

**FACTORS INFLUENCING MOCK JOB INTERVIEW PERFORMANCE AMONG
SEMESTER 5 STUDENTS IN
POLYTECHNIC SULTAN IDRIS SHAH : A PRELIMINARY STUDY.**

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Abstract

Department of Statistics Malaysia and Polytechnic Sultan Idris Shah (PSIS) Tracer Study 2014 stated that, the number of unemployed experienced an increase. The statistics report clearly shows that many graduates from various institutes specifically PSIS are found lacking to fulfil the requirements demanded by certain companies including deficiency in English oral competencies. This is one proof that indicated the importance of language oral proficiency for graduates to secure jobs besides technical knowledge and competence in the field of study. The overall goal of this research was to examine the factors influencing mock job interviews among semester 5 students who seek for work in various companies after graduation. Ultimately, the findings will be useful as insights to improve students' preparation for an interview by identifying some factors that primarily affect performance in using English at job interview. Specifically, this study also is interested in examining the relationship between communication apprehension, attitude and motivation towards job interview performance. Therefore, this study may assist the curriculum designers, language instructors and students to prepare and face the challenges of communicating with confidence after graduation especially during the interview session.

Keywords: *Language Proficiency, Communication Apprehension, Motivation and Attitude, Mock Job Interview*

1.0 Introduction

Stated in the Malaysian Today on 2005, a survey on Malaysian graduates revealed that about 60,000 Malaysian Graduates were unemployed due to lack of experience, poor English, poor communication skills and because they had pursued studies irrelevant to the market place (as cited in Kaur and Kaur, 2008, p. 16). This is one proof that indicated the importance of language oral proficiency for graduates to secure jobs besides technical knowledge and competence in the field of study. Even though there are lots of high expectations from the employers, Malaysian graduates especially in Polytechnics institutions faced difficulties in reaching their high demand. The graduates' English oral proficiency skills are still below their expectations. This is in line with a statement from Jobstreet.com as cited in The National Graduate Employability Blueprint(2012) mentioned that the most common problems identified by employers is poor command of English with 55.8%. Therefore, Polytechnics education policy makers might come up with ways to encourage the use of English language during the mock interview for Semester 5 students who already have experience doing their industrial practical training with various organizations.

2.0 Literature Review

This literature indicates that performance in oral communication ability especially during the mock interview relates to the following factors:

2.1 English Oral Proficiency

In related to this study, English oral proficiency becomes the first impression especially during the interview session. Moreover, in response to the higher expectation from the industrial organization, the higher education system in Malaysia strongly encourages communication competency throughout its curriculum by emphasizing the importance of student interaction not only in the English courses but other courses too. As stated by Booher (1994), failure to communicate is the frustration of modern management especially to the jobs that dealing with people (as cited in Nurzarimah & Parahsakthi, 2010, p.5)

2.2 Communication Ability

The evaluation towards a student's target language level will be via the students' ability to communicate in the specified language. The process of globalization that increase interaction among nations required constant communication to get things done. Bryan (2007), mentioned that one of the common languages that enable easier communication is English. Hence, the demand for knowledge workers to be proficient in English language particularly oral communication skill is on the rise throughout the world.

2.3 Communication Apprehension

The term of communication apprehension has been discussed by numerous local and abroad studies in related with many aspects. As cited in, Francis, T. A. (2007) mentioned that high communication apprehension as opposed to low communication apprehension is progressively showing a negative impact in a person's life. From this study, it is mentioned about the negative impact of high communication apprehension in general aspects. Moreover, as cited in Butler, M. M. (2004) pointed out that there is a different in scores during the employment interviews between the high and low communication apprehension candidate. Thus, the high communication apprehension subject has a tendency to get a higher negative self-statement score.

2.4 Anxiety

The feelings of anxiety demotivate a language learning process. Gardner & MacIntyre (1993), mentioned , language anxiety can be defined as the fear or apprehension occurring when a learner is expected to perform in the second or foreign language or the worry and negative emotional reaction when learning or using a second language.

2.5 Job Interview

Generally in Malaysia, one of the important steps in job seeking is going through an interview. This process of interview has been known as the most difficult process in job seeking. Gatewood & Field (2001) mentioned that, interviews may be the most important element in an organization's selection decisions because interview performance is often afforded more weight than other measures by those responsible for hiring decisions. Therefore this impact itself creates a drawback among fresh graduates like polytechnic students.

Interviews can be categorized into two types which are structured interview and non-structured interview. Williamson, Campion, Malos, Roehling, & Campion, (1997), mentioned

that the more interview items and response scoring procedures are standardized and defined, the more highly structured the interview. Most structured interviews are based on job analysis. A job analysis identifies the knowledge, skills, and abilities that affect job performance of the job in question. Research by Huffcutt, Conway, Roth, and Stone (2001) proposed that interviews which differ in structure frequently vary in the constructs they are assessing. Kori Hilton (2011) mentioned that, Low structure interviews are not based on job analysis, and thus may be unable to assess knowledge, skills, and abilities that are relevant to the job. Unstructured interviews commonly contain whatever questions the interviewer finds suitable at the time, and usually assess basic constructs like general intelligence, education, experience, and interests

