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Analysis of the Communication Skills at Graduation Level in Pakistan

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Abstract

The current study was conducted to explore and analyze the communication skills at graduate level at The Islamia University Bahawalpur, Pakistan. Communication Skills have an utmost importance for business education as well as professional life. It is needed in every field of life. It was a survey based research for which the researchers qualitative and quantitative paradigms and data were collected through distrusting questionnaires to students of graduate level department of business at The Islamia University Bahawalpur. The data were analyzed on SPSS version 16 and the results of the study revealed that the students had dearth of communication skills because of lacking practices in the class as wells as scarcity of teachers professional trainings. The research also suggested that the stronger and the more accurate approach is, the better the process of communication will be. Its purpose was to find out the reasons of their weak communication skills, to find out the sources to remove their weakness and also to find out the steps through which they can be motivated to enhance their communication skills. The study has also some implications for the National accreditation of Teacher educators and Punjab education commission Pakistan.

Key words: Education, Communication, Business, Teachers

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I Introduction

The word, " Communication "is derived from Latin word "commune" ,means common, shared. First, communication is continuous. If we are updating our understanding, then communication needs to be continuous, to be effective, not a one-off event, like a radio transmission, but a process. , communication is complicated process.

Communication is also contextual it never happens in isolation. It refers to the exchange of thoughts and ideas with the intention of conveying information. It is a two –way street that includes vocalization as well as gesticulation. Its purpose is to convey one’s beliefs, ideas, thoughts & needs with clarity so as to reach a consensus or mutually acceptable solution. Oral communication involves conveying ideas, thoughts or information via a spoken language. In written communication, however, information is exchanged using written symbols, that is, via words and sentences. Written communication is the sharing and exchanging of written symbols between individuals or groups. It is also the presentation of ideas in a coherent manner in written form. A two-way process, communication comprises the following elements: the sender, message, channel, receiver, feedback, and context.

Good communication skills, necessary for a teachers enable him to communicate well with students. He can inspire them to learn in a best way. Good communication skills are the asset to a sales person as he is trusted in with the task of convincing the buyer about the wisdom of investing. While the importance of verbal communication cannot be underestimated.

Good communication skills are key to success in life, work and relationships. Without effective communication, a message can turn into error, misunderstanding, frustration, or even disaster by being misinterpreted or poorly delivered.

There are a lot of people who work in this context e.g. “written communication skills toolkit” was written by the members of Griffith institute for higher studies Australia in 2003-2007. They provided some useful suggestions and strategies to improve writing skill. While on the other hand Butt did an experimental research on Non-verbal communication in 2011, which showed its importance on the learning outcomes of the students. Philip Bullock has also prepared a research report on skills utilization in the work force in 2012. Wetanson Burt (2010) has also written an essay on the importance of communication in an organization.

Charles (1998) has also conducted a research on communication and came up with the idea that it is the heart of business. While Hamer (2005) conducted a research and found that it is important in every field of life. The purpose of this research was to develop student’s skills in written and oral communication and develop the study skills. It will explore essay writing, academic referencing, and avoiding plagiarism; organizing, planning and editing written work; and improving technical writing style.

Students will also consider time management, meeting deadlines; developing personal awareness and confidence by class presentations. It will also utilize on-line delivery of material via the virtual learning environment thus providing an impetus to cultivate communication skills.

Far from being a ‘luxury’ qualification, Communication is an exciting, dynamic and fast evolving area of study and work and a degree in Communication gives students a wide range of employment options both in terms of the type of work they undertake and the industry sectors in which they can be employed.

