

The Impact of Social Services Activities on Students' Communication Skills
(*Kesan Aktiviti Khidmat Sosial Terhadap Kemahiran Komunikasi Pelajar*)

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ABSTRACT

This article investigates the impact of social services activities on students' communication skills and focuses on understanding how participation in such activities influences the development of effective communication abilities among students who are involved with uniformed units such as Reserve Officer Training Unit (ROTU), Police Undergraduate Voluntary Corps (SUKSIS), Golfers and Civilian in Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM). The research adopts a qualitative methods approach which is interviews to collect data from students engaged in various social services. All of them become a holistic student when they can mix all the skills like communication and get involved in social services to give the best performances to their Inapan Siswa (INASIS) and have a perfect combination of skills added to the Islamic perspective which can attract other students to get involved in any social services. The study investigates the extent and nature of student's involvement in various social services activities, considering both voluntary and organized initiatives, and to emphasize the importance of holistic student development by showcasing the role of social services activities in fostering not only academic excellence but also essential interpersonal skills crucial for personal and professional success, encompassing verbal, non-verbal, and interpersonal aspects. In conclusion, this finding contributes to the understanding of the positive influence of social services activities on students' communication competencies.

Keywords: Impact, Social Services, Activities, Students, Communication Skills

ABSTRAK

Artikel ini menyiasat kesan aktiviti khidmat sosial terhadap kemahiran komunikasi pelajar dan memberi tumpuan kepada pemahaman bagaimana penyertaan dalam aktiviti tersebut mempengaruhi perkembangan kebolehan komunikasi berkesan dalam kalangan pelajar yang terlibat dengan unit beruniform seperti Unit Latihan Pegawai Simpanan (ROTU), Prasiswazah Polis. Kor Sukarela (SUKSIS), Pemain Golf dan Orang Awam di Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM). Penyelidikan ini menggunakan pendekatan kaedah kualitatif iaitu temu bual untuk mengumpul data daripada pelajar yang terlibat dalam pelbagai perkhidmatan sosial. Kesemua mereka menjadi pelajar holistik apabila mereka boleh mencampurkan semua kemahiran seperti komunikasi dan melibatkan diri dalam perkhidmatan sosial untuk memberikan persembahan terbaik kepada Inapan Siswa (INASIS) mereka dan mempunyai gabungan kemahiran yang sempurna ditambah kepada perspektif Islam yang boleh menarik minat orang lain. pelajar untuk melibatkan diri dalam sebarang perkhidmatan sosial. Kajian ini menyiasat sejauh mana dan sifat penglibatan pelajar dalam pelbagai aktiviti perkhidmatan sosial, dengan mengambil kira inisiatif sukarela dan terancang, dan untuk menekankan kepentingan pembangunan pelajar holistik dengan mempamerkan peranan aktiviti perkhidmatan sosial dalam memupuk bukan sahaja kecemerlangan akademik tetapi juga interpersonal yang penting. kemahiran penting untuk kejayaan peribadi dan profesional, merangkumi aspek lisan, bukan lisan dan interpersonal. Kesimpulannya, dapatan ini menyumbang kepada pemahaman tentang pengaruh positif aktiviti khidmat sosial terhadap kompetensi komunikasi pelajar.

Kata kunci: Impak, Perkhidmatan Sosial, Aktiviti, Pelajar, Kemahiran Komunikasi

INTRODUCTION

In Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), there are 15 Inapan Siswa (INASIS) that have been developed in stages since the establishment of this university. Among them is Inapan Siswa Yayasan AlBukhary better known as INASIS YAB. INASIS YAB is a place to stay for students who are involved with uniformed units such as the Reserve Officer Training Unit (ROTU), Police Undergraduate Voluntary Corps (SUKSIS), Golfers, and Civilian students. All of them become a holistic student when they can mix all the skills like communication and get involved in social services to give the best performances to their INASIS and have a perfect combination of skills that add to the Islamic perspective and can attract other students to get involved in any social services.

Social service refers to several people joining together and working together to do something beneficial for themselves and the public, whether in the field of worship, science, or even entertainment. In addition, activities carried out by one or several people voluntarily as a service to the community in the field of education, good and bad deeds, charitable and social work, and other activities.

