

The Significance of Interpersonal Communication as A Mechanism for Social Relationships in the Career Development of Employees At “Seia Sekata Roastery & Espresso Bar” In Cirebon City

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Abstract: The informal sector, which is based on the creative economy, provides flexible workplaces with work relations that differ from those of formal organizations. Interpersonal communication in this context is an essential aspect of organizing work processes and developing social relationships. This study aims to analyze the meaning, processes, and the role of interpersonal communication networks among employees at Seia Sekata Roastery and Espresso Bar in Cirebon in supporting career development. The study employed a qualitative phenomenological approach using in-depth interviews with five informants, consisting of the owner who also served as the human resources representative, a roastery staff member, a roastery assistant, a barista, and a social media staff member. Relevant books, articles, and journals were used as secondary sources to support the interpretation of the research findings. The results indicate that employees perceive interpersonal communication as a significant factor in sustaining workplace relationships and career development through their recurrent communication experiences. The findings also demonstrate how DeVito's interpersonal communication dimensions and Putnam's social capital framework complement one another in explaining employees' lived experiences within an informal workplace. The values of openness, empathy, support, positive attitude, and equality, as described by

DeVito, provide the foundation for strengthening workplace relationships and fostering trust, norms of reciprocity, and supportive relationships as forms of social capital. This social capital contributes to career development by strengthening employees' work roles and expanding professional opportunities. Thus, interpersonal communication is not only employed as a channel for information exchange but also serves as the foundation for developing sustainable social relationships that support individual career development.

Keywords: Interpersonal communication; social relationships; social capital; career development; employees

Introduction

An informal sector founded on the creative economy has also emerged as another work environment, which not only offers the possibility of flexibility in the production process, but also creates work relations patterns that are not comparable to those of formal organizations. The low hierarchical structure of this work plus its team-based and fluid nature suggest that the most important factor in the organization of work processes and maintaining the professional relationship is the interpersonal communication (Zakiyah et

al., 2025). The role of interpersonal communication in an informal workplace is not just a technical tool of communication but a base of social connections between the employees.

This layout is echoed in the work practices in Seia Sekata Roastery & Espresso Bar in Cirebon in that it can be a workspace as a coffee production facility (in addition to the idea of a slow bar) and a working-in-progress space. A work model that emphasizes on the need to collaborate and interact with the employees forms a work dynamic that is largely dependent on open communication and understanding of the team members. The separation of roles is not absolute but is modified in the circumstantial context in everyday coordination, thus interpersonal communication is the main interconnection between the various work roles.

The reason why Seia Sekata Roastery & Espresso Bar is chosen as the research subject is due to its work environment that allows intensive interpersonal communication. The relatively small size of the team also leads to the higher number of interactions as well as the involvement of the entire team into the work process. Additionally, there is less hierarchical working relationship, more team oriented and this results in open, loose and cooperative communication. These conditions make Seia Sekata a topical place to investigate how to comprehend and practice interpersonal communication in the everyday working life.

The evolved practices of communication at Seia Sekata are relaxed, egalitarian and team-oriented. These patterns of communication are not only applied in the process of managing the workflow but also in building of mutual trust, openness, and a sense of togetherness among employees. These results are in line with the idea of interpersonal communication (DeVito, 2011) which points to openness, empathy, support, positive attitude, and equality as aspects that determine shared meaning in interpersonal relationships. The service business has shown that interpersonal communication assists in establishing positive working relations (Bagus et al., 2022).

The interpersonal communication defines social relations that influence the job roles development and recruitment process. Seia Sekata has administrative methods of recruiting employees through official methods, but the degree of communication and individual relationships is a major determinant of decision making. This is in line with the previous researches which found that good interpersonal communication skills are needed not only during the job search process, but also after an individual has been hired to work as effective communication helps to adjust to the work culture of the team and helps to coordinate its work with other team members and develop professionally (Novianti Solikhah et al., 2023). This pattern is also supported by the values of togetherness, courtesy and community which are the elements of the local culture (Nurfalah & Dian Lestari, n.d.).

This pattern of work relationships can be explained using the social capital theory of work relationship (Putnam, 2000) that emphasises the significance of collective resources, such as social networks, trust, and norms of reciprocity. The first process through which a social capital is formed in informal working contexts that allow access to opportunities to work and develop a career is interpersonal communication (Hayati & Aji, 2022; Zakiyah et

al., 2025) The social networks formed in the process of everyday communication become resources that a person can use to pursue the development of work roles and career.

. In this study, Putnam's (2000) social capital theory is operationalized through two complementary dimensions, namely bonding social capital and bridging social capital. Bonding social capital explains how openness, empathy, mutual support, and trust strengthen close interpersonal relationships within the work team, while bridging social capital explains how these relationships facilitate access to new information, professional recommendations, and broader career opportunities. These dimensions are introduced from the outset as the conceptual basis for understanding how interpersonal communication contributes to the formation of social capital in an informal workplace.

