

STATUS AND PROSPECTS ON COMMUNICATION SKILLS OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN HOSPITALITY

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Introduction

Communication is a tool with which we exercise our influence on others, bring out changes in ourselves and others, motivate the people around us and establish and maintain relationships with them. **Communication makes a major part of our active life and is a social activity. This social activity is pursued verbally through speech, reading, and writing or non-verbally through body language.** There are many required skills that a Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management students must possess. One of these skills is the student's communication skills which include: Verbal and Non-verbal communication skills (speaking, gesture and body language), listening skill, and writing skills (grammar and spelling). It is of great importance that students must learn these skills for it will help them be prepared and become more competitive in the business world. The question is, 'are the students of the University of Saint Anthony in Tourism management have the necessary skills they need in communication?'

Ever since, communication has played a big part in everyone's lives. Being able to communicate effectively is the most important of all life skills. In the tourism industry, one must be effective with communication. Communication is vital to the success of tourism businesses. With regards to communication, there are several issues that could be linked to it. One of which is the miscommunication between the tourism service provider and the tourist/customer and between tourism service provider themselves.

Miscommunication doesn't only happen in this industry but also in different life situations. In some countries, there are concerns for the

need to develop their communication skills specially using the English language. The possible solution for this is to increase the hours/time for the subject. Giving more time to the subject means more learning that will be acquired by the students. To be acquainted with the English language (the international language) will help different races from different part of the world understand one another.

Article VI, Section 18.1 General Education Core of the CHED memorandum order no. 30 of 2006 states that Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management students must also take-up the subjects Communication Arts 1, Communication Arts 2, and Business Communication. Communication Arts 1 covers the development of communicative competence in English with emphasis on effective reading and writing and listening skills. It is designed to develop language learning strategies, effective communication techniques, and academic study skills. Lessons and activities involve development of oral and written communication skills in different social contexts, reading skills enhancement, and effective use of reference and resources. On Communication Arts 2, it is a continuation of English 1 and covers the development of advanced language skills in critical thinking and problem solving skills. It also provides training on goal setting, self-assessment and monitoring skills, time management strategies, and communicative competence for general and academic purposes. Lessons and activities include writing routine and special business letters and reports as well as oral and verbal communicative skills. In Business Communication, it covers the different types of communication used in business transaction including oral and written forms. Formal styles of communication and the use of technology in communication are also covered in the course.

Communication skill is one of the daily needs of an individual. It enables him to participate in the environment that he is part of. It creates a harmonious atmosphere where in everyone is given the right to express themselves, confident enough that they will be delivering their messages as to what and how they would like it to be received. Being able to communicate can lead us to many doors of opportunities in life. This study aims to evaluate and assess the skills of the students of the University of Saint Anthony taking-up Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management in communication along: verbal, non-verbal, and listening

skills. Also the study seeks to determine the problems encountered by the students that could possibly contribute in developing an output which is a syllabus that will guide them to improve and develop their communication skills to help that will make them a globally competitive graduate.

Statement of the Problem

The main problem of the study is to determine the status and prospects of Communication Skills of Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management students of the University of Saint Anthony. It specially seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management students in University of Saint Anthony, Iriga City?
2. What is the status of Communication Skills of Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management students along:
 - a. Verbal Skills
 - b. Non-verbal skills
 - c. Listening Skills
3. What are the problems encountered by Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management students in terms of:
 - a. Speaking
 - b. Writing
 - c. Reading
 - d. Listening
4. What measures can be proposed to enhance the Communication Skills of Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management students?

Research Methodology

This study made use of the descriptive survey in gathering the essential information that were analysed and be interpreted. The descriptive survey was utilized to evaluate the status of the communication skills of the Bachelor of Science in Tourism Management students of University of Saint Anthony.

Findings

The profile of the respondents in terms of gender, the female population covered eighty-eight percent of the population learning the male population with only twelve percent. As for the age, students between 18-19 was dominant in number, with 65.52 in percent. The age bracket of 15-17 was 25.86% while the age bracket 20 and above was 8.62%. In year level, the students in first and second year level were both seventeen in number while the third year level was twenty-four, and more than half of the respondents graduated high school in private school.

The students' performance in communication was in between being excellent and being poor so reading, writing, speaking, listening and nonverbal skills were just moderate and needs a lot of improvements.

The problems encountered by the students in their communication skills resulted from their performance and poor participation in class discussion because of poor communication skills. How can be able to develop their communication skills.

The most preferred measures to enhance the communication skills of the students were class discussion, panel discussion, question and answer session, and demonstration followed by reports of group.

Conclusions

From the foregoing findings the following conclusions were made:

1. Eighty-eight percent of the respondents were female and dominated the whole population with 58 in number and more than half were between 18 – 19 years old. Most of the students finished their high school in a private school.

2. The communication skills of the students necessitate for demanding more improvements for they fall under the scale of three in the findings. Communication skills are moderately difficult and that they lack motivation and practice in communicating.

3. The students have difficulties in reading, writing, speaking, listening, and in nonverbal communication.

4. The students preferred class discussion, panel discussion, question and answer session and demonstration followed by reports of group in order to enhance their communication skills.

Recommendations

Guided by the conclusions, the following recommendations are given:

1. Students' must be required to take qualifying examination. Qualifying exams must be given every year before he can move to the next year level. The scope of the exam must not only focus on the major subjects but also in minor subjects which are deemed necessary for the course.

2. The students should be encouraged to read a lot. To further develop their communication skills. Forms of instruction must promote attentiveness and focus to heighten the students' interest in learning and become more active and participative in class. The forms of instruction must be innovative, unique and fun.

3. Require every student to speak in class regardless of the subject they have for the period in order to develop their confidence to recite.

4. Proposed measures the used effectively to really develop the communication skills of the students.

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