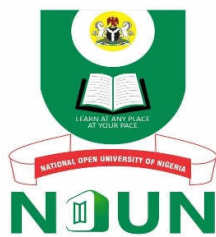


**COURSE  
GUIDE**

**EGC 811  
PRINCIPLES OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP**

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© 2022 by NOUN Press  
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Reviewed 2021

Printed 2022

ISBN: 978-058-999-X

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## **INTRODUCTION**

EGC 811: Principles of Interpersonal Relationship is a two-credit unit course for Master's Degree in Education Students in Guidance and Counselling. As a post-graduate/master's degree student, it is an elective course that you might need to study to enable you graduate. The course is designed to consists of three (3) modules of fourteen (14) units.

Studying the course well implies that you have attended to all your self-assessment exercises (SAEs) and tutor-marked assignments (TMAs).

This course guide tells you briefly what to expect from reading the accompanying course study material. It provides you with information on how to make the best use of the materials so that you can achieve good success.

## **THE COURSE**

The course consists of 14 study units, which include concepts and theories in interpersonal relationship, principles of interpersonal relationship, difficulties in forming relationship, forming and maintaining positive relationships with clients' families, self-disclosure, impression management in inter-personal relationship, interpersonal relations in organization, adolescent interpersonal behavior, interpersonal attraction, and developing relationship, fostering positive parent-teacher relationship in the school system, causative factors of interpersonal conflicts in the school system, psychological experiences of ageing spouse, group processes and language as a tool of interpersonal relationship. The course material has been developed and reviewed to suit not only distance learners in Nigeria and elsewhere and general interest readers in the areas of psychology, sociology, anthropology, social work, education, etc. The intention is to make use of local and global experiences and situations to support the learners while studying, and to ensure that the content remains current and relevant.

This course guide is a window into the course. It tells you vividly what the course is about, what to expect from reading the accompanying course study materials, and how you can work your way through the material. It suggests some general guidelines for the amount of time you should spend on each study unit of the course in order to complete it successfully. It also gives you some guidance on your tutor marked assignments (TMAs). There are regular tutorial classes known as facilitation Which last for 8 weeks that are linked to the course. You

are advised to hook on to the link which is made available by NOUN learning spa@ <https://mylearningspace.nouedu2.net/info/timetable/>

You are encouraged to take advantage of the online facilitation sessions made available for many courses including EGC 811.

Online facilitation offers students the opportunity to engage with facilitators on course materials. This is of three main activities.

1. Video conferencing sessions. The facilitator comes online for one hour on predetermined schedule (see <https://mylearningsspace.nouedu2.net/info/timetable>)
2. Discussion Forums: Here you will have opportunity to express your opinion and challenge one another/your mates regarding topic of discussion.
3. Chat sessions with other students in the course, students participate in the activities using internet-enabled smart devices- smartphones, tablets, laptops etc. students are expected to observe online etiquette.

All NOUN's online platforms remain accessible to staff and students via <https://mylearningspace.nouedu2.net/info/timetable>

## **WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS COURSE**

The overall aim of EGC 811: Principles of Interpersonal Relationship is to introduce and explain specific concepts, theories and principles of interpersonal relationship with particular consideration to forming, maintaining and fostering positive relationship with clients, and families. In the course of studying this course, you will learn about what the term interpersonal relationship means, and learn about the various persons or groups among which relationship can develop, especially as it affects the school system, and the various stages and processes this goes through. You will be given sufficient grounding to understand the dynamics of interpersonal relationship and be helped to understand the various interpersonal skills and techniques one needs to learn and develop in order to have a positive healthy and interpersonal relationship, and these should provide you with the necessary basis for further study.

## **COURSE AIMS**

It is hoped that with your Master's Degree in Guidance and Counselling, you will rise to certain influential leadership positions in the society, and particularly in the education sector; therefore, the major aims of the course include:

- (a) introducing you to the definitions of the concept of relationship
- (b) explaining to you what the interpersonal relationship entails.
- (c) expounding certain theories of interpersonal relationship
- (d) inculcating into you the skills and strategies for healthy interpersonal relationship
- (e) deepening your understanding of the basic principles that guide the human behavior towards healthy and positive interpersonal relationship.
- (f) Preparing you to be able to counsel teachers, parents and all stake-holders in the education sector on the value and strategies for healthy interpersonal relationship in the sector.
- (g) Preparing you to be able to discuss coherently on any issues or matter relating to interpersonal relationship or its application in the education sector.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this course, EGC811: Principles of Interpersonal Relation, you will be able to:

- (a) define interpersonal relationship
- (b) discuss the various concepts in interpersonal relationship and enumerate the different types of interpersonal relationship
- (c) discuss the basic principles that guide the human behavior toward healthy and positive interpersonal relationship.
- (d) Explain factors that are responsible for difficulties in forming relationships
- (e) explain how a counsellor can form, build and maintain a positive healthy relationship with the family of his client
- (f) discuss extensively the concept and principle of self-disclosure
- (g) list the various strategies of impression management
- (h) explain the influence of basic human interaction on organization
- (i) discuss the implications of adolescent interpersonal behavior to counselling
- (j) enumerate the skills that counsellors need to assist learners with behaviour problem
- (k) explain the disengagement theory
- (l) define group process
- (m) describe language as a tool of interpersonal relationship

## WORKING THROUGH THIS COURSE

To complete the course, you are required to read the study units, read books and other materials provided by the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN). Each study unit contains Self-Assessment Exercise (SAEs) and Tutor Marked Assignments (TMAs). There is also an end of course final examination. You will also find listed, all the components of the course, what you have to do, and how you should allocate your time to each study unit in order to complete the course successfully and on time.

## COURSE MATERIALS

Major components of the course are:

1. Course Guide
2. Study units
3. References
4. Presentation schedule

## STUDY UNITS

The study units in this course are as follows:

### Module 1

- |        |   |
|--------|---|
| Unit 1 | Concepts and Theories in Interpersonal Relationship                   |
| Unit 2 | Principles of Interpersonal Relationship                              |
| Unit 3 | Difficulties on forming Relationship                                  |
| Unit 4 | Forming and Maintaining Positive Relationships with Clients' Families |
| Unit 5 | Self-Disclosure   |

### Module 2

- |        |   |
|--------|---|
| Unit 1 | Impression Management in Interpersonal Relationship                 |
| Unit 2 | Interpersonal Relations in Organisation.                            |
| Unit 3 | Adolescent Interpersonal Behaviour                                  |
| Unit 4 | Interpersonal Attraction and Developing Relationship                |
| Unit 5 | Fostering Positive Parent-Teacher Relationship in the School System |

### Module 3

- |        |  |
|--------|--|
| Unit 1 | Causative Factors for Interpersonal Conflicts in the School System |
|--------|--|

Unit 2	Psychological Experiences of the Ageing Spouse
Unit 3	Group Processes
Unit 4	Languages as a Tool of Interpersonal Relationship

## **ASSESSMENT**

There are three aspects of assessment of the course. The first is a set of self-assessment exercises (SAE's), second is a set of tutor-marked assignments (TMAs) which includes you going online to do your computer-based assessment/tests. This test/assessment carries 30 marks. The third is a written end of semester examination which carries 70 marks.

In tackling the assignments, you are expected to be sincere in attempting the exercises; by applying the information, knowledge and techniques gathered during the course. The assignments must be submitted online according to schedule. The formal deadline will be communicated to you. The online assignment will make up 30% of your course mark.

At the end of the course, you will need to sit for a final written examination of two hours' duration. This examination will make up the remaining 70% of your total course mark.

## **TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMAS)**

There are tutor-marked assignments in this course. You are encouraged to do all assignment questions for the study units.

The assignment comes in three segments:

TMA one – This has ten questions and you are expected to answer all ten as it carries 10 marks

TMA two – also has ten questions and carries 10 marks too.

TMA three – also carries ten questions which is 10 marks.

The three TMAs carry 30 marks in all. This forms part of the 100% expected of the course. The 30% of the TMA and the 70% of the end of semester examination makes up the 100% expected of the student in this course.

## **FINAL EXAMINATION AND GRADING:**

The final examination will be of two hours' duration and it has a value of 70% of the total course grade. The examination will consist of pen-



on paper questions which reflect of self-testing, practice exercises and tutor marked assignments (online-computer based test/assessment) problems you have previously encountered. All areas of the course are assessed.

Use the time between finishing the last study unit, online facilitation and computer-based TMA and sitting for the examination to revise the entire course. You might find it useful to review your self-tests again before the examination. The final examination covers information from all parts of the course.

<b>Tutor Marked Assessment (Online)</b>	
TMA's 1- 3 (10 marks each)	30%
Final Examination	70%
Total	100% of course work

Table 1: Course Marking Structure.

## **HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM THE COURSE**

In Open and Distance Learning (ODL), the study units replace the University Lecturer. This is one of the great advantages of ODL. You can read and work through specially designed study materials at your own pace, and at a time and place that suit you best. Think of it as reading the lecturer. In the same way that the lecturer might set you some reading to do, the study units tell you when to read your other materials. Just as a lecturer might give you an in-class exercise, your study units provide exercise, for you to do at appropriate points. In addition, there will be scheduled regular online facilitation of the course, following the study units and you can ask questions or make your contributions there and then.

Each of the study units follows a common format. The first item is an introduction to the subject matter of the study unit and how a particular study unit is integrated with the other study units and the course as a whole. Next is a set of learning objectives. These objectives let you know what you should be able to do by the time you have completed the study unit. You should use these objectives to guide your study. When you have finished the study unit, you must go back and check whether you have achieved the objectives or not. If you make a habit of doing this, you will significantly improve your chances of passing the course.

The main body of the study unit guides you through the required reading from other sources. This will usually be either from a reading section or some other sources. You will be directed when there is need for it.

Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) are interspersed through the study units. Working through these SAEs will help you to achieve the objectives of the study units and prepare you for the assignments and examination. You should do every SAE as you come to it in the study unit. There will also be numerous examples given in the study units. Work through these when you come to them too. The following is a practical strategy for working through the course. If you run into any trouble, telephone your tutor/facilitator immediately. Remember that your tutor's job is to help you; don't hesitate to call and ask your tutor to provide it.

1. Read this course guide thoroughly.
2. Organize a study schedule. Refer to the course overview for more details. You should note that it is expected of you to devote at least 2 hours per week for studying this course. The number of hours to be devoted for intensives study stated above is outside other need driven academic activities like self help, group discussion and instructional facilitation. Note the time you are expected to spend on each unit and how the assignments relate to the study units. Important information e.g. details of your tutorials, and the date of the first day of the semester is available. You need to gather together all this information in one place, such as in your diary or a wall calendar. Whatever method you choose to use, you should write in your own dates for working on each unit.
3. Once you have created your own study schedule, do everything you can to stick to it. The major reason why students fail is that they get behind with their course work. If you get into difficulties with your schedule, please let your tutor know before it is too late for him to help you.
4. Turn to unit 1, read the introduction and the objectives for the unit.
5. Assemble the study materials. Information about what you need for a unit is given in the table of content at the beginning of each unit. You will almost always read both the study unit you are working on and one of the materials for further reading on your desks at the same time.
6. Work through the Unit. The content of the unit itself has been through the unit, you will be instructed to read sections from other sources. Use the unit to guide your reading.
7. Keep in mind that you will learn a lot by doing all your assignments carefully. They have been designed to help you meet the objectives of the course and, therefore, will help you meet the objectives of the course and, help you pass the

- examination. Submit all assignments/online TMAs not later than the due date.
8. Review the objectives for each study unit to confirm that you have achieved them. If you feel unsure about any of the objectives, review the study materials or consult your tutor.
  9. When you are confident that you have achieved a unit's objectives, you can then start on the next unit. Proceed unit by unit through the course and try to pace your study so that you keep yourself on schedule.
  10. When you have submitted any assignment/online TMA (say TMA 1) and taken note of your score, do not wait until you see the second TMA before starting the next unit. Keep to your schedule. When the assignment/online TMA (the third-TMA3) is completely done, continue revising for your examinations. Consult your tutor as soon as possible if you have any questions or problems.
  11. After completing the last unit, review the course and prepare yourself for the final examination. Check that you have achieved the unit objectives (listed at the beginning of each unit) and the course objectives (listed in the course guide).

## **FACILITATORS/TUTORS AND TUTORIALS**

There are 14 hours of tutorials provided online in support of this course. You will be notified of the dates, times and online location of these tutorials together with the name and phone number of your tutor as soon as they are arranged. Do not hesitate to call your tutor by telephone, e-mail, or discussion board if you need help. The following might be circumstances in which you would find help necessary. Contact your tutor if:

- You do not understand any part of the study units or assigned readings
- You have difficulty with self-assessment exercises
- You have a question or problem with an assignment or with the grading of an assignment
- You should try your best to attend the online tutorials. This is your only chance to have an academic contact with your tutor and to ask questions on problems encountered in the course of the study. To gain the maximum benefit from course tutorials, prepare a question list before attending them. You will learn a lot from participating in discussions actively.

**MAIN  
COURSE**

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## MODULE 1

Unit 1	Concepts and Theories in Interpersonal Relationship
Unit 2	Principles of Interpersonal Relationship
Unit 3	Difficulties in Forming Relationship
Unit 4	Forming and Maintaining Positive Relationships with Clients' Families
Unit 5	Self Disclosure

### UNIT 1 CONCEPTS AND THEORIES IN INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP

#### Unit Structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3 Meaning of Interpersonal Relationship
  - 1.3.1 Stages of Interpersonal Relationship
  - 1.3.2 Concepts in Interpersonal Relationship
- 1.4 Types of Interpersonal Relationship
  - 1.4.1 Classification of Interpersonal Relationship
  - 1.4.2 Self-Assessment Exercise
- 1.5 Conclusion
- 1.6 Summary
- 1.7 Tutor–Marked Assignment
- 1.8 References/Further Reading

#### 1.1 Introduction

Any worthwhile book on the principles of Interpersonal Relationship will definitely be discussing the nature of the course. The principles of the course include conceptual classifications of significant concepts that are related to the subject matter of discourse, definitions, purposes and principles. This unit will, among other things, provide the definitions and meanings of the term interpersonal relationship, the various stages of interpersonal relationship, the need for it, and its functions in organisations. This will help lay the necessary foundation about the course.

#### 1.2 Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- define and explain the meaning of interpersonal relationship
- discuss the various concepts in interpersonal relationship

- enumerate and distinguish between the different types of interpersonal relationship.

### 1.3 The Meaning of Interpersonal Relationship

You sure have an idea what the term relationship means. You know too that the term interpersonal connotes person to person. However, the term interpersonal relationship is explained in different ways by various writers, but they all are pointing to the same meaning. DeVito (2013) sees it as “a perception shared by two people of an ongoing interdependent connection that results in the development of relational expectations and varies in interpersonal intimacy.” In other words, interpersonal relationships refer to reciprocal social and emotional interactions between two or more individuals in an environment. In short, interpersonal relationship refers to the social association, connection, affiliation, interaction and bond between two or more people. Attraction between individuals brings them close to each other and eventually results in a strong interpersonal relationship.

Think of the various persons or groups among which relationship can develop. Relationship can occur between romantic partners, business associates, doctors and patients, counsellors and counselees, parents and their children, and so on. It permeates our lives. Bershield (1999) defines interpersonal relationship as a strong deep or close association and acquaintance between two or more people that may range from a brief duration to a long enduring relationship. This association may be based on love, affinity or solidarity. The context can vary from family or kingship, friendship, work, clubs, neighborhood and places of worship.

So, we are saying that an interpersonal relationship can develop between individuals working together in the same organization, people working in the same team, between man and a woman (love, marriage), relationship with immediate family members and relatives, relationship of a child with his parents, and relationship between friends.

#### 1.3.1 Stages of Interpersonal Relationship

Interpersonal relationship goes through various stages and processes. Of course, a sense of trust, loyalty and commitment is essential in a relationship, and it takes a while for a relationship to grow and pass the test of time. There are two possibilities about a relationship.

Possibility 1: Two people might start a relationship as mere strangers. They get to know each other slowly and become emotionally and mentally

attached to each other gradually. Such relationships often lead to lasting commitments.

Possibility 2: Two people might start well but soon face problems. Troubles in relationship start when people have different opinions and views, and fail to reach mutually acceptable solution.

According to George Levinger (1983), every relationship goes through the following five stages:

1. First stage- Acquaintance and acquaintanceship: This is having a personal knowledge or state of familiarity, and having a relationship with a person you know just slightly. Common friends, social gatherings, same organisations, etc, help people meet, break the ice, get acquainted with each other and start a relationship. So, becoming acquainted may depend on previous relationships, physical proximity, first impressions, and other factors.
2. Second stage – The Buildup Stage: This is the stage when the relationship actually grows. To build up a quality relationship, these rules are to be followed:
  - i. Maintaining regular contact with each other
  - ii. Ensuring that time spent together is meaningful
  - iii. Seeking values agreement or concord and acknowledging each other
  - iv. Showing empathy and experience in interactions
  - v. Providing chances for mutual progress in different aspects of interpersonal relations.

The build-up stage in a relationship is often characterised by two individuals coming close, being passionate, and feeling for each other.

3. Third Stage – The continuation Stage: This is the stage when relationship blossoms into lasting commitments. For a relationship to grow and continue, some friendship rules should be maintained.

Such are:

- (i) Standing up for a friend in his absence
  - (ii) Information and feelings about success should be shared
- Emotional support should be demonstrated
  - There should be trust and confidence
  - Help should be rendered in times of need
  - Making each other happy when together is vital
  - Refraining from criticising your friend in public
  - Keeping confidences.

- Desisting from being jealous or negative about other relationships around you.
- Respecting each other's privacy

Trust and transparency are also essential for the charm to stay in relationship.

4. Stage 4 – Deterioration Stage: This is the stage in a relationship when the connecting bonds between partners weaken and there is drifting from each other. Lack of compatibility, trust, love and care often lead to misunderstandings and serious troubles in relationship. Of course, not all relationships deteriorate, but those that tend to show signs of trouble, boredom, resentment and dissatisfaction do. An individual may communicate less, and avoid self-disclosure. Loss of trust, and betrayals may take place as the downward spiral. Continuous deterioration may eventually end the relationship.
5. Stage 5 – The Termination Stage: This is the end of a relationship. The termination of a relationship may be due to death of any one partner, a break-up, or by spatial separation for quite some time, and severing all other existing ties. So, there are five other ways to terminate a relationship. They are differentiating, circumscribing, stagnation, avoidance and termination.

