Advance Course in Social Psychology

Lecture 10: Interpersonal Attraction: Part-II

Hello friends, welcome back. In the previous discussion, I discussed about interpersonal attraction, factors influencing interpersonal attraction and factors influencing friendship based on similarity and mutual liking. Today, I will continue the discussion that how interpersonal attraction, similarity and mutual liking leads to social relationships and how they are formed. Because when we talk about social relationships, they are formed and they have more mature emotions encompasses between two people, it is love and care. So, when we are talking about social relationships, they are formed in groups and involve more than liking that is care and love. There can be liking, disliking, but whenever we are engaging in establishing social relationship that involves more deep feelings or understanding about two people or understanding each other in a very in-depth level that is about care and love.

So, social relationships are formed, it is not about attraction, it is not about liking, it is not about mutual liking or friendship or similarity. It is more about continuum or a unity where two people tend to become one in a way that their ideas, beliefs, opinions are common to each other. There is no difference in their own understanding. To understand more about social relationships, Levinger and Snoeck presented a simple framework for showing the development of relationship right from superficial to deep or involvement deep involvement and there are stages that how relationship also matures in its own way.

So, I will go to this diagram where Levinger and Snoeck has talked about three levels of contact. So, the first is the zero contact where two people are unrelated to each other, there is no probability in long run that two people would ever interact. But with a gradual process of exposure, two people come close based on superficial acquaintances and they find some probability that they can meet and interact. There is acquaintance and attraction. Zero contact is leading in gradual process to approach where there is possibility of acquaintance and attraction.

This is the first level of establishing social relationships. With the gradual process of interaction, there is more awareness. People will find that they are unilateral in their attitudes, in their impressions and their attractions and again they are exchanging their attitudes and leading to a surface contact. Initially, there was zero, but with the gradual process of interaction they become aware and eventually lead to a surface contact where they are exchanging the attitudes, similarity, liking, disliking about specific aspects and there is probability of affiliation. People tend to affiliate with each other based on number of similarities.

If we can reconsider our previous discussion where we have talked about proportion of similarity. At this point people tend to calculate the proportion of similarity between each other, they tend to exchange, they tend to disclose information with each other and try to build up relationships. Those relationships can be at superficial level, but ultimately there is some kind of involvement, deep involvement when they are sharing. So, as soon as the approach level that is a zero contact level reaches the level of awareness and there is sense of affiliation then people tend to make efforts to build relationships and as soon as people tend to have this approach of affiliation there is a kind of mutuality or a continuum. Here the continuum means that people, two people who are engaged in a relationship tend to identify and have a desire to express that relationship to keep it in long.

There is no point in breaking that relationship based on similarities and interaction. So, their continuum is there, but even that level of continuum has three levels. It is minor interaction in intersection, major intersection and total unity. So, at this point it is not only about approach affiliation, it is about attachment. That is the degree of attachment between two people.

Maybe they are in a relationship, their relationship has established, but what is the level of relationship even at that stage? Whether it is minor intersection, whether there is major intersection or there is total unity. So, at this point of or level of social relationship or the process of social relationship, minor major intersection is there and total unity is there and at this level there is strong possibility of consolidation, collaboration, there is trust, there is secure attachment or there is desire for a secure attachment and there is balance, cooperation, mutuality and intimacy. So, as soon as two people tend to reach at this level of social relationship, people have strong desire for a continuum in form of total unity. So, based on these we can see the positive transitions that are expanding from one level to the other. Initially the positive transactions were absolutely zero, but with the gradual process of attraction and approach these transitions are becoming very much mature in their own way and they are towards total continuum or total unity.

So, how they are approaching to each other, how they are affiliating to each other and how they are attaching to each other based on consolidation, cooperation, collaboration, mutuality, intimacy and secured attachment that establish a strong relationship. At this point the person two people when leads to total unity there is more deep feelings that is love and care. According to Levinger and Snowy this seems based on a diagram to be a simple process, but actually it requires lot of time and patience that is being delivered by two people when they are engaged in interaction right from attraction, right from approach they have towards each other, right from affiliation that is they tend to have the tendency of building relationship and attachment in terms of consolidation, mutuality and intimacy. In all the transitions people are together, but that togetherness is very much defined at different different levels. So, this is how Levinger and Snowy has talked about social relationships which are focused on involvement as a crucial variable while separating superficial from deeper relationship.

So, here the same thing has been reflected in this diagram that how two people are involving themselves in deeper interactions, communication and finally leading to deeper relationship. Next comes factors promoting intimacy. Now once according to Snowy also the person two people have reached the state of probability of mutuality how this stage is being maintained it is not that two people have reached its stage of mutuality and the process of establishing social relationship is over. It requires more efforts and there are certain factors that define these level as well. So, the factors that promote intimacy are mutuality, self-disclosure and shared activities and interdependence.