Communication is a process of transferring meaning that is implied from the source to the recipient for the common good as in (Othman & Ahmad, 2003). They added that the main purpose is for the meaning of the message conveyed by the source to be understood by the recipient and has various functions such as the dissemination of information and warnings, establishing relationships with groups in the community, cultural exchange, and entertainment that go hand in hand with the development of technology.

Yayasan AlBukhary Residential Hall (YAB) is one of the residences that provides accommodation for the students inside the campus of UUM. This residential hall stands out among the others as the students are composed of those who are involved in special forces such as the Reserve Officer Training Unit (ROTU) which is there are consists of the Army, Navy and Airforce, National Golf Academy (AGN) and Police Undergraduate Voluntary Corps (SUKSIS), as in.

Communication skills nowadays are one of the most important skills in following the current of modernity. This is said to be so because, the communication skills applied by an individual, creates an attitude of confidence in students. These skills can provide or enhance social networks among students who stay at the Student Residential Hall (INASIS) *Yayasan AlBukhary*. A total of 1,403 students who stayed at the residential hall made up of various interests and of that

number, only 641 were male students while the rest were female students which were 762 people.

From an Islamic perspective, the skills that volunteers should have in themselves such as the properties of Prophet Muhammad PBUH like *Siddiq* (truthfulness), *amanah* (trustworthiness), *tabligh* (advocacy), & *fathonah* (wisdom). Also mentioned by Imam Al-Ghazali in his book '*Arbain Fi Usuluddin*', the commendable nature such as *taubah*, fear to Allah, *mahabbah*, *ikhlas*, *zuhud*, *sabar*, *syukur*, *tawakkal*, *redha* & *zikrulmaut*, as in (Muin & Perlis, 2017).

Therefore, social services and communication skills between university students at INASIS YAB can dispel all the negative perspectives of others who think that those who are involved with this uniformed body face difficulties in communicating well. Other than that, students also gain input from the communication and social services that they joined.

HISTORY OF RESIDENTIAL HALL YAYASAN ALBUKHARY

Originally, INASIS was completed on 16 October 2000 and was known as the Asenia Cluster which consisted of two (2) student residential blocks namely AP1 and AP2. The newly opened accommodation can accommodate up to 3000 students at a time. The initial placement of students began in the November 2000/2001 session with a total of 1500 students. Starting the May 2001 session, the college administration was divided into two, namely Asenia I (Block AP1 and AP2) and Asenia II (Block AP3 and AP4). On November 21, 2002, Asenia I College was proclaimed as Yayasan Al-Bukhary Residential College by His Grace Dato' Seri Dr. Abdul Shukor bin Abdullah the Education Advisor of the Al-Bukhary Foundation. In 2008, in line with the new restructuring of the university, the college also received a change in which the name of the college was changed to Dewan Penginapan Pelajar (DPP). Since September 2015, DPP has also been known as Inapan Siswa (INASIS).

TYPES OF SOCIAL SERVICES

The Reserve Officer Training Unit (ROTU), SUKSIS, golfers, and civilian students in UUM typically engage in various social services and activities aimed at contributing to the community and fostering personal development among students. The specific types of social services may vary, but here are some common activities are Military Training, Community Outreach

Programs, Disaster Relief Activities, Khidmat Bakti Masyarakat or Jiwa Murni, Leadership Development Programs with the Ministry of Defence, Student Welfare Programs, Cultural and Social Events, Volunteer Work, and Academic Support Services. According to Azmina & Nasreen, suggest that community service learning can increase insights of the importance of community work, understanding of diversity, social skills as well as a sense of responsibility (Afzal & Hussain, 2020). This is in line with the objective of social services activities on students's communication skills.

OBJECTIVE

The objective of writing this article is to investigate the extent and nature of student's involvement in various social services activities, considering both voluntary and organized initiatives, and to emphasize the importance of holistic student development by showcasing the role of social services activities in fostering not only academic excellence but also essential interpersonal skills crucial for personal and professional success.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This qualitative research employs in-depth interviews as the primary methodological approach to investigate the impact of social services activities on students. The study seeks to unravel the intricate nuances of students' experiences and perceptions related to their engagement in diverse social services initiatives. By conducting interviews, the research aims to capture rich, contextual insights into the subjective aspects of the student's involvement, emphasizing the qualitative dimensions of their experiences.