Most of the research which has been done in the past still has the inclination of taking interpersonal communication as an effective tool or a structural variable in work organizations. This approach has yet to explore the subjective experience, interpretation and perception of interpersonal communication as an experience of the employees in the process of work. The restriction creates a research gap on the understanding of interpersonal communication as a lived experience in forming social relationships and career in informal work environments.

Unlike previous studies that mainly examine interpersonal communication as a means of improving organizational effectiveness, customer service, or access to employment, this study positions interpersonal communication as a lived experience through which employees construct social capital in their everyday work interactions. The theoretical novelty of this study lies in integrating DeVito's interpersonal communication theory with Putnam's social capital theory within a phenomenological perspective. This integration explains not only how interpersonal communication occurs in an informal workplace, but also how employees interpret openness, trust, and reciprocal relationships as mechanisms that strengthen social capital and support career development opportunities.

The research will analyze interpersonal communication among informal sector workers as a career development avenue; analyze interpersonal communication processes of coffee shop workers in Cirebon City in the development of social relationships and analyze the role of social networks as a social relationship and career enhancement mechanism. The theoretical contribution of this research to the body of knowledge on communication studies on interpersonal communication and social capital in the informal sector would be realized. Practically, this study will empower the employees and managers of coffee shops with a notion of what positive interpersonal communication can do to facilitate career development.

This study employs phenomenological approach to unveil the meaning of interpersonal communication as directly experienced by the employees at the Seia Sekata Roastery and Espresso Bar. The research focuses on the subjective experiences of five interviewees, including one owner, who is the human resources manager and four team members, including those in different positions, including roastery, roastery assistant, barista and social media manager. The experiences of the informants were utilized to comprehend

how interpersonal communication is executed, deciphered, and helps form social relations that foster career growth in an informal workplace (Anggun Pradana & Miftakhul Huda, 2025).

Literature Review

The interpersonal communication is conceptualized as a two-way interactive process which makes individuals develop a shared understanding through exchange of meaning in social relationships (DeVito, 2013). On a phenomenological approach, communication is not only perceived as a technical process of transmitting messages, but it is also an experience, and a feeling that people experience in their day-to-day work. The framework that can be applied to understand how individuals represent themselves, how they respond to others and how they establish relational significance during interactions with others in the workplace is the five dimensions of interpersonal communication that DeVito developed that include openness, empathy, support, positive attitude and equality (Silvia et al., n.d.).

These five dimensions provide the conceptual basis for understanding how interpersonal communication develops into social relationships in the workplace. Openness, empathy, support, positive attitude, and equality are not treated merely as communication characteristics, but as interactional processes through which employees create trust, mutual understanding, and reciprocal relationships. In this study, these interpersonal communication dimensions are analytically connected with Putnam's concept of social capital to explain how everyday communication experiences contribute to relationship building and career development in informal workplaces.

In non-formal work situations where buildings are porous and there are minimal levels of hierarchy, the communication between individuals is very intense and circumstantial, and is interwoven into day-to-day work processes. Interactions between employees are not only perceived as a coordination but also as a community of experience, exchange of feelings and common ground, which leads to a sense of intimacy and trust. Such dialogic and reflective communication experiences enable people to view work relationships as equal and supportive, which, in turn, leads to the psychological well-being and quality of social relationships in the workplace (Bannikov, 2022).

Such interpersonal communication has a subjective meaning and this according to (Robert D. Putnam, 2000) is closely connected with the development of the social capital. Through the repetitive and important communication experiences the employees form networks of trust, norms of reciprocity and a sense of belonging to which is social resources. Phenomenologically, social capital is not seen as a theoretical construct, rather as something that materializes in the course of daily activities in communication. This kind of interactions inculcate bonding social capital, increasing the team cohesion and bridging social capital, expanding the access to positions, learning and career development opportunities (Robert D. Putnam, 2000).

Accordingly, bonding social capital in this study is reflected in employees' experiences of trust, emotional support, openness, and equality that emerge from everyday interpersonal communication. Meanwhile, bridging social capital is reflected in the expansion of professional relationships, access to information, role development, and career

opportunities generated through these interpersonal interactions. By positioning bonding and bridging social capital as analytical dimensions rather than merely discussion concepts, this study systematically explains how interpersonal communication evolves from individual interaction into social resources that support career development.

In such a way, interpersonal communication within a casual workplace can be conceived as a system of social relationships as it is subjectively perceived by workers and it has consequences on the establishment of social capital and career growth. Based on this conceptual integration, the analytical framework of this study assumes that employees first experience interpersonal communication through DeVito's five dimensions, which subsequently foster bonding social capital within the work team. These close social relationships then develop into bridging social capital by facilitating broader social networks, information exchange, and opportunities for career development. This sequence provides the conceptual foundation for interpreting employees' lived experiences throughout the phenomenological analysis. This paper uses a phenomenological method to examine the experiences, processes and meaning of interpersonal communication as lived by employees at Seia Sekata Roastery and Espresso Bar, by using in-depth interviews that are designed based on the dimensions of interpersonal communication by DeVito as well as the concept of social capital by Putnam and are backed up by the documentation of work activities.

