people (Walker et al., 1990). An interpersonal circumstances can be a real-life encounter between two people or a conceptual depiction of one's relationship with others (Wilde & Dozois, 2019). According to interpersonal theory (Kiesler, 1983; Leary, 1957), interpersonal motives, traits, and behaviors can be divided into two categories: affiliation which include communion, warmth, friendliness, love, desire to connect harmoniously with others and dominance which include agency, power, control, dominance, motivation to influence others. These two dimensions are orthogonal to one another, forming a "interpersonal circumplex" (Kiesler, 1983). According to interpersonal theory, the human condition is defined by a constant struggle to satisfy one's demands for both connection and domination. The two dimensions are discernible at many levels of analysis, they are represented in an individual's traitlike inclinations for affiliation or dominance across circumstances, but may also be used to define particular actions within an interpersonal scenario. Interpersonal relations are critical to general physical and emotional well-being. They are based on trust, loyalty, and support. Family, kinship, friendship, love, marriage, commerce, employment, clubs, neighborhoods, ethical ideals, support, and solidarity are all examples of interpersonal interactions. According to available data, social interactions are vital for our well-being. Support from family and friends is critical to our happiness and health. Social relationships have an important role in wealth and financial well-being (Ortiz-Ospina & Roser, 2020).

Having positive interpersonal relationships plays a very important role in life. Mutually beneficial relationships with others can provide happiness, emotional support, and opportunities to grow and develop as individuals. But, it is not always easy to establish and cultivate good interpersonal relationships. Therefore, it is important for individuals to understand and implement ways to develop positive and sustainable interpersonal relationships. According to Daniel Goleman (1995), there are several things that can be done to foster interpersonal relationships, including (Goleman, 1995):

1. Pay Attention to Others Emotions

One important step in cultivating strong interpersonal relationships is to pay attention to the emotions of others. This involves showing interest and concern for their feelings. When interacting with someone, take the time to listen with empathy. Listen actively, not just physically but also by activating your mind and heart to understand their feelings and perspectives.

2. Practice Verbal and Nonverbal Skills

Besides verbal communication, nonverbal skills also play an important role in fostering strong interpersonal relationships. Pay attention to body language when interacting with others. Make sure your posture is always open, with an upright stance and no back to the person. Use proper eye contact and nod your head gradually as the other person speaks. This will show that one is really listening and paying attention to what they are saying.

3. Consider the Other Person's Perspective

To strengthen interpersonal relationships, it is very important to see the world from the other person's point of view. Try to understand the other person's background, values, and life experiences. Awareness of these differences can help develop a sense of understanding and empathy towards others. Appreciating and respecting others' perspectives will help build deeper bonds and improve the quality of interpersonal relationships.

4. Show Empathy

Empathy is an important quality in fostering strong interpersonal relationships. When interacting with others, strive to feel and understand their feelings. Do not ignore or dismiss their feelings, but show empathy and understanding. This can be done by responding appropriately to their feelings, such as saying phrases like "I understand how difficult your situation is" or "I can imagine how you feel in that situation." This can be done to show empathy towards others so that interpersonal relationships can be well established.

5. Practicing Communication Skills

Good communication skills are an important aspect in strengthening interpersonal relationships. Learn and practice skills such as active listening, asking helpful questions, and conveying messages clearly and empathetically. Active listening involves giving full attention to what the other person is saying, repeating key words or summaries to show that you understand, and avoiding distractions or distracting thoughts.

In addition, Jalaludin Rahmat (2007) also explained three things that can be done to cultivate interpersonal relationships, including (Rahmat, 2007):

1. Trust

Trust plays a crucial role in influencing interpersonal relationships between individuals. When there is mutual trust between individuals, their relationship can grow through reinforcing understanding. This creates an attitude of openness, where they can easily share information, thoughts, and feelings without fear or concern. Trust also helps to fill the gaps between individuals because they can complement each other in terms of knowledge, skills, or resources. Moreover, trust creates a deep understanding between each other, reducing the likelihood of misunderstandings that can damage the relationship (Brown, 2017). In an interpersonal relationship based on trust, individuals can feel more comfortable sharing and building depth in the relationship. They have confidence that the information they provide will be accepted and appreciated, and they can rely on each other in difficult situations or conflicts. Trust is a strong foundation in interpersonal relationships, helping to build better relationship quality and enhance communication between individuals (Smith, 2016).

2. Supportive attitude

A supportive attitude is an attitude that can reduce defensiveness in interpersonal communication. When someone feels threatened or anxious, they tend to become defensive and more focused on self-protection rather than understanding the messages conveyed by others. Personal factors such as fear, anxiety, or past negative experiences can trigger this defensive response, which ultimately hinders the effectiveness of interpersonal communication. In the context of interpersonal relationships, a defensive attitude can make it difficult to understand the messages conveyed by others. When someone is too preoccupied with self-protection from perceived threats, they may be less able to listen with empathy and openness to others' perspectives. This can result in communication failures and worsen interpersonal relationships. With this supportive attitude, it can help reduce defensiveness, allowing individuals to create a safe and open communication environment. This includes listening attentively, providing emotional support, and showing empathy towards others' feelings and perspectives. This supportive attitude builds trust and makes individuals feel more comfortable in expressing themselves, thereby increasing the likelihood of effective interpersonal relationships (Jones, 2018).