The participants of the study consist of students actively engaged in various social services activities, encompassing both voluntary and organized initiatives. Through purposive sampling, a diverse group of participants is selected to ensure representation across demographic variables, academic disciplines, and levels of engagement.

The interview process is structured to explore the multifaceted aspects of the impact, with a focus on changes in communication skills, personal growth, and the perceived benefits of participating in social services. Open-ended questions encourage participants to express their thoughts, feelings, and reflections, allowing for a deeper understanding of the intricate interplay between social services engagement and holistic student development.

The qualitative data collected through interviews will be subjected to thematic analysis, employing a systematic process to identify recurring patterns, emergent themes, and insightful narratives within the participants' responses. The findings derived from this qualitative exploration are expected to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by providing nuanced insights into the subjective experiences of students engaged in social services and how these experiences shape their communication skills and overall development.

Ultimately, this research strives to bridge the gap between quantitative assessments and the lived experiences of students, shedding light on the qualitative dimensions of the impact of social services activities on holistic student development. The outcomes of this study aim to inform educational practices, guide policy recommendations, and enrich the discourse on the importance of experiential learning in shaping well-rounded individuals within the academic community.

ADVANTAGES OF COMMUNICATION SKILLS

There are various advantages to communication skills because they can influence various aspects of life both from a positive point of view and in various situations. Among them is improving understanding among students staying at INASIS YAB. This is said to be so because the students in the accommodation can communicate with various people who have different interests in uniforms. Therefore, the diversity of this interaction provides a diverse perspective on students.

Next is to be able to improve creativity in communicating with each other. The students who stay at YAB are aware that there are also students who venture into the military, police, and sports fields. In relation to that, the diversity of the fields involved in communication is likely to create a unique and innovative exchange of ideas. In addition, diversity can also give space to new views that may not have occurred before. Communication through the social network created can also stimulate the diversity of creativity of male and female students at INASIS YAB. The diverse thought process can allow students to create a more creative solution to solving problems.

The next advantage is being able to increase the opportunity to collaborate in communication that exists between students. This is said to be so because such advantages have opened up space for greater students to communicate with other residents. In communication, it can also show that there are similarities in certain goals or projects in addition to combining membership

in a group to get better income. At the same time, there is an increase in tolerance and appreciation that can be developed through increased tolerance of differences and learning to appreciate diversity. Therefore, this advantage can help in developing a stronger and more harmonious relationship between individuals and groups.

Lastly is to increase the social and professional network that can be obtained in diverse communication. For example, the communication created in the diversity of interests has opened opportunities for students to further expand their social network and professional attitude to interact. The results can be found when other residents who have a variety of fields of interest can become or produce a variety of collections that are valuable in their personal and professional lives. At the same time can overcome negative stereotypes and prejudices against those who join the uniformed body. This is said because communication with a variety of interests can help students overcome stereotypes and prejudices that are likely to be found in certain groups or individuals. Therefore, this can most likely be proven through a deeper understanding of a person.

Related to the following advantages of communication skills, it is significant to the theory that I've learned. One of the theories that relate is behavioural theory pioneered by Ivan Petrovich Pavlov. Which is, they added that the more exercises like communication skills are done, the stronger movement counter prevalence. In this situation, students at INASIS YAB gain input from skills like communication and community services that they joined to show their authority.

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Investigate the Extent and Nature of Students' Involvement in Various Social Services Activities

This article delves into the extent and nature of students' involvement in a spectrum of social services activities at UUM, aiming to provide a comprehensive understanding of the diverse ways students engage in initiatives that contribute to societal well-being, with a primary focus on qualitative exploration through interviews to capture the nuanced aspects of students' participation.

The participants encompass a varied cohort of students actively involved in social services activities, covering both voluntary and organized initiatives. Purposive sampling ensures representation

across demographic variables, allowing for a nuanced examination of involvement patterns within distinct groups.

