



Articles

Individual Personal Values as Mediators During Behavioral Perception and Transference

Sunil Kumar*^a

[a] Department of Human Resource Management & Organizational Behavior, School of Business & Management Studies, Central University of Himachal Pradesh, Dharamsala, India.

Abstract

Perception and transference are two behavioral processes affecting human existence and survival. This study focuses on the concept of interpersonal relationships of university students during transference and perceived behavioral processes. Information was gathered from 234 university students. Three factors, i.e., perceived behavior, personal values, and transference behavior were explored. Confirmatory factor analysis was used to validate the proposed conceptual model and hypotheses were tested with structure equation modeling. The findings support the mediational role of personal values in perceived and transferred behavior and also the role of personal values in passing of activated schema from an interpersonal relationship to another. This study will provide a rational ground to behavior scientists that it's the 'Eigenwelt' responsible for achieving full individual potential in case of 'Mitwelt'.

Keywords: interpersonal relationship, personal values, perceived behavior, transferred behavior, individual potential

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*Corresponding author at: Department of Human Resource Management & Organizational Behavior, School of Business & Management Studies, Central University of Himachal Pradesh, 176215, India. Tel. +919817647199. E-mail: sunil23121984@gmail.com



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Buber (1958) put forward the proposal of interpersonal theory and divided human life into three worlds: the *Eigenwelt*, related to self, the *Umwelt*, the natural environment around humans, and the *Mitwelt*, referring to interpersonal relationship. Buber marked these three worlds as *I*, *It* and *Thou*. According to Buber *I* cannot live without *It* and *Thou* and all three are relevant if one wants to live fully his or her human potential. Brink and Janakes (1979) demonstrated the relevance of Buber's interpersonal theory as a tool to develop therapeutic techniques in psychiatry and advocated that an individual can control or withdraw *I* from the *It* world. But in the case of *I* and *Thou*, the control and withdrawn lead to ending interpersonal relationships.

The output of applying this interpersonal theory in academic world depends on student's self-definition, academic work itself and other people's role in academic life. These constructs lead the student to build interpersonal relationship for deciding educational output effectiveness. In universities, the focal points of education system are students and academicians. A rich interpersonal relationship includes ethical conduct, technical support and autonomy in decision making. The blur locus of control in academia creates confusion in relationships resulting in instrumental interpersonal relationships. Sharing of responsibility, claiming mistakes equally, confronting situations and power distribution enrich interpersonal relations (Newstrom, 2007). The

choices for interpersonal relationships reflected respect, differentiating right and wrong, and ethical code of conduct. The consultation and discussion between students and teachers about their motives clear the picture and help them to determine their future course of actions. These classroom participants firstly act for justifying and satisfaction of self, and secondly, for gaining acceptance in a larger group.

Throughout time, models of interpersonal relationships have changed to more understandable one. The transfer of knowledge in the form of values from one generation to another, and the assimilation of this transferred knowledge opened new paradigms of interpersonal relations among humans. Interpersonal relations sometimes become paradoxical and require new logics for valid explanations. The two axis model proposed tries to relate approaches for defining interpersonal relationships and this model was successful to an extent. Opportunities for growth and continuous development forced behavioral researchers to think again and again about interpersonal relationship theories. Moskowitz (2005) observed that when participants perform the role of supervisors they become more dominant and this dominant behavior is more important to a person with a higher status role.

This study investigated students' interpersonal relationships, on which the quantitative and qualitative output of universities depends, including dyadic interaction processes, motives, and choices affecting interpersonal relations in a formal organizational system from the students' perspective. This study also investigated how perceived behavioral attributes are transferred to other informal interpersonal relation among students. Students' personal values were analyzed to determine their mediational effect during interpersonal relationships.

Teachers link their students to various academic and research activities. This group of teachers and students in university system controls the future of academics and manpower supply to the society at large. The values both parties carry throughout their dyadic relationship reflect in the success of students in their future. The role of ethical behavior between these dyads, recognition, respect, support and honesty will ultimately help to supply better human beings for the growth and development of our society.

