



Research Article

The Correlation between Lecturers' Interpersonal Communication and Students' Learning Motivation

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Article Info

Received: 23rd Nov 2024
Revised: 25th Nov 2024
Accepted: 28th Nov 2024
Available Online: 10th Dec 2024

Keywords:

Interpersonal Communication;
Learning Motivation;
Students

p_2775-2682/e_2775-2690/

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Abstract

Communication is used in everyday life to interact with other individuals. Establishing good communication aims to create good social conditions as well. This study aimed to determine the correlation between lecturers' interpersonal communication and students' learning motivation. This study was conducted using a non-experimental quantitative approach with correlational study methods. The questionnaires were developed from DeVito's interpersonal communication theory and Pintrich & Groot's learning motivation theory. . The respondents in this study were 36 students of the STAIN Sultan Abdurrahman Islamic Broadcasting Communication Study Program, Riau Islands. Based on the results of the correlation test, the 2-tailed Sig value was 0.003 <0.005, it can be concluded that there was a correlation between lecturers' interpersonal communication and students' learning motivation. This study was the first to be conducted at STAIN Sultan Abdurrahman as a tertiary education institution with a focus on effective interpersonal communication built by lecturers with students as a first step in creating a good academic atmosphere and encouraging all components of student learning motivation to achieve good academic achievement.

To Cite this article:

Hamdan, A., Attika, S. The Correlation between Lecturers' Interpersonal Communication and Students' Learning Motivation. *Journal of Education and Religious Studies*, Vol. 03 No. 03 December 2024. Doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.57060/jers-v9svrw21>

INTRODUCTION

Communication is a two-way interaction involving both the message sender and receiver. Its purpose is to ensure that the intended message is effectively conveyed and understood by both parties. From the earliest stages of life, individuals start developing communication skills through interactions with those around them. Over time, these skills continue to improve, shaped by the individual's growing experiences. In the educational setting, communication activities are essential in facilitating interaction between lecturers and students to successfully achieve the intended learning objectives.

Effective communication between lecturers and students helps create a positive academic atmosphere. It plays a vital role in ensuring that the purpose of lectures is clearly delivered. This concept aligns with (Abubakar, 2015) who stated that effective communication can bring about changes in attitudes among participants. Similarly, Hovland, as cited by (Effendy, 2018), described communication as a process aimed at influencing and altering the behavior of others.

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Interpersonal communication skills are essential for individuals to establish effective communication. According to Suranto, as cited in (Abidin, 2022), interpersonal communication involves daily activities that enable the exchange of thoughts, information, ideas, feelings, and even emotions. This process aims to achieve mutual understanding between the sender and the receiver of the message. Furthermore, Johnson as cited in (Abidin, 2022), explained that interpersonal communication plays a crucial role in fostering individuals' happiness: (1) it supports intellectual and social development. As individuals grow older, their communication environment expands, and the quality of their interactions with others significantly influences their intellectual and social growth; (2) an individual's identity or sense of self is shaped through communication with others. In the process of communicating with others, individuals, whether intentionally or not, observe and mentally record all the reactions they receive from others; (3) to comprehend the social realities in their surroundings and assess the accuracy of their perceptions about the world, children must compare their views with those of others; (4) a person's mental well-being is largely determined by the quality of their communication and relationships with others. To achieve happiness, individuals need confirmation from others that they are normal, healthy, and happy. The opposite of confirmation is disconfirmation, which involves rejection from others through responses indicating that the person is abnormal, unhealthy, or unhappy. Such feedback can only be received through personal communication with others.

The ability of lecturers to communicate effectively can enhance student motivation, as good communication improves students' capacity to absorb lessons and fosters a supportive learning environment. According to (Abubakar, 2015), motivation is crucial in the learning process at universities, as it determines the intensity of students' learning efforts and encourages them to engage in activities related to their studies. In line with this, a study conducted by (Sidabutar et al., 2020) found that learning motivation positively influences academic achievement. This indicates that higher motivation leads to better student performance.

In reality, the quality of lecturers' communication significantly influences students' learning motivation. Lecturers who effectively convey the essence of learning can enhance students' motivation. This effect can be measured quantitatively through academic performance and qualitatively through students' enthusiasm and active participation in class. However, many lecturers are still unaware that their communication patterns with students can significantly impact students' psychological well-being and learning motivation.

This study was conducted to examine the extent of the influence of lecturers' interpersonal communication on students' learning motivation. The uniqueness of this study lies in its focus on the quality of effective interpersonal communication between lecturers and students, covering aspects such as openness, empathy, support, positive feelings, and equality to foster students' learning motivation. The findings of this study also provide recommendations for educational institutions, particularly universities, to improve the quality of learning by creating a positive academic atmosphere, starting with effective communication between lecturers and students to build learning motivation. Ultimately, this study offers insights for lecturers, policymakers in educational institutions, and education managers in designing effective communication strategies to support better learning outcomes.

