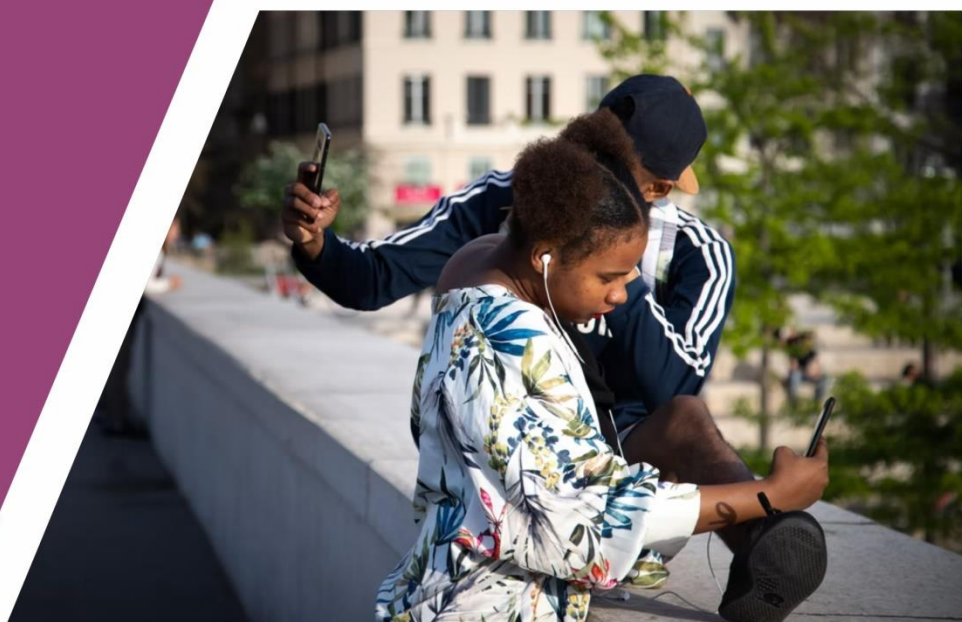**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

EGC 811

Principles of Interpersonal Relations

Module 3

EGC 811 Principles of Interpersonal Relationship Module 3
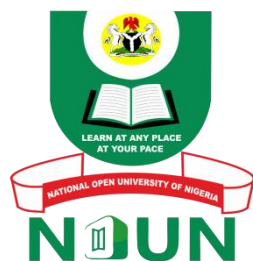
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Module 3

Unit 1 Causative Factors for Interpersonal Conflicts in the School System

1.0 Introduction

During the adolescence phase of human development, how can educators help students become responsible adults? Schools are places where students interact with one another. Many educators believe student's behaviour affects academic achievements, therefore, negative behaviour has always been a concern about student's behaviour that result in conflicts. Therefore, this unit emphasise the various causes of conflict in the school system.

2.0 Objectives

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 counselors need to assist learners with behaviour problems.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Causes of Conflicts

Conflicts are a natural part of life and therefore a natural part of school's life. Many causes have been attributed to the phenomenology of conflicts in the school system; and when students learn to resolve their conflicts, the atmosphere at school is more pleasant for everyone. Teachers can spend more time teaching and students can spend more time learning. The sources of conflict include change, power, security diversity, and civility. Anytime the status quo is about to change or has to change, there is the possibility that others will resist that change. This resistance and the subsequent actions are taken to overcome resistance.

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 assignment in the school, without consulting. In the departments, conflict ensues when everyone is trying to get a piece of the same resource for his/her purposes, so conflict is created. The resource may be money, time, space or anything that is limited in supply. 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 condemned.

3.2 Behaviour Problems

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 temporary nature (Ashton & Elkins, 1994, Lamb & Kelter Linus, 1994), all these are capable of causing conflict in the school system.

3.3 Anti-Social Behaviour

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

3.4 Skills for Counselors in Assisting Learners with Behaviour Problems

The counselor in cooperation with the teacher has to create safe atmosphere for learners with behaviour problems; as they trust the learners and help them lovingly and patiently. Berger (1999) and Sharter & Strue (2001) agreed on the skills needed by the counselors in assisting the learners with behaviour problems. These include paying attention, listening, encouragement, exploration skills and actions.

Pay attention: The teacher/counselor can convey non-verbal skills to the learner to ensure he is paying attention.

Listening: There is the need for the teacher/counselor 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 learners 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.

Emphatic understanding: Empathy is the cornerstone of a positive relationship between the learner with behaviour problems and the teacher/counselor. 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/she is truly understood.

