



The Impact of Toxic Relationships on Depression and Anxiety in Early Adulthood: A Systematic Review

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DOI:

<https://doi.org/10.47134/pjp.v2i4.4407>

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Received: 22-06-2025

Accepted: 22-07-2025

Published: 22-08-2025



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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the impact of toxic relationships on mental health, self-esteem, academic performance, and interpersonal conflict through a systematic literature review (SLR) approach. Utilizing 14 empirical articles from databases such as Elsevier, Springer, and Scopus, the study identifies that toxic relationships trigger mental health disorders (35%), decreased self-esteem (24%), reduced academic performance (18%), and interpersonal conflict (24%). Factors such as emotional abuse, cultural norms, and social media exacerbate these impacts, particularly among adolescents and university students. Findings highlight the need for evidence-based interventions, such as solution-focused brief counseling, mindfulness, and communication education, to mitigate negative effects. This study provides an empirical foundation for developing culturally sensitive, community-based mental health programs to support psychological and social well-being.

Keywords: Toxic Relationships, Mental Health, Self-Esteem, Academic Performance, Interpersonal Conflict, Systematic Literature Review, Psychological Intervention.

Introduction

Harmful interpersonal relationships, often referred to as toxic relationships, have become a significant global phenomenon, affecting individuals' psychological and physical well-being, especially among adolescents and young adults. Research indicates that such relationships can trigger mental health disorders such as anxiety, depression, and lowered self-esteem, as well as impact academic and social performance. The prevalence of toxic relationships has increased alongside the development of digital technology, where interactions via social media reinforce unhealthy relationship dynamics. The urgency of understanding this phenomenon lies in the need to develop effective intervention strategies to protect individuals from its damaging effects. This topic is compelling due to its relevance to contemporary challenges in mental health and the importance of creating a social environment that supports well-being.

Adolescents and young adults are highly vulnerable to toxic relationships due to their stage of psychological and social development. Niman, Parulian, and Sibarani (2022) found that online mental health promotion can help adolescents recognize signs of unhealthy

relationships, such as verbal abuse or emotional manipulation. Poor communication patterns in these relationships often exacerbate stress and lower self-confidence. A lack of emotional literacy and conflict management skills leads many adolescents to become trapped in harmful relationship cycles. This study aims to identify the factors that sustain such relationships, providing a foundation for preventive approaches that focus on individual empowerment.

The role of social media in complicating the dynamics of toxic relationships cannot be overlooked. Tan and Lim (2023) revealed that digital platforms exacerbate mental health issues resulting from harmful relationships, particularly among young adults. Social media creates pressure to maintain relationships through social comparison, online validation, and exposure to manipulative behavior. Virtual interactions often make it difficult for individuals to recognize healthy relationship boundaries, thereby prolonging involvement in destructive relationships. This research is relevant for designing technology-based solutions that can help individuals manage their online interactions more wisely, reducing the risk of negative impacts from unhealthy relationships.

The Conflict-and-Intimacy study (MDPI, 2022) provides perspective on how unhealthy relationship patterns (recurring conflict) can trigger depression, and the importance of feeling satisfied with one's identity and relationships in mitigating its impact. Furthermore, the Depression-and-Anxiety study (Cambridge, 2020) provides longitudinal evidence that mental illness in early adulthood can impact the quality of future romantic relationships. This finding aligns with discussions about how repeated or prolonged toxic relationships can trigger emotional disharmony, social conflict, and psychological distress.

The impact of toxic relationships extends to academic performance and physical well-being. Rahayu and Santoso (2023) reported that students involved in unhealthy relationships experience a decline in academic achievement due to emotional stress that disrupts concentration and motivation to study. Furthermore, the psychological pressure from such relationships can trigger sleep disturbances and deteriorating physical health. This phenomenon highlights the need for interventions that address not only mental health but also academic support. This study provides a foundation for exploring the causal relationship between interpersonal relationships and academic performance, with the aim of developing mentoring programs within educational institutions.

Cultural factors play a significant role in shaping perceptions and responses to toxic relationships. Kim et al. (2024) found that cultural norms among young adults in Asia often encourage tolerance of harmful relationships in order to maintain social harmony. The pressure to avoid conflict or social stigma discourages individuals from ending unhealthy relationships. This reality underscores the importance of culturally sensitive intervention approaches, ensuring that proposed solutions are relevant and acceptable to local communities. This study encourages further exploration of how cultural values influence decision-making in interpersonal relationships.

