



A STUDY ON EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION FROM TEACHERS' AND STUDENTS' FRAME OF REFERENCE

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ABSTRACT

Communication is the process of conveying ideas, opinions, facts and information which plays an indispensable role in human society whereas Effective Communication is about understanding the intentions and emotions behind the information. The researchers have conducted this study for discerning the gravity of 'Effective Communication' and have listed its few essential elements- Active Listening, Body Language, Public Speaking, Questioning and Presentation Skills along with the 7Cs. Effective communication embodies creating a standard perception requiring familiarity with the barriers. The target population for the research was 'Students and Teachers'. A mixed methodology was used for collecting data. Offline and online surveys and structured interviews were conducted for acquiring Students' and Teachers' perspectives respectively. For the survey, each respondent was given alternatives, for answering the questions at a level playing field. As for the interview, predetermined questions were asked so as to compare different answers given to the same questions. The study concluded that in accordance with the majority, being a good listener overpowers a good communicator (speaker). Also, respondents' perceptions were obtained on the significance of questioning skills for sustaining effective communication etc. Ultimately, effective communication is not about speaking what we think, but ensuring others what we tend to mean.

KEYWORDS: Effective, communication, teachers, students.

INTRODUCTION

Communication plays a crucial role in human life & society. It helps in fostering relationships with people. The key element in all kinds of communication is understanding. Without understanding, there would be no information sharing or knowledge and communication would become aimless. Communicating information clearly and effectively is a key skill for getting the message across.

Good communication skills between students and teachers help create better and friendly relations where they can be honest with each other. Students can clarify their doubts and teachers can know the problem faced by students. It also helps to raise others' confidence and productivity, which can have long-term benefits.

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

"Good communication is as stimulating as black coffee, and just as hard to sleep after," once said by American author Anne Morrow Lindbergh in her 1955 novel "Gift from the Sea." As humans, everyone craves socialization and communication; even the most introverted person needs to be in dialogue in some way with others. Even Koko, the Gorilla's early sign language learning

demonstrates the vitality of communication. Effective communication is a paramount skill that influences perceptions and boosts confidence. It entails not just communicating with clarity and incisiveness but also actively listening and empathizing.

It helps us to understand each other better, avoid misunderstandings and conflicts, and build trust and respect. Effective communication is always about grasping and understanding the other person, not about winning an argument or imposing opinions on others. A few effective communication skills that greatly influence the interaction between students & teachers have been listed: *Active Listening, Body Language, Public Speaking, Questioning Skills, Presentation skills*.

7C's of Effective Communication [‘Effective Public Relations’ (2013, 11th edition) by Scott Cutlip, Allen Center]

The 7C's of Communication (Clarity, Correct, Concise, Courtesy, Concreteness, Consideration, Complete) is a checklist to help improve professional communication skills and increase the chance of the message being acknowledged as intended.

BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Effective communication between teachers and students holds the potential to elevate the learning experience. However, this necessitates effort on both sides as when there are barriers, communication becomes inefficacious.

It can be challenging for students to make best of their education, interact with teachers & fellow students due to communication hurdles. Sometimes, teachers fail to connect with students and develop compelling lectures.

Barriers to effective communication can be diverse, such as linguistic, physical, psychological etc. It may be due to the use of jargon, language differences, misinterpretation of words, etc. Such hurdles hamper communication efficacy and thus make teaching and learning futile at a point.

Therefore, persistent awareness and an attempt to minimize prevailing communication barriers is imperative.

OBJECTIVES

1. To accentuate the importance of effective communication skills from the teachers' frame of reference.
2. To understand the significance of effective communication skills from students' perspectives.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

It would encourage students to analyze their gratification concerning their communication skills.

It would lead to discovering the teachers' way of measuring effective communication. Drawing attention towards the few essential elements of effective communication skills would be possible. The qualities that respondents (teachers) look for in a good speaker could be realized. The study would discern as well as highlight the gravity of 'Effective Communication' and its essential elements namely – Active Listening, Presentation, Public Speaking, Body Language and Questioning.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Keeping in view, the necessity and demand of the present study, the researchers have used the following procedures:

I. DATA

i) Quantitative Data - Survey (Online and Offline)

Specific questions that prompt yes or no answers were added with the purpose to receive fairly clear-cut information/responses. Multiple choice questions were introduced in this survey to allow respondents to select one answer from a few possible choices and to find out more explicit information.

ii) Qualitative Data – Interview (Virtual and In-person)

A structured interview was conducted i.e. pre-determined questions were asked to 6 interviewees (teachers). It was done so that we can compare and contrast different answers given to the same question.

