

The Level of Communication and Academic Performance among University Students

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To Link this Article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBS/v14-i8/22283>

DOI:10.6007/IJARBS/v14-i8/22283

Published Date: 12 August 2024

Abstract

Academic performance is an achievement that can be achieved by every student. Among the factors that contribute to encouraging academic performance are the level of communication. Good academic performance gives students advantages such as increased knowledge and skills. However, some students are still less sensitive to the level of communication. This study aims to find out the relationship between the level of communication and academic performance among university students. This study was conducted in a hybrid manner, which is face-to-face and online, to answer questionnaires. A total of 313 students from the IPTA were involved as a study sample using a simple random sampling method. Respondents were asked to complete a questionnaire consisting of six parts. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 29 was also used for the data analysis process. The findings of the study show that the level of communication have a weak positive relationship with academic performance, namely ($r = 0.206$, $p = <0.001$) In conclusion, the level of communication are related to academic performance among UPMKB students. Implications of study, good communication, bring benefits to students in various fields such as education, social work, employment, and others. While encouraging academic performance brightens the future of students by giving them the opportunity to continue their studies at a higher level or gain an advantage in the work environment.

Keywords: Academic Performance, Communication, Level, University Student.

Introduction

Students who are more diligent in the lecture room or outside of the lecture will usually have an easier time achieving encouraging academic performance. Student academic performance is defined as the achievement of short-term and long-term educational objectives as well as the fulfilment of the required educational criteria (Stebbins, 2017). According to Hafizah (2015), academic performance is measured based on grades, raw scores, and ranks for subjects or the entire course. According to Kathryn (2010), academic performance refers to

the academic discipline of a student as well as the abilities that students are expected to master in each topic. Good academic performance also reflects persistence and a person's perseverance to achieve it. This is because there are various challenges and processes that need to be faced in order for academic performance to be at an encouraging level.

According to Halimatus (2020), academic excellence includes every activity carried out to determine whether success can be achieved at the highest level. In general, communication can be defined as a process of information exchange, from the person who gives information through verbal or non-verbal means to the person who receives the information. A good level of communication is an asset that is so valuable to every individual, especially students, regardless of background, because it can have a positive impact, such as making daily work easier. According to the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education (2006), the skill set components that are highlighted as a focus in universities include communication skills. Handoko (2003) defines communication as the process of transferring understanding in the form of ideas from one individual to another. The transfer of understanding involves more than just words used in speech; it also involves facial reactions, intonation, vocals, and so on

Literature Review

Level of Communication

Communication has its own various definitions, according to the field of study. This is so because the discipline of communication is studied by various fields of study such as sociology, anthropology, politics, literature, engineering, and so on (Aris and Yunus, 2016). Sulaiman (1997), concluded that communication begins when a message (information) from the sender (speaker, writer) is transferred through a certain tool or channel to the recipient (reader, listener), who then provides feedback (encodes and interprets) the message. According to Ermawati and Amboningtyas (2017), communication is a way of conveying information, thoughts, feelings, and values to other individuals. The implementation of communication usually involves two parties, namely the sender (communicator) and the receiver (communicator).

According to the Hall Dictionary, Fourth Edition (2017) communication can be defined as a relationship directly or through intermediaries such as letters, radio, telephone, and establishing relationships such as talking, discussing, exchanging opinions, and so on. The success of communication depends on the design of the information and the way the information is delivered (Masdul, 2018). Verbal communication skills can be developed and fostered through activities such as presentations and open discussions in class or groups. Based on Buntat and Hassan (2010), students' self-confidence can be increased to a higher level with the existence of communication skills in learning activities. Following that, verbal communication skills can also be practiced outside the classroom through interviews. Written communication skills involve two parties: the giver and the receiver of information. Feedback givers can be measured through their ability to translate ideas and give meaning through written work. Iksan et al (2012), argue that clarity of writing, flow of ideas, good use of words, comprehensibility, and use of academic writing style are all indicators of good written communication skills.