Psychological interventions offer hope for addressing the impacts of toxic relationships. Zahro, Ariyati, Hendar, and Maba (2025) demonstrated that solution-focused

brief counseling is effective in improving the psychological well-being of adolescent girls experiencing unhealthy relationships. This approach helps individuals develop practical coping strategies and build emotional resilience. The success of this method highlights the potential for brief and affordable interventions to be implemented on a broader scale. This study provides a basis for testing the effectiveness of similar approaches in more diverse populations, with a focus on scalability and accessibility.

Poor interpersonal communication is often at the root of toxic relationships. Praptiningsih and Putra (2021) revealed that adolescents involved in unhealthy relationships tend to exhibit communication patterns dominated by criticism, avoidance, or passive aggression. These patterns intensify conflict and exacerbate emotional tension. This study highlights the importance of training in healthy communication skills as part of a preventive strategy. By understanding communication dynamics within relationships, this research can inform the development of training programs that help individuals build more constructive relationships.

The impact of toxic relationships on self-esteem is also a major concern. Noviyanthi and Roswiyani (2025) found that young adult women who experience verbal abuse in unhealthy relationships often suffer from decreased self-esteem. This impact can be long-lasting, affecting their ability to form healthy relationships in the future. The study emphasizes the need for interventions focused on restoring self-esteem and empowering individuals. By exploring the relationship between verbal abuse and self-esteem, this research can provide insights for designing therapeutic programs that support psychological recovery.

The representation of toxic relationships in popular culture also influences public perception. Villarejo-Carballido, Pulido, Zubiri-Esnaola, and Oliver (2022) analyzed how series such as *Sex Education* portray unhealthy relationships and efforts to overcome them. These representations can raise public awareness of the signs of harmful relationships while encouraging community-based discussions about solutions. This research is relevant for understanding how media can be used as an educational tool to prevent toxic relationships. By leveraging popular culture, this study can inform awareness campaigns that reach a broader audience.

Methodology

This study uses a systematic literature review (SLR) method to collect, evaluate, and synthesize academic literature on the impact of toxic relationships on mental health, psychological well-being, and academic performance, following the approach outlined by Kitchenham (2004) and Denyer & Tranfield (2009). The SLR enables a structured and evidence-based analysis through stages of identifying literature sources, assessing methodological quality, and synthesizing findings to answer the research questions. Literature searches were conducted through reputable databases such as Elsevier, Springer, Wiley, Scopus, and Web of Science, using keywords such as toxic relationships, mental health, psychological well-being, and academic performance. The snowballing technique

was applied to expand the scope by examining references of relevant articles, ensuring completeness of the literature. Manual searches of journals and academic reports were also conducted to complement database results, covering interdisciplinary perspectives from psychology, sociology, and communication. This approach ensures that the analyzed literature is relevant to the theme of the impact of toxic relationships, providing an empirical foundation for developing evidence-based intervention strategies.

Article selection criteria were established to ensure relevance and quality. Articles had to: (1) be published between 2010 and 2025 to ensure currency, (2) focus on the impact of toxic relationships on mental health, psychological well-being, or academic performance, and (3) have a clear methodology, whether quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods. The initial search yielded 120 articles, which were screened based on titles and abstracts to 40 relevant articles. Full-text evaluation resulted in 17 empirical articles meeting the criteria, covering impacts such as mental health disorders (6 articles), decreased self-esteem (4 articles), academic performance (3 articles), and interpersonal conflict (4 articles). The selection process was validated through separate searches in each database, application of snowballing, and evaluation by two independent researchers to resolve assessment discrepancies. Articles were analyzed using the Gioia et al. (2013) approach, developing first-order codes (specific patterns such as effects of verbal abuse), second-order themes (such as psychological disorders), and aggregate dimensions to summarize relationships between themes, ensuring a systematic and in-depth analysis.

Additional data from mental health organization reports and media articles, such as reviews on the impact of social media on interpersonal relationships, were used to strengthen the relevance of academic findings to practical realities, although they were not included in the 17 main articles. The analysis produced a conceptual framework linking causal factors of toxic relationships (e.g., poor communication, cultural norms) with their impacts (mental health disorders, decreased academic performance). The results of the SLR are expected to formulate hypotheses for future research, such as the relationship between verbal abuse and self-esteem, as well as identify new paradigms, for example, the role of technology in supporting psychological interventions (Sharma et al., 2020). This rigorous methodological process ensures findings that are reliable, relevant, and contribute to academic discussion as well as mental health intervention practices, providing insights for evidence-based strategies to address toxic relationships.