Review of Literature

People continuously interact with youngsters, teenagers, teachers, parents, and cliques by using their analytical approach. During any interaction people have to make judgments about their actions in specific contexts. These judgments affect the individual self and others as well (Kirkendall & Avery, 1955). In the past, researchers investigated attitude and image relations, and tried to answer questions about judgment of self and others in interpersonal relationship. Ichheiser (1943) studied the role of image in attitude building and how these images generate in human mind under the influence of external environment. Farber (1962) stated that older concepts as propounded by Kirkendall and Avery (1955), with traditional roles and functions like judgments, are not able to handle family affairs in a changing social context. Farber advocated competence as a value to define interpersonal relations and investigated how the competence works in a population who wanted to find a spouse. Foote and Cottrell (1955) described competence in interpersonal relationships as intelligence, empathy, judgment, autonomy, creativity and health.

In the context of working environment, individuals interact with each other and make efforts to change organization ways for sharing information. These changed ways help individuals to share feelings about their work relations. At workplace, the talented and resourceful individuals approach others in order to get

information and to establish relationships for accomplishing their work. Alderfer and Smith (1982) focused on three issues for studying intergroup relations embedded in organizations. They highlighted inter-relationship as interactions among method, data and theory in behavioral research, and advocated the role of investigators for generating non-collusive respect in mutual exchange between parties. In case of organizations, decision making was influenced by the informal sub-group relations. These sub-groups affect the choices and judgments in a formal group and help to overcome the formal group's power pressures (Patterson, 1959). While the professional commitment and personal role of individuals create hindrance in ethical sense to relate work and partners (Howton, 1963). In our complex society, choices in interpersonal relations among available alternatives require decision making.

Individual differences and similarities with others influence interpersonal relationships. How people socially evaluate others and how they accept themselves as social units affect their interpersonal relationships (Blau, 1962). Holloman (1973) investigated qualitative and quantitative measures of interpersonal relationships, defining source, direction and frequency as quantitative measures, whereas awareness, trust and openness as qualitative measures.

Butler, Doherty, and Potter (2007) described the interpersonal rejection sensitivity with respect to its social context. Researchers found interpersonal sensitivity associated with teasing in childhood but not with social support and acceptance. In recent studies, researchers found that individuals with high self-esteem experienced greater task related stress to increase their independence, while greater interpersonal stress increases the interdependence of people. But in case of individuals with low self-esteem stress has no effect (Nakashima, Yanagisawa, & Ura, 2013). Brewer (1988) and Bodenhausen (1990) found the role of cognitive and motivational resources to overcome stereotypes of race, gender or age when little information is available about another individual.

Kruglanski and Pierro (2008) investigated the role of dissimilarities and low mental resources to initiate the transference. Findings of their study revealed that the similarities and high mental resources did not initiate the transference effect. Researchers found that the activated schema may or may not activate and depend upon the individual processing mental resources. The interpersonal values predict the relationship outputs affecting the maintenance of relationship (Lemay & Spongberg, 2015).

The role of teachers inside and outside the classroom greatly defines interpersonal relations in this context. It's not mere talking or teaching lessons, but they have to teach students. Partners should be there when others need them as valuing others is an important part of life (Galloway, 1976). Teachers' behavior in terms of involvement, structure and autonomy support is central to students' expression in classroom and their motivation (Skinner & Belmont, 1993). Evaluation and recognition are two different elements of classroom setting. Teachers play a salient role in evaluation and recognition of students. On the other hand, students in their classroom structural setting absorb, support, and learn from teachers. Personal values carried by students decide further processing of classroom information. Values like conformity, self-direction, virtue, hedonism, idealism, security and self-actualization are exhibited by students in their classroom. These personal values are not only active in classroom setting but also help students to decide the courses and careers they will choose, but intrinsic and extrinsic orientation of these values differs in students belonging to different streams (Kopanidis & Shaw, 2014). Personal values are prioritized by people to make their behavioral decisions (Vigoda-Gadot & Grimland, 2008). Stein (1971) analyses the relationship between self-esteem, personal values

and interpersonal values of students and found a non-significant relationship among variables. Personal values students hold in the transference behavior in interpersonal relationship can hinder the information passage or activated schema. This research proposes to examine the role of personal values as individual psychological resources in the perceived and transferred behavior processes during interpersonal relationships. The path diagram of proposed relationship is given below (see Figure 1).

