

# The effect of interpersonal sensitivity on attractiveness essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

The current study examines the effect of interpersonal sensitivity on attractiveness among Filipino De La Salle University students. Interpersonal sensitivity is the ability to perceive accurately and thoroughly the feelings, thoughts, emotions and needs of the person and to respond accurately to his or her interpersonal, personal and social environment. On the other hand, attractiveness is part of a social process wherein two individuals are involved and one of them transmits a verbal or visual stimulus while expecting the other to give a positive response.

The researchers conducted an experiment wherein they chose seventy random De La Salle students as their participants. The experiment was conducted using a vignette scale containing a situation showing high sensitivity and a situation showing low sensitivity and the participants were asked to mark on the scale which situation they are most likely or unlikely attractive to. The results of the experiment showed that there was a significant difference between a person with high interpersonal sensitivity and a person with low interpersonal sensitivity.

The Effect of Interpersonal Sensitivity on Attractiveness Among Filipino De La Salle University students, it is part of their nature to develop a sense of closeness with one another and to establish a good relationship with each other because of the strong interpersonal relationship they have among themselves due to the sense of "connectedness" they have, enabling each other to relate very well amongst themselves.

Furthermore, given that they are part of an interdependent culture, the effect they have on their social relationship with others is that they tend to

value and consider very much the feelings, thoughts and desires of the person they are socially engaged to at any given moment. According to Markus and Kitayama (1991), given a situation where an interdependent view is portrayed, given two individuals, where the first person asks the second person where he wants to go and also gives specific preferences.

The result of this situation is that the second person slightly hesitates in answering the question because he feels that the first person must somehow know what he wants and the second person will go with whatever answer the first person decides to choose. In relation to this situation, according to Mead (1934), "taking the role of the other" requires an individual to be able to interpret the feelings and desires of the other individual involved in the situation and to consider the other persons wishes and make him realize his personal goals.

Moreover, in Markus and Kitayama's article (1991) "under the assumptions of an interdependent self, it is the responsibility of the host to be able to "read" the mind of the friend and offer what the host perceives to be the best for the friend. It is the duty of the guest, on the other hand, to receive the favor with grace and to be prepared to return the favor in the near future, if not right at the next moment". The main study of this paper is to define and explain the concept of interpersonal sensitivity and how it affects attractiveness in relation to social relationships among Filipino De La Salle university students.

Interpersonal sensitivity refers to the ability of an individual to perceive and sense another person's thoughts, feelings, needs and desires in a particular

social context and to provide an appropriate response towards the other person. In relation to interpersonal sensitivity, the researchers included the concept of “ taking the role of the other”, when seen among Filipino DLSU students, they tend to feel and sense what the other person is feeling and to seem to know the wants and needs of the person.

Moreover, they also tend to express themselves more nonverbally than verbally and use their body language and facial expressions to express and portray their feelings towards other people in a given situation or manner. “ Interpersonal sensitivity is a term describing the ability to sense, perceive accurately, and respond appropriately to one’s personal, interpersonal, and social environment. ” (Bernieri 2001, p. 3).

Moreover, it is a multidimensional construct containing different aspects such as varied skills and capabilities, as well as incentives from the different types of people and the different situations and circumstances (Davis, 1983). In the context of the interdependent culture, individuals prefer to express their true desires, thoughts and feelings through their body gestures and movements and their facial expressions. Pursuing this further, interaction is described as an “ expression game” because people cannot directly read the thoughts, feelings and desires of other people by trying to read their mind.

It is more of being able to interpret the body gestures and movements and facial expressions of the person. In addition, it is through these unconscious and conscious behavior where individuals somehow express their internal feelings and thoughts in understanding their current situation and how they intend to respond to it. Also, an interdependent individual considers the

value of regarding the decisions and choices that other people make in order to have a sense of belongingness, fulfillment and obligation to become part of an interpersonal relationship (Markus and Kitayama 1991, p. 227).

