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Mardiana Mazaulan . Noor Azila Azreen Md Radzi .
Nurul Ain Abu Kasim . Nur Hani Syazwani Bakri .
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Editors

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Investigation on Effective Communication and Group Cohesiveness in the Outdoor Recreation Program Curriculum at the Faculty of Sports Science and Recreation, UiTM



Syaza Nur Nadirah Afzainizam* and Ahmad Fikri Mohd Kassim.

Abstract | This research endeavour seeks to compare the difference between level of education on effective communication and group cohesiveness through outdoor recreation program curriculum at the faculty of sports science and recreation, UiTM. The study delves into two fundamental components of effective communication: external perception encompassing clarity and information dissemination, and internal disservice focusing on conflict resolution. In addition, the analysis of group cohesiveness entails an examination of four dimensions: individual attractions towards the group in social contexts (ATG-S), individual attractions towards the group in task-oriented settings (ATG-T), group integration-social (GI-S) and group integration-task (GI-T). A set of questionnaires based on Interpersonal Communication Skills (ICS) and Group Environment Questionnaire (GEQ) was completed by 233 students who took an outdoor recreation program. The respondent in this study consists of male ($n = 121$) and female ($n = 112$) respondents. The result revealed that external perception is positively associated with group integration social (GI-S) but negatively associated with individual attraction to the group task (ATG-T). Internal disservice is positively associated with individual attraction to the group social (ATG-S), group integration social (GI-S) and group integration task (GI-T). Conversely, negatively associated with individual attraction to the group task (ATG-T). The findings underscore the complex interplay between external factors (such as perception) and internal group dynamics (such as conflict management) in shaping overall group cohesiveness and member engagement. These findings could help students and academicians understand the elements of group cohesiveness which can lead to more effective group work and improved learning experience for better educational achievement.

Keywords: *Effective communication, group cohesiveness, outdoor recreation program, curriculum development.*

S.N.N., Afzainizam* (✉) and A.F., Mohd Kassim.

Faculty of Sports Science and Recreation, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Perlis Branch, Arau Campus, Malaysia.

*Corresponding author: syazanadirah1999@gmail.com

I. INTRODUCTION

Outdoor recreation program curriculum is a type of training that promotes every aspect of an individual, including intellectual, physical, emotional, social, and psychological health. This educational technique attempts to provide students with practical knowledge and skills in natural environments, frequently using outdoor leisure activities to achieve academic goals [1]. Besides, internal and external influences contributed to development. Changes must be made with a structured and systematic approach so that the transformation process can be observed and is consistent with expectations [2]. Through communication, one can better understand themselves, their peers, and the world around them. This is because communication allows one to learn about their environment and respond correctly by acting and choosing appropriately [3]. When it comes to altering attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and perceptions, interpersonal communication is the most successful form of communication.

Moreover, according to study conducted by [4], cohesion is a dynamic process that is reflected in a group tendency to keep together and remain together in the achievement of its instrumental purposes and for the satisfaction of member affective needs. Individual and societal demands pushed for unity. Because of this urgency, group members were able to connect with one another on a constant basis, which fostered cooperation and, ultimately, group cohesion [5]. This research endeavour seeks to compare the difference between level of education on effective communication and group cohesiveness through outdoor recreation program curriculum at the faculty of sports science and recreation, UiTM. The study delves into two fundamental components of effective communication: external perception, which encompasses clarity and information dissemination, and internal disconnection, which focuses on conflict resolution. In addition, the analysis of group cohesiveness entails an examination of four dimensions: individual attractions towards the group in social contexts (ATG-S), individual attractions towards the group in task-oriented settings (ATG-T), group integration-social (GI-S) and group integration-task (GI-T).

II. METHODS

A quantitative research and questionnaire survey are chosen as the primary research design. A set of questionnaires based on Interpersonal Communication Skills (ICS) and Group Environment Questionnaire (GEQ) was completed by 233 students who took an outdoor recreation program. The respondents in this study consist of male ($n = 121$) and female ($n = 112$) respondents. The respondents for this study will be the students from Universiti Teknologi Mara Campus Perlis, Seremban, Shah Alam, Puncak Alam, and Jengka. Samples are selected using the purposive sampling method.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

An independent sample t-test was conducted to compare the differences between levels of education on effective communication and group cohesiveness.