Methodology

The present study is a qualitative one and it takes the phenomenological method to the meaning of interpersonal communication as a social-relational process in career-building of the informal sector employees. The choice of phenomenological approach can be explained by the fact that it includes the subjective side of the employees (lived experience), their behavior, perceptions, motivations, and actions that occur in relation to the daily activity (Moleong, 2010) (Seia Sekata Roastery and Espresso Bar) that makes the phenomenological approach possible to allow the researcher to gain deep insight as to how employees themselves interpret and experience interpersonal communication in their work environment. The method is relevant to the study aims and objectives that are concerned with the meaning of interpersonal communication in career development, process of interpersonal communication in the development of social relationships, and the role of social networks in developing career opportunities in the informal sector. Accordingly, this study focuses on employees' subjective experiences of interpersonal communication, social relationships, and career development rather than measuring organizational performance indicators such as productivity, customer satisfaction, or employee retention. This boundary is consistent with the phenomenological approach, which seeks to understand the meanings participants assign to their lived experiences rather than to evaluate organizational outcomes.

The study was conducted in the Seia Sekata Roastery and Espresso Bar in Cirebon which was selected as a purposive sample because of the nature of the working environment where there is collaboration, minimal hierarchy and high degree of communication among

the workers. The conditions enable continuous socialization and give a context to analyze the importance of interpersonal communication in career development. It was conducted using five informants (four of whom were employees and the other informant was the supporting informant, the HR representative) and was deemed adequate to arrive at the depth of data required to carry out a phenomenological study (John W Creswell, 2014). The participants were purposively selected based on their direct involvement in daily interpersonal communication and represented different organizational roles, including the owner (who also served as the human resources representative), a roastery staff member, a roastery assistant, a barista, and a social media staff member. This variation enabled the researcher to capture diverse interpersonal communication experiences from different perspectives within the same organizational setting. In phenomenological research, participant adequacy is determined by the richness of lived experiences rather than numerical representation. Therefore, the inclusion of five participants was considered sufficient because each informant possessed direct experience relevant to the phenomenon under investigation. Although the study was conducted within a single organization, the rich contextual description provided allows analytical transferability to similar informal service organizations characterized by collaborative work systems, intensive interpersonal interaction, and minimal organizational hierarchy.

A set of in-depth interviews (15-20 minutes) was used as a method of data collection. The semi-structured interviews were designed along the dimensions of DeVitos of interpersonal communication and Putnam's idea of social capital to give flexibility on discussing the experiences, perceptions and interpretations of the informants in details. The recordings of all interviews were done with the permission of the informants and transcribed word-to-word. Furthermore, since it is a form of data triangulation, documentary data were collected as field notes, photo of activities, and electronic materials related to work interactions through nonparticipant observation. The researcher aimed to bracket in this phenomenological research process by putting aside his/her assumptions and experiences to allow the experiences of the informants to come out in the stories that they narrated. Data collection continued until thematic saturation was achieved. Saturation was assessed through continuous comparison of emerging categories across interviews and was considered to have been reached when subsequent interviews no longer generated new meanings regarding interpersonal communication, social relationships, and career development. The repetition of similar experiential narratives indicated that the essential structure of the phenomenon had been sufficiently captured. Throughout the interviews, the researcher also explored participants' experiences related to communication difficulties, misunderstandings, and interpersonal tensions. Although participants described occasional differences in communication styles and work coordination, no recurring patterns of interpersonal conflict emerged across the interviews. These experiences were therefore interpreted as situational rather than constituting the essential meaning of the phenomenon.

The qualitative data analysis was conducted on the premises of the interactive analysis model designed by Miles and Huberman that entails the following steps: data reduction, data presentation, conclusion derivation and verification (Asipi et al., n.d.)

Within the framework of the phenomenological approach, the data interpretation process is repeated until the nature of the experiences that the employees underwent is perceived and no additional significant information is found. The coding process combined deductive and inductive approaches. Deductive coding was guided by DeVito's five dimensions of interpersonal communication together with Putnam's concepts of bonding social capital and bridging social capital. Inductive coding was subsequently applied to identify meanings emerging directly from participants' lived experiences. During coding, each interview excerpt was first assigned to a single primary category according to its dominant meaning before relationships among categories were examined. Interpersonal communication dimensions (openness, empathy, supportiveness, positive attitude, and equality) were interpreted as communication processes, whereas bonding social capital and bridging social capital were analysed as relational outcomes resulting from those communication experiences. Career development was interpreted as participants' lived experiences of expanded work responsibilities, role development, learning opportunities, and increased organizational trust, whereas career opportunities referred to participants' perceived access to future employment, recommendations, and professional networks emerging from interpersonal communication. This procedure minimized conceptual overlap during thematic interpretation.

