

Self-confidence and organizational experience as predictors of communication skills among vocational high school students

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Abstrak

Tuntutan era Industri 5.0 telah menempatkan keterampilan berkomunikasi sebagai kompetensi inti yang wajib dimiliki lulusan SMK, namun capaiannya di lapangan masih belum merata. Penelitian ini bertujuan: (1) menganalisis pengaruh kepercayaan diri terhadap keterampilan berkomunikasi; (2) menganalisis pengaruh pengalaman berorganisasi terhadap keterampilan berkomunikasi; dan (3) menganalisis pengaruh simultan kepercayaan diri dan pengalaman berorganisasi terhadap keterampilan berkomunikasi siswa kelas XI SMK Negeri 1 Karanganyar. Desain penelitian kuantitatif kausalitas diterapkan dengan populasi 152 siswa yang aktif dalam organisasi sekolah. Melalui purposive sampling proporsional, 110 siswa dipilih sebagai sampel penelitian. Data dikumpulkan menggunakan kuesioner tertutup berskala Likert empat poin dan dianalisis dengan regresi linear berganda. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa: (1) kepercayaan diri berpengaruh positif dan signifikan terhadap keterampilan berkomunikasi ($t = 3,943 > t \text{ tabel } 1,982; p < 0,001$); (2) pengalaman berorganisasi berpengaruh positif dan signifikan dengan pengaruh lebih dominan ($t = 6,426 > t \text{ tabel } 1,982; p < 0,001$); dan (3) secara simultan, kedua variabel menjelaskan 75,2% variasi keterampilan berkomunikasi siswa ($F = 161,997; p < 0,001$), dengan sumbangan efektif pengalaman berorganisasi 47,4% dan kepercayaan diri 27,8%. Temuan ini merekomendasikan agar sekolah merancang program terpadu yang memperkuat kepercayaan diri siswa melalui metode pembelajaran aktif sekaligus memperluas akses keterlibatan dalam organisasi sekolah yang terstruktur. Secara teoretis, temuan ini memperkuat penerapan Experiential Learning Theory dalam konteks pengembangan kompetensi komunikasi siswa SMK.

Kata kunci: efikasi diri; keterlibatan organisasi; teori kompetensi komunikasi; teori pembelajaran pengalaman

Abstract

The demands of the Industry 5.0 era have elevated communication skills to a core competency that vocational high school (SMK) graduates must possess; yet real-

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Citation in APA style: Ayucahyani, R., & Indrawati, C.D.S. (2026). Self-confidence and organizational experience as predictors of communication skills among vocational high school students. *Jurnal Informasi dan Komunikasi Administrasi Perkantoran*, 10(5), 618-627.
<https://dx.doi.org/10.20961/jikap.v10i5.121753>

world attainment of this competency remains uneven. This study aimed to: (1) analyze the effect of self-confidence on communication skills; (2) analyze the effect of organizational experience on communication skills; and (3) analyze the simultaneous effect of self-confidence and organizational experience on the communication skills of Grade XI students at SMK Negeri 1 Karanganyar. A causal quantitative research design was employed, with a population of 152 students actively participating in school organizations. Using proportional purposive sampling, 110 students were selected as the research sample. Data were collected through a four-point Likert-scale closed questionnaire and analyzed using multiple linear regression. The results revealed that: (1) self-confidence exerted a significant positive effect on communication skills ($t = 3.943 > t\text{-table } 1.982$; $p < .001$); (2) organizational experience exerted a significant positive effect with a stronger influence ($t = 6.426 > t\text{-table } 1.982$; $p < .001$); and (3) simultaneously, both variables explained 75.2% of the variance in students' communication skills ($F = 161.997$; $p < .001$), with organizational experience contributing an effective contribution of 47.4% and self-confidence 27.8%. These findings recommend that schools design integrated programs that strengthen students' self-confidence through active learning methodologies while expanding access to structured school organizational involvement. Theoretically, the results reinforce the applicability of Experiential Learning Theory in the context of communication competence development among vocational high school students.