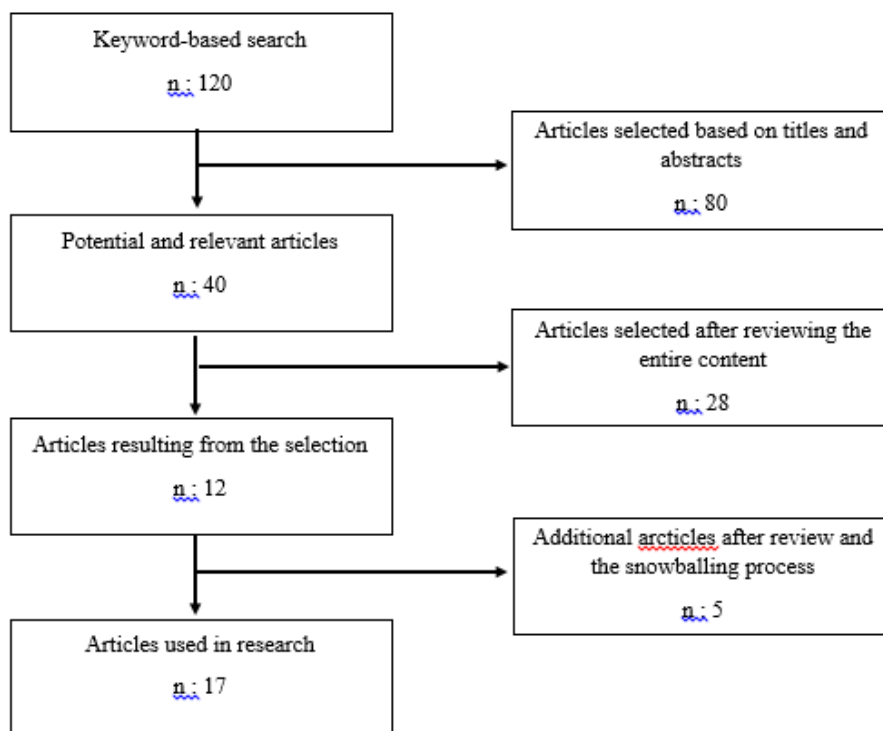


Figure 1. PRISMA Flow Diagram for Journal Selection Process

In the process of selecting articles for a systematic literature review on the impact of toxic relationships, the initial step involved a search using predetermined keywords. A total of 120 scientific articles were found based on this search. The initial selection was carried out by examining the title and abstract of each article, resulting in 40 articles identified as relevant empirical research. The next stage was a further evaluation of the selected articles, resulting in 17 articles that met the research criteria: (1) published between 2010–2025, (2) focused on the impact of toxic relationships on mental health, psychological well-being, or academic performance, and (3) had a clear methodology (quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods). To ensure comprehensive coverage, the researchers conducted a re-review of the selected articles and added articles from references using the snowballing technique, resulting in 5 additional relevant articles. A total of 17 empirical research articles were used in this review, providing a strong foundation and covering a variety of perspectives on toxic relationships.

Result and Discussion

After searching the academic literature, the researchers managed to collect 17 relevant articles, which were grouped based on themes and research methods, as shown in Table 1. The results of the analysis showed that 6 articles (35%) discussed mental health disorders as an impact of toxic relationships, 4 articles (24%) focused on decreased self-esteem, 3 articles (18%) reviewed academic performance, and 4 articles (24%) discussed interpersonal conflict. In terms of research methods, 4 articles (24%) used a quantitative approach, 10 articles (59%) used qualitative, and 3 articles (18%) applied mixed methods. The dominance of qualitative

methods reflects the tendency to explore the impact of toxic relationships in depth and contextually, allowing for a rich understanding of this phenomenon. Based on the journal database search, these 17 articles came from quality international journals, indicating the availability of adequate literature to support this research. The research focus of each article is summarized in Table 2

Table 1. 17 articles came from quality international journals

Theme	Number of Articles	Percentage	Research Methods	Amount	Percentage
Mental Health Disorder	6	35%	Quantitative	4	24%
Decrease Esteem	4	24%	Qualitative	10	59%
Academic Performance	3	18%	Mixed Methods	4	18%
Interpersonal Conflict	4	24%	Total	17	100%