The level of communication competence (verbal and written) in English is low compared to the level of communication competence in Malay. According to Iksan et al

(2012), there are four subconcepts for social communication skills: negotiation, language, culture, and courtesy. Communication skills are the ability to involve or build relationships with other people, directly or indirectly, through an intermediary medium. These communication skills include writing, reading, debating, listening, communication ethics, and those related to the use of technology (Nussabaum and Williams 2007).

Academic Performance

Academic performance is the achievement obtained by a student as a reference to the effectiveness of an educational programme (Azwar, 2002). Based on Kumar et al (2021), academic performance is the primary feature and one of the important purposes of education, which can be defined as the information received by the student and judged by marks by a teacher, or educational goals set by students and teachers to be achieved during a specified period of time. According to Al-Haifi et al (2023), a study of the relationship between academic performance and lifestyle behaviour among Kuwaiti college students showed that there was no significant correlation between lifestyle behaviour and academic achievement. Academic performance is a criterion used to evaluate student success in the educational process (Khalaila, 2015).

A study conducted at Universiti Muhammadiyah Tangerang, Indonesia, by Azza and Puspitasari (2020), found that the factors that affect student performance are internal and external factors. Lutfiwati (2020), who stated that the low learning motivation that students have will affect the academic performance of the students themselves, Therefore, intrinsic motivation (internally), which implies learning something with one's own desire, as well as extrinsic motivation (externally), which refers to learning something in order to gain appreciation, need to be increased in students. Simamora et al (2020), stated that the determining factor that affects the student's learning achievement is motivation and interest in learning. Raop and Razali (2018), stated that the most important factors in determining academic achievement are attitudes, interests, and learning methods. Palos and Petrovici (2014), state that referential and conversational communication skills are the most important for teaching activity, and there are significant links between academic performance.

Conceptual Framework Study

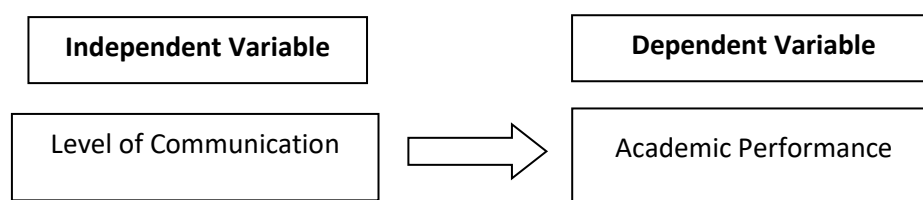


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework Study

Methodology

This study is conducted using a quantitative method involving a questionnaire. Respondents were selected by simple random sampling to avoid bias in obtaining respondents. This study was also conducted in a hybrid manner, which is online through Google Forms and face-to-face using hard-copy questionnaires. Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 29 was also used as a tool to analyse the data.

Study Location

This study was conducted at the Universiti Putra Malaysia Bintulu Campus, Sarawak. The latitude of this area is 3.211475, while the longitude is 113.092918 (view on Google Maps). This area is also in the city. This area was chosen because it is easy to collect data and meets the criteria to achieve the objectives of the study.

Study Population and Sample Size

This study involves undergraduate and postgraduate students at UPMKB. The undergraduate student population of the UPM Bintulu campus is 1582 students, while the total number of UPMKB postgraduate students is 98. This source is obtained from the UPMKB website (2022), and the total population is 1680 students. The academic programmes involved in this study are pre-diploma, diploma, bachelor's, master's, and doctor of philosophy (PhD). Based on the sampling size calculation by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), the sample size of respondents is 313.

Finding and Discussion

Table 1 shows the total number of respondents involved in this study, which is 313. Most of them are female students, which are 169 (54%), and male students, which are 144 (46%). The results of the analysis found that the age range between 19 and 23 has the highest number of 216 (69%), followed by the age range between 24 and 28, which has 65 (20.8%) respondents. For respondents aged ≤ 18 years, as many as 25 (8%) were involved, while a total of 7 respondents (2.2%) represented the age range between 29 and 34. In the religion category, the largest number of respondents were individuals who follow Islam, with a total of 198 (63.3%), followed by 101 (32.3%) Christian respondents. While for followers of the Hindu and Buddhist religions, 8 (2.6%) and 5 (1.6%) respondents were obtained, respectively, and 1 person (0.3%) was obtained from non-religious respondents.