Keywords: communication competence theory; experiential learning theory; organizational involvement; self-efficacy

Received June 19, 2026; Revised July 10, 2026; Accepted September 01, 2026;
Published Online September 02, 2026

<https://dx.doi.org/10.20961/jikap.v10i5.121753>

Introduction

The transformation of the labor market in the Industry 5.0 era demands that vocational education graduates demonstrate not only technical proficiency but also excellence in nontechnical competencies, commonly referred to as soft skills. Among the various soft skills required by industry, the ability to communicate effectively occupies a strategically important position. Through a bibliometric analysis of more than one thousand documents from the Scopus and Web of Science databases, Wagiran et al. (2023) identified communication as one of fourteen core competencies most consistently required by the global vocational world. Consistent with this, Kemendikbudristek (2023) positioned communication as one of four essential 21st-century competencies that graduates of all educational institutions including Vocational High Schools (*Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan*, SMK) must achieve.

Field realities, however, do not yet reflect this ideal. Preliminary observations conducted at SMK Negeri 1 Karanganyar revealed a notable disparity: while some students were able to articulate ideas clearly and confidently, others exhibited reluctance or even anxiety when required to speak before a group. In a multisite qualitative study of Indonesian vocational schools, Jaedun et al. (2024) confirmed that students' lack of courage in openly expressing their thoughts represents the primary barrier to the development of interpersonal communication skills within vocational education contexts.

Two factors that have been theoretically and empirically demonstrated to be relevant in shaping communication skills are self-confidence and organizational experience. As an internal factor, self-confidence influences students' communicative motivation and psychological readiness to engage in social interaction. Schulenberg et al. (2024) provided evidence of a reciprocal relationship between communicative self-efficacy and communication apprehension among

undergraduate students, demonstrating that greater self-confidence is associated with lower perceived psychological barriers to communication. Organizational experience, as an external factor, provides a genuine and sustained arena for communication practice. Camarinha-Matos et al. (2020) documented that active involvement in organizational activities consistently cultivates oral and written communication skills, leadership, and teamwork. This finding aligns with Thornhill-Miller et al. (2023), who affirmed that communication and collaboration both 21st-century competencies are most effectively developed through practical experience rather than classroom instruction alone.

Although each of these factors has been examined independently in prior research, studies that integrate both within a single analytical model specifically for SMK students remain limited. Most prior studies have focused on university students or the general student population, raising questions about their ecological validity for the vocational high school context. Widyawati et al. (2024) and Rahmawati (2024) have examined relationships among similar variables; however, their studies employed different populations and instruments, underscoring the need for context-specific investigation. This gap motivated the present study, which employed a causal quantitative design to examine the effects of self-confidence and organizational experience both independently and in combination on the communication skills of Grade XI students at SMK Negeri 1 Karanganyar.

Communication skills in this study are defined based on Communication Competence Theory (Spitzberg & Cupach, 2011) as an individual's ability to convey and receive messages effectively and appropriately in context, encompassing dimensions of communicative motivation, communicative knowledge, verbal–nonverbal technical skills, and communication effectiveness and appropriateness. Self-confidence is operationalized based on Lauster (1992/2012) through four indicators: belief in one's own abilities, optimism in facing challenges, objectivity in self-assessment, and responsible and realistic action. Organizational experience is constructed based on Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory, encompassing direct involvement (concrete experience), reflection (reflective observation), conceptualization (abstract conceptualization), and active testing (active experimentation).

Based on the foregoing, this study aimed to examine the effects of self-confidence and organizational experience both partially and simultaneously on the communication skills of Grade XI students at SMK Negeri 1 Karanganyar. The contribution of this study lies in integrating both predictor variables within a single analytical model in the SMK student context, thereby enriching the empirical evidence for the application of Communication Competence Theory and Experiential Learning Theory in vocational education settings. Three research hypotheses were formulated: H₁, self-confidence has a significant positive effect on students' communication skills; H₂, organizational experience has a significant positive effect on students' communication skills; and H₃, self-confidence and organizational experience simultaneously have a significant positive effect on students' communication skills.

Research Methods

This study was conducted at SMK Negeri 1 Karanganyar, located at Jalan R. W. Monginsidi No. 1, Karanganyar, Central Java, Indonesia, during the even semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. A quantitative causal-associative design was employed, which is appropriate for the study's purpose of statistically identifying and measuring the effects of independent variables on a dependent variable. The research examined the effects of self-confidence (X₁) and organizational experience (X₂) on communication skills (Y).