Termination can be incremental or can go through a critical event. Incremental means to slowly drift apart and this unravels itself in steps. It can also be referred to as disengagement. Gottman (1999) proposes the theory of magic ratio for successful marriages. The theory says for a marriage to be successful, couples must have the average ratio of five positive interactions to one negative interaction. As the ratio moves to 1:1, divorce becomes more likely. In addition, Seligman (2011) proposes the concept of active constructive–responding, which stresses the importance of practising attentive skills.

From the above discussions, a successful interpersonal relationship can be summarily defined as a process involving nonstop interrelated thoughts, feelings and behaviours of persons in a relationship or association in which they respect empathy, social skills and active participation. We also note that relationships are not static; we move from one stage to another largely as a result of our interpersonal interactions.



### 1.3.2 Concepts and Theories in Interpersonal Relationship

Man is naturally attracted to companionship with fellow man, either same sex or opposite sex. Maxwell (2003) observed that a thing brings two persons together to make them remain in the context of relationship. Such things may be common interests like desire, aspiration or goal. When interpersonal relationship is born from any of these, if it is fed and nurtured, it grows; but if neglected, it deteriorates and dies. A lot of concepts and theories therefore come into the fore in the study of the development of interpersonal relationship, offering insight into why and how we develop and dissolve our relationships.

1. **Attribution Theory:** We attach and assume meanings to others' behavior in our day to day life, and the theory developed by Fritz Heider based on this attribution is called Attribution Theory. The term attribution refers to the interpretation of an event by inferring what caused the event to occur.

Attribution theory explains how and why ordinary people explain the things as they do. The theory argues that we attempt to assign motive or cause to the behaviour of another individual. It is a humanistic theory that believes that there is a direct relationship between our behavior and its causes.

2. **Implicit Personality Theory:** According to the implicit personality theory, when we meet someone, we absorb the most evident traits, and then make general assumptions about that person's personality. This is an automatic subconscious reflex that is different for each individual. Wikipedia explains that the theory describes the specific patterns and biases an individual uses when forming impressions based on a limited amount of initial information about an unfamiliar person.

The theory argues that we develop a list of associated qualities that we attribute to the individuals with whom we interact. This allows us to make guesses about an individual's personality based on whatever information we currently have about the individual. It is about the inward sense of our body, its tension or its well-being. Toward a further reflection, we can notice that only its direct sensing do we have meanings to what we say and think. We need to have our 'feel' before verbal symbols can have concrete meanings.

3. **Impression Formation Theory:** Impression formation in social psychology refers to the process by which different pieces of knowledge about another are combined into a global summary

impression. We subconsciously form opinions about people that we meet. Our minds do this so we can begin to understand how to interact with new people. Impressions help us to contextualise the information about the world around us, and give us the tools to start interacting. From there we can develop opinions that are more long lasting and less superficial. The theory says we form impression about others on their qualities and behaviours, the information given about them.

4. **Social Exchange Theory:** The Social Exchange Theory was proposed by George Casper Homans in 1958. It proposes that social behaviour is the result of an exchange process between two people. The basic concept of the exchange theory is that “give and take” forms the basis of almost all relationships though their proportions might vary as per the intensity of the relationship. In a relationship each individual has his expectations from his/her partner. According to the theory, feelings and emotions ought to be reciprocated for a successful and long lasting relationship. An individual invests his time and energy in relationships only when he gets something out of it. What he expects to get out of it may be love, trust, honour, respect, money, favour, etc. There are relationships where an individual receives less than he gives. This leads to situations where the individual starts comparing his relationship with others, and such can stop individuals from putting their best in relationships. The social exchange theory explains that the derived outcomes of a relationship must be greater than or equal to the investment costs of the relationship.

This theory claims that you develop relationships that will enable you maximise your profits – a theory based on an economic model of profit and loss. The theory begins with the following equation:

Profit = Reward – [minus sign] Costs.

**Rewards** are anything that you would incur costs to obtain. **Costs** are things that you normally try to avoid, that you consider unpleasant or difficult. **Profit** is what results when the costs are subtracted from the rewards (Profit = Rewards – Costs).

5. **Equity Theory:** Equity theory was developed in 1968 by John Adams. It is a theory that attempts to explain relational satisfaction in terms of perceptions of fair/unfair distribution of resources within interpersonal relationship. In summary, equity theory suggests that people are more satisfied with a relationship in which there is equal give and take by both parties. The theory proposes that a person’s motivation to stay in any relationship is based on

equality (or inequality) of the contributions made to the relationship. In fact, it is a more complex version of the social exchange theory. It uses the ideas of the social exchange but goes a step further and claims that you develop and maintain relationships in which the ratio of your rewards relative to your cost is approximately equal to your partner's.

6. **Relational Dialectics Theory:** This is a theory of how meanings are constructed through speaker utterances, whether verbal or nonverbal, oral or written. The theory views meaning-making as a fluid, polemic process in which different, often competing, discourses or world views struggle for dominance. Sometimes, emergent from this struggle, new transformative meanings are constructed. The theory moves away from psychologists' view of interpersonal communication, in which the individual is central, to an approach in which discourses become the focus of attention.

Relational Dialectics is a concept within the communication theories introduced by Leslie Baxter and Barbera M. Montgomery in 1988. It focuses on the contradictions in relationships. It stems from the concept of the extreme will sustain the sources of the contrary. This arises when two people of varying differences maintain a dialectics in a relationship. The most dialectics in a relationship are:-

- (i) **Openness and Closeness:** Both partners expect openness in their communication as to be a dependable one, and to also maintain a healthy relationship. However, on the contrary, one of them desires privacy.
- (ii) **Certainty and Uncertainty:** Certainty is a bonding factor in a relationship. It is a promise kept to comfort partners in a relationship. However, on the contrary predictability makes the relationship uncomfortable.
- (iii) **Connectedness and Separateness:** It is natural to desire a close and permanent bond in a relationship. However, a partner in a relationship may want to be alone. Too much of staying together may result in the loss of individual identity.

7. **Attraction Theory:** The attraction theory holds that people form relationships on the basis of attraction characteristics that may generate attraction for a relationship, and such characteristics may include facial appearance, general body structure, grooming and general cleanliness, appropriate beliefs, sense of humour, optimism toward life in general, the other person being positive toward them, honest/ethical, ambitious, communicative, similarity in cultural backgrounds, including race and nationality,

availability, sexual compatibility, etc. Generally, people are attracted to others on the basis of five major factors: similarity, proximity, reinforcement, physical attractiveness and personality, and socio-economic and educational status.

8. **Relationship Rules Theory:** The general assumption of rules theory is that relationships – friendship and love in particular – are held together by adherence to certain rules. When those rules are broken, the relationship may deteriorate and even dissolve.

Relationship rules theory helps us clarify several aspects of relationships. First, these rules identify successful versus destructive relationship behaviour. In addition, these rules help pinpoint more specifically why relationships break up and how they may be repaired. Further, if we know what the rules are, we will be able to master social skills involved in relationship development and maintenance. And because these rules vary from one culture to another, it is important to identify those unique to each culture so that intercultural relationships may be more effectively developed and maintained.

The various relationship rules which vary from one culture to another can be classified as friendship rules, romantic rules, family rules, workplace rules, etc.

9. **Politeness Theory:** Still another approach to relationships looks at politeness as a major force in developing, maintaining and deteriorating relationships. Two people develop a relationship when each respects, contributes to, and acknowledges the positive and negative face needs of the other, and it deteriorates when they don't. (NB: Positive face is the need to be thought of highly – to be valued, to be esteemed. Negative face is the need to be autonomous – to be in control of one's own behaviour, to not be obligated to do something). Relationships develop when these needs are met. Relationships will be maintained when the rules of politeness are maintained. And relationships will deteriorate when the rules of politeness are bent, violated too often, or ignored completely.

The major weakness of this theory seems to be that what is politeness to one person may be perceived as rude or insensitive to another. And politeness seems to be relaxed as the relationship becomes more intimate.

10. **Socionics Theory:** Socionics intertype relations describe relationship between Psychological Types of people, and not between the actual people. This is the reason these relations are called “intertype” relations. The relations between actual people are complicated and depend on many different factors. The intertype relations, however, form the core of any relationship and describe various degrees of psychological compatibility between people according to their types.

Socionics theory projects the idea that a person’s character acts like a set of blocks called psychological functions result in the different ways of producing and accepting information which results in different behaviour patterns and character types.

11. **Minding Relationship Theory:** This refers to a theory of relationship maintenance and satisfaction. It emphasises that relationship satisfaction is primarily a matter of how partners think about a relationship, happiness in a relationship, etc. The theory suggests that relationship satisfaction may be sustained over long periods through positive habits of cognition and communication between partners.

The theory projects how closeness in relationships may be maintained and enhanced. It explains how thoughts, feelings and behaviours of individuals in a relationship should be reciprocal. The five components of ‘minding’ can be:

- (i) Knowing and being known – each partner should seek to understand themselves and be understood.
- (ii) Making relationship – enhancing attributes for behaviours, that is, giving the benefit of any doubt.
- (iii) Accepting and respecting empathy and social skills.
- (iv) Reciprocity should be maintained
- (v) Continuity should exist in ‘minding’, and ‘mindfulness’ should persist.

12. **Attachment Style:** Attachment theory is a psychological model attempting to describe the dynamics of long-term and short-term interpersonal relationships between humans. Attachment theory is not formulated as a general theory of relationships; it addresses only a specific facet - how human beings respond in relationships when hurt, separated from loved ones, or perceiving a threat.

In infants, attachment as a motivational behavioural system directs the child to seek proximity with the parent when they are alarmed, with expectation they will receive protection and emotional support.

According to Bolt (2004), it is by 'both nature – the infant's inherent need to bond and belong – and nurture – parental responsiveness. There are three factors determining the attachment an individual has developed as a child. It has a predictive effect on the type of love relationships one develops as an adult.

#### 1.4 Types of Interpersonal Relationship

We have earlier explained that when two individuals feel comfortable in each other's company they begin to relate with each other. A close association between individuals who share common interests and goals is called interpersonal relationship.

There are many different types and classifications of relationships. They include family or kinship relationships, friendship relationships, acquaintanceship relationships, peer relationships, neighbourhood relationships, love or romantic relationships, platonic relationships, and professional or workplace relationships. A brief explanation or discussion of each of these types will be necessary here, although some of them may overlap.

1. **Family or Kinship Relationship:** This exists between members of the same family, both extended and nuclear family. It is known as biological relationship. Ideally, people should have strong relationships with their families, although this does not always happen. They should feel love and closeness for their relatives, and be able to confide in them and discuss personal things. A key role of parents and older relatives is to offer guidance, support and, where needed, boundaries and discipline.

Family relationships are ideally life-long, although as children grow into adulthood, it is usual for them to have more independence and for the parental relationship to become less one of guidance and more of mutual support. Sometimes, as children become teenagers and adults, there can be an increase in arguments and conflicts with parents as the growing child tries to assert their independence and find their adult identity. This is perfectly normal and often calms down once the teenage years have passed.

2. **Friendship Relationships:** Friends are people who may not be related but choose to interact with each other. Friends are people we trust, respect, care about and feel that we can confide in and want to spend time with. So, friendship is an unconditional interpersonal relationship where individuals enter into by their own sweet will and choice. It is a relationship where there are no formalities and individuals enjoy each other's presence.

Friendship can be between a man and a woman, man and man, or woman and woman.

Transparency is the most essential factor for a stable friendship. Be honest. Feelings like ego, jealousy, hatred and anger should not exist in friendship. The entire relationship revolves around trust and give and take. No relationship can be one sided and same with friendship. So, it is important that a friend should try to do as much as he can for his friends.

There are varying degrees of friendship. You may find that you feel more comfortable and able to confide in friends whom you have known for longer time or spend more time with. It should be noted that physically intimate or romantic contact is not appropriate in a friendship.

3. **Acquaintanceship Relationships:** Acquaintances are people you may encounter regularly, but who are not friends or relatives, e.g. neighbours, work colleagues, etc. It can also be just somebody one has seen before, somebody one recognises anywhere they meet.

It is important to be polite and respectful to acquaintances. In some cases, relationships that start as acquaintanceship can, over time, evolve into friendships.

4. **Peer Relationships:** This is a relationship that exists among people within the same age bracket, political or social group, classmates or school mates, etc.
5. **Romantic or Love Relationships:** A romantic relationship is one in which you feel very strongly attracted to the other person – both to their personality and, often, also physically. This is reciprocated by the other person in the relationship. The relationship is characterised by passion, intimacy, trust and respect. Individuals in romantic relationship are deeply attached to each other and share a special bond. A romantic relationship is the closest form of relationship and the two people involved will often describe themselves as being “in love”. Some people in romantic relationships live together. As this is such a close relationship, various kinds of physical contact which would not be appropriate in any other kind of relationship are accepted.

Marriage happens when two individuals in love decide to take their relationship to the next level. Keys to a successful marriage include understanding, love, passion, intimacy, respect, trust, etc.

6. **Platonic Relationship:** This is the type of relationship that exists between people of either the same or different gender without any

feelings or sexual desire for each other. Platonic relationships might eventually end in romantic relationships.

7. **Professional or Workplace Relationships:** Individuals working together for the same organisation develop a relationship that should be healthy and cordial. Such individuals are called colleagues. Colleagues may or may not like each other.

Employees working together ought to share a special bond for them to deliver their level best. It is essential for such individuals to be honest with each other for a healthy interpersonal relationship and eventually ambience at the workplace.

There are three major types of communication in interpersonal relationship. They are nonverbal, written and oral communications.

- (i) **Nonverbal Interpersonal Communication:** This involves communication that is void of words, such as gestures, actions, facial expressions, body language and other aspects of physical appearance. Effective communicators send, receive and interpret non-verbal messages, the same way they would oral or written communication.
- (ii) **Written Interpersonal Communication:** Human interpersonal communication, especially in an organisational setting, refers to those messages that are transmitted via writing. Advantages of written communication, for instance E-mail, is less expensive than long distance phone calls, and certainly less than travel expenses, especially when a message needs to be conveyed to a large number of people. It enables efficiency and accuracy. Written communication also allows for reflection.
- (iii) **Oral Communication:** A manager would use oral communication for a variety of things, such as meetings, interviews, and performance reviews, presentations, trainings, soliciting and providing feedback to subordinates, or when communicating progress to upper management.

## 1.5 Classification of Interpersonal Relationship

We have already hinted that Interpersonal relationship can be classified according to different spheres of life in which human beings could encounter one another. These include:

- (a) Love or marital relationship
- (b) Family or kinship relationship
- (c) Workplace relationship
- (d) Neighbourhood relationship



- (e) Places of worship relationship

All these relationships may be regulated by law, custom or mutual agreement, as they form the basis of social groups and the society as a whole

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What are the classifications of interpersonal relationship?

### **1.6 SUMMARY**

In this unit, you have been introduced to the meaning of interpersonal relationship, the stages it goes through, various conceptual theories as well as various types of interpersonal relationship.

### **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

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### **Answer to Self-Assessment Exercise**

- i. Love or marital relationship
- ii. Family or kinship relationship
- iii. Workplace relationship
- iv. Neighbourhood relationship

## **UNIT 2      PRINCIPLES              OF              INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP**

### **Unit Structure**

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Learning Outcomes
- 2.3 Basic Principles of Interpersonal Relationship
- 2.4 Values of Interpersonal Relationship
- 2.5 Formation of Interpersonal Relationship
- 2.6 Techniques of Interpersonal Relationship
- 2.7 Summary
- 2.8 Reference/Further Reading
- 2.9 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercises

### **2.1 Introduction**

In this unit, you will learn about the basic principles of interpersonal relationship. The values and justification for the course will also be discussed. The knowledge from this unit will help justify the reactions for introducing this important course in the tertiary education's curriculum in Nigeria.

### **2.2 Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss the basic principles that guide the human behaviour toward healthy and positive interpersonal relationship
- demonstrate an understanding of the usefulness of interpersonal relationships in different areas of life
- state the techniques of interpersonal relationship.

### **2.3 Basic principles of Interpersonal Relationship**

Interpersonal Relationship as a course stands on basic principles, and its study is of maximal benefit not only to the individual but also to the body of knowledge. The basic principles of interpersonal relationship accepted by most authorities in the field of social psychology and relationship science are described as follows:

1. The study of interpersonal relationship involves several branches of social sciences including such disciplines as sociology, psychology, anthropology and social work.
2. Interpersonal skills are extremely vital when trying to develop a relationship with another person.

3. Interpersonal relationships are dynamic systems that change continuously during their existence. Like living organisms, relationships have a beginning, a life span and an end.
4. All relationships are governed by the Levinger model to describe heterosexual adult romantic relationships. (This has been fully discussed in UNIT 1 of this module, as the five stages of relationship).
5. The list of interpersonal skills needed for healthy and positive relationship include:
  - Verbal communication: what we say and how we say it
  - Non-verbal communication: what we communicate without words. Body language is an example.
  - Listening skills: how we interpret both the verbal and non-verbal messages sent by others.
  - Negotiation: working with others to find a mutually agreeable outcome.
  - Problem-solving: working with others to identify, define and solve problems.
  - Assertiveness: communicating our values, ideas beliefs, opinions needs and wants freely.
6. Healthy relationships are built on a foundation of secure attachment. Secure attachment models represent an internal set of expectations and preferences regarding the intimacy that guide behaviour.
7. Lastly, the principle of Confucianism, which means that an individual knows his place in the social order and plays his or her part well. For instance, juniors are considered in the principle of Confucianism as owing their seniors reverence, and the seniors have their duties to benevolence and concern towards their juniors.