From the point of view of race, this study found that the largest number of Sarawak Bumiputera's were involved, with a total of 136 people (43.5%), followed by the Malays with a total of 79 people (25.5%). Sabah Bumiputera recorded a total of 71 people (22.75%), while 18 people (5.8%) were Chinese respondents, followed by 8 (2.6%) Indian respondents, and 1 person (0.3%) from the indigenous race peninsula. In the group of study programs, the respondents from the bachelor's degree were the most involved, with 220 (70.3%) people, followed by the respondents from the diploma with a total of 74 (23.6%) people. Next are 11 (3.5%) pre-diploma respondents, while 8 (2.6%) Master's respondents are involved.

Table 1

Demographic Distribution (n=313)

Profile	Respondent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	144	46
	Female	169	54
Age	<18	25	8
	19-23	216	69
	24-28	65	20.8
	29-34	7	2.2
	35 and above	0	0
Religion	Islam	198	63.3
	Christian	101	32.3
	Buddha	5	1.6
	Hindu	8	2.6
	Others	1	0.3
Race	Malay	79	25.5
	Chinese	18	5.8
	India	8	2.6
	Native of Sarawak	136	43.5
	Native of Sabah	71	22.7
	Others	1	0.3
Education Program	Pre-diploma	11	3.5
	Diploma	74	23.6
	Bachelor	220	70.3
	Master	8	2.6
	Phd	0	0

Understanding of Communication

Table 2 breaks down questions about understanding communication. The results of the study show that the highest mean score value is that respondents feel communication is important in daily life ($M = 4.50$, $SP = 0.59$), followed by oral or verbal communication being important in daily life ($M = 4.46$, $SP = 0.60$), and social communication being important in everyday life ($M = 4.44$, $SP = 0.58$). While the respondent's knowledge about the meaning of communication is ($M = 4.38$, $SP = 0.57$), Finally, the respondent's feelings about written communication being important in daily life ($M = 4.34$, $SP = 0.64$) The communication process is the most important and unavoidable pillar in the daily activities of every individual (Sulaiman et al., 2010).

Table 2

Understanding of Communication

No.	Statement	Mean	Deviation Standards
1	I know what is meant by communication.	4.38	0.57
2	I feel communication is important in everyday life.	4.50	0.59
3	I feel oral or verbal communication is important in everyday life.	4.46	0.60
4	I feel written communication is important in everyday life.	4.34	0.64
5	I feel social communication is important in everyday life.	4.44	0.58

Note:1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

Level of Communication Among University Students

The data in Table 3 shows the level of communication among university students. The results of the study show that the highest mean score is the respondent's ability to write well (M = 4.37, SP = 0.61). This aspect of communication skills is developed through the completion of written assignments and reports through academic programmes at universities (Iksan et al. 2012). Followed by the respondent's ability to communicate with people despite different cultures (M = 4.35, SP = 0.60). Next is the respondent's ability to understand what is heard and the respondent's ability to give feedback verbally, each getting the same mean score (M = 4.34, SP = 0.62), and (M = 4.34, SP = 0.63). In addition, the respondent's ability to communicate well and the respondent's ability to give feedback in writing, as well as the respondent's ability to communicate politely, obtained the same mean score (M = 4.33, SP = 0.59), (M = 4.33, SP = 0.57), and (M = 4.33, SP = 0.58).

In addition, the ability of respondents to convey ideas orally (M = 4.31, SP = 0.63). The ability of respondents to discuss in groups (M = 4.30, SP = 0.61). The respondent's ability to complete a written assignment and the respondent's ability to complete a written report each obtained the same mean score (M = 4.29, SP = 0.56) and (M = 4.29, SP = 0.58). Next, the respondent's ability to make oral presentations and the respondent's ability to communicate with humility also got the same mean score (M = 4.28, SP = 0.63) and (M = 4.28, SP = 0.59). Meanwhile, the respondent's ability to socialise well got the score (M = 4.27, SP = 0.62). Furthermore, the respondent's ability to convey ideas in writing (M = 4.25, SP = 0.56). Furthermore, the respondent's ability to negotiate to obtain agreement (M = 4.24, SP = 0.66). After that, the respondent's ability to write using an academic writing style (M = 4.22, SP = 0.61). Lastly is the respondent's ability to communicate in different languages (M = 4.19, SP = 0.72).