The qualitative inquiry seeks to uncover the motivations, experiences, and challenges associated with students' participation (ROTU & SUKSIS especially) in social services. Through open-ended interviews, participants are encouraged to articulate their perspectives, providing rich narratives that illuminate the multifaceted nature of their engagement.

This research contributes to the broader understanding of student engagement in social services by uncovering the qualitative dimensions. The outcomes of this study aim to inform educational institutions, policymakers, and practitioners about the nuanced nature of students' involvement in social services, thereby facilitating the development of more targeted and effective initiatives to encourage socially responsible behaviour among students.

Emphasize the Importance of Holistic Student Development

The primary objective is to explore the interconnectedness of academic achievement and the acquisition of essential interpersonal skills within the context of social services engagement.

The participants in the study consist of students who have been actively involved in various social services initiatives, both voluntary and organized (ROTU & SUKSIS especially). Purposive sampling ensures diverse representation across demographic variables, facilitating a comprehensive examination of the impact on holistic development within distinct groups.

Qualitative interviews serve as the primary data collection method, allowing participants to articulate their experiences, perceptions, and reflections regarding the holistic impact of social services activities. The study delves into the development of interpersonal skills, academic performance, and the perceived benefits that extend beyond traditional educational outcomes.

This research contributes valuable insights to the discourse on the holistic development of students, emphasizing the significance of experiential learning in fostering a well-rounded skill set. The outcomes aim to inform educational practices, guide policy recommendations, and underscore the importance of integrating social services activities into the educational framework to nurture socially responsible and capable individuals.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has shed light on the significant impact of social services activities on students' communication skills. The findings underscore the multifaceted nature of this impact, emphasizing not only the development of verbal, non-verbal, and interpersonal communication competencies but also the broader implications for holistic student growth.

The qualitative insights garnered through interviews highlighted the intrinsic motivation driving students to engage in social services. Personal values, a sense of social responsibility, and a genuine desire to make a positive impact emerged as powerful motivators. These motivations, in turn, were found to be closely linked to the development of empathetic communication and cultural competence, essential components of effective interpersonal communication.

Communication is a process of transferring meaning that is implied from the source to the recipient for the common good as in (Othman & Ahmad, 2003). They added that the main purpose is for the meaning of the message conveyed by the source to be understood by the recipient and has various functions such as the dissemination of information and warnings, establishing relationships with groups in the community, cultural exchange, and entertainment that go hand in hand with the development of technology.

Siti Ezaleila Mustafa & Azizah Hamzah defined social networking as the development of software that enables the involvement of the public in mass social and collective activities (Mustafa & Hamzah, 2010). INASIS YAB is one of the residences that provide accommodation for the students inside the campus of UUM. Communication skills nowadays are one of the most important communication skills in following the current of modernity. These communication skills can exist verbally or non-verbally in the lives of those who stay in an accommodation that has various interests and tendencies of its own.

There are various advantages to communication skills that enhance students' social networks. This is said to be so because the students in the accommodation can communicate with various people who have different interests in uniforms. In relation to that, the diversity of the fields involved in communication is likely to create a unique and innovative exchange of ideas. In addition, diversity can also give space to new views that may not have occurred before.

This is said to be so because such advantages have opened up space for greater students to communicate with other residents. Lastly is to increase the social and professional network that can be obtained

in diverse communication through social services activities as well as a through cooperative learning to enhance students' communication skills (Munawaroh et al., 2022). For example, the communication created in the diversity of interests has opened opportunities for students to further expand their social network and professional attitude to interact. This is said because communication with a variety of interests can help students overcome stereotypes and prejudices that are likely to be found in certain groups or individuals. Also, in line with the challenges of facing the Industrial Revolution technology 4.0 (IR 4.0) (Abd Muin et al., 2022).

In essence, this research contributes valuable insights to the ongoing discourse on the role of social services activities in shaping well-rounded individuals with enhanced communication skills. The study serves as a foundation for future investigations and interventions aimed at maximizing the positive impact of such experiences on students' holistic development.

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