

Relationship between Interpersonal Communication and Assertive Behavior

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ABSTRACT

Students who are pursuing education at the tertiary level are late adolescents born in the digital era who have a prominent characteristic, namely, living with gadgets and the internet. Besides that, as social beings, students have needs that will require other creatures to fulfill-both physical and psychological as well as social needs, which are expressed through communication media. Ideally, they have good interpersonal skills because rapid development makes them able to use technology as a medium of communication to seek information both within the scope of their study and in other environments, meaning that there is interaction and adaptation between one individual and another. This requires individuals to be able to convey their thoughts. Their desires and needs are assertive; they know how to convey information properly and express it appropriately so as not to harm themselves or others. In reviewing assertive behaviour in communication, assertiveness is something that must exist within an individual to support the continuity of effective communication. The purpose of this study was to find out the relationship between interpersonal communication and assertive behaviour in college students. The method used is quantitative with a correlational research design. The results of this study indicate a strong relationship between interpersonal communication and assertive behaviour, as indicated by the number 0.736, which makes it clear that interpersonal communication has a correlation with assertive behaviour.

KEYWORDS-Interpersonal Communication, Assertive Behaviour.

1. INTRODUCTION

Students are individuals who are currently studying at tertiary institutions, their age ranges from 18-25 years where they were born in the digital era. Individuals born in the digital era have a prominent characteristic, namely living together with gadgets and the internet. With the rapid development of this era, they are able to use technology quickly as a medium of communication to find information using electronic media to support academic tasks. As the next generation of the nation, students are faced with various kinds of changing times and problems they face, and are required to be able to answer the problems of the times. Higher education is a place for intellectual meetings and the growth of individual personality. Apart from that, in the community, the perception of students is always different, they are considered able to do all things, are proficient in various fields, besides that, the community always has hope for students to be able to make changes that have an impact.

Students as late adolescents have developmental tasks and developmental phases that encourage them to establish relationships. In building relationships with other individuals, of course, a communication process is needed; students need two-way communication skills or interpersonal communication skills to be able to exchange thoughts, opinions, information, feelings, needs, desires and so on. In fact the phenomenon that exists today, there are also students who do not have good interpersonal communication skills. Found in lecture rooms of students who are silent and choose to be followers only, have no stand, are unable to express their thoughts, feelings, needs and desires. Individuals who are unable to carry out interpersonal communication in their environment result in individuals not being accepted, rejected and by themselves individuals will withdraw from the environment because of difficulties in interacting, while individuals who have interpersonal skills will have a good impact on themselves, achievement, social relations and their environment (Isti'adah, 2017).

Hartley stated that interpersonal communication is communication between two or more people that is carried out directly and it is possible that each individual will capture the reactions of other people directly both verbally and non-verbally. The interpersonal communication aspects expressed by Hartley include Nonverbal Communication, Reinforcement, Questioning, Reflecting, Listening, Self self-disclosure (Istiadah, 2015). It is important for each student to have interpersonal communication skills to support various other abilities, as stated

that interpersonal communication skills have a psychological influence on themselves, so the good and bad interpersonal communication skills possessed by individuals will affect the learning process on campus. The establishment of interpersonal communication will help shape communication skills such as the ability to understand each other, the ability to express feelings, the ability to express thoughts, the ability to provide support, the ability to solve problems, and the ability intended to form an individual's assertive behaviour (Fazril & Erliana, 2022). Alberti and Emmons stated that assertive individuals are individuals who are easily understood by others in interpersonal communication, feel confident, spontaneous, are able to express feelings without hostility, and are warm when speaking (Susilawati, 2016). Aspects of assertive behaviour put forward by Alberti and Emmons cover eye contact, body posture, distance (physical), gesture, facial expression, voice tone inflection and volume, fluency, timing, and listening (Aryanto, 2021).