Survey-based data collection platforms (Google form) and offline printed forms were circulated to characterize various perspectives of students and teachers. The 100 students and 20 teachers were administered questionnaire. Virtual interview (Zoom platform) and in-person interview for 6 teachers were conducted with the help of interview schedule.

Respondents	Online	Offline	Method	Total
Students	52	48	Survey	100
Teachers	11	9	Survey-20 Interview-6	26

II. TARGET POPULATION

The respondents were confined to teachers and students. They were asked to share their insights as their knowledge can motivate each other and enhance their abilities. There were a total of 126 respondents comprising 100 students and 26 teachers. Both males and females were considered for the survey.

Region	Maharashtra	Other States	International	Total
No Of Responses (Students)	89	9	2	100
No Of Responses (Teachers)	26	0	0	26

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sabbah S., Fadwa H. & Ola H. in 'Communication Skills among Undergraduate Students at Al-Quds University' (2020) analyzed the communication skills among undergraduate students at Al-Quds University using a questionnaire from Hamidat (2007). Results showed that university students achieved high levels of listening, speaking, understanding others, and controlling emotions. However, there were no significant differences in communication skills based on gender, faculty, or academic year. The study highlighted the importance of developing these skills in students to enhance their overall communication abilities.

Asrar Z., Tariq N. and Rashid H. in 'The Impact of Communication Between Teachers and Students: A Case Study of the Faculty of Management Sciences, University of Karachi, Pakistan' (2018) have scrutinized the influence of communication of teachers and students. The research revealed a positive relationship between teachers and students, which creates goodwill and results-oriented behavior. Establishing a positive relationship is challenging, but with good communication skills, it becomes easier.

Malek N., Ibrahim N., Adnan W. and Rahim R. in 'Communication Barriers Between Student and Lecturers' (2018) investigated communication barriers between students and lecturers. Respondents come from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and values. Results have shown that the most common barrier is language, followed by perceptual and emotional barriers. Measures to overcome these barriers are suggested to ensure effective classroom communication, promoting fruitful learning and teaching.

Fatih Y. and Çelik Ö. in 'The Importance Of Listening In Communication' (2017) aimed to understand the importance of listening in communication, especially oral production. They also explored the direct relationship between listening skills and speaking skills. They analyzed related papers and provided recommendations for teachers and researchers for further study.

Pal N., Halder S. and Guha A. in 'Study On Communication Barriers In The Classroom: A Teacher's Perspective' (2016) analyzed the secondary school teachers' opinions on classroom communication barriers. Results showed that barriers exist, but there is a significant difference in opinions on various dimensions. According to the research, most teachers believe barriers are not due to the teacher, but rather the classroom environment, curriculum, and students

Rana P. in 'Effective Communication Skills'(2015) stated that Effective communication involves understanding the emotion behind information and using strategies such as eye contact, attentive body language, gesture awareness, and cultural sensitivity. Active listening and asking open-ended questions can improve relationships, teamwork, decision-making, and problem-solving. Effective communication also enables the communication of difficult messages without creating conflict.

Adriwanta A. in 'The Student's Perception Towards The Effectiveness Of Public Speaking Subject To Support Their Speaking Skill'(2015) aimed to understand students' perceptions of public speaking subject effectiveness and its support for their speaking skills. The study suggested that improvements are needed in instruction, observation, and evaluation.

Patel D. in 'Body Language: An Effective Communication Tool' (2014) concluded that body language is a crucial tool for effective communication and interpretation, making it essential not only in daily situations but also for interpreters. Understanding and using body language effectively can improve communication and avoid being lost for words.

Etemadzadeh A. in 'The Role of Questioning Technique In Developing Thinking Skills: The Ongoing Effect on Writing Skills' (2013) stated that questioning technique is a crucial strategy for promoting critical thinking in students. Teachers often struggle with passive students in interactive activities. This paper aimed to encourage students to improve their critical thinking, leading to increased activity in language production, including speaking and writing. Good writing is believed to result from good thinking.

Alshare K. and Hindi N. in 'The Importance Of Presentation Skills In The Classroom: Students' And Instructors' Perspectives' (2004) have explained that employers demand graduates with excellent communication skills, making student presentations crucial for delivering positive learning experiences. This paper analyses the role of student presentations from the viewpoints of both students and instructors, presenting a checklist for excellent and ineffective presentations.

