

The Role of Close Relationships in an Individual's Life

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Abstract: This paper presents an overview on the role of close relationships in an individual's life.

Keywords: close relationships, individual's life

1. Introduction

Close relationships are a vital component of health and well-being. There is compelling evidence that close relationships contribute to a long, healthy and happy life. A social psychological approach to close relationships focused on interaction between attention to both behavior and what goes in people's mind (emotions and cognitions). Within social psychology up to late 1970s, research into relationships concentrated on interpersonal attraction; namely, what factors lead people to be attracted to one another at the initial stage of relationship development? This research tended to be a theoretical and the results read like a shopping list of variables that influence attraction, including similarity, proximity, physical attractiveness, and so forth. In the 1980s the psychological Zeitgeist shifted toward the study of the much greater complexity inherent in the development, maintenance dissolution phases of dyadic romantic relationships. This shift was prompted by several key developments in the 1970s. First, John Gottman and others in the clinical area began research that, for the first time, observed and carefully measured the dyadic interchanges of married couples in an attempt to predict who would divorce. Second, Zick Rubin and others becomes interested in love and devised reliable scales that would measure the concept. Third, Harold Kelley led a team of social psychologists in producing a seminal book published in 1983 (close relationships) which presented the first full blooded treatment of close relationships from an interactional, social psychological perspective.

2. Objectives

- To study the close relationships in an individual's life.
- To know the level of securedness in close relationships.
- To know the level of mutual understanding in a close relationship of individuals.

3. Literature Review

A number of studies have been done in comparing cohabitation with marital relationships. Cohabitation, like

marital relationships involve sharing a household with an intimate partner who is a potential confidant, caretaker and provider and both involve social roles that are seen as improving health and well-being, including someone to monitor health and provide information (Waite & Gallagher 2000).

Despite the similarities, a lot of differences have also been found. Previous research generally finds lower levels of commitment and relationships quality in cohabiting relative to marital relationships (e.g., Brown 2003, 2004; Stanley, Whitton & markman, 2004; Hansen, Moun & Shapiro, 2007).

Although some studies have not found gender differences in the quality of same sex friendships (e.g. Rose, 1985; Jones 1991), when differences do emerge, it is women who evaluate their same sex, friendships as higher in quality.

According to Reis, Clark and Holmes (2004), supportive behaviors have a positive influence on relationship security and satisfaction when partners are responsive, understanding and validating. Cutrona et al (2007) found that support that did not match recipients' needs was associated with proper concurrent satisfaction precisely because partners were judged to be less understanding.

4. Methods

This is a theoretical based paper so secondary has been collected.

5. Findings

After going through few reviews I came to know this framework revealed important gaps in knowledge about relationships and health in an individual's life. Future work in this area will benefit from taking into account individual differences in attachment, adopting a more explicit dynamic approach examine more integrated models that test for mediating process and incorporating a broader range of relationship constructs that have implications for health.

6. Conclusion

A theoretical framework for studying close relationship can accelerate progress by generating new research directions designed to pinpoint the mechanisms through which close relationships promote or undermine health. Furthermore, this knowledge can be applied to develop more effective

interventions to help individuals and their relationship partners with health related challenges.

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