Good interpersonal relationship leads people to deal and work in friendly and cozy environment. Healthy interpersonal relations provide people security, satisfaction, enjoyment and contentment towards each other. Those who are not successful in good interpersonal relations with people around them feel great sense of frustration, anxiety, failure and loneliness. To have good interpersonal relationship, there are five important principles. They are as follows:

- (i) **Mutual Benefit Principle:** Strong interpersonal relations are formed when people share same group interests. It helps them to form a strong bond and meet up the social need of themselves, and as well as those which are connected with each other. So, a healthy interpersonal relationship brings satisfaction to both sides of

- people. And to have such cordial terms, both parties have to show a friendly affection with acceptance towards the other.
- (ii) **Credit Principle:** To make the relation with people fruitful and pleasant, it is important to make people feel that you are useful to them. When people are treated this way they value you. Mutual understanding can be achieved through mutual sincerity and good intentions for each other. Only such feeling will enhance the good emotions, and will make the relationship stronger.
  - (iii) **Respect Principle:** When someone has to deal with people socially, there is always a presence of different views. Even if someone does not seem to agree with your own views, the interpersonal skill teaches us to show tolerance and acceptance to listen to other views.
  - (iv) **Tolerance Principle:** Tolerance implies that a person does not care about small minor issues, and by keeping aside disturbing issues, people can work together for a common goal and can negotiate the issues separately without letting the environment and the relationship get spoilt.
  - (v) **Moderation Principle:** A distrust relation brings distance and lack of communication, whereas too much communication and time together causes irritation, obsession and lack of sense of space. To maintain a good social interpersonal relation, one should keep a moderate way to deal and communicate with people.

### **Characteristics of Relationship:**

These can be classified into goals, attitudes, behaviour and communication.

**Goals:** These include mutual support goals, problem-solving goals, individual growth in the relationship goals, structural goals, financial goals, and family goals. Such are meant to be pillars holding the whole water front of relationships. Think of these goals in terms of life-long relationships, e.g marriage.

#### **Mutual Support Goals:**

- (i) To nurture one another
- (ii) To communicate with one another
- (iii) To determine how independent of each other
- (iv) Openness
- (v) The length or duration of the relationship
- (vi) What extreme to take when the relationship grows cold
- (vii) How pleasurable the relationship will be
- (viii) How much can people be allowed or included in the relationship without affecting the support for each other.

**Problems Solving Goals:**

- (i) How to approach problems in the relationship
- (ii) What will be the problem-solving model to be adopted
- (iii) How to tolerate each other
- (iv) How to fight or quarrel
- (v) How to handle such fights and resolution strategies
- (vi) When to seek third party involvement
- (vii) How to encourage each other to be good problem solver.

**Individual Growth in the Relationship Goals:**

- (i) How to ensure mutual growth in the relationship
- (ii) How open the taking of joint and individual responsibility of the relationship needs.
- (iii) How to use the unique and individual personalities to assist each other.
- (iv) What steps to take if any of the partners needs mental health assistance.
- (v) What steps to take to handle jealousy or a sense of competition.
- (vi) How to help each other to have pleasure in the relationship.

**Structural Goals:**

- (i) Planning for time limits in achieving goals
- (ii) Arranging for schedules to pursue specific and individual interests
- (iii) Level of freedom allowed to pursue the interests
- (iv) Commitment to settling long-term relationship goals
- (v) Right placing of the position of religion, hobbies, sports, and any other outdoor interests.

**Financial Goals:**

- (i) The career goals each has should be discussed
- (ii) How to promote each other's career
- (iii) Who pays the bills
- (iv) How to pay for wants or luxuries
- (v) Agreement on insurance, savings, investments, retirement, etc

**Family Goals:**

- (i) How to handle the role of in-laws
- (ii) How many children to have, and at what intervals
- (iii) How to fit the children into the relationship without losing the other
- (iv) How to educate the children

- (v) How to be functional as parents
  - (vi) How the children will not affect the pleasure timing
- ii. **Attitudes:** Attitudes have a powerful influence on behaviour. Attitude is a relatively enduring organisation of beliefs, feelings and behavioural tendencies. It is an expression of favour or disfavour towards a person, place, thing or event.

Attitude and interpersonal skills are needed everywhere, especially in workplace relationship. These characteristics define who you are as a human being, and they determine whether or not you are mature and realistic. It is important to develop a number of positive attitudes, such as:

1. Working cooperatively with others. Cooperatively working gets things done much faster.
  2. Accepting constructive criticism. Constructive criticism is what people tell you that will enhance your character.
  3. Working out conflicts. Conflicts are inevitable. They are everywhere and dealt with everyday.
  4. Respecting others. This is the basis of getting along with your partners and boss or superiors.
  5. Managing stress. Stress can corrode anyone's mental state of mind, and dealing with it is a healthy approach.
  6. Having high standards of conduct. This will show other people that you are a more mature individual.
  7. Encouraging communication. Being anti-social and uncommunicative will hurt you in today's workplace. If you are easier to talk with, work will flow smoothly.
  8. Accepting responsibility for actions. Nobody likes people that blame other people for their actions or inactions. Own up to what you did. This also falls under the category of being courteous and trustworthy.
  9. Being courteous. This is a very valuable characteristic.
  10. Honouring differences. Everyone is different from each other, so get used to it. Don't judge other people because they have different behaviours from the norm; get to know them before you determine whether or not you think they are a good person or not.
- iii. **Behaviour:** Behaviour is a range of actions and mannerisms exhibited by a person. In interpersonal relationships, two participants are interdependent, where the behavior of each affects the outcomes of the other. Often, most of us spend our lives craving positive, healthy, connections with others, but relationships are most often the source of many frustrations. Sometimes we find the other person behaving badly, exhibiting aversive behaviour. Some

of such aversive behaviour may include teasing, swearing, gossiping, betrayal and so on. Such aversive behaviours have profound implications for the process of social interaction.

However, most psychologists are of the view that no behaviour is inherently hurtful, offensive or rude until a listener responds to it as such. In other words, it all depends on the perspective of the other person. Kowalski (2001) insists that if the target of what might be termed an aversive behaviour is properly informed of, and involved in a tease, for example, the target may emphasize the humorous nature of the tease and deem it an unequivocal expression of friendship. So, whereas teasing, for instance is generally considered negative among strangers, its effect will become even stronger when the target is explicitly involved.

- iv. **Communication:** Relationships are activated through communication; communication is said to be the basis of every interpersonal relationship. If individuals do not communicate effectively with each other, problems are bound to come. Communication plays vital role in reducing misunderstandings and eventually strengthens the bond among individual.

Of course, it is not always that an individual needs to talk to express his/her feelings. Feelings can be expressed through non-verbal modes of communication.

Effective communication is determined by a number of factors. These include the words we use, listening/attending skills and body language, using a good method of communication, etc.

## 2.4 Values of Interpersonal Relationship

The main objective of this course is to identify and describe the usefulness of interpersonal relationships in different areas of life, with a view to assisting the students to discover the value of interpersonal relationship. In general, the values of interpersonal relationship include:

- Knowing and being known – seeking to understand the partner
- Making relationship-enhancing attributions for behaviours, giving the benefit of doubt.
- Accepting and respecting empathy and social skills
- Maintaining reciprocity – active participations in relationship enhancement
- Continuity in minding and persisting in mindfulness.

With respect to the academic setting, there are three major relationship sources that are influential in students' academic and non-academic

lives. These are parents/caregivers, teachers, and peers. Each is linked significantly to students' healthy functioning and development.

In terms of parents/caregivers, better academic functioning has been associated with parents' positive expectations for their child, the academic goals parents hold for the child, consistent feedback on the child's behaviour and performance, and the educational values and standards they hold for their child. The role of the teacher is also influential in students' academic and non-academic development. Students' feelings of being accepted by the teacher have been linked to positive emotional, cognitive and behavioural engagement. Similarly, teacher warmth is associated with student confidence. Peers are also significantly linked to academic development.

So, in effect, there are numerous benefits attributed to the role of positive interpersonal relationships. It has been described as a buffer against stress and risk, instrumental help for tasks, emotional support in daily life, companionship in shared activities, and a basis for social and emotional development.

## **2.5 Formation of Interpersonal Relationship**

Interpersonal relationship develops over time, and researchers have proposed a life-cycle of this development. The relationship typically starts in the acquaintance stage. This stage, as has been discussed earlier, is where the first impressions are made. But usually, before the acquaintanceship there is the stage of awareness when prospective acquaintances come into contact with each other. So, the stages of help in the formation of interpersonal relationship are as follows:

- (i) Awareness
- (ii) Acquaintance
- (iii) Groundbreaking
- (iv) Rapport building
- (v) Exploration, that is:
  - (a) Seeking
  - (b) Giving information
- (vi) Negotiation
- (vii) Self disclosure, which involves
  - (a) Formation of bond
  - (b) Reduced need for further testing
- (c) Identification: (i) Efforts made to determine the partners needs
  - (ii) Efforts made to meet the partner's needs
  - (viii) Breakdown.



## 2.6 Techniques of Interpersonal Relationship

- i. Don't criticise, condemn, or complain about people. It creates resentment towards you.
- ii. Appreciate people. They are much more likely to give you more good things to appreciate. (If you can't say something nice, don't say anything at all).
- iii. Solve your own problems by solving other people's problems. (Try to figure out how what you want might benefit the person doing to it)
- iv. Be genuinely interested in others more than you want them to be interested in you. Demonstrate genuineness in your interaction with people.
- v. Smile to people. (It makes them feel warm inside).
- vi. Be a good listener. (Listen more than you speak, and encourage others to talk about themselves).
- vii. Make others feel important. (Show them that they are important)
- viii. Avoid arguing and understand that you cannot really be always right. Be tactful in your approach and consider the other person's feelings.
- ix. Admit your guilt or fault.
- x. Manage your anger. If you have a problem with someone that needs to be sorted out, approach the person calmly.
- xi. Suggest to people, rather than telling them, what to do or how to do things/how to think. (People like to come up with their own beliefs or opinions of how to do things).
- xii. Communicate clearly: say exactly what you mean or what you have in mind.
- xiii. Resolve conflict
- xiv. Display sense of humour often.
- xv. Understand other people's feelings, and understand your feelings too.
- xvi. Synchronise cooperatively
- xvii. Act authentically
- xviii. Acknowledge generously
- xix. Be empathetic.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Enumerate the five important principles of interpersonal relationship.

### **2.7 Summary**

This unit has exposed the basic principles, as well as the characteristics of interpersonal relationship. It has also shown the values of interpersonal relationship, especially in the academic setting and thus the justification for the course.

### **2.8 References/Further Reading**

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**2.9 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercise**

- i. Interpersonal relationship involves several branches of social sciences
- ii. Interpersonal skills are very vital in developing a relationship
- iii. Interpersonal are dynamic – they change continuously during their existence
- iv. All relationships are governed by the Levinger model (You should explain this)
- v. The skills needed in interpersonal relationships include verbal communication skills, non-verbal communication skills, listening skills, negotiation skills, problem-solving skills, and assertiveness.

## **UNIT 3     DIFFICULTIES IN FORMING RELATIONSHIP**

### **Unit Structure**

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Learning Outcome
- 3.3 Fundamental Component for Enduring Interpersonal Relationship
- 3.4 Causative factors for Interpersonal Skills Deficit
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 References/Further Reading
- 3.7 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercises

### **3.1 Introduction**

Interpersonal skills are sometimes also referred to as people skills or communication skills. Interpersonal skills are the skills a person uses to communicate and interact with others. Deficiency in such skills will certainly make forming and sustaining relationships difficult. Interpersonal skills are used often in business contexts to refer to the measure of a person's ability to operate within business organisations through social communication and interactions.

### **3.2 Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss the fundamental component for enduring interpersonal relationships
- explain factors that are responsible for difficulties in forming relationships.

### **3.3 Fundamental Component for Enduring Interpersonal Relationship**

Most of our daily activities require interaction with other people. It is critical to be efficient at getting along with others in order to have a successful career and meaningful friendship. The discovery of the establishment of common ground between individuals is a fundamental component for enduring interpersonal relationship. Due to loss of common ground, which may occur over the time, many tend to end interpersonal relationship. For each relationship, certain set of skills are needed and without these skills, more advanced relationships may not be possible. Such skills are referred to as interpersonal skills.

Interpersonal skills are the skills required to effectively communicate, interpret and work with individuals and groups. They are the life skills we use every day to communicate and interact with each other. They include our confidence and ability to listen and understand. People with good interpersonal skills are strong verbal and non-verbal communicators and are often considered to good with people.

Interpersonal skills are actually characteristic traits like manners, attitude, courtesy, habits, behaviour and appearance which help us to communicate and maintain relationship with others. They are the cluster of personality traits, social graces, communication, language, personal habits, friendliness, and optimism that characterise our relationship with other people. Specific examples of interpersonal skills are listening, problem-solving, decision-making, stress management, asking questions, conflict resolution, emotional intelligence, persuasion and team working. In a business setting, the term generally refers to an employee's ability to get along with others while performing his job. In short, interpersonal skills are all about working with other people.

Interpersonal skills operate in an environment of social skills. Wikipedia describes a social skill as any competence facilitating interaction and communication with others where social rules and relations are created, communicated, and changed in verbal and non-verbal ways. The process of learning these skills is called socialisation.

Social skills are very critical to successful functioning in life. They enable partners to know what to say, how to make good choices and how to behave in diverse situations. They include:

### **Basic Interaction Skills**

- (i) Making frequent eye contact (ii) Smiling when greeting people (iii) Showing confident body language (iv) Basic Politeness (v) Showing interest in others.

### **Making Conversation**

- (i) Taking turns when talking (ii) Do small talks (iii) Listening and showing interest in what the other person has to say (iv) Nodding and smiling to indicate that you are following along (v) Using humour (vi) Knowing when to disclose personal information and when not to.

## **Building and Maintaining Friendships.**

### **Approach Skills**

- (i) Being able to start talking to someone (ii) Sharing decision making (iii) Showing appropriate affection and appreciation (v) Being supportive – showing concern in hard times (vi) allowing distance and closeness (vii) thoughtfulness

**Empathy:** This is putting oneself in someone else's shoes and recognising their feelings.

- (i) Noticing other people's feeling (ii) Expressing concern at other people's distress (iii) Being able to recognise what someone else might be feeling in a given situation (iv) Showing sensitivity to others' feelings when communicating, especially when criticising.

### **Dealing with Conflict**

- (i) Assertiveness or being able to say what you are feeling without being aggressive or getting personal.
- (ii) Negotiation Skills: Being able to discuss a conflict calmly and rationally to get a solution.

All these social skills if not attainable, result in the following deficits:

- (i) Alcoholism: Social skills are significantly impaired in people suffering from alcoholism due to neurotoxic effects of alcohol on the brain, especially, the prefrontal cortex area of the brain. The social skills impaired by alcohol abuse include impairments in perceiving facial emotions, prosody perception problems and mind deficits; the ability to understand humour is also impaired in alcohol abusers.
- (ii) ADHD: Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder studies have revealed that half of the ADHD children and adolescents experience peer rejection compared to 10-15 percent of non-ADHD children. Adolescents with ADHD are less likely to develop close relationships. Going into relationships might be easier by the time adolescents grow into adulthood and enter into the workplace. Poor peer relationship can constitute major depression, criminality, school failure and substance abuse disorders. Adolescents with ADHD are more likely to find it difficult in making and keeping friends due to their attention deficits, causing impairment in processing verbal and no-verbal

language, which is important for the development of social skills. Romantic relationships are usually difficult in the adolescents who are of the college age because of the lack of attention to non-verbal cues such as flirting gestures, tone of the voice, which may include misinterpretation of whether the person is romantic or not.

- (iii) Autism: People with autistic spectrum disorders, such as Asperser's syndrome, generally have difficulty in social skills. They hardly understand people's emotions. Most people in the spectrum have many social idiosyncracies such as obsessive interest and routines, lack of eye contact, one-sided conversations, abnormal body language and non-verbal communication.

According to Schneider & Bryne (1985), the procedure for training social skills had the largest effect size, followed by modelling, coaching and social cognitive techniques. Behavior analysts prefer to use the term behaviour skills to social skills. Interpersonal skills can be measured on about how you treat other people and how you react to them.

### **3.4 Causative Factors for Interpersonal Skills Deficit**

Interpersonal relationship through consanguinity and affinity can persist despite the absence of love, affection or common ground. When these relationships are in prohibitive degrees, sexual intimacy in them would be a taboo of incest. Relationships are not all necessarily healthy. Unhealthy examples include abusive relationship and co-dependence. Sociologists recognise a hierarchy of forms of activity and interpersonal relations, which divides into behaviour, action, social behaviour, social action, social contact, social interaction and finally social relation.

Therefore, the various difficulties in forming relationships include:

1. Lack of sensitivity to receiver: A breakdown in relationship may result when a message is not adapted to the receiver. Recognising the receiver's needs, status, knowledge of the subject matter and language skills, assist an individual in living a healthy relationship. If a customer is angry, for instance, an effective response may be just to listen to the person's vent for a while.
2. Lack of Basic Communication Skills: The receiver is less likely to understand the message if the sender has trouble with choosing the precise words and arranging them in a grammatically correct sentence.

3. Emotional Distractions: If emotions interfere with the creation and transmission of a message, they can also disrupt the reception. If you receive a report from your supervisor regarding a proposed change in work procedure, and you do not particularly like your supervisor, you may have problem reaching the report objectively. You may find fault by misinterpreting words for negative compressions, consequently, there may be a strain of relationship.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i. Explain the factors that are responsible difficulties in forming relationships.
2. List the skills necessary in making conversations.

### 3.5 Summary

There is harmony between the behaviour and theoretical analysis of interpersonal deficits or social skills deficits. The knowledge of the two aspects will help in the understanding and appreciating the depth of the difficulties in forming healthy relationships.

The synergy of the theoretical and behavioural analysis of the difficulties in forming a healthy relationship provides the format of understanding. It also shows that the various deficits in social skills cannot be trivialised.

### 3.6 References/Further Reading

- Coleman, W. L. (2008). *Social Competence and Friendship Formation in adolescents with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder*, *Adolescent Med. State Dev. Rev.* 19 (2) Pp 278-299 PMID 18822833.
- Gills, J. M & Butler, R.C (2007). Social Skills Interventions for Pre-Schoolers with Autism Spectrum Disorder. A Description or Single Subject Design Studies. *Journal of Early and Intensive Behaviour Intervention.* 4 (3) PP. 532 – 584 (4).
- Schneider, B.H & Bryne, B. M. (1985). *Children Social Skills Training. A Meta-Analysis.* (Pp 175-190). New York: Springer – Vet Lag.