RESULT

Teachers' frame of reference:

1. *indicating effective communication of the speaker:*

Options	No. of responses	Percentage
Maintain good eye contact	4	20
Questions answered by speaker	14	70
Empathize with the speaker	1	5
Nodding head for understanding	1	5
TOTAL	20	100

Table 1

20% of our respondents emphasized on maintaining eye contact. According to 70% of respondents, interaction indicates effective communication. 5% of respondents think that the speaker is communicating effectively if they could empathize with the speaker. Rest 5% of the respondents prefer nodding head as response for understanding.

2) *Facts which make the listener interested in the speaker:*

Options	No. of responses	Percentage
Aura, position and level of knowledge	1	5
Topic they are talking about	4	20
Content delivery of the speaker	15	75
Relationship with the speaker	0	0
TOTAL	20	100

Table 2

5% of respondents feel captivated by a speaker’s aura, status, and degree of expertise. 20% of respondents believe that the content elevates the interest. 75% of the respondents think that the speaker's content delivery piques their attention. None of the respondents are influenced by their relationship with the speaker.

3) Major Effective skills ignored by people in communication:

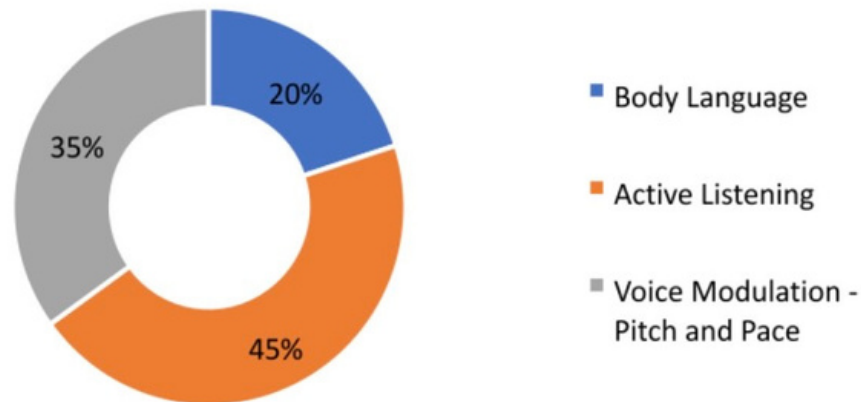


Figure 1

20% of respondents said that "body language" is the most underutilized effective communication technique. In contrast, "Active listening" has been chosen as the most ignored effective communication ability by 45% of respondents. As per remaining 35% of respondents, Voice Modulation-Pitch and Pace is the most neglected practical communication ability.

4) Importance of questioning for sustaining effective communication:

Options	No. of responses	Percentage
Maintain interpersonal communication	8	40
Obtain clarification	5	25
Explore their personality	2	10
Encourage further thought by showing interest in the topic	5	25
TOTAL	20	100

Table 3

According to 40% of respondents, questioning ensures interpersonal communication. 25% of respondents prefer maintaining effective communication by obtaining certain information for clarity. 10% of respondents believe asking questions help communicate effectively and learn more about someone's personality. 25% of respondents claim that good communication involves asking content-related questions to encourage further thought.

5. Approach to measure and assess the way of communicating effectively:

The teachers (professors) were questioned regarding their approach to measure effectiveness of the communication. The professors answered the questions by weighing the question from every possible aspect and hence, aided in providing thoughtful insight regarding the same.

6. Prime element of Effective Communication skills:

The teachers (professors) were questioned whether being a good listener is important or a good communicator. The professors answered the questions by weighing the question from every possible aspect and hence, aided in providing thoughtful insight regarding the same.

Students' frame of reference:

1) Prime element of communication skill:

Options	No. of responses	Percentage
Good listener	58	58
Good Communicator	42	42
TOTAL	100	100

Table 4

58% of respondents were of the opinion that being a good listener is primarily important in any communication while to the remaining 42%, being a good communicator is of utmost importance.