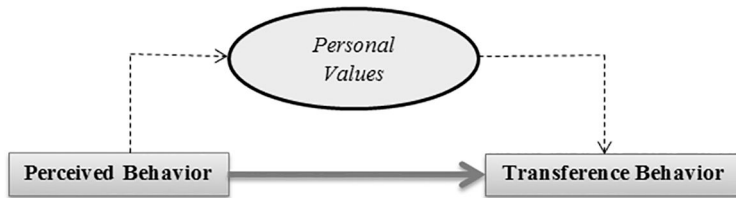


Figure 1. Path diagram.

The objectives of the study are: (a) to examine relationships between perceived behavior and transferred behavior; (b) to study the mediational role of personal values in perceived behavior and transferred behavior.

Hypotheses Formulation

H1: The perceived behavior significantly affects the personal values of students.

H2: The personal values significantly affect the transference behavior.

H3: The perceived behavior significantly affects the transference behavior.

H4: Personal values are significantly mediating the relationship between perceived behavior and transference behavior.

Method

Pilot Study

Initially, a set of 29 statements was framed from literature. The information was checked for content validity by two academicians related to research field. Further 10 statements were excluded by experts. Then, the pilot study was conducted on a sample of 87 post graduate students to determine the questionnaire structure. The statements with communalities less than 0.40 were excluded and the statements cross loaded were also dropped. Finally, nine statements given below were selected for final information collection:

Faculty's Perceived Behavior

- V1: My teacher's personality makes people work for him/her without the use of his/her power position in organization
- V2: During classes my teacher never lost focus in spite of adverse situations
- V3: You see your teachers as men/women of action or motivating personalities

Individual Personal Values

- V4: You are worthy of all those responsibilities your fellow students give to you
- V5: Take good care of fellow students' properties
- V6: With your fellow students you strive to accomplish something significant

Students' Transference Behavior

- V7: You always come directly to the point with fellow students in classroom conversations
- V8: You clear your position on matters with fellow students
- V9: I learn a lot of new things from fellow students by participating with them in different activities.

In the final stage, the information was collected from 234 post graduate students of Central University situated in North India. Out of total respondents 78 were males and 156 were females. The mean age of respondents was 22.04 ($SD = 1.1$). The majority of respondents, i.e., 107 have rural background, 82 respondents have semi-urban background, and 45 respondents have urban background. In total sample 152 respondents were from social sciences stream and 82 respondents were from science stream.

Measurement (Research Tool)

Based on a pilot study, a structured questionnaire was developed for measuring the perception and transference behavior, and contributing items were rated on an 11-point scale (1- strongly disagree to 11- strongly agree). It contains three subscales on perceived behavior, personal values and transference behavior. Sample items in the questionnaire are My teacher's personality makes people work for him\her without the use of his/her power position in organization (perceived behavior), Take good care of fellow students' property (personal values), and You always come directly to the point with fellow students in classroom conversations (transference behavior).

Results

The descriptive statistics and correlation between variables is presented in [Table 1](#). The exploratory factor analysis was used to extract the latent factors by using SPSS 18.

In [Table 2](#) total three factors were explored again from the 9 variables under study to confirm the factor structure and validation of model. In the present study the ratio of sample size to variable is 26:1. The Bartlett's test of sphericity was conducted to check multicollinearity ($\chi^2 = 1229.12$, $df = 36$, $p < .001$). Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin test was conducted to check the sampling adequacy, the test showed value of 0.763. For extracting factors Principal component analysis was used and Varimax with Kaiser Normalization as rotation method. The factors explored have strong loadings with minimum value 0.766 and maximum value of 0.915. The extracted factors are explaining 78.95 percent of cumulative variance. The communalities of all the variables range from 0.682 to 0.882 which is more than the lowest acceptable limit of 0.50.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix (N = 234)

Item No.	M	SD	Correlation matrix									
			V1	V2	V3	V4	V5	V6	V7	V8	V9	
V1	5.3932	3.12	–									
V2	5.9615	2.20	.661	–								
V3	6.6795	2.45	.510	.620	–							
V4	7.2564	2.30	.226	.351	.259	–						
V5	7.8376	2.41	.087	.292	.358	.713	–					
V6	7.7009	1.60	.234	.407	.274	.566	.665	–				
V7	6.6966	2.42	.113	.259	.107	.544	.494	.412	–			
V8	7.1154	2.10	.090	.197	.120	.523	.442	.416	.837	–		
V9	7.3504	2.19	.173	.222	.077	.358	.249	.328	.681	.732	–	