As we know that in an interaction, communication is the main point, such as the statement from Mathur & Srivastava (2020) that the topic of discussing interpersonal communication and assertive behaviour is a relevant topic, considering that currently it takes effort to maintain a relationship, and this is an important part of the late adolescent stage of life. Being assertive is not being aggressive or submissive, but assertive about their personal rights without violating the feelings and rights of others. So this research can help in exploring student interpersonal relationships and assertive behaviour.

2. METHOD

The approach used in this study is a correlational, descriptive and quantitative approach. This quantitative research is a research method based on the philosophy of positivism which is used to examine certain populations and samples with statistical analysis with the aim of testing the specified hypothesis (Sugiyono, 2011). This quantitative research is an approach that involves the processes of data collection, data analysis, and data interpretation, as well as writing of research results that aim to test theories, reveal facts and show relationships between variables and provide descriptive information (Creswell, 2012). Correlation is a statistical data analysis technique that is used to find a relationship between two or more quantitative variables. It is said to be correlated if a change in one variable is followed by changes in other variables regularly in the same direction (positive correlation) or opposite correlation (negative correlation). According to Donna, in essence, the purpose of correlational research is to determine and find out how much the variation in a factor is related to the variance of other factors based on the correlation coefficient (Ibrahim et al., 2018). Likewise with the notion of correlation according to Arikunto (2010) research was conducted to determine the level of relationship between two or more variables without making changes, additions or manipulations.

So the purpose of this research was to determine the level or degree of relationship between two variables (bivariate) by measuring the relationship between interpersonal communication and assertive behavior in terms of the aspects of each variable and then identifying and describing the results of the research. then the sample used in this study is the entire population that is used, namely by saturated sampling technique, clear sample is the determination of the sample by using all members of the population as a sample, this can be done if the population size is relatively small and the researcher wants to make generalizations with very large errors small. So the sample used in this study were 5th semester Guidance and Counseling students at Muhammadiyah University of Tasikmalaya. The measurements carried out in this study used a questionnaire, namely a data collection technique by giving written questions to respondents (Sugiyono, 2011). Collecting data using research instruments in the form of interpersonal communication questionnaires and adapting assertive behaviour Adapting research instruments is a process of changing or modifying existing instruments for reuse in different situations and populations. In accordance with this study, using an interpersonal communication instrument develops aspects of Hartley that are used for high school students equivalent (Istiadah, 2015) and using an adopting behaviour instrument and an assertive behaviour instrument develops aspects of Alberti and Emmons that are also used for high school students equivalent (Aryanto, 2021). The instrument adapted for the needs of this research was used with the permission of the owner of the instrument, and adjustments had been made to the level because the objects in this study were students, It was confirmed that the instrument used was valid, reliable and in accordance with the research context.

3. RESULTS

Based on the research objectives that have been formulated, namely to determine the relationship between interpersonal communication and assertive behaviour of students, which includes an overview of interpersonal communication and an overview of assertive behaviour, interpersonal communication and assertive behaviour are reviewed based on the aspects developed.

Table 1 Overview of Interpersonal Communication

Interpersonal Communication					
No	Score	Score Range	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	$X < 135$	1 – 135	Low	14	13%
2	$135 \leq X < 161$	136 – 161	Moderate	79	76%
3	$X \geq 161$	162 >	High	11	11%
Amount				104	100%

In general, the description of interpersonal communication is categorised into 3 categories, as listed in the table above: low, moderate and high. There are 11% or as many as 11 students in the high category which means that students with interpersonal communication skills at this level can adapt well to the environment they are in, be open with other people, have empathy, greet friends, express opinions straightforwardly, open up and end the conversation and maintain the conversation with the other person. Then there are 76%, namely as many as 79 students in the medium category, which is interpreted as a level where students can adapt to their environment, be open with other people, empathise, start and end conversations, but are often stiff, there are also some points that are the essence of interpersonal communication, that are often overlooked. Furthermore, there are 13%, namely as many as 14 students in the low category, meaning that interpersonal communication skills in individuals are not qualified, Interpersonal communication skills that are less than optimal are identified from aspects or indicators of interpersonal communication such as not being able to adapt to the environment, not being open with other people, not having empathy, not wanting to greet friends, having difficulty expressing opinions during discussions, and having difficulty starting and ending conversations.

