Miscommunication and Conflict Resolution in Monogamous Relationships

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Abstract. Miscommunication is cognitive-affective dissonance that happens during message transaction with potential disturbances of significant meaning transfer and relationship imbalance in relation to romantic associations. For monogamously related individuals, miscommunication is often expressed through relationship conflict which necessitates an efficient conflict resolution strategy to preserve relationship stability as well as relationship quality for a couple. The aim of this research is to examine and clarify (phénomènonlogically) the phenomenon of miscommunication dynamics and importantly, the mediating influence of assertive communication based on conflict resolution technique according to Robert E. Alberti and Michael L. Emmons' Assertiveness Theory theory outline. Essentially, this research is meant to assess kinds of miscommunication experiences of relations, influence of miscommunication on relationship quality, as well as mediating influence of assertive communication as a link for understanding notions of differences of perspectives according to prior theoretical outline for effective conflict resolution for relations of all kinds. Research method qualifies as phenomenological with application of key participants' analysis through intensive interviews with respondents. Expected findings for current research are supposed to give significant contribution to truth through technique application of promoting healthier relations with clearer and more meaningful communication through principles of assertive communication according to research outline aims objectives.

Keywords: Assertive Communication, Conflict Resolution, Miscommunication, Monogamous Relationships, Phenomenology.

1 Introduction

From an etymological point of view, the origin of the word communication is derived from the Latin word 'Communis' referring to the process of establishing togetherness, or it may also be related to the Latin word 'Communico' meaning share. From a social science perspective, communication is viewed as a process where ideas, expectancies, and messages are encoded in meaningful symbols sent by the communicator to the communicant (Depari, in Herbert). Additionally, according to Theodore Herbert, communication is the process where meaning is transferred from one person to another, usually with the intention of reaching a given objective [1].

As a function of transmitting and decoding messages between two or more parties, communication facilitates mutual understanding. The flow of communication represents a primary expression of social interaction and provides a precursor for the formation of a social network and dissemination of information in a particular social setting. Hence, interpersonal and intrapersonal communication skills have been regarded as an important requirement for each and every individual for his/her adaptation and interaction with his/her surroundings.

Although it plays a crucial role, there exist challenges for this process of communication, including miscommunication. Miscommunication can be defined as a failure to communicate meaning through a process that results in a lack of understanding between two parties involved [2]. Miscommunication plays a crucial role as a major cause for conflict that results from romantic relations concerning monogamy.

Conflicts are imminent within a relationship. Nevertheless, if the conflicts are not constructively resolved because of lack of appropriate communication skills, they may result in destructive recurring conflicts [3]. Moreover, it has been found to be true that conflicts, if unresolved, have the latent capacity to stimulate either emotionally or physically explosive violence [4]. The importance of constructive conflict resolution and appropriate communication skills to sustain harmony cannot be overlooked in a relationship.

The process of conflict resolution is not simply the end to a disagreement, but rather a process that must be accepted and worked towards by both sides, where different views must be accepted and the expression of needs

and feelings must not be done at the expense of the rights of the other individual. The resolution to this misunderstanding is achieved through proper communication methods that incorporate assertive communication techniques.

Miscommunication symptom examples that lead to disharmony are often associated with lack of assertiveness in the way that you fail to listen to your partner, use the wrong tone of voice that results in misunderstanding, keep your feelings down, use hurtful words, fail to address problems that continue as you do not discuss them, use passive-aggressive communication in the way that you send unclear messages or avoid conversations that do not honor the opinion of the other partner in the relationship, as well as telling lies.

For skills in conflict resolution, may be honed by mastering assertive communication skills that will help the individual express himself or herself in an assertive manner. This will ensure that couples are able to overcome their differences in opinions and minimize the effects that may arise from misunderstandings in their relationship.

Noting the crucial role that assertive communication can perform in lessening the intensity of miscommunication and conflicts, a thorough study on the matter will be a pressing concern. This proposed study seeks to discuss the types and signs of miscommunication that commonly exist within monogamous relations, the factors contributing to miscommunication, the harmful after-effects of miscommunication that could eventually lead to a less intimate relationship, and the role that assertive communication can perform as an appropriate response to conflicts.