Data validity was ensured by triangulation of sources and methods (DeVito, 2013), member checking, in which the researcher presents the findings of his/her interpretation to the informants to have them confirm that what they interpreted was what the researcher got right (Guba & Lincoln, 1982) and member checking. Ethics in research was followed without regard to the identity of the informants; and participation was voluntary. To enhance the credibility of the findings, comparisons were conducted across participants from different organizational roles to examine the consistency of emerging themes while preserving each participant's subjective perspective. The combination of source triangulation, method triangulation, member checking, and cross-role comparison strengthened the credibility, dependability, and confirmability of the findings. These processes will enable the study to give a holistic view of the perceptions of interpersonal communication as a process of social relation in career development as viewed by employees at Seia Sekata Roastery and Espresso Bar.

Result and Discussion

Research Findings

The current research presented valuable findings regarding the perception of one interpersonal communication in the relationships within the social sphere and career promotion among the employees of Seia Sekata Roastery and Espresso Bar. This research identified thematic experiences that characterize how interpersonal communication is experienced and construed in an informal workplace setting through a thorough interviewing of five employees, who hold different occupations.

The Importance of Interpersonal Communication in Workplace Relationships

Interpersonal communication as a concept in this study is based on how Seia Sekata Roastery & Espresso Bar, employees perceive and make meaning out of their communication experiences as they work in their day to day activities. This interpretation does not emerge as a normative idea that is based on purely theoretical framework but is seen as a construction of meaning that arises through the subjective experiences that informants go through. In this manner, the concept of interpersonal communication is defined within the context of the consideration of interactions, which employees experience face to face in work relationships.

The study results show that the employees perceive interpersonal communication as a relational practice that transcends the instrumental roles of the workplace communication. Informants observe that communication is a sphere where they can create openness, develop mutual understanding, psychological comfort and strengthen social bonds among individuals. Communication is perceived not merely as the process of communicating but a social process that contributes to the sense of insecurity and interpersonal closeness and to the stability of working relationships. These findings also indicate that interpersonal communication functions as the initial process through which social relationships are developed, providing the basis for the formation of social capital in informal workplaces.

The idea of interpersonal communication is to be understood within the framework of the working life in the eyes of the employees and it adds to the character of the social relations within the environment of Seia Sekata. Relaxed, dialogic and egalitarian interaction patterns help to create the impression that communication is an essential source of harmony in the dynamics of the team. This meaning shows that not only is the interpersonal communication seen as an operational need, but a social process that assists in the working relationships maintenance. This understanding is also manifested in various themes, which have been elaborated in the interviews that entail openness, empathy, equality and trust. In this context, the interaction patterns described by the participants primarily reflect the development of bonding social capital through trust, reciprocity, and a shared sense of belonging among employees.

1. Openness in Workplace Communication

The research results show that openness is one of the key features of the interpersonal communication behaviors of employees at Seia Sekata Roastery and Espresso Bar. This is referred to as openness and is the willingness of employees to share experiences, give opinions and discuss work-related issues in a manner that is truthful and decent. Based on the experiences of the informants, openness is not just evident within formal communication of work related issues but also during informal interaction which takes place as a spontaneous occurrence during work related tasks.

Informants perceived openness as a state of affairs that creates a more dynamic and non-stiff communication space. This situation permits the workers space to express themselves without the hierarchical pressures and therefore, the work relationship is relaxed. Openness is another component that goes hand in hand with mutual acceptance and this can be exhibited through story telling, discussing work or responding to the

opposite point of view. Aurel, an Assistant Roaster in Seia Sekata Roastery and Espresso Bar, replied that:

“I’m very used to it. Because, for example, at work, the atmosphere is naturally relaxed. So in between busy moments or when it’s not too crowded with guests, we always end up sharing stories about our experiences—whether they’re work-related or about our lifestyles, all sorts of things.” (Aurel, January 30, 2026. Roastery Assistant).

A statement given by Auriel suggests this when he says that openness could be cultivated through making it a habit to share stories in a relaxed work atmosphere. Such an activity of sharing can be considered as an indicator of a cozy communication environment where personal and professional experiences can be shared naturally. This habit depicts that being transparent is a component of the mechanics of daily communication, as opposed to the deliberate communication plan. These results indicate that the concept of openness can be interpreted as freedom of speech as well as an interactive process that leads to interpersonal closeness. During data analysis, openness was interpreted as an interpersonal communication process, whereas trust and social relationships were analyzed as outcomes of that communication to avoid conceptual overlap during coding. This interpretation is supported by other informants.

“Openness is important. If we’re open, we can figure out what the problem is. If we keep things to ourselves, well, we’re not psychics. When it comes to trust, it definitely makes a difference. People who are open are easier to trust.” (Gilang, January 27, 2026. Roastery)

The statement of Gilang underlines that openness is perceived as a way of comprehending the situation of colleagues. Openness assists people to become aware of the problems they encounter, thus minimizing the chances of misinterpretations. Moreover, openness is directly connected to the establishment of trust, open people are viewed as more trustworthy in work relations. Although participants acknowledged occasional differences in communication styles, these situations were generally resolved through everyday interaction and did not develop into recurring interpersonal conflicts.