Data were collected using a four-point Likert-scale closed questionnaire (1 = Strongly Disagree to 4 = Strongly Agree), with the neutral option excluded to avoid central tendency bias (Budiaji, 2021). The instrument comprised 44 final items across three subscales: self-confidence (X₁, 12 items), based on Lauster's (1992/2012) theory; organizational experience (X₂, 16 items), based on Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory; and communication skills (Y, 16 items), based on Spitzberg and Cupach's (2011) Communication Competence Theory. The instruments were adapted from those previously employed in research with equivalent theoretical constructs specifically, the self-confidence scale adapted from Widyawati et al. (2024) and the organizational

activeness and communication ability scales adapted from Rahmawati (2024)—with item wording adjusted to suit the SMK student context.

The initial instrument pool consisted of 50 items (self-confidence: 16 items; organizational experience: 16 items; communication skills: 18 items). A pilot test was conducted with 30 students outside the main sample, using a validity criterion of $r_{\text{obtained}} > r_{\text{table}} = 0.361$ ($n = 30$; $\alpha = .05$). Results indicated that 16 of 18 communication skills items were valid (2 items eliminated); 12 of 16 self-confidence items were valid (4 items eliminated); and all 16 organizational experience items were valid. All 44 final items demonstrated adequate validity ($r_{\text{obtained}} > r_{\text{table}}$ at $\alpha = 5\%$) and reliability (Cronbach's $\alpha > .70$).

The study population consisted of all Grade XI students at SMK Negeri 1 Karanganyar in the 2025/2026 academic year who were registered as active members of school-based intra-school organizations, totaling 152 students distributed across seven organizations: Student Council/OSIS ($n = 17$), Red Cross Youth/PMR ($n = 29$), Flag-Raising Corps/Paskasawa ($n = 23$), Scout Troop/Ambalan ($n = 40$), Student Advisory Council/MPK ($n = 11$), School Safety Patrol/PKS ($n = 20$), and Islamic Study Group/Rohis ($n = 12$). Grade XI was selected because students at this level have reached a stable stage of cognitive-social development, possess sufficient variation in organizational experience, and have not yet commenced field work practice, which dominates the Grade XII schedule.

The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula with a 5% margin of error, yielding 110 students. Proportional purposive sampling was applied to ensure each organization was represented according to its proportional membership within the population, resulting in the following distribution: OSIS ($n = 12$), PMR ($n = 21$), Paskasawa ($n = 17$), Ambalan ($n = 29$), MPK ($n = 8$), PKS ($n = 14$), and Rohis ($n = 9$). The purposive inclusion criteria required respondents to: (a) be registered as active committee members or organizational members for at least one running semester; (b) maintain a minimum 75% attendance rate at organizational activities; and (c) be willing to complete the questionnaire in full. The proportional-purposive sampling procedure was executed in two steps: first, the sample quota for each organization was calculated proportionally using the formula $n_i = (N_i/N) \times n$; second, within each organization, a sampling frame comprising students meeting all three inclusion criteria was constructed, from which respondents were selected through simple random sampling until the proportional quota was fulfilled.

Multiple linear regression was employed as the primary analytical technique, as the study examined the simultaneous and independent effects of two predictor variables on one criterion variable. Data analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics and included: (1) classical assumption tests (normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and heteroscedasticity); and (2) hypothesis testing through partial t-tests, simultaneous F-tests, the coefficient of determination (R^2), effective contribution (EC), and relative contribution (RC). Autocorrelation testing was not conducted, as the cross-sectional nature of the data renders temporal residual correlation tests inapplicable.