3. Open-mindedness

Open-mindedness plays a crucial role in building effective interpersonal relationships. This open-minded attitude can foster mutual understanding and respect among individuals. By communicating openly, one can better understand each other's feelings, thoughts, and needs. They listen to each other attentively and empathetically, creating a relationship that understands and supports one another. Moreover, an open-minded attitude also plays a vital role in developing the quality of interpersonal relationships. When individuals share openly with each other, they can grow together and deepen their understanding of one another. They can overcome problems and challenges together, as well as collaborate to improve and strengthen their relationship (Smith, 2020).

According to (Kleptsova & Balabanov, 2016) they explain some of the benefits of interpersonal relationships for individual self-development:

1. Emotional and Social Support: Positive interpersonal relationships provide emotional support, empathy, and understanding, which contribute to the emotional well-being and resilience of individuals. Having a supportive network of relationships helps individuals cope with stress, anxiety, and other challenges, fostering personal growth.
2. Personal Growth and Feedback: Interpersonal relationships offer opportunities for personal growth through feedback. Trusted individuals within these relationships can provide constructive criticism, guidance, and encouragement, helping individuals identify their strengths, areas for improvement, and personal goals. This feedback promotes self-reflection and self-awareness, facilitating personal development.
3. Expanded Perspectives and Diversity: Interacting with diverse individuals allows for exposure to different perspectives, cultures, and experiences. Positive interpersonal relationships broaden individuals' understanding of the world and promote open-mindedness. This exposure enhances critical thinking, empathy, and tolerance, contributing to personal growth and development.
4. Skill Development: Interpersonal relationships provide opportunities for individuals to develop and refine essential skills such as communication, collaboration, and conflict resolution. Through interactions with others, individuals can learn new skills, acquire knowledge, and benefit from shared experiences, which contribute to their personal and professional growth.
5. Self-Identity and Self-Reflection: Positive interpersonal relationships serve as mirrors, reflecting individuals' strengths, weaknesses, and personal qualities. They provide a space for self-reflection, self-discovery, and the development of self-identity. These relationships help individuals gain a deeper understanding of themselves, their values, and their aspirations, facilitating personal growth and self-actualization.

The research method used to write this article is a literature study. The writing sources used in this article are based on journals and books that have been sorted according to the criteria. In searching for sources, several keywords related to the research title were used, namely "Interpersonal", "Interpersonal Relations", and "Self-Development". The pages used as data sources for journal search are Sinta, Scimago, Google Scholar, Psynet, Pubmed, and ResearchGate. After doing a search, finally found the journal that was considered the most appropriate. Overall, there are seven stages carried out in the context of writing this scientific article, namely determining the title, choosing keywords that will be used as guidelines for searching literature, searching for literature on predetermined pages, collecting literature that has been found, re-sort so that each journal used is appropriate, study the literature in the form of writing results and discussion, and draw conclusions from the results and discussion of the studies that have been carried out. The limitations experienced by the author in making this article are the lack of availability of the latest journals related to this research topic.

3 RESULTS

Various research findings have consistently shown that interpersonal relationships have a positive influence on individual development. A study conducted by Widya Kartika Sari, A. Muri Yusuf, and Alwen Bentri (2019) revealed that having positive interpersonal relationships can enhance the self-confidence and communication skills of adolescents, as well as their ability to understand others' emotions (Widya et al., 2019). Furthermore, the study highlighted several other benefits of maintaining good interpersonal relationships, such as improving effective and efficient communication with others, aiding adolescents in building positive social support networks, boosting their self-confidence in interacting with others, enhancing their ability to express themselves and convey their opinions or ideas, and improving their understanding of others' feelings and perspectives, thereby enabling conflict avoidance and promoting cooperation with others. In line with these explanations, research by Hasyim Hasanah (2015) also emphasized the significant role of interpersonal relationships in individual development, particularly in reducing gender-related emotional distress (Hasanah, 2015). Additionally, good interpersonal communication and positive interpersonal relationships can support individuals in expressing their feelings and emotions more effectively. This can help establish positive social support networks and enhance individuals' self-confidence and self-belief. In summary, various research studies consistently demonstrate that interpersonal relationships have a positive impact on individual development. Positive interpersonal relationships contribute to improved self-confidence, communication skills, empathy, effective expression of emotions, and conflict resolution. They also play a crucial role in reducing gender-related emotional distress and fostering positive social support networks. Consequently, nurturing and

strengthening positive interpersonal relationships within school and family environments hold significant implications for overall individual development.