### **3.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises**

#### Question 1

- i. Lack of sensitivity to receiver; that is, if the message is not adapted to the receiver
- ii. Lack of basic communication skills
- iii. Emotional distractions

#### Question 2

- (i) Taking turns when talking
- (ii) Do small talks
- (iii) Listening and showing interest in what the other person has to say
- (iv) Nodding and smiling to indicate that you are following along
- (v) Using humour
- (vi) Knowing when to disclose personal information and when not to.

## **UNIT 4 FORMING AND MAINTAINING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH CLIENTS' FAMILIES**

### **Unit Structure**

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Learning Outcome
- 4.3 The Child and His Family
  - 4.3.1 Kinds of Families
  - 4.3.2 Forming and Maintaining Positive Relationships with clients' families
  - 4.3.3 Sharing Information with the Family
  - 4.3.4 Building Trust with the Family
- 4.5 Summary
- 4.6 References/Further Reading
- 4.7 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercises

### **4.1 Introduction**

This unit seeks to acquaint you with how as a counsellor you can form, build and maintain a positive relationship with families of your clients. In this unit, you will learn about:

- The various kinds of families you may be working with;
- The components of a healthy family;
- Ways to build trust with families; and
- How to work in collaboration with families.

### **4.2 Learning Outcomes**

By the end of this unit, you will be able to:

- explain how, as a counsellor, you can form, build and maintain a positive relationship with the family of your client.

### **4.3 The Child and His Family**

Every child belongs to a family – whether that family is composed of blood relatives, adopted parents, a close-knit neighbourhood, or a foster family. This family influences every aspect of the child's life, from the first moment to the last. It affects who the child is and who he or she becomes. The child learns his vocabulary, the habits, customs, and rituals, and how to view and observe the world around him. He also learns how to love and how to interact with others from his family relationships. A

child born into a healthy family with healthy relationships is likely to learn how to maintain healthy relationships. If he is born into a dysfunctional family that struggles to connect, he may also struggle to connect with others. Even though nearly all families deal with some sort of dysfunction at one time or other, yet most families retain or regain a sense of wholeness and happiness. It therefore becomes very imperative that the counsellor should know and relate positively with the family of his clients, if the counsellor will make any significant impact on the life of the child/client. Indeed, it is important to know and involve the family members because they are invariably involved – either as contributors or bystanders – to the client’s behaviour. Often, a health problem for one is also a problem for another. Even when problems are not shared across family members, it is important to involve the family. The client and the family share a common environment and the client’s resolutions to change cannot be maintained over time without adjustments in the shared environment.

#### **4.3.1 Kinds of Families You May Be Working With**

- (i) Two-parent families
- (ii) Single parent families
- (iii) Foster parent families – providing short or long term care to children placed in their home
- (iv) Approved family home – providing residential support to those (including adults) with an intellectual disability

The basic features of families are likely to include:

- (i) Affection – Love for one another, encouragement and commitment to one another.
- (ii) Respect – Positive Communications and Interactions with one another
- (iii) Emotional Strength – Ability to deal with stress and resolve conflict.
- (iv) Shared Experience – Enjoying one another’s company.

The real story of a family is how the family loves, respects, encourages and enjoys one another, irrespective of whether it is an approved home, foster parent family, single parent family or two parent family. It is important to note that all forms of families are equally important as long as they share the basic features of a healthy family.

### **4.3.2 Forming and Maintaining Positive Relationships with Clients' Families**

As a counsellor you will in very practical ways interact with families. This means working together to achieve a common goal. In the past, parents were expected to be passive recipients of the advice and direction of professionals. The relationship between parent and professional was marked by social distance. The relationship was impersonal and in many instances cold. While establishing appropriate boundaries remains essential in human services, the treatment of parents as inferior has become outdated. The parent expects and wants to share power, responsibility, and information with the people supporting a family member.

As a counsellor, you may have to lead the process of creating a positive relationship with the family, even if they seem cold and distant at first. In most cases, the family will respond and cooperate with you in the process. You can promote positive relationships by being friendly, showing interest, asking questions and sharing information.

### **4.3.3 Sharing Information with the Family**

For the relationship between counsellor and parents to work, you will have to share information. You will need information about the person you are helping, and the family will need information about what you are experiencing. You will need to share information in a clear, respectful, and helping way. You need to:

- Be open to the idea of information sharing;
- Pay attention to what is going on when you are working;
- Start with an objective description of an event;
- When you are being subjective, make it clear that you are sharing your opinion and not fact.

### **4.3.4 Building Trust with the Family**

Trust must be established between you and your client's family. Without trust every decision you make and every action you take will be second guessed and analysed.

Trust is a key component of any partnership between the family and the counsellor. Families have to trust you to take care of their children. You need to move from being a stranger to becoming a trusted ally. You need to get the family to believe in you; to get them to see that you are a caring and talented person who is worthy of trust. Building trust depends on demonstrating positive character traits and responsible behaviour. You

will have to demonstrate that you are a person who is dependable, accountable, and focused on the person you are helping.

To build lasting relationships with your clients and their families, the following tips, among others, are available.

1. Focus on exceptional communication. Timely, efficient communication should be a priority.
2. Maintain a positive attitude. Enthusiasm and zeal are attractive personality traits that people enjoy staying around and that parents enjoy working with.
3. Share knowledge. Explaining to the parents what you did, why you did it, and how you came to your decision will help them appreciate what you are doing.
4. Be open. By confidently expressing your honest opinions, parents/clients will respect your initiative and desire for excellence.
5. Exceed expectations. Ensure that you don't oversell yourself and promise unrealistic results. By setting reasonable expectations, the client's parents will be impressed and would like to continue with you when you exceed their expectations.
6. Smile when you see parents and greet them.
7. Learn their names. Learn how they would want to be addressed and how to pronounce them correctly.
8. Declare your intention. Tell them that you want to partner with them, that you would appreciate their support, and look forward to working together.
9. Your language is powerful. Be careful not to express negative or wrong assumptions about the family. Learn how to ask open-ended questions and understand that sometimes parents/guardians might not want to share some information.
10. Listen to parents – really listen. They know a whole lot of about the kids.
11. Let the parents know how they can help. Be specific – provide ways they can support their child at home.
12. Be a broker of resources. If they share a concern, be prepared to point them to a direction where they can find help, or suggest what the parents can do.
13. Share every success. Let parents know what their child is doing well, what academic skills, social skills or knowledge he has mastered.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

- (a) Identify the various kinds of families you may be working with, as a counselor.
- (b) What are the necessary features of a family?

#### 4.5 Summary

In this unit, you have been introduced to the various ways and techniques through which a positive relationship can be built and maintained with the family.

#### 4.6 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Coleman, W. L. (2008). *Social Competence and Friendship Formation in Adolescent with Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder*. Adolescent Med. State Dev. Rev. (19 (2) Pp 278-299 MID 18822833.
- Gillis, J. M & Butler, R.C (2007). *Social Skills Interventions for Pre-Schoolers with Autism Spectrum Disorder. A Description of Single Subject Design Studies*. Journal of Early and Intensive Behaviour Intervention. 4 (3) Pp. 532 – 548 (4).
- Schneider, B. H. & Bryne, B. M. (1985). *Children Social Skills Training. A Meta-Analysis*. (PP 175-190). New York: Springer – Vet Lag.

#### **4.7 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercises**

##### Question (a)

- i. Two-parent families
- ii. Single parent families
- iii. Foster parent families
- iv. Approved family home

##### Question (b)

- i. Affection
- ii. Respect
- iii. Emotional Strength
- iv. Shared Experience

## UNIT 5 SELF-DISCLOSURE

### Unit Structure

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Learning Outcomes
- 5.3 Conceptualising Self-Disclosure Relationship
  - 5.3.1 Characteristics of Self-Disclosure
- 5.4 Guidelines for Self-Disclosure
  - 5.4.1 Guidelines for Making Self-Disclosure
  - 5.4.2 Guidelines for Facilitating and Responding to Self-Disclosure
- 5.5 Rewards of Self Disclosure
- 5.6 Dangers of Self-Disclosure
- 5.7 Summary
- 5.8 References/Further Reading
- 5.9 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

### 5.1 Introduction

The goal of this unit is to assist learners to develop the ability to be open to each other, or to their clients, with a view to developing a lasting relationship. Essentially, self-disclosure is conceptualised as verbally revealing one's personal thoughts and experiences to others (Derlega Petromio and Margulie, 1993), which will help them develop confidence in the counsellor. But self-disclosure is more than personal and private talk (Billelter, 2000). Studies have revealed two types of self-disclosure: self-disclosure given and self-disclosure received.

### 5.2 Learning Outcomes

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the concept of self-disclosure in human relationships
- enumerate guidelines for self-disclosure
- discuss the rewards and dangers of self-disclosure

### 5.3 Conceptualising Self-Disclosure Relationship

Self-disclosure means communicating information about yourself (usually information that you normally keep hidden) to another person. It may involve information about

- i. Your values, beliefs and desires
- ii. Your behaviour (e.g. I shoplifted but was never caught)
- iii. Your self-qualities or characteristics.



Self-disclosure is sometimes referred to as verbal and nonverbal activities, like in the case of thoughts, feelings and experiences of others. These activities are used often to express ideas, desires, deep seated feelings and judgment, the knowledge to relate better with peers and help others in dire need of relationship sincerity.

Note that to qualify as self-disclosure, the information must be received and understood by another person. Self-disclosure given is referred to as self-reported self-disclosure. This refers to disclosing one's personal feelings, thoughts and experiences. Self-disclosure received is also referred to as information disclosure by others.

Billetter (2000) identified the direction of self-disclosure as friendship disclosure, which according to Sprecher (1987) was found to be more important predictor of liking, love and stability in romantic relationships. Derlega, Gerzelak (1979) posited that non-verbal nuances are intended to communicate information. Self-disclosure is a transaction that occurs between two or more people. They play the roles of disclosure giver and the disclosure recipient or listener. Some aspects of disclosure or non-disclosure may influence how close a relationship begins, including privacy regulation. It shows how much of the actions of the discloser and the disclosure recipient's behaviour that are contributing to the underlying reactions. Information conveyed from the discloser and disclosure recipient's behaviour reveals the reasons underlying each person's reaction.

Taylor, Gowld and Brounisten (1981) are of the opinion that self-disclosure may be perceived as personalitic (like, uniquely intended for a recipient) or non-personalitic (such as, intended for anyone, for the basis of social penetration). Social penetration theory as proposed by Irwin Altman and Dalmis Taylor (1973) provided important early perspective about self-disclosure, the development about self-disclosure and the development of close relationship. According to this theory, at the start of a relationship, prospective partner may be limited to fairly stereotyped and superficial behaviour, but as relationship progresses, individuals are predicted to increase the range of activities they share with one another, including disclosing more personal information to one another. Partners also compose a mental picture of one another, posed on positive and negative experiences. Social penetration includes any behaviours that are interpersonal-verbal (self-disclosure) non-verbal, like moving a chair to sit closer or farther away from the other person.

Yum and Hara (2005) also reported the increase in the breadth and depth of self-disclosure in internet communication, which was associated with increased feelings of liking, love and inter-dependence with one's partner

as based on a survey of Japanese American and South Korean internet users. This is consistent with self-disclosure in counselling.

Many factors influence whether or not you disclose, and to whom you disclose. Among the most important factors are who you are, your culture, your gender, who your listeners are, and what your topic is. The knowledge and competence of the counsellor in self-disclosure will facilitate the following:

- (a) Ability to keep the client and find the appropriate words to disseminate his emotion.
- (b) Ability to help the client verbalise the key concerns, meanings and memories which arose from emotional arousal.
- (c) Ability to help the client to verbalise the wishes, needs, behaviours and goals associated with failings and emotions.
- (d) Ability to suggest imagery and metaphor to help the client to become more aware and to articulate the meaning of their experiences.

### **5.3.1 Characteristics of Self-Disclosure**

- (i) The story is always representing the individual disclosing.
- (ii) It is influenced by the culture of the person disclosing
- (iii) Self-disclosure is usually symmetrical
- (iv) It stimulates feedback
- (v) It can be most revealing
- (vi) It occurs incrementally
- (vii) Too elaborate amount of self-disclosure is not necessary.
- (ix) It is usually rare.

### **5.4 Guidelines for Self-Disclosure**

Because self-disclosure is so important and so delicate a matter, guidelines here are necessary for:

- (i) Deciding whether and how to self-disclose
- (ii) Responding to the disclosures of others
- (iii) Resisting pressure to self-disclosure

#### **5.4.1 Guidelines for Making Self-Disclosures**

1. Disclose out of appropriate motivation. It should be motivated by a concern for the relationship, for others involved, and for yourself. Avoid disclosing to hurt the listener.
2. Disclose in the appropriate context. Consider whether it is the right time and place to disclose. It is probably the best to resist

intimate disclosures (especially negative ones) with non-intimates, casual acquaintance, or in the early stages of a relationship.

3. Disclose gradually. Give the other person a chance to reciprocate with his or her own disclosures.
4. Disclose without imposing burdens on yourself or others. Carefully weigh the potential problems that you may incur.

#### **5.4.2 Guidelines for Facilitating and Responding to Disclosure**

1. Practise the skills of effective and active listening. Listen actively listen for different levels of meaning; listen with empathy; and listen with an open mind. Express an understanding of the speaker's feelings to allow the speaker an opportunity to see them more objectively and through the eyes of another. Ask questions to ensure your own understanding and to signal your interest and attention.
2. Support and reinforce the discloser. Make your supportiveness clear to the discloser through your verbal and non-verbal responses.
3. Be willing to reciprocate.
4. Keep the disclosures confidential. Be sure not to use the disclosures against the person.

#### **5.5 Rewards of Self-Disclosure**

Self-disclosure may help increase self-knowledge, communication and relationship effectiveness, and physiological well-being. It helps you achieve a closer relationship with the person to whom you self-disclose, and increases relationship satisfaction. In intimate relationship, it is largely through self-disclosure that you learn what the other person likes and dislikes.

#### **5.6 Dangers of Self-Disclosure**

1. Self-disclosure sometimes entails risks. If you self-disclose aspects of your life that vary greatly from the values of those to whom you disclose, you incur personal risks: you may experience rejection from even your closest friends and family members.
2. Relational risks: total self-disclosure may prove threatening to a relationship by causing a decrease in mutual attraction, trusts or any of the bonds holding the individuals together. Self-disclosures concerning infidelity, romantic fantasies, past indiscretions or crimes, lies or hidden weakness and fears could easily have such negative effects.

3. Professional risks: Revealing political views or attitude towards different religious or racial groups may open you to professional risks and create problems on the job, as may disclosing any health problems, such as being HIV positive.

In making your choice between disclosing or not disclosing, keep in mind the irreversible nature of communication.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise**

Discuss the characteristics of self-disclosure.

### **Your answer should include the following:**

- (i) The story is always representing the individual disclosing. (ii) It is influenced by the culture of the person disclosing (iii) Self-disclosure is usually symmetrical (iv) It stimulates feedback (v) It can be most revealing
- (vi) It occurs incrementally (vii) Too elaborate amount of self-disclosure is not necessary (viii) It is usually rare.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

This unit acquainted you with how as a counsellor you can understand the value of self-disclosure and develop the needed competencies for counselling needs that care to do with emotional disturbance and relationship instability.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, you have been introduced to the concept of self-disclosure, with some guidelines for self-disclosure. Rewards and dangers of self-disclosure were also highlighted.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

In what ways can a counsellor develop self-disclosure in the client?

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Billetter, R. B (2000). *Statistics for Social Data Analysis*. Alaska, Illinois: F.E. Peacock Publishers.

Derlega, et al (1993). *Self-Disclosure*. Newbury Park

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## MODULE 2

Unit 1	Impression Management in Interpersonal Relationship
Unit 2	Interpersonal Relations in Organisation
Unit 3	Adolescent Interpersonal Behaviour
Unit 4	Interpersonal Attraction and Developing Relationship
Unit 5	Fostering Positive Parent-Teacher Relationship in the School System

### UNIT 1 IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT IN INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP

#### Unit Structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3 Impression Management in Interpersonal Relationship
- 1.4 Motives to Engage in Impression Management
- 1.5 Strategies for Impression Management
- 1.6 Summary
- 1.7 References/Further Reading
- 1.8 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises

#### 1.0 Introduction

Impression management is the goal-directed activity of controlling or regulating information in order to influence the impressions formed by an audience. Through impression management, people try to shape an audience's impressions of a person, for example, self, friends, enemies, objects like a sub unit, organisation, a gift, a course, a product or an event, such as a transfer, a task, and performance.

This unit offers theoretical and research findings that establish impression management and how individuals can appropriately influence one another in a healthy manner.

#### 1.2 Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the basic concept of impression management.
- identify and discuss the motives to engage in impression management
- list the various strategies of impression management.

### 1.3 Impression Management in Interpersonal Relationship

Impression management refers to the process in which individuals attempt to influence themselves. Wikipedia sees it as conscious or subconscious process in which people attempt to influence the perceptions of other people about a person, object or event by regulating and controlling information in social interaction. It is a goal-directed activity that helps to establish the boundaries or what is considered an acceptable behaviour. The term is often used synonymously with self presentation, which is actually among the most common types of impression management.

Impression management theory states that one tries to alter one's perception according to one's goals. In other words, the theory is about how individuals wish to present themselves, but in a way that satisfies their needs and goals. It was first conceptualised by Erving Goffman in 1951. In his seminar report, "the presentation of self in everyday life", Goffman showed that an individual is influenced by his or her environment and the perceived audience. Edward E. Jones extended this concept in the 1960s to include people's attempts to control others' impression of their personal characteristics, which he described as strategic self-presentation. Strategic impression management emphasises the power dynamics and goals that characterise most social interactions. Jones (1990) suggested that the goals in strategic impression management are aimed at negotiating the power dynamics in social relationship.

The concept of "self" is important to the theory of impression management – as the images people have of themselves shape and are shaped by social interactions. Our self-concept develops from our social experience early in life.