Owing to these objectives, the research questions would be: What are the dynamics and difficulties of communication that couples face in a monogamous relationship? What are the most dominant factors that lead to miscommunication, and how can assertive communication serve as an intervention to achieve a middle ground in cases of conflict? What is the implication of miscommunication in a monogamous relationship based on its intensity?

2 Literature Review

This is a systematic approach conducted by researchers to analyze existing works with the purpose of having a comparative point and theoretical platform for an upcoming study. A review of existing work goes beyond a mere source, and it has the purpose of emphasizing the academic position and confirming the new contribution of a study. In this section, researchers offer a compilation of different findings related to the study with a purpose of developing a strong conceptual platform. The following are some of the existing works with a theme linked to the study.

2.1 Previous Research

Firstly, the study titled "*Conflicts over Intimacy within Mature, Happy Marriages - Relying and Reliability of Intimate Relationships*" employs the use of Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPAcritical) that focused on the lived experiences of 10 married couples in their middle-aged stage of marriage when they recognize themselves as "happy in marriage." The study was keen to focus on the dyadic communication as well as the meta-communication that took place before, during, as well as after the conflict in the context of distance and intimacy in the relationship. Open questions were used in the study that encouraged the couples to discuss their experiences in relation to conflicts that may arise in the context of intimacy and distance in their marriages. From the study, two primary themes emerged. First, turning points/Crisis points in the couple's lives impact the degree of intimacy of the couple. Secondly, turning points in the couple's lives informed the couple that they cannot rely on anybody but themselves (an aspect that was predominant in the issue of intimacy in the relationship) [5].

Second, a study entitled "*What Type of Communication during Conflict is Beneficial for Intimate Relationships?*" appearing in a prominent psychology journal examined different communication techniques employed by couples in a relationship to tackle conflicts effectively. Overall and McNulty revealed in this research that effectiveness does not depend upon a single communication style but four important dimensions: the need for change (how threatening a problem is to the endurance of the association itself), the degree to which change is possible (name the problems which can be removed or altered), change capability in the partner, and the sense or feeling of security with one's partner to be responsive to the problem or issue. The conclusion reached in this research clearly states the advantages of opposing communication in scenarios where severe problems need to be removed and the couple has changed capability but turns out to be hazardous to relationships if the couple has a lack of confidence or a lack of feelings of security in one's partner. Cooperative communication with affection and validation communication turns out to be hazardous in scenarios where severe problems have to be removed or associated with change but proves to be helpful in scenarios with minute or unrestrained problems [6].

Three, study with the title "*Semiotic Silence: Its Use as a Conflict-Management Strategy in Intimate Relationships*," employed a qualitative approach and a semiotic phenomenological framework in examining how married couples utilize silence as a conflict management strategy in their intimate relationships. By applying the three-step approach in analyzing the data collected from the study, Oduro-Frimpong discovered that the

participants in the study experience silences in three ways to manage conflicts that were inevitable in their intimate relationships. The study made clear indications that silence is not simply the lack of communications but possess certain meanings in relation to an interpersonal context. The study deviates from the usual negative perceptions associated with silences in intimate relationships by presenting an original point that silences could be an adaptive approach in conflict resolution in order to allow couples to calm down in the process of conflict resolution [7].

Four, this qualitative study entitled "*Facilitating Factors of Mentalizing in Marital Relationships: A Thematic Analysis of Content and Process Dynamics*" applies Thematic Analysis to examine the factors that facilitate mentalizing, the capacity to understand and interpret one's internal state and that of others. The study was conducted using semi-structured interviews of 14 couples who were in a relationship for at least two years. The results included three themes: content factors (emotional literacy, cognitive insight, and knowledge of one's partner), process factors (effective communication, empathic engagement, conflict resolution, use of humor, curiosity, and patience), and content-process factors (contextual understanding, flexibility, and shared emotional regulation). It appears that this study makes the important point that having an understanding of one's partner's perspective and emotional experience is an essential element of good conflict resolution. Improved mentalizing skills in this way will allow couples to avoid the misunderstandings that arise from assumption based on an inaccurate understanding of our partner's intent and feelings [8].