2) *Contemplating whether texting is one of the best innovations for communicating:*

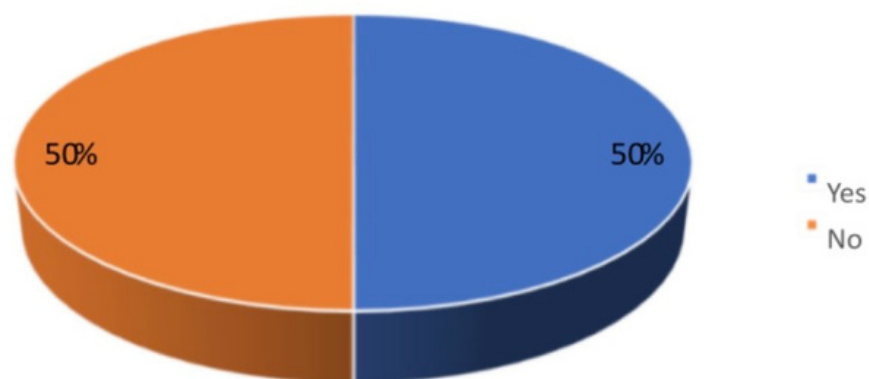


Figure 2

50% of respondents believe that texting is one of the finest advancements in communication, while the other 50% disagree.

3) *Strategies to make sure that communication is effective:*

Options	No. of responses	Percentage
Right time and place	22	22
Clear and comprehensible	48	48
Communicating one idea at a time	6	6
Comprehension by audience	24	24
TOTAL	100	100

Table 5

According to 22% of our respondents, successful communication results from determining appropriate time and place. 48% of respondents prefer explicit and comprehensible communication. 6% believe that speaking only one idea at a time results in effective communication. Rest 24% believe, successful communication involves ensuring the audience has comprehended.

4) Qualities and skills improved through Presentations:

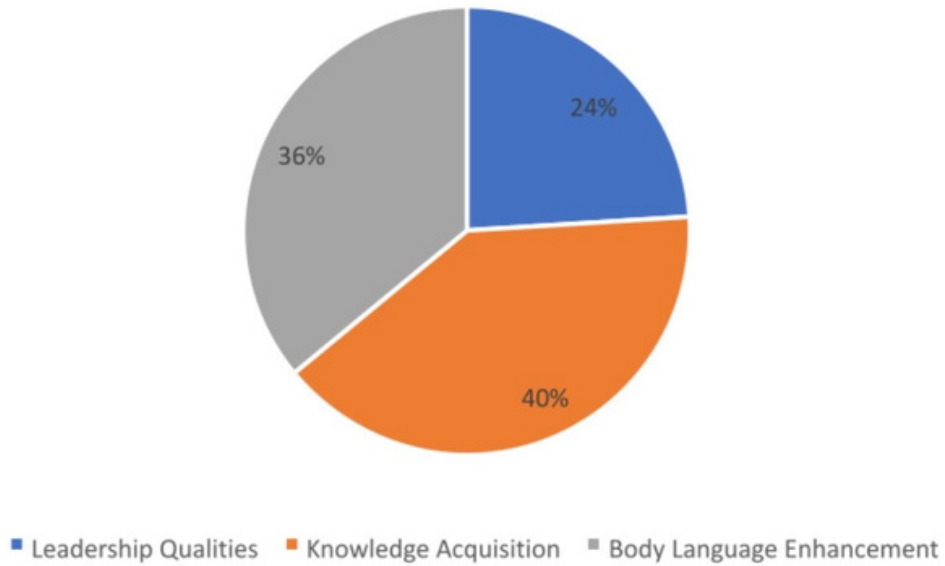


Figure 3

24% of respondents are of the opinion that leadership qualities are improved through presentations. Around 40% of respondents prefer acquiring knowledge through presentations. According to the remaining 36%, presentation skills assist in body language enhancement.

5) Level of satisfaction with one's own effective communication skills:

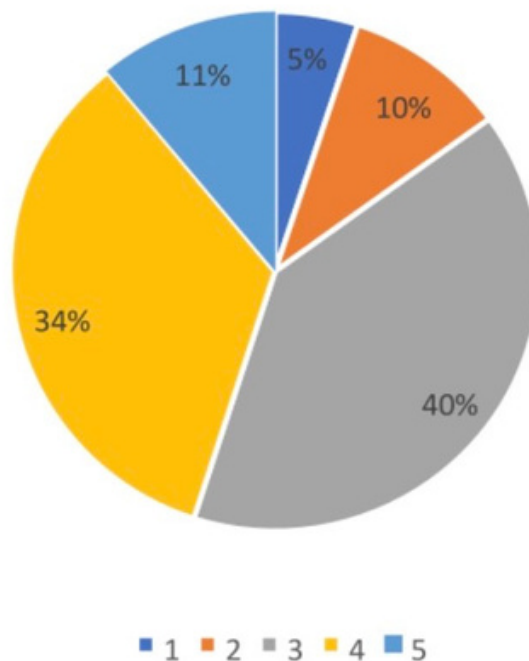


Figure 4

40% of respondents claimed they have average communication abilities. 45% of respondents indicated they were extremely satisfied with their communication abilities. On the flip side, the least no. of respondents about 15% has expressed dissatisfaction with their communication abilities.