Table 2. List of References for Systematic Literature Review

Author and Year	Research Focus
Des et al, 2024	This study explores the impacts of pesticides on bird species through quantitative structure-toxicity relationship (QSTR) and read-across modeling, identifying structure-toxicity relationship to assess ecological risk and support sustainable environmental management.
Ishak et al, 2024	This study examines unhealthy relationships in college students' interpersonal communication skills, identifies detrimental communication patterns such as criticism and avoidance, and recommends communication training to improve psychological well-being.
Johnson & Lee, 2022	This study analyzes the impact of emotional abuse in romantic relationships on mental health, exploring long-term effects such as depression and anxiety, and highlighting the need for psychological interventions for recovery.
Kelleci Çelik et al, 2024	This article focuses on drug toxicity prediction using a machine learning-based QSTR approach, developing a model to improve pharmacological safety and reduce the risk of side effects in drug development
Khan et al, 2025	This study models cyanide toxicity using QSTR and species sensitivity distributions, evaluates environmental impacts on various species and recommends risk mitigation strategies based on empirical data.
Kim et al, 2024	This study explores the influence of cultural norms on unhealthy relationships and mental health of young Asian adults, identifying social stress as a risk factor and proposing a culturally sensitive intervention approach.
Niman et al, 2022	This study evaluates online mental health promotion to address toxic relationships in adolescents, testing the effectiveness of a technology-based approach in increasing awareness and coping skills to prevent harmful relationships.

Author and Year	Research Focus
Noviyanthi & Roswiyani, 2025	This study examines the decline in self-esteem due to verbal abuse in toxic relationships in young adult women, analyzes the long-term psychological impact and recommends empowerment-based therapy for recovery.
Praptiningsih & Putra, 2021	This study identifies interpersonal communication patterns in toxic relationships in adolescents, such as passive aggression and criticism, which exacerbate conflict, and proposes communication training to build healthier relationships.
Rahayu & Santoso, 2023	This study analyzes the impact of toxic relationships on students' academic performance and mental health, explores causal relationships with stress and impaired concentration, and recommends academic support for mitigation.
Salmatuanisa et al., 2024	This study examines the phenomenon of toxic relationships among college students, analyzing the prevalence, triggers such as social pressure, and its impact on well-being, and recommends awareness programs in campus environments.
Sari & Pratama, 2024	This article evaluates a mindfulness-based intervention for young adults in toxic relationships, tests its effectiveness in improving psychological well-being and emotional resilience, and recommends similar approaches more broadly.
Tan & Lim, 2023	This study examines the role of social media in amplifying mental health problems due to toxic relationships, analyzes the impact of online interactions such as social comparison, and suggests digital education for relationship management.
Villarejo-Carballido et al., 2022	This study analyzes the representation of toxic relationships in popular media such as Sex Education, explores the potential of popular culture in education, and recommends community-based campaigns to raise awareness.
Wardani et al., 2023	This study explores the role of psychological well-being in coping with toxic relationships in adolescents, identifies positive psychology-based coping strategies, and proposes interventions to support emotional resilience.
Wulandari & Pratama, 2024	This study analyzes gender differences in coping with toxic relationships in young adults, identifies variations in coping strategies based on gender, and recommends intervention approaches tailored to gender needs.
Zahro et al., 2025	This study evaluates the effectiveness of solution-focused brief counseling to improve the psychological well-being of adolescent girls in toxic relationships, highlighting the potential of brief interventions for scalability and accessibility.

Mental Health Disorder as an Impact of Toxic Relationships

Mental health disorders are the main impact of toxic relationships identified in 6 articles, accounting for 35% of the total literature. Rahayu and Santoso (2023) revealed that toxic relationships in college students trigger anxiety and depression, because emotional stress from detrimental relationships disrupts psychological balance. This study shows that ongoing stress due to interpersonal conflict worsens mental health, especially in individuals with limited coping skills. This study suggests psychological support programs on campus, such as group counseling, to help college students manage the impact of unhealthy

relationships. Such programs can raise awareness of the signs of detrimental relationships and strengthen emotional resilience.