In order for an individual to implement interpersonal sensitivity, the focal objective is to form a well-established relationship with the significant other (Hamaguchi, 1985). Also, the degree of closeness and connection to each other matter due to the fact that through the development of a firm and deep relationship, it is evident that the individuals involved are more likely to be familiar with each others' preferences, feelings and needs. Together with interpersonal sensitivity there are three other sub concepts which are empathy, sympathy and in the Filipino context, pakikiramdam.

According to Smith (2007), empathy " is an active process, which...can contribute to understanding...it is the source of meaning whereby ' I' experience a being as another ' I', another subject, another living body acting by will and so on". Furthermore, empathy is described as a " unique mode of consciousness" which enables us to experience other's thoughts and emotions and to help us understand others by putting ourselves in their " shoes". Also, " empathy involves sharing the perceived emotion of another feeling with another.

This vicarious affective reaction may occur as a response to overt perceptible cues indicative of another's affective state (e. g. , a person's facial expression) , or as the consequence of inferring another's state on the basis of indirect cues (e. g. , the nature of the other's situation). Thus, we define empathy as an emotional response that stems from another's

emotional state or situation". Meanwhile, sympathy is "acknowledging a person's emotional hardships and providing comfort and assurance".

Furthermore, the term *pakikiramdam*, "is the pivotal value of shared inner perception... refers to heightened awareness and sensitivity" (Enriquez 1992). Also, "it is a request to feel or to be sensitive to and to also share an emotional feeling" (Mataragnon, 1987). On the other hand, attractiveness is part of the social process involving a person expressing verbal, visual or other stimuli towards the other individual and receives a positive response. Also, it is said that attraction also has motivational qualities such as the yearning to make a connection with another person in order to satisfy his or her needs and feelings.

Moreover, attraction is part of a social process wherein one person transfers verbal or visual stimuli to another individual while expecting more or less a positive response. In addition, attraction involves motivational qualities that longs for a sense of connection with another person in order to satisfy his or her needs. (Baumeister and Leary, 1995). Furthermore, attraction involves the positive feelings for another and can be seen in friendship and by liking another person.

In addition, attraction is present when an individual focuses on the physical features of a person, when two individuals are really close friends and when two individuals share similar interests and likes (Insko and Wilson, 1997).

Lastly, attraction emphasizes the degree of closeness when common likes and interests are shared among individuals. Moreover, associating with the other is caused by how much attracted he or she is with the other person in

terms of their liking and interest on a number of specific things while creating a positive feeling. (Byrne, 1971).

Pursuing this further, individuals with similar behavior and attitude are more likely to be attracted to each other. (Rosenbaum, 1986). Discussion The present study predicted that among Filipino De La Salle University students, high interpersonal sensitivity is more attractive than low interpersonal sensitivity. For the most part, this hypothesis was supported by the number of responses given from answering a survey containing a situation showing a person with high interpersonal sensitivity and a situation showing a person with low interpersonal sensitivity.

Given the results, it is evident that our findings are in line with the theory proposed by Markus and Kitayama (1991), stating that individuals from an interdependent culture are most likely to interpret what another individual is thinking or feeling. Also, the nature of the “ taking the role of the other... involves the willingness and ability to feel and think what others are feeling and thinking to absorb information without being told” (Mead, 1934).

It is evident that people with interpersonal sensitivity are more likely seen more attractive to others than those individuals with low interpersonal sensitivity. People who are fully aware of the others feelings, thoughts, desires and needs and can give the appropriate response to that person’s present condition, then that person is seen as very appealing rather than a person who is unable to provide the right responses and who is not fully aware of the feelings of what the other person is experiencing at the moment.

The findings of this study imply that people who are in a relationship or just friends, it is good to take the opportunity to really get to know them really well and to establish that sense of relatedness and connectedness with them and to develop that deep understanding between or among yourselves in order for you to form an interpersonal sensitive relationship and develop a strong appeal among yourselves.