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THE EFFECTIVENESS OF A HUMAN RELATIONS
TRAINING PROGRAM IN DEVELOPING ELEMENTS
NECESSARY FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION
AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS.

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by
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ABSTRACT

This study sought to determine the effectiveness of a human relations training program in (a) developing elements for effective communication (namely self-concept, self-disclosure, clarity of expression, listening, and conflict-management skills) and (b) improving interpersonal relationships. It sought also to determine the relationship between these elements of communication and the quality of interpersonal relationships of Malaysian adolescents studying in St. Michael's Institution, Ipoh, Malaysia.

It was hypothesized that there is a significant difference between the group which attended the human relations training program and the group which did not attend the program in their change scores (pretest-immediate posttest, pretest-delayed posttest) on the overall factors of the Interpersonal Communication Inventory (ICI) as evaluated by the participants themselves, and on the overall factors of the Interpersonal Relationship Rating Scale, as observed by the participants themselves (IRRS) and their significant other (IRRSSO). Secondly, it was hypothesized that there is a significant relationship between the elements necessary for effective communication and the



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quality of interpersonal relationships as measured by the participants' immediate posttest scores on the ICI and IRRS.

The experimental pretest-posttest control group design was employed in this study.

The subjects consisted initially of 42 students selected from a group of 67 volunteers. These 42 were those who scored average or below on the ICI, based on local norms. The stratified sampling method was used in order to ensure a good mix of male and female students as well as a balanced racial composition in both experimental and control groups. Each group had 21 subjects before the start of the human relations training program. At some point after the program, experimental mortality claimed 4 subjects, reducing the number in the experimental group to 20 (16 males, 4 females) and the control group to 18 (11 males, 7 females). The results of this study were based on this final total of 38 subjects.

Those in the experimental group participated in a three-day live-in human relations training program which involved the use of structured exercises and group dynamics directed towards improving communication skills in the five areas stated earlier.



The posttests were administered five days (immediate posttest), and then again one month (delayed posttest) after the program.

For statistical treatment of data, the t -test for independent samples was used to determine if there was a significant difference between the group which attended the human relations training program and the group which did not attend the program in their change scores (pretest-immediate posttest, pretest-delayed posttest) on the overall factors of the ICI, IRRS, and IRRSSO. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was computed to determine if there is a significant relationship between elements necessary for effective communication and the quality of interpersonal relationships, as measured by the immediate posttest scores on the ICI and IRRS.

Findings showed that there was a significant difference between the group which attended the program and the group which did not in the change scores (pretest-immediate posttest, pretest-delayed posttest) on the overall factors of the ICI, $t(36) = 3.11$, $p < .05$ and $t(36) = 1.81$, $p < .05$, respectively. There was also a significant difference between the experimental and control group in their change scores (pretest-immediate



posttest, pretest-delayed posttest) on the overall factors of the IRRS, $t(36) = 2.81, p < .05$ and $t(36) = 1.90, p < .05$, respectively. A significant difference was likewise noted between the significant others' ratings of the experimental and control groups in their change scores (pretest-immediate posttest, pretest-delayed posttest) on the overall factors of the IRRSSO, $t(36) = 2.51, p < .05$ and $t(36) = 1.91, p < .05$, respectively. Finally, a significant relationship between the elements necessary for effective communication and the quality of interpersonal relationships, as measured by the immediate posttest scores on the ICI and the IRRS, respectively ($r = .3169, p < .05$), was also noted.

Based on these findings, the researcher concluded that the human relations training program was effective in enhancing communication skills, which led to an improvement in the quality of interpersonal relationships of those who attended the program as compared to those who did not attend the program. He also deduced that the changes effected by participation in the human relations training program did produce a lasting and significant improvement in interpersonal relationships and competence in communication skills,



based on the of the results one month after the program.