So, when we are talking about factors promoting intimacy it is a close familiar affectionate personal relationship with the other person. There is more mutuality that is beyond liking and there is close association with the deeper knowledge understanding of the other person attitude, beliefs and ideas. This stage is something that even the other person would not say anything, but the spouse, the partner, the friend would understand the unsaid words as well. This is intimacy. So, intimacy is a close familiar affectionate personal relationship which requires more patience to sustain this kind of deeper relationship.

So, mutuality is the first factor. This involves the belief that the other person is trustworthy, dependable and reliable and two people take account of each other's feelings and desires and the relationship is pro-social. Here pro-social means that expanding or extending your help and support even when not expected and not expecting anything in return. The person to whom you are extending your help is also not expecting and at the same time you are not expecting in return that whether the person will return the same help in future or not. It is simply understanding, deep understanding of each other's feelings and emotions that defines mutuality or the total continuum.

The other factor is self-disclosure. It is an act of revealing personal information about oneself to another person and increases with mutuality in a relationship. There is empathy between two people. Now here disclosure means not only extending simple superficial day to day information, it is about empathy. You are sharing some emotional state with the other person with whom you are maintaining social relationship, but at the same time you are empathetic.

You can step down into the shoes of that person and understand what the person is going through. So, this is self-disclosure. It is not only about just giving some information to the other person. It is about being empathetic towards the other person. So, prosocial and empathy defines intimacy and the other is shared activities and interdependence.

Two people influence each other's lives and engage in many joint activities that requires more sharing of the information, more positive reinforcement and there are more opportunities provided to each other which expands cooperation, which expands interaction and there are more opportunities to establish themselves deeply when it comes to affection or relationship. So, the three factors that define intimacy are mutuality, self-disclosure and shared activities or interdependence that defines prosocial, being prosocial, being empathetic and being interdependent. So, that is how intimacy is being maintained. So, if I go back to this diagram, if I see about mutuality, the third level, a continuum where there is attachment, there is more mutuality, there is more trust, consolidation and cooperation, then it is about mutuality, it is about disclosure, it is about shared activities and interdependence. Next comes measurement issues.

How to understand the relationships among people? There is no way to quantify relationships. It is all about what you feel with the other person. We can just categorize those feelings in terms of liking, disliking, neutral feeling, mild liking, mild disliking. But how to quantify the relationships? It is a difficult task.

But J.L. Morino has identified a method to map and understand social relationships among members in a group. Now they have, J.L. Morino has developed a technique for mapping the relationship of attraction or rejection among members of a group and this technique is known as sociometry, where relationships are being mapped based on type of relationship in terms of liking, in terms of disliking, in terms of having a clique. That means within a group itself, 2 or 3 people will be so closely bonded that they will not allow any other member to interact with them or there can be an isolate with whom no one is interested to talk or interact to a particular person.

So sociometry is a technique for mapping the relationship of attraction and rejection among members of a group. It is a method of studying interpersonal relationships among members expressed in terms of choice, rejection, attraction, indifference or patterns of interaction. That means, pattern of interaction here means that maybe one person is reciprocating to the other person, but yes the other person will not respond to the same person. That means it is one way not two way. So these are the patterns of relationship that exist in a group and how we can understand those relationships.

So sociometric explorations reveal hidden structures that give group its form in terms of clique as I explained you that within a group of 10 or 15 people, 2 or 3 people or 5 people will be so close to each other that they will not allow other members to interact with them. So they form a clique within the group itself. It can be a liking of 2 people towards each other. It can be that 3 people like each other a lot. It can be positive or negative choices or preferences or there can be an isolate where nobody is interested in talking to that one particular person in the group.

So when we talk about sociometry it is about mapping the relationship within the group itself. So J.L. Perino has identified the types of relationship based on attraction, rejection, choices based on these type of diagram where we will see that A is the most liked person. A, B, C and D all are interacting with each other where we can say that A is the star member of the group or he is the most liked person or we can also say that in a group of 10 or 15 people A, B and C and D they form a clique where they are so close to each other that they will not allow any other member to interact with them.

So they form a clique where A is also considered as a star member. So this is a type of relationship that can be mapped based on sociometry. The other can be a triad where E, F and G they are very much close to each other. They are preferable to each other.

They have choices for each other. They are attracted to each other and they will not allow any other member to interact with them. So this is a triad. Maybe they interact with the other person, but these 3 people have strong liking for each other and they form a triad. The other can be a diad where I and J are very much likable towards to each other and they form a close association.

They form a diad. Now the idea is that when we are talking about triad even 3 members are there they can resolve any kind of conflict. But when it is diad there is no other way to resolve the conflict and 2 people who are attracted to each other can have a conflicting interest and they can disband. But in triad there is a third party or third person who can help 2 people to resolve the conflicts within the group itself. The other is the isolate where no member is interested in talking to this particular member. This is this member is termed as isolate.

And people have inhibitions interacting with this one particular member. And the other hand we have unreciprocated choices or negative choices between K and L. K is responding to L. K has attraction towards L.