Considerable theory (Bozeman & Kacmar, 1997, Femis & Judge, 1991) and researches suggest that the uses and effectiveness of impression management may vary from situations to situations. According to Schneider (1981), there are a number of ways in which individuals may manage their impressions. In a nutshell, the general definition used by scholars is that impression management is the process through which individuals attempt to influence the impressions other people form of them (Gardner, 1992).

#### 1.4 Motives to Engage in Impression Management

Being trained in the process of impression management is becoming more significant for managers and it is especially true in workplaces characterised by high pressure, and also where quick decision need to be made in dynamic environment. Individuals who are not aware of this aspect of organisational life run the risk of performing poorly, or even being moved to lower positions in the organisation (Gardner, 1992).

Some theorists have explained the motives behind impression management. These include social, personal and situational factors or, when it can be called, the cost-benefit analysis (Schermer, 1980). So, the awareness of being a potential subject of monitoring necessitates impression management, just as the characteristics of a given social situation are also important factors. Specifically, the surrounding cultural norms often determine the appropriateness or otherwise of particular non-verbal behaviours. The actions have to be appropriate to the targets, and within that culture, so that the kind of audience as well as the relation to the audience influences the way impression management is realised. Yet another factor governing the ways and strategies of impression management is a person's goals.

The main objective of impression management in any organisation is to create desirable image, finding out how revenue would be generated, and protecting or defending employees when feeling threatened.

#### 1.5 Strategies of Impression Management

Various writers have identified different methods, techniques and tactics of impression management.

**Assertive technique** is to create the desirable image. The fact of non-verbal communication cannot be ignored in the social setting as it consists of more than 6% of communication. To be an effective communicator, one has to become part of the environment, or adapt to the environment quickly. Non-verbal and verbal tactics constitute the behaviours that can be used to reach goals.

**Non-Verbal Tactics:** This involves facial expressions, touching, body orientation, posture and interpersonal distance that can strongly influence the impression that others form of us, and those we form of other individuals (Depanlo, 1992).

**Verbal Impression Tactics:** This can be related to assertive impression management tactics and defensive management tactics.



Assertive Impression Management: According to McFarland, Yun, Harold and Moor (2005) is smiling, head nodding and handshaking. Goffman (1959) also noted body posture and facial expression as indices of impression management. Non-verbal behaviour is irrepressible and it is linked to emotions.

Verbal tactics has been spread to include protective tactics and acquisitive tactics. Protective tactics are used as responses to poor performances, while acquisitive tactics have the purpose of establishing as a certain identity.

Jones and Pitman (1982) identified the following tactics:

- (a) Ingratiation: It has the purpose of being seen as likeable
- (b) Self-promotion: This aims at creating an image of competence.
- (c) Exemplification: It refers to people who manage the impressions of sacrifice and going beyond the call of duty in order to gain the attribute of moral model and dedication.
- (d) Intimidation: These are the tactics that signal the power or potential to punish others.
- (e) Supplication: It refers to tactics aimed at creating a needy or pitiful image by means of demonstrating workmanship and competence.

### **Self-Assessment Exercise**

Discuss why organisations engage in impression management.

### **1.6 Summary**

This unit has exposed you to the rudiments and basics of impression management. It has also shown that it is very expedient to understand self and others in the social environment.

### **1.7 References/Further Reading**

Arrow, H. (1997). "Stability, Disability and Instability in Small Group Influence Patterns". *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 72 Pp. 75-85

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**1.8 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercise**

- i. To create desirable image
- ii. To find out how revenue would be generated
- iii.** To protect and defend employees when feeling threatened

## **UNIT 2    INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS IN ORGANISATION**

### **Unit Structure**

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Learning Outcomes
- 2.3 The Concept of Interpersonal Relationship in the Workplace
- 2.4 Importance of Interpersonal Relationship at Workplace
- 2.5 Factors Affecting Interpersonal Relations in the Organisation
  - 2.5.1 Human Interaction
  - 2.5.2 Cultural Barriers
  - 2.5.3 Increasing Employees' Values
  - 2.5.4 Sharpening Listening Skills
- 2.6 Interpersonal Skills
- 2.7 Summary
- 2.8 References/Further Reading
- 2.9 possible answer to self-assessment exercise

### **2.1 Introduction**

Interpersonal relations at workplace serve a critical role in the development and maintenance of trust and positive feelings in an organisation. Quality interpersonal relationships help in producing worker productivity. In this unit, emphasis will be laid on basic concepts of human interactions as it affects workers in general and the supervisor in particular, as well as the interpersonal skills in the workplace. At times, individual and cultural differences may complicate working relations. This unit will provide information on the concepts.

### **2.2 Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the concept of interpersonal relationship in the workplace
- Explain the influence of basic human interaction on organisation
- Discuss the importance of interpersonal relationship at workplace.

### **2.3 The Concept of Interpersonal Relationship In The Workplace**

Interpersonal relationship in the workplace refers to a strong association among individuals working together in the same organisation. Employees working together ought to share a special bond for them to deliver their level best. It is essential for the individuals to be honest with one another for a healthy interpersonal relationship and eventually positive ambience at workplace.

Interpersonal relationship is an important aspect in every organisation. Employees are valuable assets of an organisation. Every organisation wants to improve its efficiency in order to survive and compete favourably. One effective way an organisation can achieve this goal is to develop and encourage healthy human relationship in the organisation. And one of the vital components of human relationship is interpersonal relations. Interpersonal relationship usually involves some level of interdependence. People in relationship tend to influence each other, share their thoughts and feelings and engage in activities together. Because of this interdependence, most things that change or impact one member of the relationship will have some level of impact on the other member.

### **2.4 Importance of Interpersonal Relationship at Workplace**

An individual spends around eight to nine hours in his organisation, and it is practically not possible for him to work all alone. We need people to talk to and share our feelings. An individual working in isolation is more prone to stress and anxiety. He will find his job monotonous. So, it is essential to have trustworthy fellow workers around with whom one can share all his secrets without fear of them getting leaked. Also, we must have friends at the workplace who can give us honest feedback.

Again, a single brain alone cannot take all decisions alone. We need people to discuss very serious issues, evaluate pros and cons and reach to solutions benefiting not only the employees but also the organisation on the whole. Strategies need to be discussed on an open platform where every individual has the liberty to express his/her views. Interaction on a regular basis is important for healthy relationship.

Besides, we need people around who can appreciate our hard work and motivate us from time to time. A pat on the back goes a long way in extracting the best out of individuals. Also, one needs to have people at the workplace who are more like mentors than mere colleagues.

Moreover, we need colleagues to fall back on at the time of crisis. If you do not talk to anyone at the workplace, no one would come to your help when you actually need them.

More still, the support of fellow workers is important. You just can't just do everything on your own. Roles and responsibilities must be delegated as per specialisation, educational qualification and interests of employees. An individual needs help of his fellow workers to complete assignments on time and for better results.

## **2.5 Factors Affecting Interpersonal Relations in the Organisation**

### **2.5.1 Basic Human Interaction**

The basic principles of interpersonal relations in the organisation is the fact that an effective supervisor should abstain from showing favouritism, make difficult (and sometimes) unpopular decisions, show concern for subordinates without appearing to pry into their privacies, and avoid supervisory power – the basic unit of wholesomeness. Often, relational partners in an organisation experience contradictory needs and should therefore adopt strategies to manage the tension, such as applying strokes.

The term stroke connotes intimate contact such as what is received by an infant who is caressed, pinched or patted. At work most strokes take place in the way of verbal communication and body language. Examples include waving, smiling, a glance of understanding, saying hello and sending a card of flower. Physical strokes may include placing a hand on another's shoulder, elbow or back. Although some do not feel these gestures, the need for personal validation is great. People may prefer negative attention to being totally ignored.

Interpersonal relationship cultivates the culture of an organisation through motivation and appreciation of workers. Kant (2009) proposed four ways to improve organisational interpersonal relationship.

- (a) Communicate frequently: If you fail to communicate, you will likely lose focus of what your partner in the relationship needs, and as a result harm the relationship.
- (b) Listen actively: When communicating with others, pay careful attention to what they are telling you.
- (c) Express your appreciation: A thank you can go a long way in maintaining your relationship health. Don't assume the other person in your relationship knows you are grateful.
- (d) Deal with conflicts productively: You cannot always avoid conflict, but you can always deal with them in a productive way.

### **2.5.2 Cultural Barriers**

Communication and organisational culture are closely linked in concepts. Communication practices influence culture, and vice versa. Language barriers and divergent communication practices can overshadow cultural practices. Fitzgibbon and Seeger (2002) found that cultural differences were one of the primary factors in determining organisational productivity. Hall (1976) proposed a concept of high versus low context as a way of understanding cultural orientation. In Hall's view, a high context is one in which people are deeply involved with each other, and as a result of intimate relationship among people, a structure of social hierarchy exists, and individual inner feelings are kept under strong self control, and information is widely shared through simple messages with deep meaning. The communication styles of Asian and Arab nations, for example, are high context culture. In contrast, European and American communication styles are considered low context cultures. A low context culture is one in which people are highly individualised, somewhat alienated and there is little involvement with others; as a result, social hierarchy as well as society in general imposes less on individual lives, and communication with people is more impersonal.

Hofstede (2001) defines culture as the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes members of the human groups from another; hence, there are the fundamentals for understanding business and cultural communication.

### **2.5.3 Increasing Employees' Values**

Careful selection, training and appraisal of employees are ways in management providing safe working environment and communicating company's policies. Equally critical are factors affecting interpersonal relations such as involving workers in decision-making, effective communication styles, listening to employees and avoiding one-way communication.

### **2.5.4 Sharpening Listening Skills**

Listening is not the same as being quiet. The right question may help an employee to know that we are listening, and thereby explain him better. Hofstede (2001) identified two major approaches to effective listening: Expert Approach (also known as the medical approach) and the Listener approach.

- (i) The expert or Medical Approach: This approach is directive. The supervisor listens to the problems presented by the employees, makes a diagnosis and then recommends the best solution. A

skillful advice giver will try to diagnose the situation through a series of questions.

- (ii) **The Listener Approach:** This is where the supervisor is more focused on attending to the needs and feelings of the employees by trying to solve a problem. Most often it is about celebrating one person's success or sharing in another's sadness. There is empathic listening. In empathic listening, we need to give the employees a chance to tell how they actually feel. Others are clarification, empathising, reflection, paraphrasing, praise and encouragement and summarising.

## 2.6 Interpersonal Skills for the Workplace

Poor communication can wreak havoc in an organisation. One of the best antidotes for poor communication in your organisation is to create strong relationships. Focus on improving interpersonal relationships among your employees and a more positive work environment, clearer communication and increased levels of productivity will be the result. Regardless of your industry, interpersonal skills (such as being able to communicate effectively) are important because they:

- Help employees develop and foster strong working relationships with one another and with their clients,
- Contribute to increasing team and organisational productivity, and
- Create an overall positive work environment.

The interpersonal skills necessary in a workplace include:

1. **Exercising self-Awareness:** In general terms, self-awareness means that a person is able to consciously know what they are feeling and why they are feeling it. Self-awareness falls within the realm of emotional intelligence which comprised four primary components, namely: (i) self-awareness, (ii) emotions (iii) empathy, and (iv) relationship building.  
Being aware of your own feelings and emotions can help you be cognisant of the messages you convey to others, whether through words or non-verbal forms. A lack of employee self-awareness can be detrimental to the success and productivity of an organisation.
2. **Being cognisant of non-verbal communication:** You need to be conscious about the non-verbal messages you are sending throughout the working day. Non-verbal cues can either make relationships stronger or damage them, depending on how they are used and the context of the situation. Some forms of non-verbal communication include eye contact, facial expressions, body



language, gestures, and physical contact (such as shaking hands, touching an arm, pushing, etc).

3. Being respectful of others: Respectful treatment of all employees is a major factor contributing to employee job satisfaction. Showing respect in the workplace can be done in a number of ways, including:
  - Showing appreciation for employees' efforts and time,
  - Showing gratitude and courtesy.
  - Listening to what others have to say, rather than listening only to respond.
  - Being respectful of other's ideas and opinions, even when they differ from yours,
  - Not disparaging, insulting or attacking others, and
  - Not taking credit for other's work. Even if you build or improve upon someone else's work, be sure to acknowledge their final contributions.
4. Showing empathy and Understanding: This helps to take into account the thoughts, feelings and needs of others.
5. Being a clear Communicator: Having effective communication skills can be the difference between success and failure.
6. Engaging in Active Listening: Active listening is all about actively listening to what someone has to say rather than passively hearing their message. By actively listening to other view points, it helps us to learn and grow.
7. Behaving Appropriately: Depending on the culture of your individual organisation, what is considered appropriate can vary. However, there are some universally accepted behaviours that should be exercised by employees. These include being punctual, being friendly and respectful to others, showing courtesy, being cooperative and easy to work with, having a positive attitude, dressing appropriately, and taking personal responsibility and being accountable.
8. Being Receptive to Feedback. Feedback is necessary for personal and professional growth. Feedback – whether positive or negative in nature – is like criticisms in that it involves an evaluation of some kind by another person. A significant difference between the two terms is intent. If you are open and receptive to feedback it will help you to learn and grow from what others – your colleagues, supervisors and clients - have to say.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Itemise the importance of interpersonal relationship at workplace.

### 2.7 Summary

In this unit, you have been introduced to the meaning of organisational interpersonal relationship and the factors affecting interpersonal relationship in the organisation. How to value employees, and sharpening listening skills were also established.

### 2.8 References/Further Reading

Fitzgibson, E.K & Seager, O. A (2002) *Cultural Differences in the Modern World*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

Hall, E. T. (1976). *Beyond Culture*. New York: Anchor Books

Hofstede, G. (2001). *Cultures Consequences, Interpersonal Difference in Work Related Values*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.

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## 2.9 Possible Answer To Self-Assessment Exercise

Your answer should include, but not limited to the following:

- i. An individual spends more than two-thirds of his waking hours in the workplace, and it is practically impossible for him to work alone.
- ii. So, it is essential to have trustworthy fellow workers around with whom one can share secrets.
- iii. Also, it is necessary to have friends at the workplace who can give us honest feedbacks.
- iv. Again, we need good brains around us who can feel free to discuss very serious issues, evaluate pros and cons and take decisions.
- v. Interactions on a regular basis is very important for healthy relationship.
- vi. Besides, we need people around who can appreciate our hard work and motivate us from time to time.
- vii. Furthermore, one often needs to have people at the workplace who are like mentors than mere colleagues.
- viii. More still, the support of fellow workers in times of stress or crises are very important.
- ix. Also, an individual needs the help of his fellow workers to complete assignments on time and for better results.

All the above are accomplishable through positive interpersonal relationships at workplace.

## **UNIT 3     ADOLESCENT INTERPERSONAL BEHAVIOUR**

### **Unit Structure**

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Learning Outcomes
- 3.3 Understanding the Adolescents
  - 3.3.1 Interpersonal Behaviour
  - 3.3.2 Implications for Counselling
- 3.4 Summary
- 3.5 References/Further Reading
- 3.6 Possible answer to self-assessment exercises

### **3.1 Introduction**

As adolescents grow, their relationships with self and others become increasingly influential. This relationship not only provides foundation of later adult relationship, they also buffer adolescents from stress and lessen the risk of later emotional and behavioural problems. The nature of interpersonal relationship among adolescents varies as the individual members themselves. This unit will provide vital information on the adolescents and their interpersonal behaviour.

### **3.2 Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the word adolescence
- List and discuss various factors that contribute to positive adolescent interpersonal behaviour
- Discuss the implications of adolescent interpersonal behaviour to counselling

### **3.3 Understanding the Adolescents**

Adolescence is a transitional period in the development of an individual from childhood to adulthood. It is a time of growing up, filled with changes, a core period of personality development in ontogenesis.

Families are often thought to influence social development, and parental rearing is traditionally seen as a factor that explains behaviour problems. However, during the adolescent period, young people become increasingly independent from their parents, and people outside the family become important for emotional adjustment and well-being. The central task of adolescence, therefore, is acquiring more independence. At around age 12 or 13, the child begins to grasp an understanding of the

larger world outside his family. He becomes sensitive to things that are going on elsewhere in the world. This motion is exciting and scary – exciting because of the anticipation of gaining adult privileges, and scary because of doubts about handling adult responsibilities. This growing awareness, along with the onset of puberty, moves him to try. Early adolescence, those ages from twelve to fourteen, characteristically argue more with their parents than older adolescents do. An early adolescent is trying to establish himself as an independent person in the family, and quite pushing about it. Teenagers do not like being treated like children. They typically show more anger towards parents and other family members during this stage; a lot of this anger stem from being caught in between childhood and adulthood. Adolescence is also a time of establishing personal identity. The struggle for a teenager to define who he is, what his lifelong goals are, and how he will achieve these goals is a critical developmental task, which if not successfully accomplished will cause him to be less self-sufficient in adulthood. Of paramount importance to the adolescent is peer acceptance. The need for peer acceptance is further accelerated by the emergence of sexual maturity during the teen years.

Moodiness is another characteristic of adolescence. At times, he or she is cheerful, relaxed and willing to be engaged by his parents. And the next moment he or she is off and moody. There are frequent changes in their moods, as such questions as: “Am I growing as my friends? Am I normal? Etc” are sources of stress to them. Other sources of adolescence processes include increased academic demands in school, peer problems, boyfriend–girlfriend issues, negotiating with parents for more freedom, the frustration of being too young and too old, financial problems, etc. Understanding the many facets of the adolescents will help us to nurture our teenagers to grow up into responsible, functioning adults who prosper in all aspects of living.

### **3.3.1 Interpersonal Behaviour**

Social interactions are the integral part of individuals’ daily lives. Social interaction is defined as any situation involving two or more people in which the behaviour of each person is in response to the behaviour of the other person. Interpersonal behaviour is closely related to social interactions.

Numerous factors such as personality, attitudes and environment factors affect the totality of one’s relationship in many ways. At one extreme, these relationships can be personal and positive. This is the case when individuals interact meaningfully, share mutual friendships and respect the dignity of the other. At the other extreme, the relationship can be personal and negative. This happens when individuals dislike one

another, create tension and crisis for one another or try to humiliate the personality of another.