Five, in the qualitative descriptive research titled "*Communication Patterns in Conflict Interactions in Premarital Couples Who Are in Abusive Relationships,*" the researcher employed in-depth interviews to study the conflict interactions with respect to communication patterns in unwed couples who are involved in abusive relationships. The researcher employed in-depth interviews, and source triangulation was utilized to determine the validity of the data. The researcher applied techniques of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing in an attempt to process the data. The researcher concluded that conflict may arise due to infidelity, verbal abuse, non-verbal abuse, as well as physical abuse in relationships. Destructive communication patterns observed in conflict situations have a tendency of increasing conflicts. The significance of discovering harmful patterns in romantic relationships at an early stage so as to avoid more abusive practices cannot be overemphasized [9].

Six, this qualitative phenomenological research study titled "*Coparenting, Couple Conflict, Social Support, and Relationship Quality: A Qualitative Phenomenological Study*" delves into how co-parenting affects the dynamics between couples. Through carrying out individual semi-structured interviews with 11 couples co-parenting infants, the research study utilized Thematic Analysis as conceptualized by Braun and Clarke to provide interpretations to the study's empirical data. The three most essential themes to be derived from these findings include the strengthening of the relationship between the couple members, adapting to new roles, and coping with conflict and resolution processes. This particular research study underscores how co-parenting can create a labyrinth of complexities when it comes to developing heightened emotional intimacy and working within stress-driven situations while still commending couples to deliver quality within their relationship [10].

Seven, with a qualitative study entitled "*Emotion Regulation in Emotionally Focused Therapists Working with High-Conflict Couples*" that focused on the Person-of-the-Therapist Training (POTT) Model, analyzed the emotional experiences and emotion regulation strategies of 21 therapists who have experience working with couples in high conflict using Emotionally Focused Couple Therapy (EFCT). From the thematic analysis of the semi-structured interviews, the five themes identified were emotional experiences of therapists, recovering after the storm, emotional triggers of therapists, adaptive emotion regulation strategies of therapists, and the positive impact of therapist's emotion regulation in the process of therapy. This study contributes to understanding the role of emotion regulation in resolving conflict dynamics in couples. Findings of this study have indicated that therapists' ability to regulate their emotions is important in increasing the effectiveness of therapy, which is a significant factor in training therapists who are working with couples with miscommunication of conflict [11].

Eight, the qualitative research on "*Reconceptualizing Marital Conflict: A Relational Perspective*" employed a purposive convenient sampling technique to collect data from five dissatisfied couples from the Gujrat district of Pakistan. By means of conducting separate semi-structured interviews with husbands and wives at different occasions utilizing the Kansas Marital Satisfaction Scale as a tool to measure marital dissatisfaction, themes were developed through Thematic Analysis and accordingly clustered under corresponding conflict resolution styles. The results of the research show that dissatisfied couples experience several kinds of marital conflict such as having aggressive spouses (80%), a lack of cooperation, a lack of quality time spent with each other, problems with their in-laws (60% each), children-related issues (20%), a lack of effective communication channels, and financial troubles (40%). The complexity of sources of conflict in a relationship has been highlighted in this research along with the relevance of understanding the usage of different conflict resolution styles for addressing complex marital issues. The results show a multitude of marital conflict sources like miscommunication that lies at the root of each problem [12].

Nine, the study entitled "*Exploring Challenges in Later-Life Relationships: A Qualitative Study of Queries Posted on Counselling Websites*" analyzed relationship-related queries submitted on a Czech online counseling website. The objectives were met by meticulously examining 225 relationship-themed queries on the Czech online counseling website. This study established that the nature of relationship issues that the current age group faces is

similar to that encountered by the previous age group but differs due to the age factor. Lack of relationship norms for the current age group, the lack of tools for dealing with relationship issues, and individual issues concerning the time spent compared to the time that will be spent together are three themes identified that contribute to the complexity of the issues faced. The possible theme concerning the queries is the misinterpretation of the time spent and time that will be spent together [13].