Table 3

Level of communication among university students

No.	Statement	Mean	Deviation Standards
1	I can communicate well.	4.33	0.59
2	I can write well.	4.37	0.61
3	I can socialize well.	4.27	0.62
4	I can communicate ideas verbally.	4.31	0.63
5	I can understand what is being heard.	4.34	0.62
6	I can give feedback verbally.	4.34	0.63
7	I can do oral presentations.	4.28	0.63
8	I can discuss in groups.	4.30	0.61
9	I can communicate ideas in writing.	4.25	0.56
10	I can respond in writing.	4.33	0.57
11	I can complete written assignments.	4.29	0.56
12	I can prepare a written report.	4.29	0.58
13	I can write using an academic writing style.	4.22	0.61
14	I can negotiate to get an agreement.	4.24	0.66
15	I can communicate with people even from different cultures.	4.35	0.60
16	I can communicate in different languages.	4.19	0.72
17	I can communicate with humility.	4.28	0.59
18	I can communicate politely.	4.33	0.58

Note:1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

Academic Performance Among University Students

Table 4 shows the results of a study of academic performance among university students. The results of the study show that the mean value of the score is 4.28, and the standard deviation value is 0.775. The personality traits of neuroticism and extroversion are significantly and negatively related to academic achievement, while the traits of agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness are positively related to academic achievement. (Hakimi et al., 2011).

Table 4

Academic performance among university students

No.	Statement	Mean	Deviation Standards
1.	Academic Performance	4.28	0.77

The Relationship Between The Level of Communication on Academic Performance

Table 5 shows the relationship between the level of communication and academic performance. The normality test was carried out and proved that the data in this study was not normal, so the Spearman correlation became an option for the researcher. Findings show the value of the Spearman correlation coefficient between the level of communication and academic performance is ($r = 0.206$, $p = <0.001$) at a significant level of 0.01. The correlation value shows that there is a positive relationship between level communication and academic

performance ; however, the relationship level is weak. The results of this study are in line with the study conducted by Dazali and Awang (2016), who stated that communication affects academic performance. The correlation test for the study shows that there is a very low but significant positive relationship between communication skills and academic performance, which is ($r = 0.07$, $p = 0.004$). This proves that communication is one of the factors that affect students' academic performance. There is a significant relationship between communication skills and academic achievement, despite having a weak relationship (Azizi et al. 2010).

Table 5

The relationship between the level of communication on academic performance

Independent Variable	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>
Communication Level	0.206	<0.001*

** Significant at level 0.01 (2- tailed).

Conclusion

This study that has been carried out aims to find out the relationship between the level of communication and academic performance among university students. The results of the study stated that the level of communication and academic performance is weak but have positive relationship ($r = 0.206$, $p = <0.001$). The researcher concluded that the results of this study can have a positive impact on educational institutions, parents, and students because the results of this study prove that the level of communication and affect the academic performance of UPMKB students. This study also proves that level of communication of university students are vital in improving the academic performance of the students themselves.

Understanding the model of the communication among institutions can help in planning a more effective strategy to achieve the best potential of students in terms of academic excellence. Existing knowledge, such as the importance of communication for academic performance, can be improved by creating seminars or talks that focus on these aspect. In fact, the university should engage professionals to diversify the techniques of delivering the benefits of communication to their students. Various indicators can be used, such as the academic performance of students after attending the seminar or talks, as a benchmark for the extent of the program's role in student academic performance. The results of this study can be used by the institution as a reference and as support to make improvements to the existing university program. In addition, parents can also utilize the results of this study as a medium to raise awareness among children about the importance of cultivating a better level of communication. Therefore, all parties need to collaborate to ensure that students have a good level of communication and are in good condition. According to Iksan et al. (2012), various parties should encourage and improve themselves in order to assist university students in developing and honing their communication abilities for future job advancement.

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