Results and Discussion

Research Results

Descriptive analysis of the 110 respondents revealed the following profile of the three research variables. The self-confidence variable (X_1) ranged from 26 to 47, with a mean of 30.04 ($SD = 4.105$). The largest frequency concentration was in the 35–37 interval ($n = 40$; 36%), indicating that the majority of students exhibited a moderate level of self-confidence. The organizational experience variable (X_2) ranged from 29 to 64, with a mean of 50.62 ($SD = 5.745$), with the highest frequency in the 44–48 interval ($n = 43$; 39%), reflecting relatively active organizational involvement. The communication skills variable (Y) ranged from 35 to 64, with a mean of 48.48 ($SD = 5.802$), with the largest concentration in the 47–50 interval ($n = 36$; 33%). The descriptive statistics for all three variables are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	N	Min	Maks	Mean	SD
Self-Confidence (X ₁)	110	26	47	30,04	4,105
Organizational Experience (X ₂)	110	29	64	50,62	5,745
Communication Skills (Y)	110	35	64	48,48	5,802

Source: Data processed by the researchers (2026)

Prior to hypothesis testing, four classical assumption tests were conducted. First, the Kolmogorov–Smirnov normality test yielded an Asymp. Sig. value of .200 (> .05), confirming that the model residuals were normally distributed. Second, linearity tests produced Deviation from Linearity values of .612 for the X₁–Y relationship and .054 for the X₂–Y relationship (both > .05), confirming linear relationships between the variables. Third, the multicollinearity test yielded Tolerance = .306 and VIF = 3.270, indicating the absence of multicollinearity among the predictor variables. Fourth, the Glejser heteroscedasticity test produced significance values of .111 for X₁ and .132 for X₂ (both > .05), confirming that the homoscedasticity assumption was satisfied. With all four classical assumptions satisfied, multiple linear regression analysis was deemed appropriate.

Hypotheses 1 and 2 were tested through partial t-tests with degrees of freedom $df = n - k - 1 = 110 - 2 - 1 = 107$, yielding t-table = 1.982 at $\alpha = .05$. As presented in Table 2, the t-obtained value for self-confidence was 3.943 (> t-table 1.982; $p < .001$), leading to the acceptance of H₁. The t-obtained value for organizational experience was 6.426 (> t-table 1.982; $p < .001$), leading to the acceptance of H₂. The resulting regression equation was $\hat{Y} = 1.390 + 0.485X_1 + 0.565X_2$, with both coefficients carrying positive signs, indicating that increases in either predictor variable are associated with improvements in communication skills.

Table 2
Results of Partial t-Tests

Variable	Koef. B	Beta	t obtained	t table	Sig.	Decision
Constant	1,390	–	0,522	–	0,603	–
Self-Confidence (X ₁)	0,485	0,343	3,943	1,982	< 0,001	H ₁ Accepted
Organizational Experience (X ₂)	0,565	0,560	6,426	1,982	< 0,001	H ₂ Accepted

Source: Data processed by the researchers (2026)

Hypothesis 3 was tested through a simultaneous F-test with $df_1 = k = 2$ and $df_2 = n - k - 1 = 107$, yielding F-table = 3.08 at $\alpha = .05$. As shown in Table 3, the obtained F-value of 161.997 substantially exceeded the F-table value of 3.08 ($p < .001$), leading to the acceptance of H₃. This result confirms that self-confidence and organizational experience jointly exert a significant effect on students' communication skills.

Table 3
ANOVA Results of Simultaneous F-Test

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	2758,473	2	1379,236	161,997	< 0,001
Residual	910,991	107	8,514	–	–
Total	3669,464	109	–	–	–

Source: Data processed by the researchers (2026)

The coefficient of determination $R^2 = .752$ (Adjusted $R^2 = .747$), as reported in Table 4, indicates that 75.2% of the variance in students' communication skills is simultaneously explained by self-confidence and organizational experience. The close proximity of the Adjusted R^2 to R^2 suggests good model stability and the absence of inflation bias from additional variables. The remaining 24.8% of variance is attributable to factors outside the model, such as learning motivation, emotional intelligence, or family support.

Table 4
Coefficient of Determination

<i>R</i>	<i>R Square</i>	<i>Adjusted R Square</i>	<i>Std. Error of the Estimate</i>
0,867	0,752	0,747	2,918

Source: Data processed by the researchers (2026)

To assess the individual contributions of each predictor, effective contribution (EC) and relative contribution (RC) were calculated using the formulas $EC(X)\% = \beta \times r^{xy} \times 100\%$ and $RC(X)\% = EC(X)\%/R^2 \times 100\%$, respectively. As presented in Table 5, self-confidence contributed an effective contribution of 27.8% (RC = 37.0%), while organizational experience contributed a substantially larger effective contribution of 47.4% (RC = 63.0%), collectively summing to the total R^2 of 75.2%.