Ten, in its systematic search titled *"Well-Being and Romantic Relationships: A Systematic Review in Adolescence and Emerging Adulthood,"* used high-quality databases like Scopus, Web of Science, PsycINFO, and Scielo to explore well-being and romantic relationships in adolescents and emerging adults. This systematic search used the PRISMA-P guidelines and explored literature related to the relationship of well-being (bienestar, happiness, flourishing, and positive development) and romantic relationships. Results revealed that romantic attachments are most desirable when they are secure, and avoidant, anxious attachments are reliable markers for reduced well-being. Communication styles and conflict resolution skills also came up as significant factors related to well-being. High commitment and intimacy levels also stood positively related, while low commitment levels stood negatively related. High levels of commitment stood negatively related. High levels of intimacy stood positively, while low levels stood positively related too. Quality relationships, satisfaction with relatedness, autonomy, and competence needs stood positively related, while high security levels stood positively related. According to literature, high-quality relationships, satisfaction of relatedness, autonomy, and competence needs, and security levels with partners stood out as robust markers of well-being. High-quality communication and high-quality conflict resolution skills help in ensuring healthy and high-quality relationships [14].

Apart from personal communication styles, it is important to look into a systems approach in order to understand miscommunications in monogamous relations. According to Bertalanffy's General Systems Theory in 1968, all relations are dynamic systems in that system elements, such as personal behaviors, communications, and emotional outputs, interact to give rise to system properties that are not predicted by their parts [15]. From this approach, miscommunication issues can be seen as system feedback dysfunction in that there is a lack of correspondence between the encoded and decoded communications, leading to system instability or disequilibrium in relations. On the one hand, there is Alberti and Emmons' (2017) approach to assertive communication, which acts as a system corrective approach in that it balances system outputs in terms of boundary establishment, clear message transmission, and respect [16].

The most prominent difference between the discussed literature and this investigation is based on the scope of psychology; this is one of the central elements of this research work. The novelty provided for this research is an understanding of monogamy that goes beyond marriage and family but also includes romantic relationships involving a couple as well as pre-marital relationships.

3 Research Method

According to Sugiyono (2011: 56) qualitative research is a means whereby researchers observe natural phenomena with researchers being primary instruments. One vital difference from quantitative study analysis is that qualitative analysis starts with data, qualified theories as an explainer, and ends with producing a theory [17].

Furthermore, according to Sugiyono (2011: 55) qualitative research is based on a post-positivist paradigm. Qualitative research investigates the natural conditions of research subjects (not using experiments) in which the instrument is a human researcher. The sources of data are selected purposefully, and Snowball sampling is applied. Triangulation is used for getting data; analysis is inductive and qualitative; and findings focus onmeaning ratherthan generalization [17]. In addition,Sugiyono (2011: 57) further states that qualitative research is appropriate in cases where: 1) research problems are unclear, vague, or fuzzy; qualitative research immerses the researcher in the research setting in order to clarify research problems; 2) comprehending social relations is of utmost significance since complex social relations are studied using techniques such as participant-observation and in-depth interviews with participants in research studies; 3) developing theory is one of the aims, especially developing field-based theory; 4) validation of data accuracy in social research is a problem since accuracy is uncertain and can be accomplished using different methods for collecting data in a mixed research setup, countering deficiencies of a solo research technique.

Aligning the phenomenological study design that sought to discover basic human experiences, the current study adopted the major use of key informant interviews undertaken using a flexible but structured approach. Specifically, the study employed a purposeful sampling method that sought information from couples who went through miscommunication and conflict resolution within a monogamous relationship context so that the miscommunication incident could be discovered, how these individuals attributed meanings towards it, the strategies created to resolve the miscommunication, and the behaviors displayed among these participants where these people exhibited assertive and non-assertive behaviors.