Negative relationship qualities encompass rivalry, betrayal, hostility, antagonism and competition. Positive relationship qualities include companionship, intimacy, assistance, loyalty, caring, warmth, closeness and trust. There is considerable overlap in adolescents' perception of these relationship qualities. Some authorities have suggested that incongruent perceptions of a friendship reflect poor relationship skills and as such may be an indicator of maladjustment.

From psychological standpoint, effective and collaborative relationship within an environment/organisation will bring about a stimulating environment in which love, trust, cooperation, and collaboration can be built towards the betterment of every individual therein and the success of the environment. On the other hand, such environment will be characterised with tension, anxiety, frustration and at large an environment where individuals are made to internalise and exhibit violence in order to endanger themselves and other people's peace and right.

Therefore, personal and social interactions play a critical role in an individual's everyday life. Information and other resources flow through them. They also evoke certain effective responses within individuals. Lichtenste (2000) in Azeez (2008) posits that interactions lead to relationships, and this creates knowledge and develops intelligence. When teens behave right, think positively and are socially successful, their relationships are a source of well-being, pride and identity. Yet, some teens have difficulties in getting along with others because of shyness, conflict or other challenges.

### **3.4 Implications for Counselling**

Research findings (Ayodele, 2011) have established that violent and uncoordinated behaviours such as riots, vandalism, bullying, obscene gestures, threatening communications by the youths can be managed or curtailed. The findings have effectively demonstrated that treatment packages could be used as veritable tools in equipping adolescents with necessary social skills that foster good relationship with selves and others, thereby bringing about better future and peaceful co-existence among the people of the world. Social skills are the interpersonal behaviours that contribute to the effectiveness of the individual as a part of a larger group of individuals. According to MacDonald (1975), it is the ability to interact with others in given social context in specific ways that are socially acceptable or valued, and at the same time personally beneficial, mutually beneficial or beneficial primarily to others. This, of course, excludes

exploitative, deceitful or aggressive skills which may be of individual benefit. It is therefore necessary for all caregivers, especially school counsellors and counselling psychologists to update their knowledge and skills on the use of some of the treatment packages that can help adolescents live meaningful and fulfilled life. This will bring adequate self-acceptance, objective self-evaluation, improved psychological well-being, enhanced relationship with self and others, social competence, as well as rational and positive co-existence among people of the world.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Identify at least **five each** of **negative** and **positive** relationship qualities.

### **3.5 Summary**

In this unit, you have been introduced to the meaning of adolescence, the characteristics and features of adolescence, and the factors affecting interpersonal behaviour in adolescents.

### **3.6 References/Further Reading/Web sources**

- Anthony, W. A. (1969). *Principle of Psychiatric Rehabilitation*. Baltimore: University Park Press.
- Ayodele, K. O. (2011). *Fostering Adolescents' Interpersonal Behaviour: An Empirical Assessment of Enhanced Thinking Skills and Social Skills Training*. Edo: Journal of Counselling. 4 (1 & 2).
- Bandura, A. (1969). *Principles of Behaviour Modification*. New York: Reinhart and Wiston.
- Liberman, R.P. & Fuller, T.R (2000). *Generalization of skills Training in Schizophrenia*. Pieland: Library of Pelish Psychiatry.

### **3.7 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercise**

**Your answer** should include:

- (i) Negative relationship qualities: rivalry, betrayal, hostility, antagonism, and negative competition.
- (ii) Positive relationship qualities include companionship, intimacy, assistance, loyalty, caring, warmth, closeness, and trust.



## **UNIT 4 INTERPERSONAL ATTRACTION AND DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIP**

### **Unit Structure**

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Learning Outcomes
- 4.3 The Concept of Interpersonal Attraction
- 4.4 The Determinants of Liking
  - 4.4.1 Love and Liking
- 4.5 Making Relationships Last
- 4.6 Breaking Up
- 4.7 Summary
- 4.8 References/Further Reading
- 4.9 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercises

### **4.1 Introduction**

Interpersonal attraction refers to positive feelings about another person. It is a positive attitude held by one person towards another person. In this unit, emphasis will be laid on determinants of liking, the growth of relationships, love, loving and breaking up relationships.

### **4.2 Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the concept of interpersonal attraction
- explain the theories of attraction
- enumerate the stages of development in relationships.

### **4.3 The Concept of Interpersonal Attraction**

Interpersonal attraction refers to liking or having the desire for relationship with another person. It is the attraction between people which leads to the development of platonic or romantic relationships. It is distinct from perceptions, such as physical attractiveness, and involves views of what is and what is not considered beautiful or attractive. It is related to how much one likes, dislikes, or hates someone. It can be viewed as a force acting between two people that tends to draw them together and to resist their separation. When measuring interpersonal attraction, one must refer to the qualities of the attracted and those of the attractor to achieve predictive accuracy. In a nutshell, interpersonal attraction can take many forms, including liking, love, friendship, lust, admiration.

#### 4.4 The Determinants of Liking

Causes or factors that lead to interpersonal attraction include physical attractiveness, propinquity or frequency of interaction, familiarity, similarity, complementarity, reciprocal liking and reinforcement.

**Physical Attractiveness** refers to the degree to which a person's physical features are considered aesthetically pleasing or beautiful. The term often implies sexual attractiveness or desirability, but can also be distinct from either. Physical attraction includes universal perceptions common to all human cultures, such as facial symmetry, socio-cultural dependent attributes and personal preferences unique to a particular individual.

Propinquity or frequency of interaction refers to the physical or psychological proximity between people, which leads to propinquity effect – i.e the tendency for people to form friendships or romantic relationships with those whom they encounter often in their daily routines, forming a bond between subject and friend. For example, workplace interactions are frequent and could be a key indicator as to why close relationships can readily form in such an environment. It has been observed that the more we see and interact with a person the more likely he or she is to become our friend or sexual partner.

**Familiarity:** The impact of familiarity is shown in the way physical proximity and interaction enhances cohesiveness.

Proximity promotes familiarity, and familiarity also increases liking for someone or something.

Similarity refers to the psychological degree of identity of two mental representations (i.e mental imagery of things that are not actually present to the senses). We have similarity in attitudes and personality; also similarity in age, race, religion, social class, education, etc. In short, we like those who are like us.

Complementarity is based on the theory that each interpersonal behaviour invites certain responses of another interactant. The behaviour and the response it invites are said to be complimentary when friendly behaviour begets hostile behaviour, and dominant behaviour begets submissive behaviour.

Reciprocal liking, also known as reciprocity of attraction, is the act of a person feeling an attraction to someone only upon learning or becoming aware of that person's attraction to themselves.

Reinforcement, in behavioural psychology, is a consequence applied that will strengthen an organism's future behaviour whenever that behaviour

is preceded by a specific antecedent stimulus. There are two types of reinforcement, known as positive reinforcement and negative reinforcement. Positive is whereby a reward is offered on expression of the wanted behaviour, and negative is taking away an undesirable element in the person's environment whenever the desired behaviour is achieved.

Note that contact by itself does not necessarily ensure the development of a relationship. Whether a relationship between two people develops depends on whether each is attracted to the other. Of course, there are several reasons or motives underlying interpersonal attraction. The need for affiliation, need for intimacy and avoidance of loneliness. Most humans are social animals who enjoy the company of others, therefore need to establish and maintain relationships with them. This contact provides emotional support. It also provides social support which is the approval, assistance, advice, and comfort that we receive from those with whom we have developed stable, positive relationships.

Again, choosing friends depends on several factors like:

- i. Social norms – what kinds of people are appropriate as friends, lovers and mentors.
- ii. People prefer a more physically attractive person for aesthetic reasons, and because they expect rewards from associating with that person.
- iii. People also choose, based on their expectations about the rewards and costs of potential relationships.
- iv. Norm of homogamy is a norm that tells us which persons are appropriate as friends, lovers and mentors. In the United States, for instance, the norm of homogamy requires that friends, lovers and spouses be similar in age, race, religion and socio-economic status. Recent studies have shown that homogamy is a characteristic of all types of social relationships from acquaintance to intimacy.
- v. Evolutionary perspective: According to evolutionary perspective, men and women have an evolved disposition to mate with healthy individuals so that they will produce healthy offspring, who will in turn mate and pass on their genetic code.

Therefore, we tend to prefer young attractive partners because they have high reproductive potentials.

#### 4.4.1 Love and Liking

Liking is a positive attitude towards an object; while love is an attachment to and caring for another person. Love is often described as close relationships; which are relationships between people and are characterised by loving, caring, commitment, and intimacy – such as those between adult friends, dating partners, lovers and married couples. These relationships are usually determined by biological, evolutionary, individual, and cultural factors. Successful close relationships often involve the positive influence of cognitive variables, including perceptions of similarity with the other, interdependence, commitment, and the incorporation of other into the self-concept, as well as affective variables including attachment, intimacy and commitment. Our close relationships help us meet the goals of self-concern and other-concern. Close relationships bring us health and happiness when we are able to create successful ones; they may produce a profound sense of loneliness and sadness when we are not. We experience higher self-efficacy, self-esteem, and positive mood when we believe that our friends and partners are responding to us supportively and with a concern for our needs and our own welfare. Our relationships with others help us buffer the negative effects of stress, avoid unhealthy behaviours, and cope with serious physical illness. And our close relationships allow us to express our fundamental desires to reach out and respond to other people.

Huston & Levinger (1978) in discussing the triangular theory of love proposed by Robert Sternberg, identify seven distinct types of love as liking, infatuated love, empty love, romantic love, companionate love, fatuous love and consummate love. These distinct types of love are characterised by different levels of passion, intimacy and commitment. By passion, they are referring to intense emotions. To them, intimacy refers to feelings of closeness, connectedness and bondness; wanting to care for the partner, self-disclosure and communication. They describe commitment as the decision that one loves the other and maintains that decision.

Thus, in their seven distinct types of love, they describe;

1. Liking – intimacy without passion or commitment (e.g friendship)
2. Infatuated love – of passion without intimacy or commitment (e.g. puppy love).
3. Empty love – commitment without passion or intimacy (e.g empty shell marriages)

4. Romantic love – passion and intimacy without commitment (e.g. romantic affair)
5. Companionate love – intimacy and commitment without passion (e.g: long term marriage).
6. Fatuous love – passion and commitment without intimacy (e.g. love at first sight).
7. Consummate love – all three elements are involved.

The different stages of love are (i) attraction (ii) initiation (iii) development (iv) sustaining and terminating.

#### 4.5 Making Relationships Last

- (i) **Be prepared for squabbles.** Every relationship has conflict. Working through minor conflicts can help you and your partner improve your social skills and make the relationship stronger.
- (ii) **Don't be negative.** Negative cognitions and emotions have an extremely harmful influence in relationships. Do whatever you can to think positively.
- (iii) **Be fair in how you evaluate behaviours.** People in close relationships, as do most people in their everyday lives, tend to inflate their own self-worth. They rate their own positive behaviours as better than their partners, and rate their partner's negative behaviours as worse than their own. Try to give your partner the benefit of the doubt – remember that you are not perfect either.
- (iv) **Do not betray the relationship.** Relationships break up when one or both of the partners betray the relationship or do something dumb. For example, sexual or even emotional infidelity creates a major strain in close relationships. Marriages are happier when the partners focus on each other and not on other potential mates.
- (v) **Do things that please your partner.** The principles of social exchange make it clear that being nice to others leads them to be nice in return.
- (vi) **Have fun.** Relationships in which the partners have positive moods and in which the partners are not bored tend to last longer.
- (vii) **Stop fighting.** Learn to talk with your partner in positive, rather than negative or abusive, ways.

#### 4.6 Breaking Up

Breaking up in a relationship means dissolving the relationship. This may cause substantial pain due to, in part, the loneliness that results from it. People who lose someone they care about also lose a substantial amount of social support, and it takes time to recover and develop new social

connections. Lonely people sleep more poorly, take longer time to recover from stress, and show poorer health overall.

The pain of a loss may be magnified when people feel that they have been rejected by the other. The experience of rejection makes people sad, angry, more likely to break social norms, and more focused on self-concern. Although people who have been rejected hurt, people who have rejected others may feel guilty about it. Breaking up is indeed painful, but people do recover from it, and they usually move on to find new relationships.

Three factors that can contribute to breaking up include:

1. If one person feels that outcomes are inadequate.
2. The degree of commitment: someone who feels a low level emotional attachment to and concern for his or her partner is more likely to break up.

Responses to dissatisfaction with a relationship include exit, voice, loyalty or neglect.

In reacting to the costs of breaking up, a longitudinal study of dating partners found that lower levels of support by friends for the relationship were associated with later termination of the relationship. In another development, a study of married couples listed the following barriers to terminating their marriage:

- Children: 31%
- Religion: 13%
- Financial: 6%

### **Self-Assessment Exercise**

List and explain five determinants for liking.

## **4.7 Summary**

In this unit, you have been introduced to the meaning of interpersonal attractions and the available means by which people could know those with whom they come in contact, no matter how fleeting.

#### 4.8 References/Further Reading/Web Sources

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#### 4.9 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercise

Your answer should include the following:

- i. **Physical Attractiveness** i.e. the degree to which a person's physical features are considered aesthetically pleasing or beautiful.
- ii. Propinquity or frequency of interaction refers to, which leads to propinquity effect – i.e. the tendency for people to form friendships or romantic relationships with those whom they encounter often in their daily routines, forming a bond or friendship.
- iii. **Familiarity**: The impact of familiarity is shown in the way physical proximity and interaction enhances cohesiveness.
- iv. Complementarity - based on the theory that each interpersonal behaviour invites certain responses of another interactant. The behaviour and the response it invites are said to be complimentary when friendly behaviour begets hostile behaviour, and dominant behaviour begets submissive behaviour.
- v. Reciprocal liking, also known as reciprocity of attraction, - the act of a person feeling an attraction to someone only upon learning or becoming aware of that person's attraction to themselves.
- vi. Reinforcement, i.e. as a response to a conditioned perception of an earlier behaviour.



## **UNIT 5      FOSTERING POSITIVE PARENT–TEACHERS REFLATIONSHIP IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM**

### **CONTENTS**

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Learning Outcomes
- 5.3 Parent-Teacher Relationship as a Positive Factor
- 5.4 Building Parent-Teacher Relationships
- 5.5 Parental Support and Involvement in Learning
- 5.6 Trust-Building between Parents and Teachers
- 5.7 Summary
- 5.8 References/Further Reading
- 5.9 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercises

### **5.1 Introduction**

Living together in collaborative relationships with parents is crucial to a child's optimal success at school, even in developing his reading skills. Attitudes are among the most salient and powerful precursors to healthy relationship with parents. Constructive attitude allows teachers to ask: How can we work together to address academic or shared goal? To answer this question in this unit, many issues are raised ranging from parent – teacher partnership as a positive factor, home support for reading skills and others.

### **5.2 Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain parent-teacher partnership as a positive factor
- discuss how to build parent-teacher relationships.
- list the conditions for trust-building in the school system.

### **5.3 Parent–Teacher Partnership as a Positive Factor**

The goal of family involvement with education is to connect important context for strengthening, learning and development. Four components, namely: approach, attitudes, atmosphere and actions (the four A's) – describe conditions necessary for parent -teacher partnership:

1. Approach: this is the framework for interactions with parents.
2. Attitudes: the values and perceptions had about parent - teacher relationships.
3. Atmosphere: the climate for parent-teacher interactions.

4. Actions: strategies for building shared responsibilities for students' learning progress and success.

The four A's serve as a guide in the development of parent-teacher connections for children's reading and learning. They represent a process that teachers can use to be control sensitive. Both parents and teachers have important roles to play. Their roles do not replace but rather complement and reinforce the other's role, thus providing the students with a consistent message about reading and learning. Thinking of parents and teachers as "partners" refers to this mutual effort toward a shared goal. It also implies shared responsibility of parents and teachers for supporting students as learners (Christenson and Sharidan, 2001).

According to Christenson (1995), the features of a constructive parent – teacher relationship include:

1. A student focused philosophy where the teachers and parents cooperate, coordinate and collaborate to enhance learning opportunities, educational progress and school success for the student in four domains: academic, social, emotional and behavioural.
2. A belief in shared responsibility for educating and socialising children – both the teacher and the parents, creating constructive relationships (the head, the family, and the teacher work together in meaningful ways) to execute their respective roles in promoting the reading and learning success of the child is most important.
3. An emphasis on the quality of the interface and ongoing connection between the parent and the teacher.
4. A preventive, solution-oriented focus, one where the family and the teacher strive to create conditions that encourage and support reading and learning and student's engagement.

#### **5.4 Building Parent–Teacher Relationships**

The manner in which schools/teachers communicate and interact with parents affects the extent and quality of parents' home involvement with their children's learning. For example, schools that communicate bad news about student performance more often than recognising student's excellence will discourage parent involvement by making parents feel they cannot effectively help their children.

When communicating with parents, consider your remarks in relation to how parents participate. For example, are you communicating about:

- Classroom learning activities
- The child's accomplishments

- How parents can help at home with the child's learning.

There are numerous advantages for children when parents become involved, namely raising their academic achievement, increased motivation or learning, improved behaviour, doing better emotionally and socially, more regular attendance, more positive attitude about homework and school in general. On the part of the teachers, parental involvement can free teachers to focus more on the tasks of teaching children. Also, by having more positive contact with parents, teachers learn more about students' needs and home environment. Personal contact, including conferences, home visits, phone calls open day fora, etc, seems to be the most effective form of communication

Effective communication strategies involve:

- Initiation: Teachers should initiate contact with parents immediately they meet with the students.
- Timeliness: Make contact soon after a problem has been identified, so that a timely solution can be found.
- Consistency and frequency: Parents want frequent, ongoing feedback about how their children are performing.
- Follow through: Parents and teachers each want to see that the other will actually do what they say they will do.
- Clarity and usefulness of Communication: Parents and teachers should have the information they need to help students, in a form and language that makes sense to them.

## 5.5 Parental Support and Involvement for Learning

It should be noted that how teachers support families to enhance learning is different from parental home support for learning. To effectively support families, the following are offered for the consideration of the teachers in academic and motivational support for learning. Scott-Jone (1995) suggested that the parents can enhance learning at home and performance in the school by: valuing, mentoring, helping, and doing.