TABLE I
AN INDEPENDENT SAMPLE T-TEST TO ASSESS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN LEVEL OF EDUCATION ON THE EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION AND GROUP COHESIVENESS

	Group Statistic				
	Level of Education	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
EP	Bachelor Degree	111	5.3964	1.12688	0.10696
	Diploma	122	5.5184	1.00575	0.09106
ID	Bachelor Degree	111	5.8889	0.97373	0.09242
	Diploma	122	5.7268	1.04536	0.09464
ATG-S	Bachelor Degree	111	4.9892	1.45423	0.13803
	Diploma	122	4.9361	1.40372	0.12709
ATG-T	Bachelor Degree	111	3.3896	1.50404	0.14276
	Diploma	122	3.7029	1.45821	0.13202
GIS	Bachelor Degree	111	6.4640	2.09541	0.19889
	Diploma	122	6.4672	1.89250	0.17134
GIT	Bachelor Degree	111	5.2309	1.63565	0.15595
	Diploma	122	5.1492	1.55549	0.14083

The analysis of effective communication and group cohesiveness across different educational levels (diploma and bachelors degrees) reveals no significant differences in the measured subscales. The results from Levene's Test consistently indicated equal variances across the groups, supporting the assumption required for the subsequent t-tests. External Perception: No significant difference in effective communication subscale for external perception with the mean score for bachelor degree, $M = 5.40$, $SD = 1.13$, was lower than diploma level, $M = 5.52$, $SD = 1.01$ ($t(231) = -0.87$, $p = 0.321$) confirm that this difference is not statistically significant, leading us to retain the null hypothesis (H_0). Internal Disseverance: Similarly, the scores for internal disseverance showed no significant difference, $t(231) = 1.221$, $p = 0.223$ (two-tailed) in the scores with a mean score for diploma level, $M = 5.73$, $SD = 1.05$, was lower than bachelor degree, $M = 5.90$, $SD = 1.01$, and $t(231) = -0.874$, $p = 0.383$ (two-tailed). Consequently, there is no significant difference in effective communication subscale between level of education.

Individual Attraction to the Group (Social and Task): For both the social (ATG-S) and task (ATG-T) subscales, the results indicated no significant differences. The ATG-S scores were $M = 4.92$, $SD = 1.40$, for diploma level and $M = 4.99$, $SD = 1.45$, for bachelor degree ($t(231) = 0.284$, $p = 0.777$). The ATG-T scores also showed no significant difference, with diploma level scoring $M = 3.70$, $SD = 1.46$, compared to $M = 3.39$, $SD = 1.50$, for bachelor degree ($t(231) = -1.613$, $p = 0.108$). Group Integration (Social and Task): The analysis for both group integration subscales also yielded non-significant results. For GI-S, the scores were $M = 6.46$, $SD = 1.89$, for diploma and $M = 6.47$, $SD = 2.10$, for bachelor degree ($t(231) = -0.012$, $p = 0.990$). For GI-T, diploma holders scored $M = 5.15$, $SD = 1.56$, compared to $M = 5.23$, $SD = 1.64$, for bachelor degree ($t(231) = 0.390$, $p = 0.697$).

The study findings show that an individual's level of education has no impact on their communication skills. This rejects the generally accepted view that greater education levels are connected with better communication abilities. Besides, it highlights the need for a more individualized approach to

communication skill development, focusing on personal strengths and weaknesses rather than relying solely on educational attainment.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

In summary, the findings indicate that the level of education (diploma and bachelor degree) does not significantly impact effective communication or group cohesiveness as measured by the various subscales. This suggests that both educational groups may possess similar capabilities in these areas, which could have implications for educational institutions and training programs. Future research could explore other factors that may influence effective communication and group cohesiveness beyond educational attainment.

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