

# Assessment of Communication Skills among the Medical Students of Avicenna Medical College Lahore

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Mubashir Nasir, <sup>2</sup> Dr. Sehrish Shafiq, <sup>3</sup> Dr. Mehrin Mazhar

## **Abstract**

### **Introduction:**

Communication is the act of conveying intended meanings from one entity or group through the use of mutually understood signs & semiotic rules.

Communication is the process that occurs between two or more people in which a message is delivered & received by the other party.

Communication is a systemic process in which individuals interact with & through synonyms to create & interpret meanings.

### **Objectives:**

To assess the communication skills among the medical students of Avicenna medical college

### **Materials & Methods**

A descriptive cross sectional study will be done. 150 medical students will be interviewed through simple random sampling technique. Closed ended questionnaire will be used as data collection tool after getting their consent. 6 team members collected data. Data will be analyzed and compiled through SPSS software version -22.

### **Results:**

Will be analyzed through SPSS Software version-22

### **Conclusions:**

It will be concluded after completion of our research work.

### **Keywords:**

Communication Skills, Medical Students

### **Introduction:**

Communication is the act of conveying intended meanings from one entity a group through the use of mutually understood signs & semiotic rules.

Communication is the process that occurs between two or more people in which a message is delivered & received by the other party. (Hovland, 2007).

Communication is a systemic process in which individuals interact with & through synonyms to create & interpret meanings (WOOD, J, 2004).

Study of communication can be divided into information theory and biosemiotics. Information theory includes the quantification, storage & communication of information in general the communication studies which concerns human communication. Bio semiotics examines the communication of organisms in general. The channel of communication can be visual, auditory, tactile (such as braille) & haptic, olfactory, kinesics, electromagnetics & biochemical. (Smith et al 2012)

It has different types Such as one way communication, two way communication, verbal, nonverbal, visual and telephonic communication. One way communication (Didactic method) is the flow of communication from sender to audience e.g. lecture system in class. In Two way communications (Socratic Method) both the communication & audience take part. Verbal communication is the spoken conveying of message. Types of verbal communication are Formal and informal communication. Formal communication is used in offices & social gathering. Informal communication is used in family & friends. Three types of informal communication



are lateral, diagonal and grapevine. Lateral is found among members working at the same level peer group. Diagonal Communication is a mixture of vertical & horizontal movement. Grape wine is an informal channel of business communication. Non Verbal communication includes the range of movement gestures & facial expression. Visual communication comprises of charts graphs, pictograph, table maps. (K.park 20<sup>th</sup> edition)

A research study conducted at London in 2006 on the students of Cambridge university. Total students were 158, about 62-65% use new communication skills such as mobile, internet. Most of The students are good enough in using verbal communication, paralinguistic aspect, gesture etc. The total study conducted overall in Pakistan in which there are only 65% people use new technology of communication skills & 35% still use old communication skills e.g. Telephone, fax machine etc [Carandang R.2006].75-80% of people are very good & vigilant in communication skill in well developed countries like in America because peoples are well educated & well awared about using communication skills. They use these types of communication skills as they go through such skills during their whole teaching methodology while the other developing countries need to improve teaching skills as they are having

limited resources regarding electronic media. [Roger VL. 2011]

A study conducted at London in 2012 on communication skills emphasis the need to identify the objective of the presentation, allowing reflection on its purpose, aim and eventual outcome.(Young 2012). A study conducted at Bingham in 2004 on communication skills introduces the concept of rhetoric and identifies the ingredients that make a presentation persuasive and convincing; ethos, logos and pathos. (Blundel 2004)

It is the fastest methodology of learning/teaching & has vast information. We will get a huge amount of material required for their studies. Communication skills are important to give awareness to people to interact easily and it is also important to motivate students to improve their skills in doctor patient relationship in medical field. Communication skills can persuade those people to communicate freely who hesitate in communicating others.

### **Literature Review**

A study was conducted on communication skills in 2003 at California, revealed that individuals could make reasoned assessment of their peers independently of their own ability. (Hughes and Large 2003). Another study conducted on communication skills in 2009 at Sydeny, stated that student assessment is too unreliable to count for summative assessment.(Boud 2009)

A study at Nepal in 2005 claimed that if peer assessment is only used formatively students will not take it seriously (Swanson, 2005). Study conducted in 2010 at Jamaica, on communication skills showed that why students may be reluctant to speak up in the classroom have been identified in literature. For instance, students may feel nervous at the thought of speaking out loud whilst in the presence of a large group (Turk, 2001). Study at Toronto in 2001 stated as “Communication apprehension – a clinical fear of communicating with or in the presence of others” (Petress, 2001). Study at Capetown in 2009 showed that the fear and anxiety expressed by students towards public speaking, who recommends the implementation of short presentations throughout a university course, which can gradually build confidence and allow students to become familiar with presenting orally. Hay suggests first easing students into the task of presenting with short and informal presentations, then gradually building up the student’s oral skills and confidence by implementing group work and perhaps a formal presentation as a ‘grand finale’. In this way, rather than suddenly facing the daunting task of a formal and assessed oral presentation with little or no previous experience, students are able to familiarize themselves with the task and improve on the quality of their presentation techniques over a period of time. (Hay 2009)

A study conducted at London in 2012 on communication skills emphasizes the need to identify the objective of the presentation, allowing reflection on its purpose, aim and eventual outcome. (Young 2012). A study conducted at U.S in 2004 on communication skills introduces the concept of rhetoric and identifies the ingredients that make a presentation persuasive and convincing; ethos, logos and pathos. (Blundel 2004)

A study conducted in 2002 at Denmark, on communication skills describe the usefulness of recording the presentation in an audio format, correcting mistakes or amending material or behaviour before video recording it in order to further critically assess one’s own performance. (McCarthy and Hatcher’s 2002)

### **Objectives:**

- To assess the communication skills among the medical students of Avicenna Medical College Lahore.

