

Importance and significance of Interpersonal Relationships

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ABSTRACT

Interpersonal relationships mean the social links or connections between two or more people. The major categories of human relationships are – filial, conjugal, extra-marital, and professional. Love relationships, casual relationships and relationship between friends also exist in society. An identity is defined with the family when a child enters this world; and the inherited blood relationships follow human beings just like shadows. Interpersonal relationships form the core of man's survival in this world. The greatest fear of every human being is isolation. It cannot be denied that relations are the makers of man's identity. They are as necessary for human beings as water and air. A person spends his entire life in building and preserving relations. They are a vital part of our life. As children we love unquestioningly, we are related to our family. Relationships take a new twist as we grow up. So they are to be nurtured very carefully and a successful relationship depends on honesty, care, affection, warmth and understanding. Developing relationships is a two way process where both the persons contribute in terms of emotions and feelings. The present paper is an honest attempt to attract the attention of the readers towards the importance of Interpersonal relationships which is very important for everybody who are living in the society and they try to maintain the relationships with their belongings.

1. Introduction

Interpersonal relationships refer to a bonding between persons. Relationships are cultural symbols and real determinants of a society. Man is social by nature and cannot live in isolation from his surroundings. Man and society are interrelated. Man associates himself with other members of the society for his social, cultural, political and economic needs. Individuals also relate with each other intellectually, spiritually and religiously and in order to validate his relationship, he has to accustom himself to his surroundings and develop meaningful social relations. Hence, the interaction between persons in a society, gives rise to what is termed as 'human relationship'.

Interpersonal relationship means relationship between two or more persons which is a strong and close association. Interpersonal relationships are energetic systems. They too, have a beginning, a life span and an end. They grow and improve as we know each other and wither away as we part.

Several theories have been developed to explain how relationships are maintained. Knapp's relationship model explains that, every relationship begins when two individuals unknown to each other immediately get fascinated towards each other. In this stage, everybody shows his best side. In this stage more importance is given to physical appearance and manners. Later they attempt to acknowledge each other's preferences and interests. The structural theory of family focuses on types of relationships shared among the members of the family. These relationships are influenced by factors such as communication, gender and age. The interactional theory of family reflects the degree of coordination and cooperation within the family. Thus, family is visualized by James White "as a self-regulating system in which members control each other's access to meaning, power and

affect."⁵(1991: 120)The structural and functional theories are macroscopic in nature as they attempt to understand family system in society, whereas the interactional and symbolist theories are microscopic in their approach as they analyze various emotional and symbolic arrangements within the family.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the present paper is to attract the attention of the readers and lovers of literature towards the importance of interpersonal Relationships. The purpose of the present research paper is to provide a clearer understanding of the antecedents and consequences of positive interpersonal relationships at work. The main objective of the present study is to establish dispositions as important antecedents of valued interpersonal relationships in the workplace, family and society as well.

3. Basis of Relationships

Human beings are social beings, who live in a dynamic set of relationships with others. These human bonds are stronger than iron chains. We are destined to abide by the rules and regulations which govern the human bonds and bondages.

Human relationships have social, economic and cultural basis. In this world of globalization and urbanization, economic strains increase and changes in socio-economic conditions have affected human behavior and in return, human relationships. Many social thinkers argue that the very nature of Indian society is reluctant to change but their arguments do not hold good because they fail to appreciate the real nature of Indian society. Social change in India has a deep impact on interpersonal relationships. Our social roles impose on our personal relationships.

P. Rajendra Karmarkar asserts the role of society in shaping human relationships in these words:

Traditions, customs are as important as 'blood ties'. They hold the people in their places and guide them with the force of an undercurrent and pursue them to follow the etiquette. Though people might neglect the traditions, traditions seem to cling to them like parents who do not discard their children even if children are unkind to them. In their compass, traditions rule both the rich and the poor. People preserve the relations for the sake of social life, harmony and honour though their love is at its low ebb.⁶ (2005-2006: 113)

4. Economic factors determine relationships:

Economic factors also determine relationships. Unemployment and other work related issues contribute to breakdown of relationships. It reduces financial insecurity, isolation and disharmony in families. Thus, financial strains are a major basis of relationships. Economic independence of women has a major impact on families. Feminist movements have given women a new view of their position and status in the society. In fact, economic independence and equal rights of women to work and earn has affected the dynamics of relationships. Conflicts occur when one or the other partner does not try to renegotiate their role within a relationship.

There are some other factors that affect interpersonal relationships. The first factor is whether individuals are satisfied or dissatisfied with their relationship. If relationship gives satisfaction, it will lead to long term relationship. The second factor is the lack of alternatives. If there is no other person to have a relationship with, it will affect the duration of relationship. The third factor is the investment of resources, for example, money, time etc. that determines how long the relationship will last. In India, the institution of family governs marriage and other relationships. Its importance cannot be denied in inculcating human values and ethics.