In their own words. It affects the students in the way that the students are not able to express any idea or concept in their own words verbally as well as in written form. They can't attempt any question in their exam that is based on creative writing. Although Pakistani students are not the native speakers of English Language and English language is L2 for them yet the hurdles and difficulties, however, can be reduced up to the reasonable level. So data was collected both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Most of the students were of the view point that the teacher must teach communication skills in a friendly environment. Similarly, some students said that teacher should try to speak in English more and more in the classroom so that the students may become habitual to listen to English properly and they may enhance their communication skills. Another suggestion was also received that the students must also b habitual to read books more and more so that their knowledge and reading skills both could be enhanced. Many people did research on

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multiple aspects of communication skills and presented their findings through different angles here are some of the examples of these researches surveys and research papers. In the written communication Toolkit "members of the Griffith Graduate Project Griffith institute for Higher Education (2003-2007) Australia reported that Toolkit was intended to provide some useful suggestions, strategies and checklists to help the students to improve their writing skills. First, it conveyed a clear and unambiguous message to the reader and secondly, Effective writing must be clear, concise and economical. They divided the students in pairs or small groups, and let them read their peers' draft work and gave constructive feedback on: its 'understandability'; its structure; its logic and flow; its style, use of words, tone, consideration of the reader., And its alignment with assignment criteria.

Butt (2011) did an experimental research on nonverbal communication which studied the importance of non-verbal communication on the learning outcomes of the students in the teaching learning process in the actual classroom setting. The non-verbal communication like body movements, facial expressions, eye contact, pitch of voice, and spatial distance between teachers and students is helpful for the progress of students. Contrary to that those teachers who do not properly use non-verbal communication in the classroom teaching, fail to motivate the students towards classroom teaching and can't achieve desired learning outcomes.

Philip Bullock (2012) prepared a research report on skills utilization and he concluded that it is the key component of workforce development. Making better use of skills in the workforce can be the means of increasing productivity, employee engagement and satisfaction. He said that skills utilization must be developed by implementing the participation, autonomy, job design, teamwork ,flexible job descriptions, multi-skilling, flexible work arrangements, skills audit and knowledge transfer are important enablers that act as levers for skills utilization to take place.

Wentanson Burt (2010), in his essay "*The importance of communication in an organization*" is of the view that Communication promotes motivation. It also plays a crucial role in altering individual's attitudes, it helps in socializing an individual. The writer further suggested that an effective and efficient communication system requires managerial proficiency in delivering and receiving messages. A manager must discover various barriers to communication, analyze the reasons for their occurrence and take preventive steps to avoid those barriers. Thus, the primary responsibility of a manager is to develop and maintain an effective communication system in the organization.

Charles (1998) conducted a research on Communication and claimed it the heart of business. The destiny of the business depends on the quality of your relationships. Your ability to transmit information helps both clients and employees. Internal communication is more important today than in previous years partly.

Hamer (2005) conducted a research and he found that communication is very important in every aspect of our lives. In order for any relationship to work properly we have to learn to communicate effectively with each other. The fact still remains that in order for any business whether partnerships or corporate offices to succeed we have to communicate with someone to voice our ideas and/or concerns. Research also found that a lack of communication within an organization can decrease productivity, lower moral and could be the cause of other serious workplace issues.

II Objectives

1. To explore the reasons of weak communication skills.
2. To explore the reducing factors through which the dearth of communication skills may be reduced.
3. To incorporate the motivation for the improvement of communication skills.

III Methodology

It was descriptive research in nature that required survey. Target population was all the students of Bachelor classes but the researchers selected 72 students from sub-campus of Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan. So simple random sampling approach was adopted to conduct the research and questionnaire was developed as main tool to collect data from 72 students. Questionnaire statements were given in close ended form so that data could be analyzed quantitatively. Collected data were analyzed on SPSS version 16 and results were shown in tables with mean, standard deviation and standard error. Interviews were also taken from the students to further confirm the

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findings of the results from the tables. Pilot study and the expert opinions were also considered the part of the research methods.

