

Communication Skills Among Hospitality Students Case Study from Polytechnic

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ABSTRACT: Communication skills are an important element that must be mastered by every student in preparation for stepping into the world of work. Realizing that the field of TVET is very important to cultivate the technical skills of polytechnic students and the field can develop the country towards progress in terms of science and technology. This study was conducted to identify the level of mastery of non-verbal communication skills and verbal communication skills among 136 of final year students of hospitality at Merlimau Melaka Polytechnic. The study was conducted using a questionnaire and the findings showed that the communication skills of educational students are at a high level. However, the level of English proficiency is still at a low level. The results of t-test analysis also show that there is a significant difference between the level of communication skills by gender. The study also found that communication skills have a significant relationship with the cost of study for each diploma program under the hospitality department in Merlimau, Melaka Polytechnic. Based on this review, the institution must ensure graduates have a good knowledge of the language especially in English which in turn can improve their communication skills after working life.

Keywords: Communication skills, TVET, Hospitality Student, Communication non-verbal & Communication Verbal.

1. Introduction

Communication skills are important and are the ability of every human being to create interactions or relationships through the medium of intermediaries or vice versa with others. These communication skills include the skills of writing, reading, arguing, listening, ethics in communicating, and related to TVET education such as hospitality. Based on the current globalization, communication skills have become an important aspect that is highly emphasized to be mastered by every individual. Hence, employers want graduates who can speak, read and write well in English, not just those who pass the examination subject. With efficient communication, information can be easily conveyed and disseminated to all corners of the world (Abdul Aziz Yusof, 2000). Development of Human Capital Generating Vision 2020 is one of the initiatives and strategies of the Malaysian government to realize Malaysia's aspiration to build a thriving, competitive Malaysia and generate high income by 2020. In this regard, our nation's leaders encourage Technical Education institutions; and Vocational Training (TVET) is competing to offer more competitive programs and

training as well as meeting industry requirements, providing job security to graduates. Guided by most developed countries, TVET is a flexible mainstream education option and can work in tandem with academic flows (Ahmad, Jalani, & Hasmori, 2015). TVET emphasizes lifelong conceptual education, which is a continuing education without a specific age of learning. TVET plays a transformative role in generating highly skilled human capital and enhancing the local workforce's competitiveness and the national economy. Even TVET was able to produce the local workforce needed by industry and country to survive the Industrial Revolution 4.0 phenomenon.

2. Methodology

This study used a quantitative approach while a survey was conveyed to 136 of final year students who taking courses hospitality management from Polytechnic Merlimau Melaka through the Telegram Group. Random sampling of samples was used in this study. Respondent's answers toward explanation in survey were evaluated utilizing five-point dichotomous scale and likert scale. Dichotomous scale is a two-point scale which presents alternatives that are totally inverse one another while, likert scale which in utilized in this examination are 1 Strongly Disagree, 2 Disagree, 3 Neutral, 4 Agree, 5 Strongly Agree. In this test, Alpha Cronbach was used to determine the relationship between the items in the questionnaire.

Table 1: Instrument Reliability Analysis

Variable	N	Number of Items
Non-Verbal Communication Skills	10	.90
Verbal Communication Skills	18	.95

For pre-study alpha values for variables Non-Verbal Communication Skills are $\alpha = .90$. Meanwhile, the alpha value for the Verbal Communication Skills variable is $\alpha = .95$. Therefore, overall, these instruments can be used without any modification to the questionnaire for the purpose of actual study. The Cronbach's alpha is 0.90 which indicates well of the reliability and item can be used referring to George and Mallery (2003). Based on the table, Cronbach's alpha is an excellent correlation between items and acceptable because the correlation coefficient in value 0.8 to 0.90 as arranging these items can be use and It also shows that respondents can understand the question easily.

3. Results and Discussion

A total of 136 questionnaires were distributed to the

study respondents consisting of 136 final year students under the Hospitality Department of Merlimau Melaka Polytechnic. The results of the study showed that a total of 90 male (66%) and 46 females (33.8%) respondents indicated that most respondents for this research is male respondents. The researcher found the results of the descriptive analysis for non-verbal communication skills show that the highest mean score is (Mean = 4.01, SD 1.40), followed by the verbal communication skills is (Mean=4.00, SD 1.36). Based on the results of the study, the relationship between demographics to non-verbal communication skills is insignificant. This is because the correlation result shows ($r = .58$ $p < 0.01$). Furthermore, the results of correlation between demographics and verbal communication skills were insignificant because the results of correlation showed ($r = .073$ $p < 0.01$). In fact, the correlation result between non-verbal communication skills and verbal communication skills is significant and relevant because the correlation results recorded are ($r = .057$ $**$ $p < 0.01$). While the next discussion is the mean and standard deviation of the correlation for each variable. Demographics recorded a total of 13.63 and a standard deviation of 5.21. Non-verbal communication skills recorded a mean of 40.09 and a standard deviation of 10.32. The mean of verbal communication skills is 70.72 and the standard deviation is 17.53.

Table 2 Variable Correlation Analysis

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	1	2
Demography	13.63	5.21	-	-
Non-Verbal Communication	40.09	10.32	0.58	-
Verbal Communication	70.72	17.53	0.73	.057**

The results of the study prove that the background of the respondents through the study demographics shows the factors of geographical location and quality of students as well as gender determine the communication skills for the final year students of hospitality at Merlimau Melaka Polytechnic. This is supported by Brunello et. al (2008); Yusof, Jamaluddin, and Lazim (2013) that academic quality and reputation as a determinant for graduates to get a job if they graduate later. Overall, the level of mastery of students' soft skills between the sexes did not differ. Male and female students have different levels of mastery of communication skills, software use skills, problem. Every educational institution must apply aspects of communication skills among students to be of better quality, ready to enter the world of work and able to meet the needs of the national industry (Kandar, 2014). This is supported by Hanapi et. al (2016), the implementation of curriculum in IPT which includes various aspects of skills to produce quality graduates and be able to develop the country. In addition, lecturers should act and be responsible for focusing on integrating elements of communication skills that need to be mastered by graduates during teaching and learning sessions.

4. Conclusions

In conclusion, the elements of non-verbal and verbal communication skills need to be emphasized before students enter the real world of work. Basri, (2012). However, Mohamad Hazrul (2012) stated that employers are of the opinion that the quality of graduates is still at an unsatisfactory level. In these two statements, it clearly shows that there is a demand space from employers that has not been filled by higher education institutions such as Polytechnics.

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