Genuineness: By this, the teacher/counselor responds freely and naturally to learners with problems rather than being artificial. He is honest to establish trust in the relationship with the learner.

4.0 Conclusion

This unit acquainted you with the conceptual meaning of conflict and how it manifests in the school system. It also stressed the various skills the counselor can utilise to help students with behaviour problems.

5.0 Summary

In this unit, you have been introduced to the meaning of conflict, and how it manifests in the school system. It highlights the various forms of behaviour problems and how it can be remediated.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Explain the term conflict
2. Discuss the manifestations of behaviour problems of the adolescents in the school system.
3. How can the counselor assist learners with behaviour problems?

7.0 References/Further Reading

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Unit 2 Dynamics of Love and Attraction

1.0 Introduction

Social psychologists have increasingly interest in the nature of relationships, particularly close relationships. In this unit, the focus will be on two lines of research. It will examine the discussion on issues in love and attraction. If feelings are absent in any relationship, this can affect its approval. Individuals who feel inadequate and are inequitably treated in their relationships are more often jealous than those who are more confident and believe they are equally treated. Stages of love will also be examined which include: attraction, initiation, development and sustaining versus termination.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:
- state what love and attraction is
- enumerate the factors that lead to attraction
- outline issues involved in love and attraction.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 What is Love and Attraction?

They can be considered to be the central factors that attract a potential male to a creature. In nature, the evolutionary theory goes that if a creature mates with a weaker creature, their off-springs will also be weak and may not be able to survive against a harsh atmosphere.

Psychologists including Sternberg (1998) view love as a triangle that consists of passion, intimacy and commitment. When people share all of the three, they are said to be in a state of consummate love.

Love assumes many variations. Time and culture both have effects on core formed relationship. Time factor includes age or developmental stage of the individuals involved in the relationship or age difference, between the partners. Romantic love requires sexual attraction. This is what you see about the person, which gets you interested in knowing more about the person. This is commonly known as love at first sight. It is purely based on looks.

3.2 Factors Leading to Attraction

People share their time with other people. Several factors have been identified to be responsible for this which include: proximity, similarity, social norms, shared activities and reciprocal liking (Eagly, 1987).

i. **Proximity:** Proximity increases the intensity in the initial reaction which ranges from neutral to definite, which results in friendship.
ii. **Physical attractiveness:** A person's physical appearance is a determinant of how well others like him or her. Unlike character and personality, physical appearance is a factor

over which we have little control; and hence it seems unfair to use it as a criterion for liking someone. It is generally believed that what is beautiful is good, hence it is attractive for a wide variety of stimuli such as music, visual art and comic strips under many different conditions.

iii. **Similarity:** The birds of the same feather flock together. This aphorism is very true. Similarity produces liking as a rewarding experience. Persons with similar attitude, provide us with support of opinions.

iv. **Social norms**: Culture determines the type of relationships people could have. These norms dictate which persons are appropriate as friends, lovers and mentors. In Nigerian society for instance, there is a norm of homogeny (this is a norm requiring that friends, lovers and spouses be characterised by similarity in age race, religions and socio-economic status).

v. **Shared activities**: As people interact, they share activities. Shared activities provide opportunities for reinforcement, which leads to friendship and other forms of relationship.

3.3 Issues in Love and Attraction

Three major issues dominate the discussion of love and attraction. These issues include: social exchange, equity, and self-disclosure.

Social Exchange: This is a theoretical and economic model of human behaviour. It provides the general perspective for analysing all kinds of relationship (Homans, 1961). Its fundamental premise rests on the fact that relationships that provide more rewards and fewer costs will be more satisfying and endure longer. Rewards and cost do not occur in a vacuum psychologically. People trying with their relationships do have certain expectations (Eze, 1991).

Equity: The issue of equity is a version of social exchange theory. It stresses the ratio between what they get out of relationship (benefits) and what they put into the relationship. This basic equity formula is:

$$\text{Your Benefits} = \text{Your Partner's Benefits}$$

$$\text{Your Contributions} = \text{Your Partner's Contribution}$$

In the equity discourse, equity is not equality. It is the balance that counts.

Self-disclosure: This is the willingness to reveal intimate facts and feelings to another person; this plays a major role in an intimate relationship. Indicate there are multiple connections between self-disclosure and relationships as we like those who disclose to us as well as liking those to whom we have disclosed to. (Adebisi, 2008, Balogun, 1948 & Kestin, 1995).

4.0 Conclusion

Intimate relationships and partner's feelings for each other are closely intertwined with the basic issues as discussed in this unit.