Overall, the freedom of communication at Seia Sekata Roastery can be seen as a manifestation of the establishment of a supportive and egalitarian culture of communication. The culture of sharing experiences, casual dialogue, and willingness to discuss issues strengthen the nature of interpersonal relationships among the employees. Openness that the informants exhibit does not only ease the information sharing process, but also inculcates a feeling of security, trust and comfort in the working relationships. The foregoing situation brings to the fore the fact that the existence of stable social relations in the workplace hinges on openness. Accordingly, these findings should be interpreted as

employees' perceptions of interpersonal communication experiences rather than as evidence of objectively measured organizational performance.

2. Empathy and Mutual Understanding in Work Relationships

The interpersonal communication empathy is perceived as the capability of a person to comprehend, empathize, as well as get oneself into the emotional position of another individual. Employment of empathy does not just apply to the emotional reaction but is also manifested in the manner people listen, give support and appreciate the subjective experiences of the people they engage with. Empathy is an important factor in workplace communication to ensure a harmonious relationship between people, minimize possible gaps, and provide a favorable working environment.

The findings in the research indicate that the empathy is practiced as the applied type of communication in workplace relations among the workers of Seia Sekata Roastery & Espresso Bar. The informants explained that being sensitive to the emotional conditions of coworkers is part of the day-to-day dynamics in the workplace. The idea of empathy is understood as emotional assistance that the colleagues must get in case of problematic situations, as described by Argyanti: These findings indicate that empathy functions not only as an interpersonal communication dimension but also as a relational process that strengthens mutual understanding and reinforces bonding social capital among employees.

“If someone is going through a tough time, we validate their feelings and help each other” (Argyanti, January 27, 2026. Barista)

This assertion shows that empathy is conveyed in the way of emotional validation. Colleagues never simply listen, but they also admit and accept emotions that other individuals feel. Such an attitude is an expression of interpersonal sensitivity in communication at work. Besides emotional validation, empathy is also exercised via willingness to listen completely and then reply. Aurel indicates that empathy assumes that one should understand the experience being discussed in the first place.

“In terms of our response, we first need to understand what their story is like and what kind of difficulties they’re facing. We need to understand that first, and only then can we offer advice. Even if they ultimately decide not to take our advice, that’s okay—the important thing is that they’ve opened up, shared their story, and were willing to do so.” (Aurel, January 30, 2026. Roastery Assistant)

This statement emphasizes that empathy is non-reactive and non-judgmental. Listening is the initial action towards comprehending the view of a colleague. This is thoughtful and mindful communication.

Empathy may be referred to as the ability to recognize feelings of emotional readiness of a person to open up. Gilang (Roastery) describes it as per his experience:

“I usually just let them be at first; eventually, they open up on their own. Not everyone is open, and that’s normal.” (Gilang, January 27, 2026. Roastery)

This statement means that empathy need not always manifest itself in the form of verbal responses, but also in giving space and time to colleagues. It is a sensitive style to emotional states and receptive to the rhythm of life of an individual. Research results have indicated that empathy is not merely expressed in words, but in fact, it is expressed in situational sensitivity and the manner in which the employees respond to the situations of their fellow employees in relation to their feelings. Although participants occasionally encountered differences in emotional expression, empathy was consistently demonstrated through listening, validation, and allowing colleagues sufficient time to communicate their experiences. Empathy assists in the improvement of the human relations, psychological health and stability of interaction in the work environment.

3. Equality and Non-Hierarchical Interaction Patterns

Interpersonal communication equality may be characterized as such in which individuals treat one another as equals without a preoccupation with dominance in terms of status in which every individual has a relatively equal opportunity to express his/her views, ideas as well as experiences. Equality emphasizes on mutual respect, transparency and valuing of personal contribution to the process of communication.

The findings of the study lead to the fact that the dynamics of interaction in the working place in the Seia Sekata Roastery and Espresso Bar can be described as egalitarian and non-hierarchical communication patterns. Informants described the relationships at the workplace as more of a teamwork rather than a superior- subordinate relationship. Consistent with these findings, informants kept on reporting that they felt at par. The participants' experiences demonstrate that equality was reflected in everyday communication practices, where each employee was encouraged to contribute regardless of formal work position. Such interaction patterns further strengthened employees' sense of belonging within the team.