3.1 Sampling Criteria and Characteristics

To ensure that the elements described were visible through the use of purposive sampling, there were particular criteria specific to this study, and they were that the participants:

a. Were in monogamous relationships (married, co-habiting, committed dating relationship) for at least two years;
b. Had experience with documented miscommunications that they could think about and talk about;
c. Were 18 years old or older;
d. Both partners were interested and agreed to take part.

To exclude participants, relationships with actual current domestic violence requiring immediate outside intervention were not sought for this study, nor relationships involving physical and/or cognitive impairment precluding the capacity for informed consent. Patton's (2015) strategy for criterion-based sampling maximizes the chance that the participants will possess rich information about the phenomenon of study" [18].

In addition to conducting the interviews, the study employed triangulation methods where the addition of the non-participant observation at the time of the interview was achieved in order to take note of the non-verbal communications, as well as using support documents. The thematic qualitative data collected from conducting the interviews as well as the triangulation was analyzed using Descriptive Thematic Analysis, which employed a phenomenological approach in order to identify the pattern linked with miscommunication and conflict resolutions.

One reason why phenomenology, as explicated by Heidegger (1962) and developed by Giorgi (2009), is uniquely qualified for this study is that miscommunication necessarily involves the phenomenological experience of meaning-making [19], [20]. Contrary to viewing miscommunication as a discreet objective construct measured in a study, phenomenology acknowledges that individuals place meaning in communicating difficulties according to their situated contexts and individual meaning-making trajectories. Moreover, according to Van Manen (1990), the objective of phenomenological research "is to reveal the structures of meaning that are inherent in human experience." Because miscommunication inherently revolves around partners' experiences with meaning-making in the context of communication breakdowns in relationships, a phenomenological study respects the participant's processes of meaning-making in understanding the underlying structures of miscommunication in monogamous relationships [21].

3.2 Data Collection and Triangulation Protocol

Where possible, three sources of data are triangulated to improve validity: (1) semi-structured key informant interviews permitting the participant to share personal experiences of miscommunication and conflict resolution as a key aspect of this research; (2) non-participant observation of interviews to record communication and affect as a source of data necessary to researchers in other studies who emphasize the embodied dimension of communication in relationships [22]; and (3) documents (relational timelines and conflict resolution plans completed by the participant) to provide additional context to the research findings. Here, methodological triangulation enables a range of purposes related to research validity: to correct the possible lack of observation of non-verbal communication in interviews; and to supplement the findings offered in interviews with observation evidence and to add a temporal component to relationship data. Denzin (1978) contends that methodological triangulation improves the reliability of findings to counter system bias in a single research source [23].

The study aimed at interpreting the meaning of the phenomenon being studied and involved data reduction and drawing conclusions as suggested by Miles and Huberman's interactive approach to getting a good understanding of the social context of the participants.

One such theory used in this study is Assertive Communication Theory proposed by Robert E. Alberti and Michael L. Emmons. According to their theory, "assertiveness is direct, powerful, and positive communication that keeps relationships in balance." They illustrate assertiveness in their work *Your Perfect Right: Assertiveness and Equality in Your Life* by saying that it "is direct, powerful, and positive communication that keeps relationships in balance." Alberti & Emmons (2017) identify seven elements of assertiveness [16]:

a. To act on one's own desires,
b. To communicate feelings with honesty and comfort,
c. To defend oneself,
d. To express opinions,
e. To respect others' rights,
f. To assert one's own rights, and
g. To share equality with others.

Through assertiveness, an individual can empower themselves to take actions for their own benefit, support their rights without any fear, and manifest their will without harming others in their rights. It provides freedom for straightforward communication with affection, friendship, love, and even disappointment, anger, and sadness.

Miscommunication occurs in relationships where each individual exhibits differences in their style of communication as well as their frame of reference, which is both nonverbal and implicit. In the context of a monogamous relationship, there can be three points where miscommunication can cause issues: Emotional Conflict, where draining conflicts are sustained through miscommunication and need continuous resolution; Decreased Intimacy, where a lack of trust and awkwardness lead to a breakdown in intimacy; and Erosion of Trust, where there can be a mismatch between communication and intentions.