5.0 Summary

Just as closeness to another affects our reactions to a relationship, so can the configuration of various aspects of ourselves. Personality of individuals in their relationships is just one aspect of their lives which is relatively separate from other identities. This study has therefore explored the dynamics of love and attraction which had gone over to analyse the problems involved in interpersonal relationships.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Conceptualise the terms love and attraction in the discourse of interpersonal relationship.
2. Examine the factors that lead to attraction.

7.0 References/Further Reading

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Unit 3 Psychological Experience of the Aging Spouse

1.0 Introduction

Death and dying are not only biological but psychological concepts; hence the two interact and sometimes overlap with each other. However, death is marked by a cessation of vital body functions, as posited by Carvil, Miller and Nash (1976) that death can be categorised into four main dimensions functional, brain, cellular and spiritual deaths. Functional death is also known as somatic death which includes the absence of heart beat and spontaneous breathing. Pryle and Ross (1963) also described somatic death as involving an individual's cessation of respiration which they term as irreversible death; brain death is established by the use of an electro-encephalogram (EEG) which detects the absence of electrical impulse activity in the brain.

Unresponsiveness to pain and unresponsiveness to stimulation as well as the absence of reflexes is established with the stiffening of the body muscles. It is known as rigor mortis, and also known as molecular death. For sometime after the somatic death, some cells may still be alive within the body and this made transplanting possible. Spiritual death is the dying of the mind. Meaningful personhood beyond the vegetative state is impossible (Udoh, 2006).

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:
- describe the experience of a dying person
- explain disengagement theory
- state various stages in dying process.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Disengagement Theory and Aging Process

Disengagement theory suggests that normal aging is a mutual withdrawal of disengagement between aging couples and others in the social system which they belong (Johnson, 1977). This death 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).

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. Kuberross (1999) submitted that 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 patients that are likely to survive (Palmone, 1971). They react shortly 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. They need to communicate with their world by survivors.

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).

3.2 Psychological Adaptation to Dying Experience

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

Phase 1 Denial and Isolation Stage: This stage is 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, rage and envy. His anger is directed against the threatening objects around him such as the doctors, nurses, hospital staff, family members and even God.

Phase 3 Bargaining Stage: After the anger stage comes the brief period of bargaining which the patient seem to have accepted what is coming to him; but needs some 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 seem to spring from un experienced guilt.

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 very 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.

4.0 Conclusion

The effect of the death of a spouse is far reaching on the other. It has been established that death and dying is both biological and physiological phenomena; being the last phase of the human existence, death and dying experiences is much dreaded and yet man has to pass through it. This unit has been able to explain the disengagement theory, psychological adaptation to dying experience and the psychological process involved in dying process.

5.0 Summary

This unit has been able to explain in clear terms the meaning of death and dying experience. It also gave a highlight of the various stages in the dying process and the problems associated with dying. It concluded with explanations on psychological adaptation to dying experiences.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Conceptualise death and dying experience.
2. The disengagement theory has been proposed to explain the dying process. Explain your personal understanding of this theory.
3. Describe the experience of the dying person in a dying process.

7.0 References/Further Reading

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Unit 4 Group Processes

1.0 Introduction

A group is defined as two or more individuals who share particular expectations and goals. 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 in-group, form the out group. Examples of groupings include national groups, classmates, and social groups, such as audience crowd, team, family and formal organisations.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:
- define group process
- explain a social group
- list types of social grouping
- state reasons for joining social groups
- state types of group activities.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Group Processes

When people are together in a group, they do not remain undifferentiated. They develop patterns of behaviours, divine tasks and adopt different roles. In some groups, the bonds among members are strong and enduring morale is high and there is general sense of grouping. When group members like one another, and are connected by bonds of friendship, cohesiveness is high. High level 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 (Olajide, 2000).

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 advertising industry. A brainstorming group is given a specific problem to discuss, such as writing slogans to advertise a new brand of toothpaste.

Gabrenya, 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 is diminishing returns. Social loafing is observable in a variety of tasks.

3.2 Types of Social Grouping

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

1. **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 do without one another.
2. **Audience:** All people listening to news on NTA are part of the same audience even though they don't stay together.
3. **Crowd:** When people are in physical productivity to a common situation or stimulus, we call them a crowd.
4. **Team:** A set of people regularly participating in an activity or purpose.
5. **Family:** These are people that live together, share common birth or legal arrangements. There are many types of families.
6. **Formal organisations:** This a setting for a higher aggregates of people to work together to achieve a common organisational goal.
7. Adebisi (2008) identified several reasons for joining one group or the other. These reasons include security, status, self-esteem affiliation and power.