“We’re all on the same level when it comes to progress; there’s no inequality.”
(Argyanti, January 27, 2026. Barista)

“Here, anyone can share their opinion. No one thinks they're better than anyone else, so the discussions are more enjoyable.” (Ade, January 26, 2026. Content Creator)

These words imply that equality is not a purely normative notion but that which is articulated in the daily communication at the workplace. It gives the staff members a sense of a free space to be able to contribute and the possibility of expressing their ideas, views, opinions without such a strong sense of hierarchy. This participation with the same trend contributes to more flowing conversation, mutual respect and development of a sense of comfort in the working relations. These findings suggest that equality primarily supports inclusive interpersonal communication and mutual participation among employees rather than indicating the complete absence of organizational roles or responsibilities.

4. Trust as a Result of Interpersonal Communication

Relationships Trust in interpersonal communication is a process, which is seen as the belief of one party in the integrity, reliability, and good faith of the other party and it is developed through open, honest and consistent interaction. Trust is built when individuals realize that they can be comfortable to exchange their ideas and emotions and that their interaction partner will respond in a similar and predictable manner. The findings of the study demonstrate that the trust is developed in Seia Sekata Roastery & Espresso Bar because of the repetitive and frequent interpersonal communication. Interpersonal trust among the employees is based on openness, honesty and feeling of security in interactions. Trust is not created in a flash and it is the outcome of day to day communication experiences that enable people to know each other, the character of each other and evaluate the commitment of the other.

The informants experience shows that the practice of trust is rooted on honest and open communication. Aurel makes a direct connection between honesty and trust building and the ensuing professional ramifications:

“The key is honesty and mutual trust. Because of that, I earned their trust, which led to an increase in my responsibilities.” (Aurel, January 30, 2026, Roastery Assistant)

This quote brings out the truth that trust is regarded as a consequence of open communication. Not only does trust enhance relations between people, but also brings about heightened accountability in the workplace and professional legitimacy. The participants associated this increased responsibility with their personal experiences of role development within the organization rather than with formal promotion or objective career advancement.

Trust can also be defined as a state of relationship which is negotiated on a regular basis within the confines of professionalism. Gilang explicates that the individual intimacy does not eliminate work role structures:

“The owner and I have been friends for a long time—decades, in fact. So we trust each other, but we still maintain a professional relationship; I still regard him as the owner at work.” (Gilang, January 27, 2026, Roastery)

This statement is a pointer that there is a moderated way of fostering trust. Trust is established based on personal relationships, but it is upheld in a professional framework. This demonstrates that one can apply trust to make work dynamics smooth with no role boundaries.

Trust may be perceived as related to the aspect of management that is closely related to the stability of the performance and employee loyalty. Handaru Tesla stresses this connection:

“If communication is good, performance and employee loyalty will follow.” (Handaru Tesla, January 30, 2026, Owner & Manager)

This is an indication that trust is perceived as a product of good communication. From the owner's perspective, good communication was believed to contribute to workplace stability and employee loyalty. However, these statements represent participants' perceptions and were not verified through objective organizational performance indicators.

Trust in this sense is a common resource that facilitates co-ordination, strengthens collaboration and enhances efficiency of social life. Interpersonal communication fosters trust which makes people have positive expectations on how their colleagues are to treat them and therefore make interaction more predictable and desirable.

The presence of open, relaxed and dialogic communication practices in the context of Seia Sekata contributes to the building of a net of relationships based on mutual trust. The trust improves team integration (bonding social capital) by creating a habit of experience sharing, work discussion, and informal interactions resulting in interpersonal relations. At the same time, cross-role cooperation (bridging social capital) may also be supported by trust, in particular knowledge sharing, work support, and learning together. These findings suggest that trust serves as an interpersonal mechanism through which both bonding and bridging social capital are experienced by employees in their everyday work interactions.

The trust established, thus, not only positively affects the social relationship in the workplace, but also as a means, it will lead to professional responsibility, a consistent level of performance, and continuity in the employment relationship. Within this study, these outcomes are interpreted as participants' lived experiences rather than as objectively measured organizational achievements.

The Process of Interpersonal Communication in Workplace Dynamics

The research results indicate that interpersonal communication in Seia Sekata Roastery & Espresso Bar occurs in a flexible manner and follows the dynamics of the everyday work. Employee relationships are not only acquired through formal and task-oriented communication, but also through informal communication, when there is spontaneous coordination and storytelling, which is naturally generated between work tasks. Communication is a part of the working rhythm, particularly, when the working atmosphere is more casual, and the workers have an opportunity to share the information, experiences and personal problems. Participants consistently described these everyday interactions as the primary context in which mutual trust, reciprocity, and social relationships gradually developed.

Work place communication process is not a commanding process, neither is it a responsive process. The staff members will go through a series of stages of understanding a situation, active listening and then responding to a situation which suits the situation of the interaction. This tendency is reflective of a reflective manner, in which communication is practiced with a sense of solicitation, human sensitivity and the maintenance of working relationships. Practically, interpersonal communication occurs in a dialogic form, where there is free conversation, sharing of ideas and the expression of opinions without having

to be subjected to a strict hierarchy. Although minor differences in communication styles occasionally emerged, participants generally described these situations as being resolved through ongoing dialogue and collaborative interaction.