Table 2 Overview of Interpersonal Communication by Aspect

No	Interpersonal Communication Aspect	Percentage
1	<i>Non verbal communication</i>	80.9%
2	<i>Reinforcement</i>	80.4%
3	<i>Questioning</i>	73.2%
4	<i>Reflecting</i>	70.5%
5	<i>Opening dan closing</i>	79%
6	<i>Listening</i>	47.5%
7	<i>Self-disclosure</i>	80%

Based on the table above, there is 80.9% non-verbal communication. There is 80.4% in the aspect of reinforcement, meaning that students can communicate by giving praise and support to others. There are 73.2% aspects of asking (questioning) that require the ability of students to ask quite well, determine the right time and place when communicating. There is 70.5% of the aspect of reflection, meaning that students can explain what has been discussed when communicating. There are 79% aspects of starting and closing that cover skills in starting and closing communication. There are 47.5% of aspects of student listening that are not good enough so that it can give the impression of being impolite or not listening to the other person when communicating. Finally, the aspect of self-disclosure is 80%, which means that the individual is open to the other person when communicating. Of the seven aspects that have the highest percentage, namely the aspect of non-verbal communication (80.9%), it means that students have good communication skills in expressing faces, looking at the other person, looking good, and using appropriate gestures and intonation when communicating with the other person. While the lowest percentage is in the listening aspect, which is 47.5%, meaning that students' ability to listen when communicating is less able to become a good listener, interpersonal communication basically involves listening to body communication and internal thinking.

Table 3 Overview of Assertive Behaviour

Assertive behaviour					
No	Score	Score Range	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	$1 < 120$	1 – 120	Low	15	14%
2	$120 \leq X < 148$	121 – 148	Moderat	74	72%
3	$X \geq 148$	149 >	High	15	14%
Amount				104	100%

In general, the description of assertive behaviour is also categorised into 3 categories: low, moderate, and high. As many as 15 students (14%) are in the low category, where the category of assertive behaviour at this level is students who are unable to be open in expressing their feelings and thoughts and find it difficult to say no to anything they don't want. As many as 74 students (72%) in the medium category are students who are able to express their feelings and thoughts without offending other people's feelings and are able to be open to their own desires and needs. As many as 15 students (14%) are in the high category, namely students who convey feelings and thoughts openly and honestly without any sense of anxiety in meeting needs and do not violate the rights and feelings of others.

Table 4 Description of Assertive Behaviour Based on Aspect

No	Assertive Behaviour Aspect	Percentage
1	<i>Eye co terntact</i>	75,6%
2	<i>Body posture</i>	72,7%
3	<i>Distance and phycal contact</i>	72,7%
4	<i>Gesture</i>	70%
5	<i>facial expression</i>	72.7%
6	<i>Voice tone, inflection and volume</i>	78,4%
7	<i>Fluency</i>	68,5%
8	<i>Timming</i>	64,8%
9	<i>Listening</i>	76,2%
10	<i>Thoughts</i>	78,7%
11	<i>Persistence</i>	77,4%
12	<i>Content</i>	74,8%

Based on the table above, the aspect of eye contact (eye contact) is in the medium category with a percentage of 75.6%, which means that students are able to show attention and respect for others during communication. Aspects of body posture, with a percentage of 72.7% where students are able to show a confident posture when speaking and have an active posture. The aspect of physical distance or contact with a percentage of 72.7% is that students are able to provide comfort to the other person when communicating and are able to adjust the distance in communication. Aspects of gestures with a percentage of 70% where students provide warmth and comfort to the other person when communicating and being assertive. Aspects of facial expressions, with a percentage of 72.7% where students have the ability to convey messages according to facial expressions.