Table 1 showing results about the lacking in communication skill

S/No	Statements	N	Mean		Std. Deviation
			Statistic	Std. Error	
1	You should learn English language in the class.	72	1.50	.086	.73
2	Your teacher helps you to improve English language.		1.62	.083	.70
3	Teacher should provide opportunity to students to speak English.		1.69	.094	.79
4	Students face difficulty in understanding English communication skills.		2.04	.085	.72
5	Students get less opportunity to show their skills in class room.		2.08	.100	.85
6	Teachers teach communication skills course theoretically.		2.21	.103	.87
7	Student's target of learning is just to get pass marks in communication skills		2.33	.115	.97
8	The focus of your teachers is only to cover syllabus.		2.53	.117	.99

The results in the first table (as in first 3 statements score goes from 1.50 to 1.69) show that the students want to learn English language but different circumstances do not allow them to do. Moreover, teachers should also provide opportunity to students to speak English. The ratio of interest in understanding English is a bit lower. The results show that if they get better opportunities, they will show good results (the ratio of the next 2 statements goes from 2.4 to 2.8, although teachers teach communication skills course theoretically, yet the students' main interest is to just get pass marks. In fact the focus of teachers is to cover syllabus as the ratio of last 3 statements is between 2.21 to 2.53.

Table 2. Showing factors analysis which causes the dearth of communication skills

Variables	N	Mean		Std. Deviation
		Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
Your syllabus is helpful in improving communication skills	72	2.06	.088	.748
Your teacher use audio or video aids in the class		2.67	.119	1.007
You speak English with your friends in the class		2.74	.105	.888
Teacher should encourage the students to improve their communication skills.		1.54	.076	.649
Teacher should speak English with the students in the class		1.82	.087	.738
Teachers should improve student's speaking and writing skills		1.46	.071	.604
Your family help you learning English		2.56	.106	.902

The results of the above table show that the most of the students say that their syllabus is helpful in improving communication skills. It is because that the teachers use audio video aids in the class and the students try to speak English with one another in the class. (As the ratio goes from 2.6 to 2.74.

While half of the students are of the view point that the teachers should speak English in the class. They are also of the view point that the teacher should communicate in English and teachers should also try to improve the writing as well as speaking skills. (As the readings are 1.54 to 1.46). As far the statement no 15 is concerned, the students say that their families help them to learn English.

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IV Discussion

The purpose of this research was to develop student's skills in written and oral communication and to develop the study skills. This research has proved the following things:

First, most of the students were of the view that the teacher must teach communication skills in a friendly environment so that students may not feel any hesitation regarding enhancement of communication skill. Secondly, some students said that teacher should try to speak in English more and more in the classroom so that the students may become habitual to listen to English properly and they may enhance their communication skills. Thirdly, another suggestion was also received by the students in response to an open ended question that the students must also be habitual to read books more and more so that their knowledge and reading skills both could be enhanced.

Fourthly, this research proved that our students cannot attempt any question in the examination that is based on creative writing. So they should try to enhance their writing skills so that they may easily attempt any question in exams that is based on creative writing. Fifthly, through the results of questionnaire most of the students gave their view point that teacher must speak in English in class room so that students may enhance their listening skills. Sixthly, students expressed their views in response to an open ended question that teacher must encourage the students while teaching communication skills.

The results show that communicating the intended message clearly and effectively is an important skill, which is often a key factor in deciding the chances of success. Communication is the process of transforming information from one entity to another; but communication skills are a set of important attributes that highlight one's personality, in this article the results focused diligently on communication skills to convey the ideas better. The results showed that the Communication between teachers and students needs to be precise and lucid Irrespective of whether it is a verbal or a written communication. The research showed that a teacher cannot expect a student to speak and listen English sentences every time he come across. Rather, if a teacher provides enough choices and variety in the language that would make the reading, speaking and listening experience of the students more comfortable and enjoyable.

V Conclusion

As teachers and students both can play their role to enhance communication skills. So teachers must strive to focus the skill development of students also besides course work so that they may became a confident person and also able to communicate their ideas and concepts in any exam, interview and on any step of life. And students must also try their best to take the advantage of learning as much as they can. The level of graduation is very important as far the personality grooming of students is concerned. Because they are to go further for their jobs or higher studies. So the things like encouragement, healthy learning activities, and the maximum participation of students in these activities may play a vital role to enhance the basic four communication skills of the students.

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