Table 2

Results of Factor Analysis, Rotated Component Matrix (N = 234)

Item No.	Explored Latent Factors		
	Transference Behavior	Personal Values	Perceived Behavior
V1			.878
V2			.858
V3			.774
V4		.771	
V5		.915	
V6		.766	
V7	.842		
V8	.876		
V9	.898		

Note. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The three factors model was confirmed in the study (see [Figure 2](#)), with a chi square of $\chi^2 = 89.561$, $df = 23$, CFI = .945, GFI = .927, TLI = .914, AIC = 133.56, RAMSEA = .11. The general accepted values of NFI, GFI, and CFI should be $\geq .95$ ([Kumar, 2015](#)). The reliability as tendency toward consistency in repeated measurement was calculated with Cronbach's alpha ([Carmines & Zeller, 1979](#)). The Cronbach's alpha value for the variables under study was 0.843.

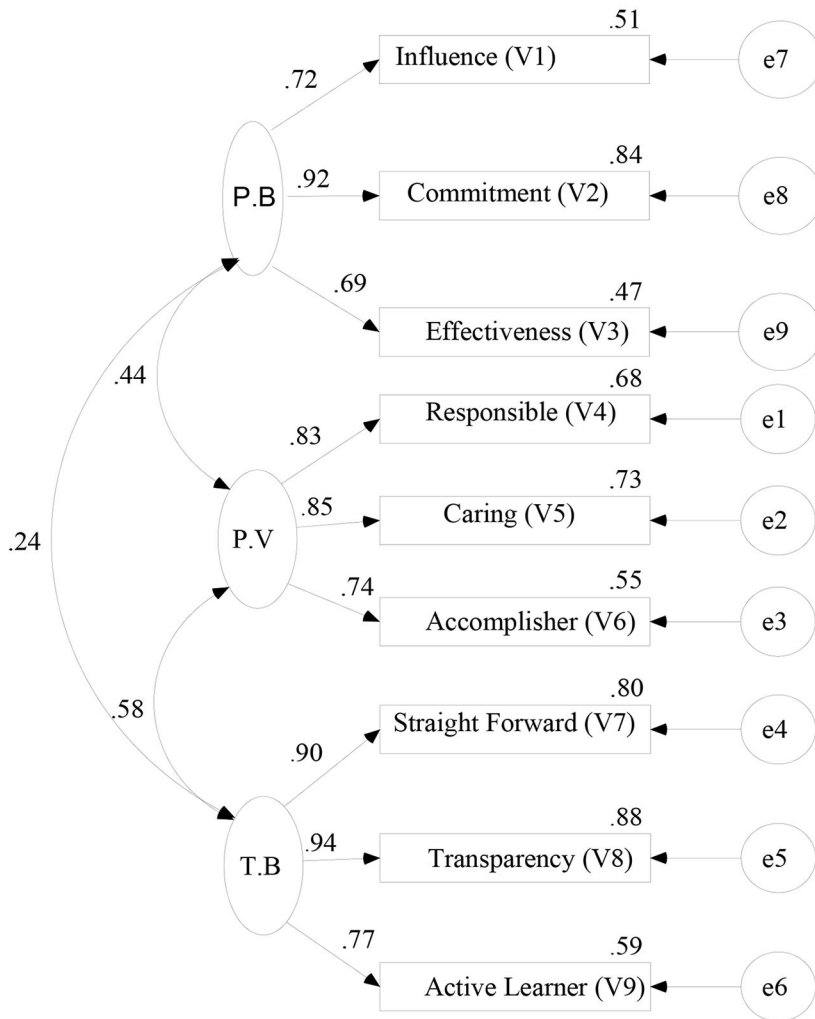


Figure 2. Confirmatory model.

Note. P.B = Perceived Behavior, P.V = Personal Values, and T.B = Transference behavior.

The covariance between the constructs was 0.44 between perceived behavior and personal values, 0.24 between perceived behavior and transference behavior, and 0.58 covariance is between personal values and transference behavior. The covariance between the two constructs should be less than 0.60 to describe the discriminant validity (Kumar, 2015). In the present research the latent factors have discriminant validation. Construct reliability (CR) represented the ability of measured variables to represent the latent factor and it should be ≥ 0.70 (Hair et al., 2006).