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

#### **1. STUDY VARIABLES:**

**a) Dependent variable:** Communication Skills

**b) Independent variable:** Confidence, Aptitude, Attitude

#### **2. STUDY DESIGN:**

Descriptive cross sectional study will be done.

#### **3. STUDY AREA:**

Avicenna medical College Lahore

#### **4. STUDY UNIVERSE:**

Lahore

#### **5. Study Population:**

4th year Medical Students

#### **6. SAMPLE SIZE:**

Total population

#### **7. STUDY SUBJECTS SELECTION CRITERIA:**

**a) Inclusion criteria:** 4<sup>th</sup> Year medical students.

**b) Exclusion criteria:** All other Year students & staff members.

#### **8. SOCIAL AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS:**

- Observed cultural and religious ethics.
- Consent will be obtained for interview.
- The information about the names addresses etc. will be not disclosed to anyone and will not be used for unethical purpose.
- No political discussions.

### **9. DATA COLLECTION PLAN:**

Questionnaire will be handed over to participants & their answers will then be sorted out to analyze the different variables under study. The data will be collected by research conducting members.

### **10. DATA COMPILATION AND ANALYSIS:**

The data will be compiled and analyzed through SPSS version-22

### **11. Data collection tool:**

A semi structured questionnaire (close ended questions) will be used to collect information from the medical students.

### **12. PRE-TESTING:**

Before carrying out the actual exercise of data-collection, questionnaire will be tested on some subjects on experimental basis to observe & correct:

- Any deficiency in questionnaire.
- Ethical and social acceptability of questionnaire.

### **ETHICAL DECLARATION:**

I undertake that:

1. I will abide by the declaration of world medical association (WMA) made at Helsinki, (2008). regarding the ethical principles for medical research involving human subjects.
2. Patient's health and safety would be our priority.
3. The procedures shall be explained to the subjects clearly and shall be kept sterile and painless.
4. The confidentiality of the information shall be maintained.

### **Discussion:**

We have conducted research on the 4th year medical students of Avicenna medical college. We divided the sample population according to their gender & age group. There were 32% males and 68% females. The ages between 19-21 years was 48% between 22-24 years was 41%, 25-27 years was 11%. There

were total 10 questionnaires which were handed over to given population to know about their opinions. According to them, 74% students practice communication skills while remaining 26% do not practice it. 33% of students know about the important methods of communication while 67% do not know about it. 56.6% students learn about communication skills through workshops carried at their place while 43% denied it. 53% students have sufficient knowledge about communication skills while 46% do not have. 41% students think that their profession is more engaged in communication skills and 58% think opposite about it. 60% think that their skills are encouraged by others but 40% do not think about it. 58% are engaged in using communication skills whereas remaining 42% are not. 30.6% think that they do not have adequate knowledge about communication skills in their area while 69.34% think opposite to it. 66.6% think that feedback from others encouraged them to improve their skills while 33.4% are not influenced by others. 52.6% are influenced by the peer pressure while 47.4% are not influenced by peer pressure.

### **Conclusion:**

Study conducted on assessment of Communication Skills among the medical students of Avicenna Medical College Lahore. 150 people were selected for study and study was conducted at Avicenna Medical College Lahore by a team of 5 members and data were analyzed through SPSS-22 software. 74% students practice communication skills while remaining 26% do not practice it. 33% of students know about the important methods of communication while 67% do not know about it. 56.6% students learn about communication skills through workshops carried at their place while 43% denied it. 53% students have

sufficient knowledge about communication skills while 46% do not have. 41% students think that their profession is more engaged in communication skills and 58% think opposite about it. 60% think that their skills are encouraged by others but 40% do not think about it. 58% are engaged in using communication skills whereas remaining 42% are not. 30.6% think that they do not have adequate knowledge about communication skills in their area while 69.34% think opposite to it. 66.6% think that feedback from others encouraged them to improve their skills while 33.4% are not influenced by others. 52.6% are influenced by the peer pressure while 47.4% are not influenced by peer pressure.

#### **Recommendations:**

In the light of above-mentioned conclusions, following recommendations are made:

1. We should arrange seminars to aware the public about communication skills.
2. It is necessary in our schools and colleges to focus on development of communication skills.
3. Communication abilities, skills and management programs should be a part of our academic course.
4. Communication skills make the sharp and bold mind of young children.
5. We should promote the communication skills in our hospital systems.
6. Being a nation it is our responsibility to initiate and promote the advantages of communication skills which is very helpful in future life.

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