The percentage of tone, modulation and volume is 78.4% where students at this level are able to express thoughts and feelings verbally according to the appropriate tone, volume and intonation of the voice. The aspect of fluency in speaking is at a percentage of 68.5%, where students can convey information correctly and make others understand it, but the delivery has not been conveyed clearly. The timing aspect is 64.8% which means that students are starting to be able to manage their time well and try not to violate anything that has been set. The listening aspect has a percentage of 76.25 where students have the ability to be good listeners to their interlocutors. Aspects of thoughts, which has a percentage of 78.7% where students are able to think first before determining attitudes and speaking. The aspect of persistence, with a percentage of 77.4% shows that students are individuals who do not give up easily when faced with new problems and are responsible. Then finally the content aspect with a percentage of 74.8%, where students can speak systematically and conceptually and try to be able to choose the right sentence to convey thoughts and feelings.

From the results of the calculations, the highest aspect to obtain results is the aspect of the mind (thought). Humans can think without using language verbally, in communication, the mind will process the contents of the message with language as the main mediator that carries the message. Furthermore, the lowest aspect of timing (timing), timeliness is one of the aspects of the effectiveness of communication that can be measured; this concerns how the communicator and communicant take appropriate actions.

Table 5 Interpersonal Communication Correlation Test Results and Assertive Behaviour

		Interpersonal	Assertive
Interpersonal Communication	Pearson Correlation	1	,736"
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000
	N	104	104
Assertive Behaviour	Pearson Correlation	,736"	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	
	N	104	104

Based on the results of the correlation test between interpersonal communication and assertive behaviour in students, it produces a correlation coefficient of 0.736. Based on the provisions, if the correlation test value is close to 1, the correlation will be more perfect, so that when viewed from the coefficient value obtained from the calculation results, which is equal to 0.736, it can be interpreted that the correlation between interpersonal communication and assertive behaviour has a strong relationship. The results of this study indicate that the higher the interpersonal communication skills, the higher the ability to behave assertively, and vice versa, the lower the interpersonal communication, the lower the assertive behaviour, so that the resulting correlation of the two variables studied produces a positive correlation.

4. DISCUSSION

Interpersonal Communication

Communication is the heart of an interaction, the continuity of a relationship depends on a person's ability to communicate. In various relationships, it is necessary to have interpersonal communication skills in order to create good relationships, interpersonal communication skills are used to express feelings, needs and ideas to the other person. Interpersonal communication is the closest affiliation or association between at least two individuals. Individuals in interpersonal relationships are characterised by being able to communicate openly from eye to eye, and this interpersonal communication can occur with anyone, for example peers, human relations, relationships between men and women, and so on (Mathur & Srivastava, 2020). Meanwhile, Hartley defines interpersonal communication as a process of exchanging information and transferring understanding between two or more people. In addition, it is stated that interpersonal communication is the process and effort of individuals or groups in giving influence by conveying information or messages intended to other individuals verbally or nonverbally to get feedback, so that interaction occurs between the two parties (Barseli et al., 2018).

Schutz emphasised that sustainable interpersonal relationships depend on how good a person's three basic needs are, the first is the need for affection, namely the desire to give and get affection. The second need is inclusiveness, namely the desire to be part of a particular social group. The third is control, namely the need to influence other people or events in his life. So at least individuals need to pay attention to these needs in order to carry out good interpersonal communication because this interpersonal communication is processual, transactional, individual, personal knowledge and creates meaning. Processional means that the communication process carried out is continuous and transactional because the basis of interpersonal communication is the process of transactions with other people. individually because interpersonal communication involves humans as unique and different individuals. Personal knowledge means that by conducting interpersonal communication, we will help develop our personal knowledge and insight into interactions with other individuals (Aestetika, 2018).