METHOD

This study was conducted using a non-experimental quantitative approach with a correlational study method. The correlational study method was used to determine whether there is a relationship between interpersonal communication and students' learning motivation. Data were collected through questionnaires distributed to students of STAIN Sultan Abdurrahman, Riau Islands, via Google Forms. The respondents in this study were 36 students from the Islamic Broadcasting Communication Study Program at STAIN Sultan Abdurrahman, Riau Islands. This study used two questionnaires: the interpersonal communication questionnaire developed by DeVito with 9 statement items and the learning motivation questionnaire developed by Pintrich and Groot, which consists of 20 statement items. This study aimed to examine the influence of variable X (lecturers' interpersonal communication) on variable Y (students' learning motivation) in the Islamic Broadcasting Communication Study Program at STAIN Sultan Abdurrahman, Riau Islands. Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires using a Likert scale, with score descriptions of 5 (Strongly Agree), 4 (Agree), 3 (Neutral), 2 (Disagree), and 1 (Strongly Disagree). The collected data were then analyzed using a correlational test with SPSS and examined based on the relevance of interpersonal communication theory and learning motivation.

The hypotheses in this study are as follows:

H0: There is no correlation between lecturers' interpersonal communication and students' learning motivation.

Ha: There is a correlation between lecturers' interpersonal communication and students' learning motivation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

Based on the results of the correlational test analysis using SPSS 26, the following data were obtained:

Correlations

		Interpersonal Communication	Learning Motivation
Interpersonal Communication	Pearson Correlation	1	,479**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,003
	N	36	36
Learning Motivation	Pearson Correlation	,479**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,003	
	N	36	36

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on the table above, it was found that the 2-tailed sig value was $0.003 < 0.005$, which led to the rejection of H0 and the acceptance of Ha. This indicates that there was a positive correlation between lecturers' interpersonal communication and students' learning motivation. The better the interpersonal communication skills of the lecturers, the higher the students' motivation to learn.

Discussion

Based on the study conducted, it was found that there was an influence of lecturers' interpersonal communication on the students' learning motivation in the KPI Study Program at STAIN Sultan Abdurrahman, Riau Islands. Effective communication creates a conducive academic atmosphere and enables students to understand the messages conveyed by the lecturers. Moreover, it can also boost students' self-confidence, motivate them to actively participate in learning activities, and help them stay more focused and enthusiastic in achieving academic success.

Interpersonal communication skills can be categorized into three types according to Sokolove and Sadke, as cited in (Abidin, 2022): (1) the ability to express students' feelings, which relates to creating a positive learning environment that allows students to share their feelings or problems without pressure or judgment. Such an environment can be fostered by lecturers through two approaches: demonstrating attending behavior and practicing active listening. (2) The ability to clarify the feelings expressed by students. Once students feel free to share their emotions or challenges, the lecturer's role is to help them classify these expressions. To achieve this, lecturers need to master two specific skills: reflecting and asking exploratory questions. Reflecting can be compared to holding up a mirror for students, enabling them to reassess their actions or words. In this context, lecturers may restate what students have said or offer constructive feedback. (3) Supporting students in exploring and selecting alternative behaviors.

According to De Vito, as cited in (Irfal, 2021), effective interpersonal communication can be identified through the following indicators: (1) Openness, which greatly influences the development of effective interpersonal communication; (2) Empathy, which involves feeling and understanding the emotions of others or the process of perceiving and interpreting those emotions; (3) Supportiveness, a condition that fosters openness to support effective communication. A supportive attitude helps reduce defensiveness in

communication; (4) Positiveness, characterized by a positive outlook on oneself, the ability to encourage others to participate actively, and the capacity to create a conducive communication environment for effective interaction; (5) Equality, which recognizes mutual respect, valuing each other's contributions, and acknowledging that both parties have something important to offer.

Motivation originates from the Latin word "motive," which means drive, impetus, or inner force within an organism (Ruliana, 2018). Learning motivation refers to the drive that fosters students' awareness to complete their academic tasks effectively. The purpose of providing learning motivation is to encourage students to develop perseverance in carrying out their academic activities. Lecturers should have effective interpersonal communication skills to ensure that the messages they convey are well-received and meaningful for students. This can be observed through improvements in academic performance and classroom abilities. In line with this, Sugiharto, as cited in Sidabutar, et.al (2020), stated that academic achievement reflects the results of assessments indicating students' mastery of the subject matter.

The components of learning motivation, as developed by Pintrich and Groot in (Mendari & Kewal, 2015), include self-efficacy, intrinsic value, and test anxiety. Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to accomplish tasks and achieve specific goals. Intrinsic value relates to the level of interest an individual has in a learning activity. Test anxiety, on the other hand, refers to the feelings of worry experienced by an individual when facing evaluations or exams.