In general, interpersonal communication process in Seia Sekata Roastery and Espresso Bar is not only the way of communicating, but also social mechanism, which helps to sustain continuity of interactions, enhance coordination of the work, and sustain stability of relations in the team. Fluid, adaptive and context-sensitive communication dynamics help in creation of a work environment that is more comfortable, supportive and responsive to the interpersonal needs of employees.

Social Networks in Career Development Opportunities

According to the research findings, social networks that are created as a result of interpersonal communication will lead to the creation of opportunities to develop roles and careers among employees at Seia Sekata Roastery & Espresso Bar. The connections that are formed at the work place are not only a source of social interaction but also a medium of information transfer, career support and employment avenue. The social networks are perceived as the product of the continuous communication, both in the workplace and informal discussions that help to enhance the relationship between people. Participants described these social networks as emerging naturally through repeated interpersonal communication, allowing both close interpersonal relationships (bonding social capital) and wider professional connections (bridging social capital) to develop within the workplace.

The results of the research show that social networks are involved in different phases of professional experience of employees. During the first period of being employed in the organization, preexisting interpersonal relations can help to obtain information on job opportunities. These social networks may be employed as a medium of communication that helps people to identify opportunities that can be availed without necessarily replacing the formal processes. This means that the social networks are a platform that encourages information flow in addition to facilitating the process of adjustment at work place.

Besides recruitment phase, job role development is another aspect which involves social networks. The depth of communication on the day-to-day basis allows the employees to determine the competency, interest and career prospects in each other. The frequent communication provides individuals with an impression of what their colleagues can do at work, and thus they can cooperate, exchange information, and development of their duties will become a natural process. In this aspect, social networks are not only strengthening interpersonal relations, but also creating space within which professional opportunities can be created. Participants generally described career development as expanded work responsibilities, increased trust, and broader learning experiences within the organization, whereas career opportunities referred to possibilities that emerged through interpersonal recommendations and professional networks.

Another finding of this study was that social networks are able to broaden career opportunities other than the main job of an employee. The relationships which are formed in the outcome of communication at the workplace provide chances to gain trust, have their competencies revealed and get other relevant professional skills. This kind of dynamics

implies that interpersonal communication plays a role in creating fruitful networks that lead to role mobility and career growth.

In line with such findings, the experiences of the informants explain the significance of social relations in the entire process of joining an organization as well as expanding professional opportunities.

““I already knew one of the team members; we talked often, so I finally asked about job openings.” (Aurel, January 30, 2026. Roastery Assistant))

Such a statement suggests that social networks are an initial point of entry to the workforce. This notwithstanding, these relations do not replace formal mechanisms, rather, they are supplementary to the professional processes. A second informant also gave a similar experience and thought social connection as a means of getting an initial recommendation.

“I was recommended by a friend from my previous job, but I still had to go through a walk-in interview and training.” (Argyanti, January 27, 2026. Barista)

This statement underscores the fact that social networks may mediate in information and recommendations. Even the official selection procedures are carried out, therefore social connections cannot be regarded as a professional demeaning practice. In addition to the recruitment process, social networks are also an opportunity at the workplace beyond the core job position.

“The social media network I’ve built has played a significant role in opening up opportunities. Since my social media presence is focused on photography and video, there are times when coworkers or contacts ask who created that content. From there, opportunities arise for people to trust me and hire me to create content.” (Ade, January 26, 2026. Content Creator)

This claim implies that social networks may be utilized as a device that will raise professional chances. The work place communication and interaction brings out competencies in an individual, which in turn provide an individual with trust and work opportunities. Social relations are considered a strategy to the career in terms of management. These opportunities were described as emerging from interpersonal recognition and trust rather than representing formal organizational promotion.

“Relationships are one of the long-term investments that will help you advance your career.” (Handaru Tesla, January 30, 2026. Owner & Manager)

The latter statement emphasizes the fact that social relations are viewed as the long-term assets. Relationship created by constant communication also facilitates the job stability, development and mobility.

In general, the social network, built in the Seia Sekata Roastery and Espresso Bar, reflects working relationships, which are not only social but functional in terms of employee development. The network that has been developed by continuous communication helps to open access to opportunities, reinforce job roles, as well as increase career opportunities in a framework of informal work. The findings indicate that interpersonal communication contributes to both bonding social capital, reflected in stronger internal cohesion and mutual support, and bridging social capital, reflected in access to broader professional opportunities through interpersonal networks.

Discussion

The findings of the given research suggest that interpersonal communication in Seia Sekata Roastery & Espresso Bar is not merely a tool of communication that focuses on the relay of work-related information. Employees perceive it as a social practice which helps in establishing and sustaining interpersonal relationships at the work place. All communication, both verbal and nonverbal, is aimed at not only getting work done but also a feeling of safety, mental ease, and intimacy among the team members. Communication therefore is an important pillar that promotes the stability of a group, conflict reduction and creation of a sense of responsibility in the day to day operation of the group. These findings should be interpreted as participants' lived experiences within the studied workplace rather than as direct evidence of organizational performance outcomes such as productivity, customer satisfaction, or employee retention.