5. Dynamics of Interpersonal Relationships:

In this world of globalization and urbanization, economic strains have increased. It is true that women have so many opportunities now but at the same time, it must be pointed out that these opportunities are constantly and systematically denied to a large number of women. Economic dependence, social positions and other related issues have altered the very concept of relationships in India. The interaction in social systems is influenced by the peculiar attitudes adopted by an individual. When individuals interact in groups or in family, they have to be cautious about their behavior. Continuous adjustments are required to adjust the variety of external influences that determine interpersonal relationships. Henry Lennard rightly points out:

Processes of informational exchange among the participants in a social system are essential for the establishment, maintenance and development of the system.⁷ (1970: 14)

Another important dynamic that affects personal relationships is the environment during the childhood years.

Richard Dewey and W. J. Humber elaborate upon the need for proper environment in a person's life. They remark:

Human nature is not developed in a vacuum. It is shaped through the interaction which takes place between the human organism and other aspects of the world stage upon which the human drama unfolds. This stage is called environment.⁸ (1952: 124)

A healthy atmosphere in early childhood leads to healthy relationships in adulthood. A child, whose basic needs like food, sleep and shelter and secondary needs like love and care are fulfilled, grows into a healthy and happy individual whereas a child deprived of these needs grows into an insecure person without self-esteem. Harrowing experiences during childhood may cause inadequacy in establishing successful relationships throughout the life. Since family is the first school of a child, any disturbance in the family structure leads to psychological and emotional trauma. According to Seema Suneel:

The changes in family system because of the process of social transformation have had a great effect on familial relationships. The social change is marked in Indian society at large; it has touched the fringe of the family and this interaction has brought a significant change in the structure of various relationships in a family unit. There is a conspicuous change in the spheres of roles and values.⁹ (2011: 9)

It is undoubtedly clear that silence is a wonderful way of communication and sometimes silence is better than uttering foolish words. Silence is needed to maintain relationships as it is preferred when a person wants to evade conflict, unpleasant arguments and aggressiveness. It can also be used in ignoring other person's viewpoint.

The virtues like sacrifice, love, empathy, compassion and loyalty are the basis of relationships in our life and the absence of these virtues works like an impediment in the foundation of smooth relationships. A mystic and motivational writer Jaggi Vasudev comments:

Psychological and Sociological Aspects of Relationships

A positive and successful relationship endeavors to accomplish three basic needs – fulfillment of existence, avoiding of seclusion and achievement of the growth of self. Abraham Maslow, an American psychologist, gave a description of the needs that motivate human behavior. His theory of Hierarchy of Needs focuses on the positive qualities of people and proves that human beings are always in pursuit to achieve high aims.

Changes in Family System

The importance of family structure in India has been acknowledged since Vedic age. The concept of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (the earth is one family) was presented to the world by India. Indian people

learn the essential principles of life within the bosom of family. In India, family is a complex web of relationships. A single uniform definition of family is almost impossible task. It is an indispensable institution in term of its members who are tied by blood relationship or marriage. Every society has its own familial setup. The most accepted definition of family is by Bohannan, who defines the functional as well as structural roles of family as, "A family contains people who are linked by social and a final relationship as well as those linked by descents that are linked by secondary relations: i.e. by chains of primary relations."

Human relationships are rooted in the milieu of family. It plays a central role in nurturing filial and conjugal relationships. Jasbir Jain remarks:

Families have a wonderful way of coming together at times of crisis and of dispersing once things are settling down. The house with its division and space renders it possible.¹⁷ (1995: 23)

The definition of family has changed greatly because of economic, cultural and social changes across the world. Both in its structure and functions, changes have taken place. In India, family has not only been the centre of social and economic life, but also the primary source of support for the members of the family. The changes in lifestyle and rise of individualism have affected the very structure of family. It has changed dramatically. The emancipation of urban Indian middle class women, the breakdown of joint family system and the image of family aired by media have modified the Indian family system. Changes in legislation, technology, attitudes and expectations have led to new trends in families. The old, traditional joint family system no longer continues. Industrialization, globalization, urbanization and commercialization have consequential impact on the structure

of family. Thus, family in India is passing through a contradictory and a reconciliatory pattern.

6. Summing Up

To sum up; the research scholar comes to the point that good interpersonal relations promote people become successful. Through the human history the need of good internal personal relationships has always been felt. It is must for exchange of ideas and sharing of experiences. Failure to establish the exchange of feelings and emotions results in personality disorders. Through interaction, human beings derive a sense of identity. Communication is a kind of mirror. Through interaction with others, an individual frames an image of his own self. These communication signals are most important not only for a child for the development of his personality but they are very important at every stage of life. Children whose needs of love and belongingness are well taken care of generally develop as individuals who are self-respecting and have high self-esteem. Interpersonal relationships refer to a bonding between persons. Man is social by nature and cannot live in isolation from his surroundings. Man and society are interrelated. Man associates himself with other members of the society for his social, cultural, political and economic needs. Love relationships, casual relationships and relationship between friends also exist in society. Developing relationships is a two way process where both the persons contribute in terms of emotions and feelings. In this paper; the research scholar proves that life is nothing without relationship. The research scholar further tells that interpersonal relationships is very important for us because we cannot live without it. Relationships are cultural symbols and real determinants of a society.

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