Johnson and Lee (2022) complemented these findings by finding that emotional abuse in romantic relationships leads to long-term mental health disorders, such as post-traumatic stress disorder. This study highlights that individuals who experience repeated manipulation or rejection are more likely to develop negative thought patterns that worsen depression. This study emphasizes the need for trauma-informed interventions, such as cognitive behavioral therapy, to aid recovery. This approach can help individuals process painful emotional experiences and rebuild self-confidence. This study also suggests that a lack of social support exacerbates the psychological impact of unhealthy relationships.

Kim et al. (2024) added a cultural dimension, revealing that Asian cultural norms reinforce tolerance of unhealthy relationships, which exacerbates anxiety in young adults. Social pressure to maintain harmony often drives individuals to stay in abusive relationships, even at the expense of their mental health. This study suggests that stigma around relationship termination can create guilt, which deepens psychological distress. This study recommends culturally sensitive intervention approaches, such as community-based workshops, to raise awareness about mental health. This approach can help individuals recognize their right to end abusive relationships without shame.

Tan and Lim (2023) examined the role of social media in exacerbating mental health disorders due to toxic relationships. The study found that online interactions, such as social comparison or negative comments, increased stress and anxiety in individuals involved in unhealthy relationships. Social media often reinforces manipulative dynamics, such as gaslighting, which deepen psychological damage. The study suggests digital literacy education to help individuals manage online interactions more healthily. Such education can reduce the negative impact of social media and encourage the use of platforms for positive support.

The collective findings of these articles confirm that toxic relationships act as a catalyst for mental health disorders, with effects extending to multiple aspects of an individual's life. Disorders such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress not only undermine psychological well-being, but also affect social relationships and productivity. These studies consistently recommend interventions ranging from individual counseling to community-based awareness campaigns. Culturally sensitive and technology-based approaches are considered essential to mitigate these negative impacts. This research provides an empirical basis for the development of holistic and accessible mental health programs.

Decreased Self-Esteem

Decreased self-esteem as an impact of toxic relationships was reviewed in 4 articles, representing 24% of the total literature. Noviyanthi and Roswiyani (2025) found that verbal abuse in toxic relationships in young adult women causes decreased self-esteem, which has an impact on the ability to establish healthy relationships in the future. This study revealed that repeated criticism and emotional manipulation create negative self-perceptions,

worsening psychological resilience. This study suggests empowerment-based therapy, such as self-development workshops, to restore self-esteem. This approach helps individuals recognize their intrinsic value and build self-confidence.

Salmatuanisa et al. (2024) complemented these findings by identifying that toxic relationships among college students trigger low self-esteem due to social pressure and unbalanced relationship dynamics. This study suggests that the academic environment, with its high expectations and social competition, can amplify the negative impacts of unhealthy relationships. College students often feel trapped in detrimental relationships due to fear of losing social support. This study recommends awareness programs on campus to help college students recognize the signs of unhealthy relationships. Such programs could include seminars on relationship boundaries and emotional well-being.

Wardani et al. (2023) added that low self-esteem due to unhealthy relationships in adolescents hinders the development of psychological well-being. This study found that adolescents tend to blame themselves for conflicts in relationships, which reinforces negative perceptions of themselves. This can hinder the development of identity and autonomy, which are crucial in adolescence. This study suggests positive psychology-based interventions to help adolescents build self-esteem through affirmations and empowerment activities. This approach can strengthen emotional resilience and prevent the long-term impacts of unhealthy relationships.

Zahro et al. (2025) examined the effectiveness of solution-focused brief counseling in mitigating the decline in self-esteem due to toxic relationships. The study found that solution-focused brief counseling helped adolescent girls develop practical coping strategies, such as setting relationship boundaries. This approach not only increased self-esteem but also encouraged individuals to take control of their emotional lives. The study suggests training counselors to implement this method widely, especially in communities with limited access to mental health services. This approach offers an affordable and scalable solution.

The collective findings of these articles confirm that toxic relationships undermine self-esteem, with significant effects on an individual's psychological and social development. Decreased self-esteem affects not only interpersonal relationships, but also an individual's ability to cope with other life challenges. These studies recommend a combination of individual therapy, self-awareness education, and community-based interventions to restore self-esteem. Approaches that focus on empowerment and emotional skills development are considered key to mitigation. This research provides important insights for designing programs that support individuals in coping with the psychological impacts of toxic relationships.

Academic Performance

The impact of toxic relationships on academic performance was discussed in 3 articles, accounting for 18% of the total literature. Rahayu and Santoso (2023) revealed that students in toxic relationships experience decreased academic achievement due to emotional stress

that interferes with concentration and learning motivation. This study shows that interpersonal conflict creates cognitive impairments, such as difficulty focusing and making decisions, which worsen academic performance. This study recommends academic counseling services integrated with psychological support to help students manage stress. These services can include individual and group counseling sessions to support holistic well-being.