Khotimah mentioned aspects of interpersonal communication that include initiative, openness, the ability to grow assertive behaviour, the ability to provide emotional support, and the ability to solve problems. In addition, Handarini stated that the purpose of interpersonal communication is to: (1) find yourself; (2) discover the outside world; (3) find and maintain meaningful relationships; (4) change attitudes and behaviours; (5) play and have fun; and (6) help others (Hikmah, 2021). Papalia, Old, and Feldman mentioned interpersonal relationship skills in students marked by friendship and self-disclosure, emotional support, acceptance, and joy (H. Lubis & Rahmaniah, 2021; K. Lubis, 2020).

Interpersonal communication will take place effectively and efficiently if each individual respects each other and obeys the norms and values that govern their behaviour in communicating; this applies to every individual and will succeed if it fulfils components such as communicators, communicants, messages, media and feedback (Pratiwi, 2016). In general, good interpersonal communication skills are needed by students in various aspects of life, both academic, social and professional. These interpersonal communication skills can help students

interact with others effectively, face challenges, build healthy relationships and achieve success in various fields of life. As stated by Darmawan et al (2019) that student groups are a group that is considered vulnerable and is expected to become agents of change to overcome various problems in the social environment, meaning that the interactions carried out need to strengthen good relationships with peers, lecturers, or the community. The importance of interpersonal communication skills in an interaction Mulyana argues that individuals who do not perform interpersonal communication well can be sure that they experience obstacles in the development process because they are unable to organise themselves mentally in a social environment (Barseli et al., 2018). To improve interpersonal communication skills, it can be done by understanding the competencies that exist within one and then practising them and being involved in various relationships. Interpersonal communication skills can be trained because they are skills that can be improved with practise

Assertive Behaviour

Alberti and Emmons stated that assertiveness is a positive self-statement by respecting others so that it will increase personal life satisfaction and improve the quality of relationships with other people, and having the ability to behave assertively has benefits including; (1) defending rights without harming others; (2) meeting needs in an appropriate and fair manner; (3) getting psychological benefits, namely having good self-adjustment, having freedom and responsibility for oneself; and (4) building positive interpersonal relationships (Al'Ain & Mulyana, 2013). Assertiveness is defined by Pfafman as the expression of ideas, feelings and the right boundaries without ignoring the rights and sentiments of others by maintaining positive and negative relationships and approaches to achieve personal goals. Rakos identifies assertiveness as openness in close interpersonal relationships, availability to give opinions voluntarily, and availability to provide neutral responses. McCabe & Timmins stated that assertive behaviour also develops respect for oneself and others, self-disclosure, self-control, increased self-confidence, satisfying communication and appreciation of positive self-esteem (Maheshwari et al., 2015; Mathur & Srivastava, 2020)

Assertiveness is seen as a series of reactions to a social conflict, where assertiveness can be seen in acceptable forms of aggression and submission as a passive form. Besides that assertiveness has characteristics of personal dominance, assertiveness, strength and the use of assertive behaviour to achieve personal goals (Nikel, 2020; Yuyun, 2014). If individuals have assertive behaviour then they will be able to get along naturally, honestly and directly, be able to express their feelings, needs and ideas, take initiative in meeting their needs and have satisfying solutions when they have conflicts with others. Besides the need for ability and self-motivation to behave assertively, it turns out that, according to Cohen and Wills in assertive behavior a person also needs social support because assertive behaviour is not an innate behaviour or a person's personality but an ability that can be learned or trained as a reaction. for responses in social situations (Fahmi & Prima, 2020).

According to Asrowi and Barida, individuals who have high assertive behaviour skills will be better able to take care of themselves, not engage in deviant behaviour, respect themselves and be able to control themselves from the influence of others on things that are not as they wish, Besides that, assertive behaviour abilities can be applied in various contexts both in personal, social and professional environments (Nuris Yuhbaba et al., 2022). Therefore, having the ability to behave assertively is considered important to live a harmonious, healthy and productive life. For students having the ability to behave assertively also has benefits and is of course important to have, having the ability to behave assertively is very relevant for dealing with various academic pressures, managing relationships with classmates and lecturers, establishing healthy social relationships, and preparing for professional careers.