3.0 Methodology

This study used a quantitative, descriptive design where data was collected to assess the relationship between English Oral Proficiency, Communication apprehension and Motivation towards Mock Interview assessment among Semester 5 students in Polytechnic Sultan Idris Shah. The population for this study were students who are registered for the last English course which is Communicative English 3. This sample comprises almost 100% of the population from 5 different departments JKA, JKE, JPH, JTMK and JP. These students were chosen because they had been exposed to job interview topic and were expected to graduate and find their job soon. The students were briefed on the purpose of the study and instruction was given on how to respond to the questionnaires. Moreover, this study will be based on the quota sampling technique. As compared to random sampling technique, this non random sampling technique has been chosen because it is more practicable due to the time and cost constraints. Moreover, the sample selecting will be based on their gender and Department. In this study, the alpha level will be set at 0.05 with 95% confidence level in amount of uncertainty that can be tolerate. With the criteria stated, 280 males student and 336 females students will be selected. To measure the variables, we are going to use PRCA-24 for communication apprehension and AMTB to measure motivation and attitude. PRCA-24 is adapted by McCroskey 1982 where it is to determine the level of communication apprehension. This instrument currently the most widely established for measure the communication apprehension. This version is preferable above all other instruments. It has a very high predictive validity and reliability (alpha regularly >.90). This instrument is composed of 24 statements concerning feelings about communicating with others. While, to measure motivation, Attitude/Motivation Test Battery by Gardner 2004 is used. Originally, it is adapted to a 5-point scale ranging from 'strongly disagree' to 'strongly agree'. Gardner's AMTB is reported to have a good reliability and validity where the literature shows that the AMTB has been used in many studies of L2 motivation. The original instrument of over 130 items is adapted to the Malaysian context following the recommendation who suggest adjusting instrument to the context where they are going to be used. This instrument is composed of two sections where the focus on the reasons for learning English, their attitudes towards English speaking people and attitudes towards learning English.

4.0 Discussion

The findings from this study also will be useful for the Polytechnics management to revise the admission qualification specifically in English result before entering Polytechnics Institutions. This is to make sure that the quality of Polytechnics students is compatible with other higher institution. Besides, the General Department in Polytechnic Sultan Idris Shah in particular, can regularly collaborate with the industry to give new environment and experienced regarding English job interview readiness. Moreover, the students will have chance to observe and realize what does the industry perceptions towards fresh graduates employability.

5.0 Conclusion

In view of this research, Polytechnics education policy makers might come up with ways to encourage the use of English language during the mock interview for Semester 5 students who already have experience doing their industrial practical training with various organizations. Besides, the respective lecturers also organized a job skill workshop in collaboration with established organization to give an idea and help the students for their preparation facing the working world in future. Yet, despite all these efforts to help the students in facing the job interview in future, there are some barriers need to be identified especially the level of communication apprehension, attitude and motivation in using English Language and the impact of poor proficiency in English communication skills towards job interview readiness focuses on Polytechnics Sultan Idris Shah students.

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Malaysian Consumers' Online Shopping

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Abstract

Consumers are playing an important role in online shopping. The increasing number of internet users in Malaysia provides an emerging prospect for online retailers. However, online marketing in Malaysia is still a new technology breakthrough since it has just begun to invade the Malaysian retailing sector with online shopping services. This case study attempts to identify the factors influencing consumers' decision when buying products online. The simple linear regression analysis has been used to test the individual relationship of the variables tested. Overall, all the hypotheses tested show there is a relationship between the decision to buy online and individual indicators. In summary, the privacy and security play an important indicator to influence consumers' decision when buying product online. Finally, through the findings of this research, online retailers could better realize online consumers' expectations and the determinants of consumers' behavior. By understanding the key drivers that could impact on online shopping consumers, online retailers would be able to formulate and implement their e-business strategy efficiently and effectively and possess stronger competitive advantage.

Keywords: online shopping, consumer's purchase decision, purchase online

1.0 Introduction

Consumers are playing an important role in online shopping. The increasing number of internet users in Malaysia provides an emerging prospect for online retailers. Commerce via the internet has experienced rapid growth since the early years. It is well known to most of the internet researchers that, the volume of online business to consumer transactions is increasing annually at a very high rate. According to Nielsen Global Online Survey on Internet shopping habits (2008), more than 85 percent of the world's population has used the internet to make a purchase – increasing the market for online shopping by 40 percent in the past two years. AcNielsen (2008) also reported that, across the globe, the most popular items purchased on the internet are books (41%), followed by clothing/accessories/shoes (36%), videos/DVD/Games (24%), airline tickets (24%) and electronic equipment (23%).

Much research has been concentrated on the online shopping in the world. Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) (2014) described how small and medium enterprises (SMEs) are key drivers of the digital economy. Still there is a huge research gap exists not only between countries, especially between developed and developing countries, which may differ significantly between countries (Stiglitz, 1998; Spanos, 2002) that limit the generalization of research results from developed countries to developing country contexts (Dewan and Kraemer, 2000; Clarke, 2001). Shore (1998) and Stiglitz (1998) reported that implementation of information system depend on specific social, cultural, economic, legal and political context, which may differ significantly from