6) *Highlighting the facts leading to ineffective communication:*

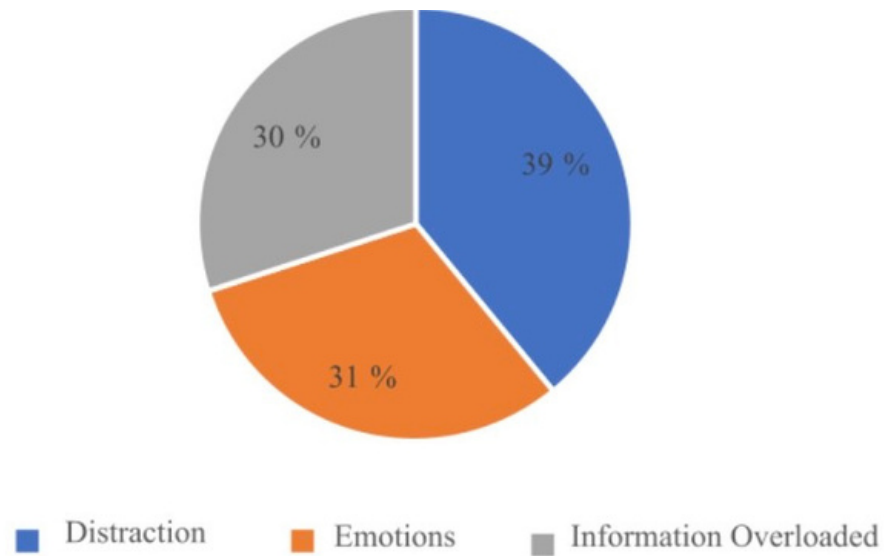


Figure 5

39% of respondents cite "distraction" as one of the factors that might result in ineffective communication. 31% of respondents chose "emotions" instead. The remaining 30% opted for "Information Overloaded."

7) *Description of effective communication:*

Options	No. of responses	Percentage
Interaction with the audience	29	29
Precise and to the point	27	27
Use of humor and examples	44	44
TOTAL	100	100

Table 6

According to 29% of the respondents, interaction with the audience is crucial for good communication. 44% of the respondents have chosen when the speaker employs humor and examples in communicating, whereas the rest 27% prefer when the speaker speaks directly to the point.

8) Importance of questioning for sustaining effective communication:

Options	No. of responses	Percentage
Interpersonal communication	28	28
Obtain clarification	31	31
Explore their personality	11	11
Encourage further thought by showing interest in the topic	30	30
TOTAL	100	100

Table 7

According to 28% of respondents, questioning ensures interpersonal communication. 31% of respondents prefer maintaining effective communication by obtaining certain information for clarity. 11% of the respondents believe asking questions help communicate effectively and learn more about someone's personality. 30% of respondents claim that good communication involves asking content-related questions to encourage further thought.

DISCUSSION

TEACHERS' FRAME OF REFERENCE:

In conformity with the study, 70% of respondents emphasized that when the speaker answers the questions asked by the audience, it establishes great interactions and effective communication, while 5% of respondents believe that the speaker conveying his message with empathy and sincerity is a great way to communicate effectively. Additionally, 5% of respondents consider nodding their heads after interpreting the speaker's message to manifest their understanding. Moreover, as indicated by the study, in accordance with 75% of the respondents, the content delivery approach (reflecting confidence, body language, voice modulation etc.) keeps the listeners engrossed. None of the respondents prefer to be interested in the talk solely because the speaker is known. 45% of respondents claim that the vital skill of active listening is disregarded. However, 20% of respondents often tend to overlook body language, leading to ineffective communication.