Interpersonal Communication Relations and Assertive Behaviour

As social beings, humans need interaction with other people which is characterized by communication. Communication is a tool used to interact with anyone and is an important tool in individual development, both personally and socially. In the hierarchy of needs put forward by Abraham Maslow, there is one need for social needs, namely the need for interaction with other people. Building relationships is an important need that needs to be fulfilled. In fostering relationships with other people, it is necessary to have skills that are mastered, namely interpersonal communication skills. With communication, individuals will learn and grow with their social environment. Interpersonal communication is an important part of social interaction and a liaison between communicators and communicants. To be able to communicate well, individuals need to have the ability to behave assertively. Because assertive behaviour is related to a person's ability to express thoughts, feelings and beliefs that are expressed spontaneously, honestly and do not violate the rights of others (Aestetika, 2018).

Interpersonal relationships are a fundamental aspect of every individual's life, relationships that are mutually maintained and sustain individuals from time to time. Likewise with assertiveness, where skills involve expressing ideas, feelings and boundaries. Jenkins and Dragojevic mentioned their perception from a communication perspective that assertiveness must be practiced with politeness, because politeness defines the social and contextual suitability of an individual relationship (Mathur & Srivastava, 2020). Behaving assertively is the most effective way to solve interpersonal problems, with openness and honesty allowing individuals to receive messages without distortion (Pipaş & Jaradat, 2010). Assertive behaviour is an example of effective communication that is useful for self-development and potential, Assertive behaviour means not sacrificing others for their own interests and not holding back for the sake of others. According to Garner the benefits of having assertive abilities in interpersonal communication include eliminating fear and anxiety, increasing self-confidence and respect for others (Widyastuti, 2017).

Erikson and Noonan stated that assertive behaviour is an important thing in establishing interpersonal communication, namely the individual's ability to express desires, needs and thoughts without feeling difficult, as well as Alberti and Emmons who have the same opinion that assertive behaviour is seen as an honest individual expression of what one thinks and feels without violating the rights of others (Wisdom, 2021). In assertive interpersonal communication, individuals are able to express opinions, needs and feelings clearly without leading to aggressive or passive behaviour. Assertive communication allows individuals to establish healthy social relationships, build mutual respect and gain support from others. Thus, it is clear that the relationship between interpersonal communication and assertive behaviour is interconnected because assertive behaviour is a form of effective interpersonal communication.

5. CONCLUSION

Based on the objectives formulated in the study, the results of an overview of interpersonal communication were obtained. In general, students have moderate abilities, meaning that they are starting to be able to adapt well. Furthermore, the description of assertive behaviour in students on average has ability in the medium category, and based on the results of data processing, it produces a value of 0.736, which means that the interpersonal communication variable and the assertive behaviour variable carried out on students have a strong positive relationship. Where interpersonal communication skills increase, the ability to behave assertively also increases, and vice versa where the ability to behave assertively increases, interpersonal communication skills also increase. This means that the correlation between interpersonal communication and assertive behaviour is positive.

6. SUGGESTION

Students are expected to be able to improve interpersonal communication skills and assertive behaviour as basic skills that need to be possessed by guidance and counselling practitioners or counsellors for now and in the future. Guidance and counselling practitioners should have these two abilities for the continuity of the service process both at school and outside of school. In addition, for future researchers, due to the limitations of the research, where the aim of this research is only to find out the relationship between interpersonal communication and assertive behaviour, it is better if it is done to improve interpersonal communication skills and assertive behaviour skills in students whose interpersonal communication skills and assertive behaviour skills are still low. Low level to be given various trainings to arrive at a higher level, either by doing assertive training or other training.

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