High self-efficacy is likely to make students more confident in expressing their opinions and actively participating in classroom discussions. Conversely, low self-efficacy can increase anxiety about speaking in front of others, which ultimately hinders students' participation in academic activities. A study conducted by (Sari, Fridia Maria. Tagela, 2024) found a significant influence of self-efficacy on public speaking anxiety among students. Students' self-efficacy can be developed through communication with lecturers, by providing constructive feedback, listening empathetically, and offering strong support to foster confidence in their academic abilities. This is in line with the a study conducted by (Marleni, 2021), which found that effective interpersonal communication between lecturers and students has a positive relationship with students' academic achievement and demonstrates an improvement in their self-efficacy.

The component of intrinsic value that students have towards the learning material plays a crucial role in motivating their active participation in the learning process. Students are generally more motivated during discussions and presentations, as it is driven by their personal interest in the material being studied. The study conducted by (Ryan, R.M. Deci, 2020) indicated that individuals with high intrinsic value tend to be more creative, proactive, and committed to the tasks assigned. Furthermore, during the learning process, the exchange of messages requires the reception of messages, and it is during this process that individual motivation, which is intrinsic to the students, becomes essential and has the potential to lead to maximum learning outcomes (Novitasari, 2023).

The final component is test anxiety, which can impact students' communication skills, particularly in oral exams or presentations. Anxiety experienced by students can become a barrier to their ability to answer questions during oral exams or convey their ideas and findings during presentations. According to a study conducted by (Ramadini & Yanti, 2024), it is recommended to manage students' anxiety and depression before facing competency tests, as the negative effects of stress, anxiety, and depression can lead to poor exam performance. Therefore, communication between lecturers and students is essential to maintain students' motivation for learning and foster optimism about the upcoming exams.

These three components are interconnected and strongly influenced by the quality of interpersonal communication between lecturers and students. High self-efficacy can enhance intrinsic value, as individuals who believe in their abilities tend to have greater motivation to learn. Conversely, low test anxiety strengthens self-efficacy and increases the likelihood of enjoying the learning process.

Lecturers with effective communication skills can facilitate these three components, ultimately enhancing students' overall learning motivation. Such effective interpersonal communication is characterized by key indicators that promote quality interactions, which in turn strengthen the components of learning motivation. As previously mentioned, these indicators include openness, empathy, supportiveness, positivity, and equality.

A willingness to be open in communication creates an environment where students feel more at ease expressing their ideas, thoughts, questions, or difficulties. Lecturers who are receptive to feedback, criticism,

or questions from students tend to enhance students' self-efficacy. Additionally, empathy is essential in establishing strong relationships with students and nurturing deeper emotional bonds. When students experience empathy from their lecturers, they feel understood on an emotional level, which helps them manage test-related anxiety more effectively. This emotional connection also provides an opportunity to address and resolve students' academic issues (Saputra, 2018).

Supportiveness is another key indicator of effective communication, characterized by offering guidance and encouragement to help students complete their studies successfully. In addition to teaching, lecturers also serve as academic advisors, acting as mediators between students and the university. They are expected to support students in completing their education on time while achieving optimal results (Wahyudin et al., 2024).

To achieve this goal, fostering a sense of positivity in both lecturers and students is essential for establishing a supportive academic atmosphere. Lecturers are encouraged to offer constructive encouragement to assist students in managing their academic responsibilities effectively. Similarly, students should maintain an optimistic outlook to successfully accomplish their tasks. Effective interpersonal communication is built upon mutual positivity between individuals (Syaharuddin., 2024).

Equality in interpersonal communication is an essential indicator of its effectiveness. This is because, in the communication process between lecturers and students, there should be no barriers arising from differences in backgrounds. While students may come from different social or economic backgrounds, possess varying academic abilities, or even have different physical appearances, lecturers should view all students as equally valuable, which helps establish effective communication (Marentek et al., 2018).

Thus, interpersonal communication between lecturers and students, involving openness, empathy, support, positivity, and equality, has a significant impact on strengthening the components of learning motivation. As mentors, lecturers are expected to create a positive academic environment that supports an engaging learning process for students. Through effective interpersonal communication, students can develop high self-confidence, feel comfortable, and stay engaged in the learning process, ultimately leading to good academic achievement.

CONCLUSION

Based on the study findings, it can be concluded that there was a relationship between lecturers' interpersonal communication and students' learning motivation. The data, obtained from correlation testing with a Sig 2-tailed value of $0.003 < 0.005$, showed that the quality of communication from lecturers had a positive impact on students' learning motivation. The better the interpersonal communication quality of lecturers, the higher the students' learning motivation. With strong learning motivation, students' academic performance was positively influenced. Therefore, efforts to improve the quality of communication, particularly between lecturers and students, should be given special attention as a strategy for managing education in higher education institutions. The implications of this study emphasize that every educational institution, especially universities, should establish policies that support a positive academic environment by enhancing the quality of interpersonal communication between lecturers and students. This effort is expected not only to improve effective communication but also to foster more harmonious relationships and support students' overall academic success and achievement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author expresses their deepest gratitude to all parties who have supported the smooth execution of the research and writing of this article, particularly the students and the entire academic community of STAIN Sultan Abdurrahman, Riau Islands.

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