4 Results and Discussion

Differences between how people communicate both verbally and nonverbally affect how they process messages which create ambiguity or confusion regarding what they mean (i.e., create misunderstandings). Miscommunication within a monogamous relationship causes these types of problems: Emotional Conflict (conflict created during emotionally draining times) along with Decreased Intimacy, conflict creates discomfort and doubt that can diminish Intimacy and Emotional Closeness. The relational capabilities of monogamous relationships begin when each partner acts based on his or her own desire to avoid conflict.

4.1 Capabilities of a Monogamous Relationship

The information relayed to the male participant in the study reveals that males understand the importance of establishing an emotional gap or stopping in case of a conflict and thus performing self-assertion regarding identifying the right thing to do in their own interests (avoiding conflict escalation). An emotional gap aims to reduce the trauma associated with emotional feelings prior to conversations between the two parties taking place; during this period, the male shows apparent readiness to acknowledge the reason for the lack of understanding as being attributable to work obligations.

Both sources of information convey their feelings with openness and honesty. They do not feel judged by either of the partners when they convey their feelings of anxiety, happiness, hopefulness, and pain straightforwardly. Moreover, the comfort level has been achieved by the trust in the process of building such a relationship, as well as due to the fact that words can build bridges, not weapons. Also, listening to each other without interrupting or being ignored is an added factor in the aspect of this relationship. For example, honesty (assertiveness) goes hand in hand with empathy in the aspect of this relationship; hence, the aspect of assertiveness has been set in a context of caring.

Being assertive while standing up for oneself, therefore, does not indicate a state of resistance but rather the ability to set boundaries and be patient. It is important for male partners to yield rather than allow disharmony in a relationship. This indicates that they do so because they are assertively showing their love for each other by taking actions that ensure there is harmony in the relationship. They are also acting wisely while both of them are showing self-control. They understand that they do not actually have to express all feelings at the same time and that they do not actually need to resolve all conflicts on the spot. They afford each other the chance to steer clear of all possible communication difficulties.

The observation of male participants deliberately making an "emotional gap" needs a more in-depth explanation. This fits with emotional regulation theory [24], which defines the differentiation between antecedent-processing strategies, which are interventionist in nature, early in the emotion-generation sequence, and response-processing strategies, which function post-event in relation to emotional responses after they emerge. In deliberately distancing themselves temporally and psychologically before engaging in conflict talk, the participants in this study are using an antecedent-processing strategy that avoids escalation patterns identified in studies of conflict in relationship relationships [25]. However, this contradicts conventional communication guidelines that stipulate "to address the problems immediately is always better." What emerges in this study is a far more subtle approach to such problems, in which the regulatory use of temporal distance is a crucial factor facilitating a stronger approach to communicating than simply acting in a reactive manner. This study also appears to verify Oduro-Frimpong's (2007) point that "silence is adaptive" insofar as seemingly purposeful disconnection with a subsequent intention to reconnect and speak about a particular conflict pattern may well have an implicit message of assertive behavior with respect for both emotional capacities in any relationship partnership [7].

4.2 Rights and Equality in Monogamous Relationships

Respect for Each Other's Rights: The balance of power with equal responsibilities is to be created by individuals in an egalitarian relationship wherein not only is their freedom to choose their romantic partner to form the foundation of their relationship, but also their equal acceptance and respect for each other's boundaries (limits) and each other's right to communicate their feelings; also, both individuals shall develop a respect for each other that helps them to express their love freely without being forced into it.

4.3 Exercise of Personal Rights in the Negotiation of the Conflict

Each of the partners exercises their personal rights in the process of negotiating the conflict. One of the female participants in the survey gave illustrations of how she communicates with her partner in relation to negotiating the conflict. One of the ways she does this is by negotiating with her partner in order to give the partner time to calm down in order to respond appropriately. An example of how the female participant exercises her personal right in negotiating the conflict is when she asks her partner, "Who would like to talk first?"

Finally, the study reveals that both men and women consider each other equals. The men interviewed reported that they consider their spouses equals, not their subordinates or superiors, but their equals, working together as a team. The sense of being equals comes from joint decision-making and sharing the same roles as partners rather than from what one would demand from the other. The environment where both men and women feel comfortable to develop and grow together without worrying about losing their identity is what they have created.