K is responding to L. But L has no choice or attraction towards K and the choice or reciprocation is negative or unreciprocated choice is there. So L has an unreciprocated choice for K. So based on the sociometry we can identify so many kinds of preferences for each other among members. It can be the most like person like A which is a star member.

There can be a clique. There can be a diad. They can be a triad. There is an isolate. And at the same time there are n reciprocated choices or negative choices among members. These are

sociograms where the relationships have understanding of relationship has been identified on certain parameters as well.

It is not only about positive or negative choices. There are about neutral choices. There are about reciprocal choices. There are about non-reciprocal choices. And there can be about choices between male and female.

So we can expand sociogram based on the requirement of understanding of relationship among members. So in this kind of sociograms or even if we compare this sociogram everything is similar but more we add some demographics the more it helps to define the relationship among members in terms of male and female. It can be about age groups as well. So this is how sociometry helps in understanding the relationships among members at different levels. The other is sociometric matrices where we are identifying or quantifying the relationship based on the number of choices that every member receives from the other members of the group.

For example, A has received a choice of two members. That means A is being preferred by B and E. Similarly B has a choice of A, D and E. That means in all A has received two choices of preferences, B has received three preferences, C has not received any choice of preference from the other members of the group, D has received only one and the maximum choice has been received by E that is the four.

So E is the most liked member in the group. So this is how we can quantify the preferences, the choices based on this matrices. Similarly there is sociometric choice matrix where the sociologist can easily identify the total number of choices a person has received and out of this total number of choices how many choices are positive and how many are negative. For instance based on this sociometric choice matrix only, A has received all in all three choices where one choice is positive and the other two are negative. So this is how we can quantify the other members of the group. Similarly B has received one positive choice and three negative choice.

So overall choice is four. That means how many members perceive a particular person in a positive manner or in a negative manner. So we can say in this sociometric choice matrix also that D has received maximum positive choices and no negative choice has been received by the member D which again identifies or indicates that D is the star member of the group or the most liked person of the group. So these are the different ways that J.L. Marino has identified to map relationship among group members not only relationship the different kinds of flavors of relationship that exist in any group in form of clique, in form of diet, triad, unreciprocated choice or isolate.

So this is how because as I mentioned just now that understanding relationship can require a lot of process, but quantifying relationship requires lot of efforts and it is not possible to quantify social relationships. Next comes merits of sociometry. It is useful in understanding the interpersonal relationship among group members which is the foremost objective of sociometry as well. It is useful in understanding the group structure that is what extend the group is stable and unstable. The more the choices are fractured the more it becomes on the group to survive in wrong run or it becomes unstable and soon it can disband.

It is useful in studying group effectiveness in terms of productivity and performance. The more the choices are positive the more people can contribute or cooperate with each other to reach the group goals. It is useful in understanding the social structure of the group in terms of values, beliefs, stereotypes and prejudice. Now here if we identify any person as an isolate then that person can be a victim of stereotypical attitude or prejudice or any discriminatory attitude that any member can execute towards that particular person. So this tense helps sociologists to understand the core reasons of this prevalent relationships among members in terms of stereotypes, prejudice or any racial or discriminatory attitude.

It helps in gauging counterproductive work behavior such as distrust, bullying or antagonism that is active hostility or opposition. It can be in terms of if I go to this diagram here that may be triad can engage in antagonism, active hostility. They are imposing all the rules, all the norms on the other person. It can be bullying as well, it can be bullying or it can be distrust. May be a person who is considered as an isolate may be the person who not want to trust that person.

Similarly it helps those with team building without breaking confidentiality. The more the group members or relationship is more intact among members, they are more close and proximal to each other. The more the information can be kept confidential, the more the members are fragmented. It becomes difficult for the group members or the leader to maintain the confidentiality of the information that exists within the group. It can be used for group therapy in various settings such as schools, military, business settings or corporate training.

The percentage that based on the relationship among members, the relationship can be enhanced in different kind of settings. For example, in school a child can be an isolate based on different kind of group therapies, a child can be understood and he can also be transformed, his behaviour can be transformed and make him a part of a particular group. It can be about military settings, how to expand team building, how to motivate employees based on understanding of the relationship among members of the group. Next comes demerits of sociometry, it does not promote intensive study for analysing relationship and there are statistical limitations to infer

relationship among group members. As I mentioned earlier that it is very difficult and a tedious task job to quantify relationships, but still it lacks statistical limitations.

  It has some statistical limitations because just giving a frequency number based on choices or negative or positive choices does not solve the purpose or suffice the purpose of sociogram rather enhancing group relationship based on certain techniques will help to identify and modify relationship among group members. So, this is all about sociometry based on interpersonal attraction that is sociometry, it is also about factors promoting intimacy and social relationship. So, that is all for today. I will continue in the next class with the new module. We are done with this module 3. Thank you so much. Thank you.