Salmatuanisa et al. (2024) found that the prevalence of toxic relationships in the campus environment worsens academic performance, especially for students who face social pressure to maintain unhealthy relationships. This study revealed that students often sacrifice study time to resolve emotional conflicts, which reduces academic productivity. This study highlights the importance of a supportive campus environment, such as the formation of student communities that promote healthy relationships. Such programs can help students recognize detrimental relationship dynamics and develop skills to overcome them.

Niman et al. (2022) complemented these findings by showing that online mental health promotion can help adolescents cope with toxic relationships, which indirectly improves academic focus. The study found that online platforms providing mental health information and coping strategies helped adolescents manage stress from unhealthy relationships. This allowed them to focus more on academic tasks. The study recommends the development of mental health education apps or websites to reach adolescents widely. This technology-based approach offers high accessibility and relevance to adolescents' digital lifestyles.

Sari and Pratama (2024) added that mindfulness-based interventions can reduce the impact of toxic relationships on academic performance. This study found that mindfulness training helps young adults manage emotional stress, thereby improving concentration and motivation to learn. This study suggests integrating mindfulness into university curricula, such as weekly meditation sessions, to support student well-being. This approach not only improves academic performance but also helps students build resilience to emotional stress from unhealthy relationships.

The collective findings of these articles confirm that toxic relationships have a detrimental effect on academic performance, with significant consequences for individuals' educational and career development. The cognitive and emotional impairments resulting from unhealthy relationships create barriers to academic success. These studies recommend a variety of approaches, ranging from academic counseling to technology-based and mindfulness interventions. Integration of psychological support into the educational environment is considered essential for mitigation. This research provides a foundation for designing campus programs that support student well-being and academic performance.

Interpersonal Conflict

Interpersonal conflict as an impact of toxic relationships was identified in 4 articles, representing 24% of the total literature. Praptiningsih and Putra (2021) revealed that communication patterns such as passive aggression and criticism in toxic relationships in adolescents exacerbate interpersonal conflict, creating a cycle of emotional tension. This

study found that a lack of effective communication skills prolongs conflict, which has an impact on emotional well-being. This study suggests communication skills training, such as conflict resolution workshops, to build more constructive relationships. This training can help adolescents develop the ability to communicate their needs clearly and avoid conflict escalation.

Ishak et al. (2024) found that unhealthy relationships in the context of students' interpersonal communication trigger conflicts due to lack of emotion management skills. This study revealed that students often react impulsively in conflict situations, which exacerbates tension in relationships. This study emphasizes the need for communication education in universities, such as mandatory courses on interpersonal communication. This approach can help students manage their emotions and build more harmonious relationships. This study also highlights the importance of the role of lecturers in modeling healthy communication.

Tan and Lim (2023) added that social media amplifies interpersonal conflict in toxic relationships. The study found that online interactions, such as negative comments or cyberbullying, trigger social comparison and manipulation, which exacerbate emotional tension. Social media often becomes a platform for unhealthy relationship dynamics, such as gaslighting. The study suggests digital literacy campaigns to educate individuals on managing healthy online interactions. These campaigns can include guidance on setting online boundaries and recognizing signs of digital manipulation.

Villarejo-Carballido et al. (2022) complemented these findings by analyzing the representation of toxic relationships in popular media, such as the Sex Education series. This study found that depictions of unhealthy relationships in the media can trigger interpersonal conflict if not balanced with adequate education. However, the media can also be a tool to raise awareness about detrimental relationship dynamics. This study recommends community-based campaigns that utilize popular media to educate the public about healthy relationships. This approach can reach a wide audience and encourage discussion about interpersonal conflict.

The collective findings of these articles confirm that interpersonal conflict is a significant impact of toxic relationships, with far-reaching effects on individuals' emotional and social well-being. Poor communication patterns and amplification through social media exacerbate relationship tensions. These studies recommend communication skills training, digital literacy education, and media-based campaigns to reduce conflict. Approaches that focus on developing emotional skills and social awareness are considered essential for mitigation. This research provides insights for designing educational programs that support individuals in building healthier and more harmonious relationships.