However, the discovery that both parties view equality as paramount deserves critical analysis. Indeed, the 'second shift' idea propounded by Hochschild (1989) indicates that there may be a gap between idealized views of equality and practice, especially when it comes to emotional support and housework, which remain a product of gender despite idealized notions of equality within a relationship [26]. Although this body of research indicates a view of equality being prevalent among participants, there surely needs to be a further investigation as to whether this understanding of equality indicates a fair allocation of relationship labor or not; instead, this may simply indicate a cultural trope that couples subscribe to as a proud means of equal relationship participation. The fact that this research relies upon self-report data may cloud understanding of what has been referred to as 'false consciousness' of equality [27]. Future research could therefore attempt to "diagnose" whether this self-reported equality could be explained by observed behavioral data gathered from completed time-diaries or observed data; indeed, this would help examine whether self-reported equality equates to observed data suggesting a specific relational dynamic. As this current body of research stands, it would appear that assertive communication as a tool for relationship quality may be more symbolic or related to relationship identity than practical or task-related when it comes to issues of relationship chores or tasks; this creates a potential problem for professionals working within this field because what may be transpiring here could indicate that couples may be negotiating their relationship identity as a symbolic or meaning-based construction as a means of feeling as though they participate effectively within a relationship when structurally or practically

4.4 Negative Case Analysis

Thorough phenomenological analysis also involves looking at those instances which do not fit a given theme [28]. In one of the instances, there was a couple who attested that though both of them fully committed to the principles of assertive communication, there was an area of miscommunication in their relationship based on finance and decision-making. It was found that this happened when assertive communication led to anxiety for one of the partners based on their family-of-origin issues with finance and conflict. This also points to the efficacy of assertive communication during conflict resolution but with the presence of unresolved trauma and anxiety patterns. This particular instance clearly points towards the non-linearity and application of assertiveness and conflict resolution. This particular instance clearly points out that emotional regulation and psychological safety need to be evaluated for participants before pointing out the importance of assertiveness and that assertiveness techniques cannot be unilaterally implemented in a trauma-informed manner without integrating treatments for trauma. It strengthens and does not weaken the theoretical contribution of our study.

5 Conclusion

When we looked at the results of the research on relationships we found something. The main reason for problems in relationships where people're with just one partner is that they do not communicate well. This happens a lot because people do not say what they really mean. They also do not tell each other what they expect from each other or how they feel. This causes problems in monogamous relationships. Miscommunication is the issue, in monogamous relationships.

So even if we think that talking about something might make things between us it does not mean that the problems we have because we do not understand each other are impossible to fix. For people, in relationships to work through their problems in a good way they need to communicate with each other in certain ways like this:

The resolution of conflict starts with making a space where people can talk openly and honestly. For that to work the people in the relationship have to be honest with each other in a way and they have to be able to listen to each other without judging. So when we try to fix a conflict we have to stop blaming each other and focus on finding things we agree on because that is what will make the relationship better. Conflict resolution is about finding a way to make the relationship stronger and that means looking for common ground not fighting about

who is right or wrong. The resolution of conflict is a process that requires effort from everyone involved. It is only, by working together that we can find a solution that works for everyone.

The role of empathy and acceptance is really important. Empathy is a tool that helps people feel warm towards each other again. When couples are empathetic they start to understand that they often misunderstand each other. This happens even when they are being honest, with each other. Empathy and acceptance help couples see that they usually have intentions they just do not understand each other. The role of empathy and acceptance is to bring people by helping them understand each others feelings and intentions.

Strengthening Relationship Foundations: In conclusion of this research, healthy relationships are not conflict-free relationships; rather, healthy relationships involve an ability to adapt to all conflicts that arise within each relationship and survive and thrive from every conflict that arises. When conflicts within relationships are managed and solved effectively, it creates an enhanced environment for increased trust and emotional maturity and an increased opportunity for emotional intimacy.

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