The study reflected that concerning 40% of respondents, questioning is favored as it is fundamental to successful communication and without it, interpersonal communication can fail. 10% of respondents expressed the opinion that the audience's inquisitiveness in ascertaining the speaker's personality through questioning aids in enhancing their own effectiveness as communicators. Also, questioning the audience in the context of speech helps the speaker to build rapport and design a strategy to keep the audience engaged.

In accordance with the study conducted, in the view of the interviewees, both skills (listening & speaking) are essential in various settings, including classrooms and social circles. However, to become a good speaker, one has to be a good listener. A good listener actively engages in listening, prioritizing the speaker. Good listeners imitate speakers, replicating accents, body language, and paralinguistics. They pay attention to the speaker's words, understand the message's meaning, and empathize. Further, effective communication requires an understanding of the audience's needs and nuances. Effective communication requires a clear, concrete message, avoiding ambiguity and abstractness. Paralinguistics, stress, and intonation are crucial aspects. When the speaker succeeds in molding the opinions or transforming people from pessimism to positivity, the efficacy of communication is evident. Furthermore, institutions and individuals may focus on different aspects, such as qualitative or quantitative assessments, depending on the purpose.

STUDENTS' FRAME OF REFERENCE:

The study suggests that 58% of respondents had the opinion that 'being a good listener' is essential for it helps in building a rapport and shows regard towards the speaker. On the flip side, the remaining 42% of respondents consider 'being a good speaker' as important for a successful communication process. Based on the study, 50% of respondents agreed that texting is the best innovation for communication because it makes communication more reachable and convenient. Conversely, the remaining half of respondents denied the same, stating that for some people, text messaging cannot correctly convey face-to-face conversation. As per the study, 48% of respondents opined that using clear language helps the audience understand, use the information given by the speaker and thereby achieve effective communication.

However, 6% of respondents believe that one idea at a time must be communicated so as to prevent errors and confusion. Furthermore, 40% of respondents consider presentations as great learning opportunities for they consist of deep research and knowledge on every aspect concerning the topic, while 24% of respondents believe that presentation skills enhance leadership qualities, since it is one of the hallmarks of a strong leader making the individual competent to influence thoughts. 45% of respondents' rating of extreme satisfaction (4 or 5) might have been in the view that those who can grasp qualities quite well would be able to pick up the messages sent to them rapidly. On account of the 15% of respondents (gratification rated as 1 or 2), it can be construed that respondents are probably quite displeased with their communication skills. It may be due to misinterpretation or mutual understanding. 39% of respondents held the view that distraction makes communication ineffective owing to unimportant interactions and information or due to any disturbing incident with the speaker. 30% of respondents expressed a belief that unchecked overflow of information very often becomes another barrier to communication.

Moreover, 44% of respondents assent to the use of examples and humor in communication for the audience to easily understand and retain for a longer time. 27% of respondents think that talking straight to the point gives the audience a reason why they are giving their time and gets a good impression of the speaker in their mind. In accordance with the study, findings reflected that 31% of respondents prefer communicating effectively through questioning for clarification and to reduce misunderstandings on the part of both speaker and listener. Besides, 11% of respondents tend to ask questions out of curiosity about the speaker's personality, enabling them to develop their own ability to communicate efficiently. Also, asking questions empowers the speaker to establish rapport and strategize to keep the audience captivated.

Hence, the aforementioned statements helped to achieve the objectives in particular.

CONCLUSION

Effective communication is crucial for fostering meaningful relationships between students and teachers. Being a good listener and speaker, ensuring clear and unambiguous messages, and avoiding misapprehension, on the part of both students and teachers, is of prime importance. Nonetheless, there are several barriers such as language barriers, perceptual barriers, interpersonal barriers, etc. These barriers might cause the message to be misconstrued, which puts the speaker at risk of wasting time by creating perplexity. Hence, recognizing these common and frequent communication barriers is vital for constructive communication. Since effective communication demands familiarity with barriers, teachers and students must be well-equipped in this context to endure effective teaching & learning. Teachers must prioritize effective communication to motivate students, enhance critical thinking and utilize their communication skills through activities.

Given the limitations of analyzing several variables, the constraints in this study are as such — Biased conduct on the part of the respondents, different interpretations of the questions by each respondents, access to the survey limited to the literate population, etc.

Ultimately, effective communication is ensuring others what we mean rather than just speaking what we think. This saying of author Jim Rohn, “If you just communicate, you can get by. But if you communicate skillfully, you can work miracles” if inculcated can truly make a difference.

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