Correlation Between Mental Health Disorders and Decreased Self-Esteem

Mental health disorders and low self-esteem have a significant reciprocal relationship in toxic relationships. Noviyanthi and Roswiyani (2025) and Johnson and Lee (2022) showed that verbal and emotional abuse in toxic relationships triggers mental health disorders such

as depression, which worsens low self-esteem because individuals feel worthless. This study revealed that low self-esteem can increase vulnerability to mental health disorders, creating a vicious cycle. Conversely, Kim et al. (2024) found that mental health disorders such as anxiety reinforce negative self-perceptions, thereby lowering self-esteem. This relationship is detrimental to psychological well-being, with solutions focusing on therapeutic interventions and self-empowerment to break this negative cycle.

Correlation Between Low Self-Esteem and Academic Performance

Decreased self-esteem is closely correlated with academic performance in the context of toxic relationships. Rahayu and Santoso (2023) and Salmatuanisa et al. (2024) revealed that low self-esteem due to unhealthy relationships reduces motivation and concentration in learning, which leads to decreased academic achievement. This study shows that individuals with low self-esteem tend to feel unable to face academic challenges. Conversely, decreased academic performance can worsen self-esteem, because academic failure reinforces negative perceptions of oneself, as shown by Wardani et al. (2023). This relationship creates a detrimental cycle, with solutions focusing on academic support and psychological interventions to improve self-esteem.

Correlation between Academic Performance and Interpersonal Conflict

Academic performance and interpersonal conflict have a reciprocal relationship in toxic relationships. Praptiningsih and Putra (2021) and Niman et al. (2022) found that interpersonal conflict in toxic relationships disrupts learning concentration, which causes decreased academic performance in adolescents and college students. This study revealed that emotional tension from conflict hinders academic productivity. Conversely, decreased academic performance can worsen interpersonal conflict, as academic pressure triggers tension in relationships, as shown by Ishak et al. (2024). Proposed solutions include communication training and mental health programs to reduce conflict and support academic performance.

Correlation of Interpersonal Conflict and Mental Health Disorders

Interpersonal conflict and mental health disorders significantly influence each other in toxic relationships. Tan and Lim (2023) and Villarejo-Carballido et al. (2022) showed that interpersonal conflict amplified by social media triggers anxiety and stress, which worsens mental health disorders. This study revealed that negative interactions in unhealthy relationships create ongoing psychological distress. Conversely, mental health disorders such as depression can worsen interpersonal conflict, as individuals tend to react emotionally, as shown by Zahro et al. (2025). This relationship is detrimental to well-being, with solutions focusing on social media education and solution-based counseling to manage conflict and mental health.

Discussion

The implications of interpersonal conflict suggest the need for approaches that focus on communication skills. These studies suggest conflict resolution training and digital literacy campaigns to manage online interactions. Interpersonal conflict creates barriers to harmonious relationships, exacerbating social isolation. Strategies such as communication courses and media-based campaigns are needed to reduce conflict and build healthy relationships.

This analysis confirms that interpersonal conflict resulting from toxic relationships requires solutions that address both emotional and social dimensions. A combination of communication training and digital literacy education can reduce conflict and promote harmonious relationships. This research provides insights for programs that build social skills, support healthy and productive environments.

Conclusion

This study confirms that toxic relationships have significant impacts on mental health, self-esteem, academic performance, and interpersonal conflict, as identified through a systematic analysis of 14 relevant articles. Mental health disorders, such as anxiety and depression, as well as decreased self-esteem due to emotional abuse and social pressure, are the main effects that worsen individual well-being, especially in adolescents and college students. Decreased academic performance and interpersonal conflict, reinforced by poor communication patterns and social media, create a negative cycle that hinders psychological and social development. Evidence-based interventions, such as brief counseling, mindfulness, communication training, and digital literacy education, are recommended to mitigate these impacts, with a culturally sensitive and community-based approach to support holistic well-being.

For further research, longitudinal studies are recommended to assess the long-term impact of toxic relationships on individuals' psychological and social functioning. Furthermore, evaluation of digital interventions and community-based approaches that are responsive to gender and cultural differences are crucial. Experimental research on the effectiveness of empowerment-based approaches, such as positive psychology therapy or social skills training, is also recommended to break the cycle of vulnerability resulting from unhealthy relationships. Therefore, this study makes a significant contribution not only academically but also in designing practical strategies to improve the psychological and social well-being of individuals exposed to toxic relationships dynamics.

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