The proposed hypotheses were validated and tested through structure equation modeling (see Table 3). Hypothesis H1 proposed a positive relationship between perceived behavior and personal values. The perceived faculty behavior is positively related to personal values ($\beta = 0.44$, $p < 0.001$). As proposed in hypothesis H2 the students' personal values are positively related to students' transference behavior ($\beta = 0.58$, $p < 0.001$). The third accepted hypothesis H3 proposed positive relationship between perceived behavior and transference behavior ($\beta = 0.274$, $p < 0.001$). The fourth proposed hypothesis H4 to check the significant mediation role of personal values between perceived behavior and transference behavior showed the direct

non-significant relationship without mediator ($\beta = 0.274$, $p < 0.001$) and direct significant relationship with mediator ($\beta = -0.2$) which is non-significant. The indirect effect between perceived behavior and transference behavior is significant (0.263 , $p < 0.001$). The results suggest the full mediation of personal values between perceived and transferred behavior of students.

Table 3

Analysis of Direct and Indirect Effects in Structure Equation Modeling (SEM)

Hypothesis Testing	Direct effect without mediator	Direct effect with mediator	Indirect Effects	Output
H1: perceived behavior and personal values	0.44***			H1: Accepted
H2: personal values and transference behavior.	0.58***			H2 Accepted
H3: perceived behavior and transference behavior.	0.274***			H3: Accepted
H4: Personal values are significantly mediating the relationship between perceived behavior and transference behavior.	0.274***	-0.2 (N. S.)	.263***	Full Mediation: H4: Accepted

Note. $N = 234$.

*** $p < 0.001$. (N.S.) = Non-significant.

Discussion

This study revealed the role of personal values in perceived and transferred behavior. Individual psychological resources, as propounded by Kruglanski and Pierro (2008), also affect the transfer of activated schema. Every judgment individuals make about themselves or others in any social context during interpersonal relations are indirectly affected by their personal values. Bodenhausen (1990) and Brewer (1988) also found that cognitive and motivational resources overcome the stereotype of race, gender or age in case of little information about other participant in interpersonal relationship. In the present study the information within the participating units was full about context, but the personal values construct overcome the available information to support the results of past studies. Personal values accumulated by individuals from birth to death, but it's the mental resources of individual which provide space to a value as personal. Alderfer and Smith (1982) talked about role of non-collusive respect in mutual exchange, non-collusive respect as a personal value depends upon the psychological resources of individual. The personal values impact the satisfaction level and behavioral outcomes of the students (Durvasula, Lysonski, & Madhavi, 2011).

The present study suggests the direct effect of perceived behavior on transferred behavior. The students in structural and formal classroom settings are perceiving faculty behavior in term of effectiveness, influence and commitment. The personal values of caring, transparency and responsiveness is mediating the impact of effectiveness, influence and commitment on clarity, interpersonal learning and transparent behavior with fellow students. The resources accumulated from the interpersonal relationship between students and teachers are further evaluated and processed by individual students for informal interpersonal relationship through the personal values. These results are indicating the role of choice (Patterson, 1959), judgment (Kirkendall & Avery, 1955), and competence as a value (Farber, 1962) in informal interpersonal relationships.

Theoretical Implication and Future Scope of Study

The findings support the mediational role of personal values in perceived and transferred behavior, indicating the role of psychological resources in passing activated schema from an interpersonal relation to another one. This study will help behavior researchers to analyze interpersonal relationship as an individual psychological phenomenon in complex social structures. Study will give thinking ground to behavior scientists that it's the *Eigenwelt* responsible for achieving full individual potential in case of *Mitwelt*.

Conclusion

This study aimed at studying the notion of interpersonal relationship in formal and informal relationships. The role of individual personal values in defining their perceived behavior in formal interpersonal relationship and the role of personal values in transference behavior was found significant. In interpersonal relationship judgments, choices, competence development, timing, and personal space are in the control of individual to deal with the outer world. By focusing on individual aspects of interpersonal relationship one can explore the full potential and opportunities arising from any interpersonal relationship. The study revealed individual student's persona as a main element in relationships directly impacting students.

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Competing Interests

The author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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