Parental involvement is the same thing as parental investment in educational pursuit. Families do not need to be fixed. They need to be supported in their efforts to educate the children in the way they see fit. Hence, the teacher can help parents to navigate the school system, which understands policies, practices and foster a positive learning environment at home. However, learning at home entails the following:

1. Providing information on how to foster successful learning both at home and at school.
2. Designing individualised home-school learning programmes.

3. Involving parents in a way the children perceived as helpful.

## 5.6 Trust-Building between Parents and Teachers

According to Haynes (1996), trust is defined as confidence that another person will act in a way that will benefit or sustain the relationship or the implicit or explicit goal of the relationship to achieve positive outcomes for students. At times parents and teachers or other school personnel do not get to this point of relationship. In order to help this situation, a number of measures have been suggested. Moles & Townronson (1996) for instance, posutulates that school must be welcoming, should be friendly and have a climate for participation. Weiss & Edwards (1992) refers to trust building as climate building between family and school. Davies (1991) is of the opinion that trust is the essential lubrication for more serious intervention. He however identifies the following as vanillas for creating a welcoming environment in the school.

- (a) Cleanliness of the school
- (b) Meeting with the school personnel, to address concerns
- (c) Parent/Teacher conferences
- (d) The relationship between the child and the teacher
- (e) How differences of opinions or conflicts are handled.

Furthermore, he goes on to identify conditions for trust-building in the school system as follows:

- (a) Accepting parents as they are.
- (b) Sharing information and references
- (c) Keeping their words
- (d) Preparing for meetings
- (e) Discussing objectives openly
- (f) Listening emphatically
- (g) Focusing on the interactive process with the parents (Adams & Christenson, 1998; Mangolis & Bramigani, 1990)

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What are the conditions necessary for parent-teacher partnership?

## 5.7 Summary

A good relationship between the teacher/school and the parent is a great starting point for handling any problems – learning, behavioural, social, emotional – that come up at school. Contact between teacher and parents should not come up only when there is problem. Trust-building between teachers and parents should be consciously pursued in the relationship.

## 5.8 References/Further Reading

- Adams, K. S. & Christenon, S. L. (1998). *Differences in Parent and Teacher Trust Levels: Implications for Creating Collaborative Family – School Relationships*. *Special Services in the School* 14 (1/2). Pp. 1 – 22.
- Christenon, S. L. (1995). *Supporting Home-School Collaboration: Best Practices in School Psychology*. Washington D.C: National Association of School Psychologists.
- Scott-Jones, D. (1995). “Activities in the Home that Support School Learning in Middle Grades.” *Creating Family-School Partnership*.

### **5.9 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercise**

Your answer should include the following:

- i. Approach - the framework for interactions with parents.
- ii. Attitudes - the values and perceptions had about parent - teacher relationships.
- iii. Atmosphere - the climate for parent-teacher interactions.
- iv. Actions - strategies for building shared responsibilities for students' learning progress and success.

**MODULE 3**

- Unit 1 Causative Factors for Interpersonal Conflicts in the School System
- Unit 2 Psychological Experiences of the Ageing Spouse
- Unit 3 Group Processes
- Unit 4 Languages as a Tool of Interpersonal Relationship

**UNIT 1 CAUSATIVE FACTORS FOR INTERPERSONAL CONFLICTS IN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM**

**Unit Structure**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3 Causes of Conflicts in Relationships
- 1.4 Conflicts in the School Situation
- 1.5 Behaviour Problems and Anti-Social Behaviour
- 1.6 Skills for Counsellors in Assisting Learners with Behaviour Problems
- 1.7 Summary
- 1.8 References/Further Reading
- 1.9 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercises

**1.1 Introduction**

Conflicts are a natural part of life and therefore a natural part of school's life. The fundamental meaning of conflict is disagreement. It is obvious that disagreement, irrespective of the form it takes, is bound to be experienced in most circumstances and situations. In diverse ways, disagreements can occur in schools – among staff members, among students, between students and their teachers, etc. Most educators believe that students' behaviour affects academic achievements, and so, negative behaviour has always been a concern about students' behaviour that results in conflicts. Therefore, this unit emphasises the various causes of conflict in the school system.

**1.2 Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain conflict in the school system
- List the various causes of conflict in the school system
- Enumerate the skills that counsellors need to assist learners with behavior problems.

### 1.3 Causes of Conflicts in relationships

Interpersonal conflict is a situation in which one or both individuals in a relationship are experiencing difficulty in relating, working or living with each other. Nelson-Jones states that interpersonal conflict usually occurs when due to differences or incompatibilities, needs, goals or styles clash.

Common factors which cause conflicts in relationships include situations or circumstances in which people find themselves, the personality of the individuals, and the urge or desire for power.

- (i) Situational Factors: Canie and CFCS (2002) and Beck (1987) opine that any aspect of living, such as working or playing together, contains the seed of situational conflict. Conflict over situational factors can be overcome when the situation or circumstance changes. Even though a situational conflict may be intense, it is usually short lived.
- (ii) Personality Factors: Personality factors usually come from individualism or the differences that are inherent in people. It is evident that everybody has unique combinations of values, characteristics, beliefs and lifestyle. In a family, for instance, if a parent values order and neatness and the children do not, conflict may occur. Very often, conflict involving personality factors occurs over matters such as mannerism, table manners and a person's way of life. These personality quirks may get on the nerves of another person and cause conflicts. In the classroom situation, personality factors may be the tendency for one to be talkative, dragging of feet, restlessness and fidgeting.
- (iii) Power Factor: Power factors result in conflict when issues are important to both parties and often results when each of the parties wants to use power to get the other to agree with his or her position. The fear of losing control or not being in control creates conflict. Conflict in some situations is the process of reality to perceived threat. For example, a new principal is assigned to a school, she reorganises the room assignments in the school without consulting. In the departments, conflict ensues when everyone is trying to get a piece of the same resource for his or her purposes. The resource may be money, time, space, or anything that is limited in supply.

As a matter of fact, conflict can have a remote cause. It is not usually easy to identify causes for conflict because what can generate a conflict for someone may not be a problem for another. When people do not



feel that they have been treated with courtesy, conflict may be created. Failing to listen, name-calling, refusing to participate in meetings, and other behaviours that demonstrate lack of civility, must not be allowed or condoned.

However, some common causes of conflict in an organisation include:

- i. Unclear definition of responsibility
- ii. Limited resources
- iii. Conflict of interest
- iv. Availability of resources
- v. Fulfillment of psychological needs
- vi. Upholding personal values
- vii. Maintaining of self-preservation

#### **1.4 Conflicts in the School Situation**

A good interpersonal relationship is one of the factors which promote effective school administration, teaching and learning. An example of good interpersonal relationship that exists in school include how well teachers relate with pupils, how teachers relate with each other, how the school relates with parents or guardians, and to the community as a whole. The interactions within a system are important for the system's organisational health. For instance, in a school situation, if the head teacher is a poor leader, his school will probably display poor morale and poor student or pupil achievement. Interactions that exist within the school and the community are usually between head teacher and teachers, teachers and teachers, teachers and pupils, teachers and parents, pupils and pupils, and school and community.

Classroom management, disruption and punishment have been identified as some of the common sources of conflict in schools, as follows

1. **Classroom Management:** One of the teacher's roles is to establish a classroom environment that prevents problems from emerging, and if they occur, teachers should intervene quickly to prevent it disrupting the lesson. The often volatile nature of teenage behaviour can lead to outbursts of unacceptable behaviour with any teacher or even follow pupils. It is therefore up to the teacher to deal with such outbursts and prevent them from overwhelming the class, the lesson, and ultimately the teacher himself. It is imperative to avoid confrontations with pupils as a teacher but there are occasions when a confrontation is beneficial.

2. **Disruption:** The disruptive behaviour of pupils may include talkative pupils, habitual late-coming, dragging chairs across the classroom, pupils talking outside through the windows, and pupils interacting with colleagues while classes are in progress. Other forms of disruption are verbal abuse, temper burst in class, and violence to teachers and other pupils.
3. **Punishment and discipline:** Many conflicts begin in the class when a pupil feels he or she has been punished unjustly or unfairly. Punishment in most cases brings conflict in organisations, especially when the intensity or severity and the moral behind its use are not legitimate

### **1.5 Behaviour Problems and Anti-Social Behaviour**

According to Weeles (1998), behaviour problems can be categorised into more serious behaviour, less serious behaviour and behaviour problems of a minor nature. More serious behaviour problems, such as juvenile delinquency and child sexual abuse, affect only a small percentage of children and are usually related to psychiatric problems. Less behaviour problems, such as truancy or bullying, require professional assistance from a psychologist who can help the affected learners. Behaviour problems which are of a minor nature, such as lying and not being punctual, are of a temporary nature (Ashton & Elkins, 1994, Lamb & Kelter Linus, 1994). All these are capable of causing conflict in the school system.

Kerr and Nelson (1989) define anti-social behaviour as behaviour that violates socially prescribed norms or patterns of behaviour. Anti-social behaviour is a form of aggressive behaviour directly linked to negative social activities that cause conflict within the adolescent relationship with other members of the society. It may lead to situations whereby the adolescent learner will experience difficulties in having relationships. These manifest in form of attention deficit 40%, attention-seeking behaviour 90%, aggressiveness 40%, and refusal to work with others 10% (Denzin, 1997).

### **1.6 Skills for Counsellors in Assisting Learners with Behaviour Problems**

The counsellor, in comparison with the teacher, has to create safe atmosphere for learners with behaviour problems as they interact with the learners and help them lovingly and patiently. Berger (1991) and Sharter & Strue (2001) agreed on the skills needed by the counsellors in assisting learners with behaviour problems. These include paying

attention, listening, encouragement, exploration skills and actions. Paying Attention: The teacher/counsellor can convey non-verbal skills to the learner to ensure he is paying attention.

Listening: There is the need for the teacher/counsellor to pay attention through listening. There should be listening to the feelings that can be observed through the facial expressions or body posture.

Exploration Skills: Exploration skills can be used to acquire information on how to assist the learner with behaviour problems. The teacher can reflect on the information given by the learner through her words or body posture.

Action Skills: It is important to listen, understand and help the learner to attain new meanings as you take actions.

Empathic Understanding: Empathy is the cornerstone of a positive relationship between the learner with behavior problems and the teacher/counsellor. Empathy serves several functions as it creates moments when the learner with problems feels that the teacher is deeply concerned with him/her, that he or she is truly understood. Genuineness: By this, the teacher/counsellor responds freely and naturally to learners with problems rather than being artificial. He is honest to establish trust in the relationship with the learner.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

List the various causes of conflict in organisations.

### **1.7 Summary**

In this unit, you have been introduced to the meaning and the cause of conflict, as well as how conflict manifests in the school system. It also highlights the various behaviour problems and how they can be remedied.

### **1.8 References/Further Reading**

Berger, K. S. & Thomson, R. S. (1996). *The Developing Person Through Childhood*. New York: Worth Publishers.

Denzin, W. K. & Linkohn, Y. S. (1994). *Introduction to Entering the Field of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks-Sage.

Kerr, M. M. & Nelson, C. M. (1989). *Strategies for Managing Behaviour Problems in the Classroom*. (2nd ed). London: Thomas Merrill.

Owusu–Mensah, M. (2007). *Conflict in Primary School and its Effects on Teaching and Learning*.

### **1.9 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercise**

Your answer should include the following:

- i. Unclear definition of responsibility
- ii. Limited resources
- iii. Conflict of interest
- iv. Availability of resources
- v. Fulfillment of psychological needs
- vi. Upholding personal values
- vii. Maintaining of self-preservation

## **UNIT 2 PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIENCES OF THE AGEING SPOUSE**

### **Unit Structure**

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Learning Outcomes
- 2.3 Challenges Facing the Elderly in the Society
  - 2.3.1 Disengagement Theory and the Ageing Process
  - 2.3.2 Death and Dying
- 2.4 Psychological Adaptation to Dying Experience
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 References/Further Reading
- 2.7 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercises

### **2.1 Introduction**

Loneliness is a common experience among older people that is associated with health risks and negative well-being. In old age, there is the discrepancy between desired and actual interpersonal relations. Psychologists have long identified positive interpersonal relations as an essential component of feeling good and being well in life. The importance of sociality continues into older age where living a socially active life and having accessible family ties have positive effects on older adults' well-being.

In this unit, the issues of challenges facing the elderly in the society, and death and dying will be examined.

### **2.2 Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this unit you should be able to:

- Describe the challenges facing the elderly in the society
- Explain the disengagement theory
- State the various stages in the dying process.

### **2.3 Challenges Facing the Elderly in the Society**

Older people have to confront inevitable life events such as retirement that would likely disrupt their existing connection with the society. The loss of independence is one potential part of the process, as are diminished physical ability and age discrimination. Today, with most households confined to the nuclear family even in Africa, attitudes toward the elderly have changed. A study reports that in 2011, of the

13.3 million households in Canada, only about 400,000 of them (3.1 percent) were multigenerational (Statistics Canada, 2012). It is no longer typical for older relatives to live with their children and grandchildren.

Indeed, the effects of ageing can feel daunting, and sometimes the fear of physical changes (like declining energy, food sensitivity, loss of hearing and vision, etc) is more challenging to deal with, than the changes themselves. If people can accept the changes in their bodies as a natural process of ageing, the changes will not seem as frightening. The most frequently reported health issues for those over 65 years of age include arthritis or rheumatism, hypertension, cataract, back pain, and heart disease. All these the elderly will have to learn to contend with or even live with.

Male or female growing older also means confronting the psychological issues that come with entering the last phase of life. Some people may have to confront regrets, such as being disappointed in their children's lives or perhaps their own. They may have to accept that they may never reach certain career goals. Or, they must come to terms with what their career success has cost them, such as time with their family or declining personal health. Some, however, are able to achieve a strong sense of integrity, embracing the new phase in life. They can learn new skills, practise new activities, and peacefully prepare for the end of life. For some, overcoming despair might entail remarriage after the death of a spouse. Men are more likely to remarry. Many surviving women tend to enjoy a new sense of freedom, as many are living alone for the first time. On the other hand, for surviving men, there is a greater sense of having lost something, as they are now deprived of a constant source of care as well as the focus on their emotional life.

Because the elderly typically no longer hold jobs or engage in any meaningful income generating activities, finances can be a challenge. Also, due to cultural or societal misconceptions, older people can be targets of ridicule and stereotypes. Mistreatment and abuse of the elderly is a major social problem in many societies today. The elderly often become physically frail, and this renders them dependent on others for care - sometimes for small needs like household tasks, and sometimes with assistance for basic functions like eating and toileting.

### **2.3.1 Disengagement Theory and the Ageing Process**

Disengagement theory suggests that normal ageing is a mutual withdrawal or disengagement between ageing couples and others in the social system which they belong (Johnson, 1977). This also applies to the dying process. As death approaches, there is deterioration in psychic and physical energy. It invariably results in gradual withdrawal from social interactions (Udoh, 2006).

### **2.3.2 Death and Dying**

Death is usually associated with old age. People tend to have strong resistance to the idea of their own death, and strong emotional reactions of loss to death of loved ones. Viewing death as a loss, as opposed to a natural or tranquil translation, is often natural in Africa.

#### **Problems Faced by the Dying Person**

Death is the last developmental phase of human existence. Dying experience is not a simple experience in an individual's life. Kubler-Ross (1999) submitted that a dying person bounces forth and back before they finally give up. Some of the problems encountered by the dying include the problem of loneliness and isolation. Studies have shown that the dying is often isolated and avoided by the hospital personnel, who pay attention to the patients that are likely to survive (Palmone, 1971). They react shabbily to the calls of their dying patients than to calls of other patients. The problem of relief from pain is another issue with the dying; they need the drugs that will reduce their pains.

The process of dying is a traumatic experience for the dying person. There is fear, which is accentuated by his isolation in the hospital or in the sick room, his removal from all decision-making process as well as from familiar surroundings of home and people, the fear of abandonment coupled with loss of family members and close friends, reinforces his emotional isolation (Huldin, 1973).

### **2.4 Psychological Adaptation to Dying Experience**

There is the consensus that not all of the dying persons go through a well-defined process, as dying persons pass through several stages as noted by Kubler-Rose and reported in Udoh (2006).

Phase 1: Denial and Isolation Stage: This is the stage characterised by becoming aware of terminal illness and the consequent reaction of



shock, disbelief and denial. This is a period the dying does not believe that he can find himself in this situation; he is worried about many things, like his children, finances and his family before he was struck down by sickness.

Phase 2: Anger Stage: This is the period the dying person is difficult to manage and care for. He is full of anger, resentment and envy. His anger is directed against the threatening objects around him such as the doctors, nurses, family members, and even God.

Phase 3 Bargaining Stage: After the anger stage comes the brief period of bargaining, a period when the patient seems to have accepted what is coming to him, but needs someone to do things which he has to complete; he haggles with God to be allowed for only a few months, weeks or even days of life.

Phase 4 Depression Stage: Depression is a normal reaction in the process of dying. He at this stage enters a period called preparatory grief, during which he or she is silent, refuses to receive visitors and spends much time crying or grieving because of reminiscences. Attempt to comfort and cheer him at this stage is futile.

Phase 5 Acceptance Stage: The acceptance stage is the final phase which many dying persons never arrive at before giving up the ghost. At this period, he accepts his fate and wants to get over with it without further delay. It is marked by peace and serenity.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Highlight the challenges facing the elderly in the society.

## **2.5 SUMMARY**

This unit has been able to explain in clear terms the challenges facing the elderly in the society, the disengagement theory, the psychological adaptation to dying experience, and the psychological process involved in dying.

## 2.6 REFERNECES/FURTHER READING

- Hendin, P. (1973). *Death as a Fact of Life*. New York: Northon.
- Kubler-Ross, R (1999). *The Psychology of Death*. New York: Basic Books.
- Lynch, J. J. (1976). *The Broken Heart: The Medical Consequences of Loneliness*. New York: Basic Books
- Little, W. & McGivern, R. (2014). *Introduction to Sociology 1<sup>st</sup> Canadian Edition – Bc Open Textbooks*. Open Book Publishing: Montreal, Canada.
- Palmore, E. (1971). *Normal Aging: Current Issues in the Treatment of the Dying Persons*: Cleveland: Western Reserve University Press.
- Udoh, C. O. (2006). *Death and Dying Education*. Ibadan: University Press.
- Wass, H. & Charles, A. (1982). *Helping Children Cope with Death*. New York: Hemisphere Publishing Corporation.