The style of communication is dynamic and flexible to the dynamic pace of work in the cafe. Informal communication is in the nature of casual chats or spontaneous sharing of ideas in the workspace, but it is mixed with formal ones, e.g., briefing before opening or giving instructions on the work. This equilibrium gives rise to the conformity towards the process and liberty of speech, and thus, the working environment is fruitful and, simultaneously, cozy. The ability to communicate and adapt to the situational context and the personality of colleagues by employees is evidence of the importance of flexibility in maintaining social relationships and performance of teams.

Communication is reflected upon by employees. They attempt to put the context into perspective, and also listen keenly before responding. This is an interpersonally sensitive style that is concerned with the preservation of the working relationship where the communication is not only transactional since it is strategic in creating strong internal network. Both the dialogic and the egalitarian interactions enhance openness of sharing ideas among all the team members without the pressures of hierarchy and hence an inclusive and collaborative working environment. These communication characteristics correspond to DeVito's interpersonal communication dimensions, while simultaneously illustrating how repeated interpersonal interactions generate both bonding social capital through stronger internal relationships and bridging social capital through collaboration across different organizational roles.

The creation of social networks, which contributes to professional development of employees, also involves interpersonal communication. Through interpersonal relationships, information flow, access to career opportunity, internal referral and knowledge sharing are facilitated. In these interactions, the employees can showcase their competencies, learn to work in cross-functional teams and expand their functions within the organization. In this study, career development is reflected in participants' experiences of expanded responsibilities, learning opportunities, and increased organizational trust, whereas career opportunities refer to potential future employment or professional recommendations emerging from interpersonal networks. In such a way, interpersonal communication does not only ensure the unity of a team, it is also an essential type of social capital that helps to further evolve the careers and professional skills of the employees.

Conclusion

The Meaning of Interpersonal Communication in Relationships at the Workplace: According to the research findings, interpersonal communication is viewed by the employees of Seia Sekata Roastery and Espresso Bar, as a kind of social practice, which is more than an exchange of information. Employees perceive communication as a method of fostering openness, empathy, equality and trust within members of the team. The atmosphere of a relaxed, dialogic and egalitarian pattern of interaction provides a feeling of security and psychological comfort and strengthens the stability of day-to-day relationships in working life. Therefore, interpersonal communication is an important pillar that enhances the quality of social relationships, team cohesion and norms of reciprocity and interpersonal support at the workplace.

At Seia Sekata, the system of communication is flexible and is adapted to the rhythm of work in the bar. The interactions are not only in the formal and task oriented environments but also in the informal interactions in the form of discussions, spontaneous coordination and sharing of experiences in between the work activities. There is a high likelihood that employees will engage in reflective communication, whereby they initiate communication by trying to understand the situation, listening to the situation and then provide a response, which is appropriate to the situation. This tendency is marked by the adaptive and dialogic communication where no hierarchical and pressure-based free flow of ideas can happen. Altogether, this process proves that interpersonal communication is a social mechanism which keeps the continuity of interactions, enhances coordination, and establishes comfortable, supportive, and harmonious working conditions.

Social networks between people also help in the career growth of employees. The relationships developed can be seen as a source of information, recommendations and professional help, access to job opportunities opening. Through the constant communication the employees will be capable of demonstrating their skills, building partnerships, exchange experience and expand their responsibilities. These findings indicate that interpersonal communication contributes to the development of both bonding social capital, by strengthening internal workplace relationships, and bridging social capital, by facilitating collaboration and access to broader professional networks. These social

networks are critical and essential in not only enhancing the personal relationship between individuals but also in offering the mobility in professions and allowing individual growth in the context of informal work settings.

This study finds that the interpersonal communication of the employees of Seia Sekata Roastery & Espresso Bar is perceived as a mechanism of social relations, which has a tangible impact on the formation of the career, as it is not merely a way of information exchange. A positive working environment will be facilitated by open, understanding and egalitarian patterns of communication, which will increase trust and stabilize relations between the team members. There are also strategic social capital like quality social behaviors and interpersonal communication which may be employed to exchange information, build relationships and provide employees with career development opportunities. In this study, career development is reflected in employees' experiences of expanded responsibilities, learning opportunities, and increased organizational trust, while career opportunities refer to future possibilities emerging through interpersonal networks and professional recommendations. Frequent and reflective patterns of communication allow the employees to easily share personal and professional experiences, as well as, build team cohesiveness and efficient social networks. In such a way, interpersonal communication can be regarded as one of the main pillars supporting employees' professional development and the maintenance of collaborative social relationships within informal work environments. These conclusions should be understood within the context of employees lived experiences rather than as evidence of organizational performance outcomes, since productivity, customer satisfaction, and employee retention were not examined in this study.

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