3.3 Stages of Group Development

Forming: most team members are anxious though positive and polite. They have not fully understood what work team will do. Some are excited about the task ahead. As a leader, you will need to play a dominant role. This stage can last for some time as it is an introductory stage.

Storming: the team moves into the next stage where they need help to take responsibility for progress towards the goal. This is a good time to arrange a team building event.

Norming: this is a stage where people need to resolve their differences; appreciate colleagues' strengths and respect the leader's authority.

Performing: the team gets to a stage where hard work leads, without friction to the achievement of the team's goal. The set structures and processes will support well. A leader can successfully delegate and can now concentrate on developing members.

Adjourning: team members will eventually reach this stage. This is a time to celebrate the team's achievements. Working with people again will be easier especially, if past experiences are viewed positively.

3.4 Characteristics of a Group

A. Group size: An effective group size should not be too large. It should make room for adequate interaction and supervision.

B. Cohesiveness: 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.

C. Norms: Every group should have a code of conduct about what is acceptable behaviour. These are expected to apply to everyone. Some of these norms may be those that should be adhered to strictly and some may be those which can permit a wide range of behaviours. A group usually has sanctions like disapprovals, reproaches that will apply to those that deviate from laid down norms.

D. Roles:

i.) 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 to problems on hand and for authoritative information.
c. Opinion seeker: He or she 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. Rationales for suggestions made are 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.

ii.) Maintenance roles:

a. The encourager: He indicates warmth and solidarity within the group. He offers commendations and praises.
b. The harmoniser: He reconciles members when there are differences.
c. The compromiser: He offers compromises by yielding status and disciplining himself or herself to maintain harmony within the group.
d. The gatekeeper: He 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: He 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.

4.0 Conclusion

When people are together in a group, they do not remain entirely undifferentiated. They develop patterns of behaviour, divide tasks and adopt different roles. It has been shown in this unit that a group is better than separate individuals in carrying out tasks. Group polarisation and social loafing are identified as components at group process. The categories of groupings and their functions are also reviewed.

5.0 Summary

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

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Define group process.
2. Explain the functions of various social groupings.
3. Mention five maintenance roles.
4. Give and discuss three characteristics of a group.

7.0 References/Further Reading

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Unit 5 Language as a Tool of Interpersonal Relationship

1.0 Introduction

Central to all topics relating to thinking is the tool of language. Many concepts like knowledge, problem-solving, human intelligence, information processing, heavily depends on language. Language is a symbolic system that provides basis for our symbolic system that invariably provides the basis for our symbolic representations of the world. Language provides a vehicle for the mind's communication with others. Language is the system of sound, symbols, meaning and rules for their combination that constitute the mode of communication. Despite the differences among all languages, they share essential properties like semantics, generativist, symbols and displacement. Language as a means of communication is a social activity and displacement allows as the expression of our feelings, thoughts and plans to others. Social interaction is a complex two-way interaction which involves intricate rules which guide the speaker and the listener in their right action.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:
* define language as a tool of interpersonal relationship
* state elements of language
* explain the process of communication.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Elements of Language

Language is processed hierarchically from small units of sound produced through their mouths and noses. This hierarchical arrangement makes up the structure of a language. The structure consists of phoneme, morpheme, phrases and sentences.

Phoneme is the smallest unit of sound that constitute speech which are strung together to create meaningful sentences. Morpheme is the smallest units of meaning in language that comprise phonemes in strong phrases and consummation of morphemes which comprise groups of words that act as a unit and conveys meaning. Phrases are incomplete sentences without a finite verb.

3.2 Language and Communication

Verbal communication ensues through the use of language. Communication is 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 menage of 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 ménage 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, emphatic listening to appreciate others' attitudes, feelings and emotions, and casual listening to music and informal discussion for pleasure. Barriers to effective communication include; individuals' bias, status, differences, fear and other emotional overtones like trust, verbal difficulties, information - overload and lack of practice in the communication skills.

4.0 Conclusion

The importance of language in the cause of interpersonal relationship cannot be over emphasised. All human activities involving thinking are all language based. Hence, this unit has been able to explain conceptual meaning of language, elements of language, process of language and barriers of language.

5.0 Summary

This unit has been able to explain in clear terms the meaning of language. People share culture with the use of language in terms of structure, elements, levels and handling of barriers to communication.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Define language as a tool of interpersonal relationship.
2. Explain the process of communication.
3. Highlight the barriers of communication in a specific culture.

7.0 References/Further Reading

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