Table 5
Effective and Relative Contributions of Predictor Variables

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Beta (β)</i>	<i>r (Correlation)</i>	<i>SE (%)</i>	<i>SR (%)</i>
Self-Confidence (X_1)	0,343	0,810	27,8	37,0
Organizational Experience (X_2)	0,560	0,846	47,4	63,0
Total	–	–	75,2	100,0

Source: Data processed by the researchers (2026)

Discussion

The first finding confirms that self-confidence exerts a significant positive effect on the communication skills of Grade XI students at SMK Negeri 1 Karanganyar ($\beta = .485$; $t = 3.943$; $p < .001$). This indicates that for every one-unit increase in self-confidence, communication skills are predicted to increase by 0.485 units, holding organizational experience constant. This finding is consistent with the theoretical framework proposed by Lauster (1992/2012), which asserts that a positive attitude toward one's own capabilities constitutes the foundational basis for expressive courage and communicative engagement. Students with high self-belief tend to be more willing to voice their opinions, actively participate in class discussions, and manage communication anxiety more effectively.

Within the framework of Spitzberg and Cupach's (2011) Communication Competence Theory, self-confidence functions as the source of communicative motivation the desire and readiness of individuals to engage actively in communication which constitutes the first and most fundamental dimension of communication competence. Without adequate communicative motivation, the technical dimensions of communication cannot develop optimally. Hengki and Ratna (2025) corroborated this finding by demonstrating that a structured self-confidence enhancement program for senior high school students significantly improved the quality of transactional and interpersonal communication. Schulenberg et al. (2024) provided complementary empirical evidence, showing that communication apprehension decreases proportionally as communicative self-efficacy increases, confirming that greater self-confidence reduces psychological barriers during social interaction. Silitonga et al. (2025) further established a

significant relationship between self-confidence and communication, collaboration, and problem-solving skills among adolescents.

These patterns are reflected in the frequency distribution of the self-confidence variable in the present study, where the largest concentration was at the moderate interval (35–37; 36%). This predominantly moderate level of self-confidence corresponds to a similarly central distribution of communication skills (47–50 interval; 33%). This parallel pattern suggests that systematic efforts to enhance students' self-confidence through the creation of an appreciative classroom climate, the provision of constructive feedback, or the assignment of tasks that promote expressive courage have the potential to yield direct benefits for their communication skill development.

The second finding demonstrates that organizational experience exerts a stronger partial influence on communication skills than self-confidence ($\beta = .565$; $t = 6.426$; $p < .001$). Each one-unit increase in organizational experience is predicted to produce a 0.565-unit increase in communication skills, holding self-confidence constant. The comparison of standardized Beta coefficients further underscores this dominance: organizational experience's β of .560 substantially exceeds self-confidence's β of .343. This dominance is attributable to the nature of school organizational activities at SMK Negeri 1 Karanganyar spanning OSIS, PMR, Scouting (Ambalan), Paskasawa, MPK, PKS, and Rohis within which students are directly engaged in authentic communication situations that demand message clarity, negotiation, and the constructive management of differing perspectives.

Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory, which constitutes the theoretical foundation of the organizational experience variable, posits that the highest learning effectiveness is achieved through a recurring four-stage cycle: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. Students who actively participate in organizations do not merely attend meetings; they also reflect on the successes and failures of their communication, conceptualize the principles they have learned, and reapply those principles in progressively more complex communication situations. This learning cycle transforms school organizations into systematic, sustained, and contextually grounded communication laboratories conditions that are difficult to replicate through conventional classroom instruction alone.