## **2.7 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercise**

Your answer should include most of the following, and possibly more:

- i. Retirement and loneliness
- ii. Loss of independence
- iii. Diminished physical ability
- iv. Age discrimination/mistreatment/ridicule/abuse
- v. Psychological issues, e.g. life regrets, feelings of disappointment
- vi. Challenges of finance/diminishing income.

## **UNIT 3      GROUP PROCESSES**

### **Unit Structure**

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Learning Outcomes
- 3.3 Group Processes
- 3.3 Types of Social Grouping
- 3.4 Stages of Group Development
- 3.5 Characteristics of a Group
- 3.6 Summary
- 3.7 References/Further Reading
- 3.8 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercise

### **3.1 Introduction**

Group process refers to how an organisation's members work together to get things done. A group is defined as two or more individuals who share particular expectations and goals. So, basically groups are made up of people who feel united and believe they share rights and objectives. Groups with particular strong sense of identification, loyalty and members to the exclusion of non-members are called in-groups. People who are not in one's group form the out-group. Examples of groupings include national groups, classmates, and social groups such as audience crowd, team, family and formal organisations. This unit explains the various categories of social groupings, characteristics of a group and the functions.

### **3.2 Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to

- explain group process
- explain a social group
- list types of social grouping
- state reasons for joining social groups
- state types of group activities

### **3.3 Group Processes**

Humans are social animals who co-operate with each other to survive and flourish. Group process refers to the behaviour of the members of small working groups as they engage in decision-making and task performance. It includes the study of how group members' characteristics interact with the behaviour of group members to create

effective or ineffective group performance. When people are together in a group, they do not remain undifferentiated. They develop patterns of behaviours, define tasks and adopt different roles. In some groups, the bonds among members are strong and enduring morale is high and there is a general sense of grouping. When group members like one another, and are connected by bonds of friendship, cohesiveness is high. High level of cohesiveness is usually beneficial to group functioning (Ogundipe, 2002). When group members enjoy working together and achieve group goals, both morale and motivation tend to be high.

Once a group is formed with roles, norms and some degree of cohesiveness, it begins to make decisions and take actions. Osborn (1957) proposed that groups are better than individuals at generating creative new ideas and solution. This particular technique that he advocated is called brainstorming and it is used today in the advertising industry. A brain-storming group is given a specific problem to discuss, such as writing slogans to advertise a new brand of toothpaste. On the other hand, Babrenya, Wang, Latane (1989) identified social loafing as a vital component of group process. Social loafing is taken to be when people believe that their contributions to the group cannot be dictated or measured, hence there are diminishing returns.

### 3.4 Types of Social Grouping

There are varieties of social grouping, although not all meet the category of being a group.

- (a) Social Categories: These are people grouped together on the basis of shared attribute, such as teenage boys, truck drivers, classroom teachers, etc. They may not know or can do without one another.
- (b) Audience: All people listening to news on NTA are part of the same audience even though they don't stay together.
- (c) Crowd: When people are in physical proximity to the common situation or stimulus, we call them a crowd.
- (d) Team: A set of people regularly participating in an activity or purpose.
- (e) Family: These are people that live together, share common birth or legal arrangements. There are many types of families.
- (f) Formal Organisation: This is setting for a higher aggregates of people to work together to achieve a common organisational goal.

Adebisi (2008) identified several reasons for joining one group or the other. These reasons include security, status, self-esteem, affiliation and power.

### 3.5 Stages of Group Development

Forming a team is just like maintaining a relationship. It takes time, patience, requires support, efforts, and members often to go through recognisable stages as they change from being a collection of strangers to a united group with common goals.

Bruce Tuckman presented a model of five stages: Forming, Storming, Norming, and Performing in order to develop a group.

Orientation (Forming Stage): This stage presents a time where the group is just starting to come together and it is described with anxiety and uncertainty. High degree of guidance is needed from the facilitator, individual roles are unclear, and process usually not well established. Typical consequences of the forming stage include achieving an understanding of the group's purpose, determining how the team is going to be organised and who will be responsible for what, etc. At this stage, group members are learning what to do, how the group is going to operate, what is expected and what is acceptable.

Power Struggle (Storming Stage): This is the stage where dispute and competition are at its greatest because now group members have an understanding of the work and a general feel of belongingness. Questions around leadership, authority rules, policies, norms, responsibilities, structure, evaluation criteria and reward systems tend to arise during the storming stage.

Cooperation and integration (Norming Stage). In this stage, the group becomes fun and enjoyable. Relationships are well-understood. There is commitment to team goals; the team begins to work to optimise team process. Group leadership is very important, but the facilitator can step back a little and let group members take the initiative and move forward together.

Synergy (Performing Stage): This is the time where the group becomes really united. At this stage the morale is high as group members actively acknowledge the talents, skills and experience that each member brings to the group. Leadership is distributive and members are willing to adapt according to the needs of the group.

Closure (Adjourning Stage): This stage of a group can be confusing and is usually reached when the task is successfully completed. At this stage, the project is coming to an end and the team members are moving off in different directions. Often, though, it is a time to celebrate the team's achievements. This stage looks at the team from the perspective of the well-being of the team instead of the perspective of handling a

team. Working with team members again will be easier, especially if the past experiences are viewed positively.

### **3.6 Characteristics of a Group**

Regardless of the size or the purpose, every group has certain similar features or characteristics which are as follows:

- (i) Collection of two or more people – a single person cannot form a group.
- (ii) Common goals or interest – in a group, every members share common interest or goals.
- (iii) Interaction and interdependence – in any group, there is interaction and interdependence among the group members, either physically, or virtually to accomplish the group goal.
- (iv) Collection identity – groups are composed of people who recognise each other as members of their group and can distinguish these individuals from non-members.
- (v) A stable structure – groups have a defined structure which gives relationship that keeps group members together the stable functioning as a unit. It clarifies roles, authority and responsibility of each group members which is important to accomplish group goal.

Certain features characterise group structure. These include:

- (a) Group size can vary from two people to a very large number of people. Small groups of two to ten are thought to be more effective because each member has ample opportunity to take part and engage actively in the group.
- (b) Group Cohesiveness: Cohesiveness refers to the bonding of group members or unity, feelings of attraction for each other and desire to remain part of the group.

It is a measure of attraction of the group members to the team members. It encourages a team spirit, and the members will be willing to coordinate their efforts. They will also be willing to attend meetings, be cooperative, friendly with each other and will be effective to achieve the aims they set for themselves. A low cohesive group will not show interest in attending meetings; there will be factions and they will experience frustration for lack of achievement. Many factors influence the amount of group cohesiveness – agreement on group goals, frequency of interaction, personal attractiveness, inter-group competition, favourable evaluation, etc.

- (b) **Group Norms:** Norms define the acceptable standard or boundaries of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, shared by group members. Every group should have a code of conduct. Each group will create its own norms that might determine from the work performance to dress, to making comments in a meeting. A group usually has sanctions like disapprovals, reproaches that will apply to those that deviate from the laid down norms.
- (c) **Group Roles.** In formal groups, roles are always pre-determined and assigned to members. Each role shall have specific responsibilities and duties. Group roles can be classified into work roles, maintenance roles, and blocking roles. Work roles are task-oriented activities that involve accomplishing the group's goals. They involve a variety of specific roles such as initiator, informer, clarifier, summariser, and reality tester. Maintenance roles are social-emotional activities that help members maintain their environment in the group and raise their personal commitment to the group. The maintenance roles are harmoniser, gatekeeper, consensus tester, encourager, and compromiser. Blocking roles are activities that disrupt the group. Blockers will stubbornly resist the group's ideas, disagree with group members for personal reasons, and will have hidden agenda. They may take the form of dominating discussions, verbally attacking other group members, and distracting the group with trivial information or unnecessary humour.

**Task Roles:** It is very important for leadership roles to be spelt out in groups.

- (a) **The Initiator** – In tasks he makes suggestions or proposes new ideas. Novel points of view are initiated concerning problems, procedures, goals or solutions.
- (b) **Information seeker** – He seeks for clarification and suggestions made in terms of adequacy, for facts related problems on hand, and for authoritative information.
- (c) **Opinion seeker** – Seeks for the clarification of all suggestions or proposals made as related to the values of their tasks.
- (d) **Information giver** – He offers authoritative facts on suggestions or proposals concerning the group.
- (e) **Opinion giver** – He gives authoritative opinion based on emphasising his beliefs or experiences about the values of the group.
- (f) **The elaborator** – He spells out suggestions in terms of developed meanings. Rationale for suggestions made is offered.



- (g) The coordinator – He clarifies the relationship between ideas and suggestions. He coordinates all activities of the sub-groups.
- (h) The energiser – He acts like a stimulant. He propels members to action.
- (i) The recorder – he takes records of group’s decisions.
- (j) The procedural officer – he expedites movement of things and people in the group.

#### Maintenance Roles:

- (a) The encourager – He indicates warmth and solidarity within the group. He offers commendations and praises.
- (b) The harmoniser – He reconciles members where there are differences.
- (c) The compromiser – He offers compromises by yielding status and disciplining himself to maintain harmony within the group.
- (d) The gatekeeper – Keeps all channels of communication open and proposes more channels of communication to maintain a flow.
- (e) Standard setter – He expresses standards that apply to the quality of processes of the group.
- (f) Group observer – keeps the evaluation process of the group.
- (g) Summariser – He defines the position and goals of the group.
- (h) Reality tester – he evaluates the quality of the group process.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- i Identify reasons why people join social groups.

### 3.7 Summary

This unit has been able to explain in practical and theoretical terms the meaning of group process, the various categories of social groupings, functions of social groups and social loafing.

### 3.8 References/Further Reading

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Osborn, A. F. (1957). *Applied Imagination*. New York: Services.

### **3.9 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercise**

Your answer should include the following:

Security, status, self-esteem, affiliation, and power.

## **UNIT 4      LANGUAGE AS A TOOL OF INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP**

### **Unit Structure**

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Learning Outcomes
- 4.3 Language as a Tool of Interpersonal Communication
  - 4.3.1 Language and Communication
  - 4.3.2 Communication Process
- 4.4 Communication Barriers
- 4.5 Summary
- 4.6 References/Further Reading
- 4.7 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercise

### **4.1 Introduction**

Central to all topics relating to thinking is the tool of language. Many concepts like knowledge, problem-solving, human intelligence, information processing, etc., heavily depend on language. Language refers to the method of human communication, either spoken or written, consisting of the use of words in a structured and conventional way. Language is the ability to acquire and use complex systems of communication, particularly the human ability to do so, and a language is any specific example of such a system. It provides the basis for our symbolic representations of the world. It provides a vehicle for the mind's communication with others. It is the system of sound, symbols, meaning and rules for their combination that constitute the mode of communication. Language as a means of communication is a social activity which allows us to express our feelings, thoughts and plans to others. Language helps us express observations, thoughts, feelings and needs – all of which are vital elements of interpersonal relationship.

### **4.2 Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this unit you should be able to:

- explain language as a tool of interpersonal relationship
- explain the process of communication
- state the barriers to communication.

### 4.3 Language as a Tool of Interpersonal Communication

As human beings, we need to express and understand the expression of others. Civilizations have risen and fallen based upon how good they were at maintaining sound relations with the rest of the world. Communication is, indeed, the very lubricant that makes the machinery of human relations function smoothly, and that with the instrumentality of language. Sometimes, difficult situations in life and relationships can be resolved by just sitting down and talking it out.

Language is relational. We use verbal communication to initiate, maintain, and terminate our interpersonal relationships. The first few exchanges with a potential romantic partner or friend help us size the person up and figure out if we want to pursue a relationship or not. We then use verbal or written communication to remind others how we feel about them and to check in with them – thus, engaging in relationship maintenance through language use. When negative feelings arrive and persist, or for many other reasons, we often use verbal or written communication to end a relationship.

Interpersonally, verbal communication is key to bringing people together and maintaining relationships. Whether intentionally or unintentionally, our use of words affect our relationships. Also, aside the specific words we choose to use (like I, we, me, you, my, our, etc), the frequency of communication also impacts relationships. When frequent communication combines with supportive messages, which are messages communicated in an open, honest and non-confrontational way, people are sure to come together. So, language can bring us together.

On the socio-cultural level, speaking the same language can also bring people together. Of course, we know that language helps to shape our social reality, so a common language leads to some similar perspectives. Verbal communication can also lead to feelings of separation. At the interpersonal level, still, unsupportive messages can make others respond defensively, which can lead to feelings of separation and actual separation or dissolution of a relationship.

Language is powerful in that it expresses our identities through labels used by and on us, affects our credibility based on how supportive our ideas, and can also serve as a means of control. The resolution of tensions in the family or other relationships requires communication and problem-solving, which implicates techniques of negotiating bargaining, decision-making, and so forth. Language not only impacts relationship, it defines it.

Written and verbal communication helps us meet various needs through our ability to express ourselves. We ask questions that provide us with specific information. We also describe things, people and ideas.

Mckay, et al (1995) identify four types of verbal expressions as follows: observation, thought, feeling and need.

Observation - describes report of sensory experiences, e.g “Pauline asked me to bring the file to you.”

Thought – describes conclusions about or judgment of experiences or memories. E.g “Students today have much less respect for authority”.

Feelings – describes communicating emotions. “I feel at peace when we are together”.

Need – describes stating wants or requesting help or support. E.g “I’m saving money for summer vacation. Is it ok if we skip our regular night out this week?”

So, language, through communication, plays a major role in all facets of an individual’s life. Everyday interactions with family, friends and colleagues ensue often through the medium of language.

### **4.3.1 Language and Communication**

Verbal communication ensues through the use of language. Communication can be verbal or non-verbal. Non-verbal communication includes a variety of signal intonation, body language, gesture, physical distance, non-verbal vocalisation, facial expression, and touch.

The process of communication begins with an impulse to pass on a made up message or information in the process of encoding. Units of information are selected and organised for transmission. Input is the doing of experiences that build up in the human brain or computer. Output is the encoded message transmitted by the information source.

Studies have shown that managers spend approximately 60 – 70% of their time communicating, and approximately 55-60% is spent listening. Levels of listening include attentive listening for important information, empathic listening to appreciate others’ attitudes, feelings and emotions and casual listening to music and informal discussion for pleasure.

### 4.3.2 Communication Process

Communication is the process of conveying information between two or more people. The communication process is the steps we take in order to achieve a successful communication. It consists of several components: sending, encoding, message, channel, receiver, decoding and feedback.

A sender is the party that sends a message. The message is the information. Encoding entails transforming one's thoughts of information to be conveyed into a form that can be sent, such as words, drawings, figures, etc. Channel of communication is the manner in which the message is sent; this includes speaking, writing, video transmission, audio transmission, electronic transmission through e-mails, text messages, faxes, social media, and even non-verbal communication such as body language. The receiver is the target of one's message or communication. Decoding means mentally processing the message into understanding. If one cannot decode, the message fails. Feedback is a message sent by the receiver back to the sender.

The process of communication is a cyclic one as it begins with the sender and ends with the sender in the form of feedback. It takes place upward, downward and laterally throughout the organisation. The process of communication as such must be a continuous and dynamic interaction, both affecting and being affected by many variables.

### 4.4 Communication Barriers

There are many reasons why interpersonal communication may fail. In many communications, the message may not be received exactly the way the sender intended, and so it is important that the communicator seeks feedback to check that the message is clearly understood. Effective communication involves overcoming barriers and conveying a clear and concise message.

Some common barriers to effective communication include:

- The use of jargon – over complicated or unfamiliar terms.
- Emotional barriers and taboos, e.g fear,
- Lack of attention, interest, distractions or irrelevance of the receiver
- Differences in perception and viewpoint.
- Physical disabilities such as hearing problems or speech difficulties.
- Language differences and difficulty in understanding unfamiliar accents.

- Expectations and prejudices which may lead to false assumptions or stereotyping. People often hear what they expect to hear rather than what is actually said, and jump to incorrect conclusions.
- Cultural differences. The norms of social interactions vary greatly in different cultures, as do the way in which emotions are expressed.

A skilled communication must be aware of the barriers to effective communication and try to reduce the impact by continually checking understanding and by offering appropriate feedback.

The barriers to communication can be categorised as follows: language barriers, psychological barriers, physiological barriers, and physical barriers.

Language Barriers: Language and linguistic ability may act as barriers to communication. Also, a message that includes a lot of specialist jargon and abbreviations (e.g. in the medical field) will not be understood by a receiver who is not familiar with the terminology used.

Psychological Barriers: The psychological state of the receiver will influence how the message is received. For example, worries, stress, anger, etc., will affect the way a message is received. More generally, people with low self-esteem may be less assertive and therefore may not feel comfortable communicating.

Physiological Barriers: This may result from the receiver's physical state. For example, a receiver with reduced hearing may not grasp the entirety of a spoken conversation.

Physical Barriers: e.g. geographical distance

Attitudinal Barriers: i.e. Behaviours or perceptions that prevent people from communicating effectively. This may result from personality conflicts, poor management, resistance to change, or lack of motivation. So, in effect, individual's bias, status differences, fear and other emotional overtones like trust, verbal difficulties, information-overload and lack of practice in the communication skills can actually hinder effective communication.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

With examples, show how you would categorise the barriers to communication.

## 4.6 Summary

This unit has been able to explain conceptual meaning of language and discussed language as a tool of interpersonal relationship. It discussed the process of communication and the barriers to effective communication.

## 4.7 References/Further Reading

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#### **4.8 Possible Answer to Self-Assessment Exercise**

Your answer should include the following:

- i. Language barriers – linguistic ability, and also use of specialist jargons
- ii. Psychological barriers – e.g. worries, stress, anger, etc. will affect the way a message is received, even the way is encoded.
- iii. Physiological barriers – e.g. a receiver with reduced hearing ability may not grasp the entirety of a spoken conversation.
- iv. Physical barriers – e.g. geographical distance.
- v. Attitudinal barriers – i.e. behaviours or perceptions that prevent people from communicating effectively.