Another study by Wang and Eccles (2018) revealed that having positive interpersonal relationships with peers, receiving social support from teachers, and receiving social support from family members significantly contribute to better academic development and school engagement in adolescents (Wang & Eccles, 2018). Adolescents who have good relationships with peers tend to be more involved in positive behaviors at school, have more positive emotional experiences in the school environment, and demonstrate greater cognitive engagement in the learning process. Furthermore, adolescents who receive good social support from their families are more likely to engage in positive behaviors at school and have positive emotional experiences in the school environment. This study emphasizes the importance of social support from peers, teachers, and family in enhancing school engagement and academic development in adolescents. The implications of these findings are that supporting and strengthening positive interpersonal relationships within the school and family contexts can help adolescents feel more engaged in education and achieve better academic outcomes.

Based on the mentioned research findings, it can be said that interpersonal interactions have a positive impact on personal development. Studies indicate that having positive interpersonal relationships can enhance self-confidence, communication skills, and understanding of others' emotions. Additionally, good interpersonal relationships help build social support networks, improve the ability to express oneself, avoid conflicts, and promote cooperation with others. Therefore, it is important to support and strengthen positive interpersonal relationships to enhance overall individual development.

4 DISCUSSIONS

According to V.N. Myasishchev, interpersonal relationships can be understood as a person's attitudes towards others. These relationships develop as individuals engage in shared activities and form certain perceptions and assessments of one another. Interpersonal relationships are described as mutually oriented because individuals are always influenced by their own expectations, stereotypes, orientations, attitudes, and dispositions when perceiving and evaluating others. These relationships evolve throughout a person's life and are influenced by factors such as age, personal characteristics, professional preferences, and sociocultural changes (Myasishchev, 1995). N.N. Obozov has extensively studied interpersonal relationships and defines them as the mutual willingness of individuals to communicate in specific ways accompanied by emotions, including positive, indifferent, or negative emotions, within the context of communication and shared activities. Interpersonal relationships can be assessed based on the presence of personal and shared emotions, categorized as positive, negative, or indifferent. They can also be characterized by the presence or absence of mutual understanding, which can be adequately or inadequately understood. Furthermore, interpersonal relationships involve cognitive identification between communicative individuals, as well as tendencies towards resistance, cooperation, or inaction (Obozov, 1979). Interpersonal relationships not only shape individuals' perceptions of others but are also expressed through interactions such as reactions, actions, and gestures directed towards the partner, which provoke active responses from the partner. These interactions become defining features, qualities, and characteristics of an individual's personality. Additionally, interpersonal relationships can be internalized in the form of group dynamics, creating a subjective reality known as the psychological atmosphere, which influences the individual and shapes their characteristics (Kleptsova & Balabanov, 2016).

In this study, we have explored the significant role of interpersonal relationships in fostering individual development. Our findings highlight that interpersonal relationships play a crucial role in shaping various aspects of an individual's life, including emotional, social, intellectual, and personal identity development. Through the emotional support provided by family and close friends, individuals experience a sense of security, trust and comfort. Positive relationships also assist individuals in managing their emotions, developing emotional resilience, and cultivating empathy towards others. Interpersonal relationships serve as a platform for practicing and refining social skills such as communication, empathy, and conflict resolution. They provide individuals with opportunities to learn social norms, appreciate diverse perspectives, and develop teamwork and collaboration skills. Moreover, interpersonal relationships facilitate intellectual growth by fostering the exchange of ideas and knowledge, stimulating critical thinking, and expanding individuals' horizons. The presence of mentors and positive role models in these relationships further contributes to personal and intellectual growth. Furthermore, interpersonal relationships transcend cultural and geographical boundaries, introduce individuals to global diversity, promote cross-cultural understanding, and encourage global collaboration. In conclusion, our findings underscore the importance of building and nurturing healthy interpersonal relationships for holistic individual development.

5 CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the research findings presented in the article consistently demonstrate that interpersonal relationships have a positive influence on individual development. Positive interpersonal relationships contribute to various aspects of personal growth, including self-confidence, communication skills, understanding of others' emotions, effective expression of emotions, and conflict resolution. They also play a significant role in reducing gender-related emotional distress and fostering positive social support networks. Additionally, positive interpersonal relationships with peers, teachers, and family members contribute to better academic development and school engagement in adolescents. These relationships promote positive behaviors, emotional well-being, and cognitive engagement in the learning process. Interpersonal relationships have a profound impact on emotional, social, intellectual, and personal identity development. They provide emotional support, help individuals manage their emotions, develop resilience, and cultivate empathy. Furthermore, these relationships serve as a platform for practicing and refining essential social skills, learning social norms, appreciating diverse perspectives, and developing teamwork and collaboration skills. Interpersonal relationships also foster intellectual growth through the exchange of ideas, knowledge, critical thinking, and exposure to mentors and positive role models. Moreover, they promote cross-cultural understanding, global diversity, and encourage collaboration across boundaries. In this modern era, where technology continues to advance and many people are busy with their daily routines, maintaining interpersonal relationships becomes increasingly important. Interpersonal relationships can help individuals grow and develop personally, as well as improve their quality of life. Through interactions with others, we have the opportunity to learn, grow, and expand our understanding of ourselves and the world around us. By building a strong social network, practicing empathy, and communicating effectively, we can develop valuable interpersonal relationship skills throughout our lives. So let's invest in nurturing ourselves and our relationships with others to achieve greater growth and success in our lives.

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