Rahmawati (2024) documented a comparable positive effect among students in the Office Administration Education program at FKIP UNS, where organizational activeness significantly predicted public speaking ability (t -obtained = 3.108; $p < .05$). Sabrina et al. (2024) reinforced these findings by asserting that active organizational membership cultivates competitive character traits, including professional communication competence valued in the workplace, precisely because it provides opportunities to practice speaking, leading, and coordinating in real-world situations. Yusuf and Hilmun (2021) additionally established that organizational experience not only develops technical speaking skills but simultaneously strengthens students' confidence in communicating, enabling both dimensions to develop in tandem. Corroborating evidence from the frequency distribution in the present study indicates that no respondent scored in the lowest organizational experience interval (34–38), suggesting that all sampled students had surpassed a meaningful minimum threshold of organizational involvement.

The third finding establishes a powerful synergy between the two predictor variables: when acting together, self-confidence and organizational experience account for 75.2% of the variance in students' communication skills ($R^2 = .752$; $F = 161.997$; $p < .001$). This magnitude of explained variance is notably high for social science research and indicates that the regression model possesses strong predictive power. The regression equation $\hat{Y} = 1.390 + 0.485X_1 + 0.565X_2$, with both coefficients carrying positive signs, confirms that improvements in either or both predictor variables are consistently associated with enhanced communication skills.

The substantial predictive power of this model can be understood through the mechanism described by Bandura (1997) in Self-Efficacy Theory, wherein successful organizational experiences (mastery experiences) represent the most potent source of self-confidence development. Students who successfully facilitate meetings, present activity reports to school supervisors, or coordinate large-scale school events accumulate mastery experiences that progressively strengthen their confidence in communicating. Crucially, the two variables do not merely operate in parallel; rather, they constitute a mutually reinforcing cycle: organizational experience builds self-

confidence, self-confidence encourages more active organizational participation, and together they sustain the continuous development of communication competence.

The pattern of organizational experience dominance (EC = 47.4%) over self-confidence (EC = 27.8%) observed in the present study invites comparison with the findings of Widyawati et al. (2024), who reported the inverse pattern self-confidence contributing more (38.7%) than organizational experience (26.6%). This divergence is most likely attributable to differences in population characteristics and organizational activity intensity. SMK Negeri 1 Karanganyar features seven actively functioning, structured organizations with a relatively high level of student engagement, as evidenced by the mean organizational experience score of 50.62 out of a maximum of 64. In an organizational ecosystem as robust as this, organizational experience emerges as the more dominant predictor because it provides more intensive and sustained communication practice than may be available in school environments characterized by more limited organizational involvement.

Taken together, the findings of this study affirm that the development of communication skills in SMK students cannot rely on a single approach. Strengthening self-confidence through active learning methodologies such as presentations, structured discussions, job interview simulations, and project-based learning needs to be synergistically integrated with opportunities for meaningful, structured organizational participation outside the classroom. The positive cycle generated by the synergy of both approaches will consistently drive the progressive enhancement of students' communication skills, better preparing them to meet the professional communication demands of the modern workplace.

Conclusion

This study demonstrated that self-confidence and organizational experience each exert significant positive effects on the communication skills of Grade XI students at SMK Negeri 1 Karanganyar, with organizational experience emerging as the more dominant predictor. When acting simultaneously, both variables account for the majority of the variance in students' communication skills ($R^2 = .752$), with the effective contribution of organizational experience (47.4%) substantially exceeding that of self-confidence (27.8%). These findings indicate that structured communication practice settings play a more substantial role than self-belief alone in shaping the communication competence of vocational high school students.

Theoretically, these findings reinforce Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory in the context of communication competence development among SMK students, while providing empirical evidence that external factors specifically, organized practice venues exert a greater short-term influence than internal psychological factors such as self-confidence. In practical terms, schools and teachers are advised to prioritize the expansion of structured organizational involvement opportunities for students as a primary strategy, while simultaneously fostering individual psychological development through active learning approaches such as presentations, structured discussions, and job interview simulations. Students are encouraged to engage actively and consistently in school organizations as direct training grounds for communication skills, while schools are urged to maintain diverse and structured organizational offerings with consistent guidance as an integral component of students' personal development curriculum.

The primary limitation of this study is its restriction to a single school, which may constrain the generalizability of the findings. Future research is therefore encouraged to expand the study context to multiple schools and to incorporate additional predictor variables such as learning motivation or emotional intelligence while employing mixed-methods designs to deepen mechanistic understanding of the identified relationships.

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