

Communication Skills for MBA Students in Guwahati, Assam and Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu: A Comparative Study

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Abstract:

MBA colleges in India, various colleges are bubbling with Campus training programmes offered to students. Among the soft skills, the ability to communicate in English has increased notably. Here the researcher attempted in making a study about the effectiveness of the communication programmes based on learning through reading, writing, listening, talking for MBA students from Guwahati in Assam and Tiruchirappalli in Tamil Nadu. 150 students from Guwahati city MBA colleges and another 150 from Tiruchirappalli city MBA colleges were taken for the study. Descriptive design is adopted. The sampling method used was stratified random sampling method. This study revealed that by way of applying which is effective among the campus training programmes.

Keywords: Reading, Writing, Listening, Talking, MBA students

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In current scenario of Business Schools in India, the campus training programmes are a appealing phrase that attracts many students to prefer their destination and to study MBA. The problem arises with regard to the expectation and requirements of the organisations in India. Every organisation is looking for students with capabilities and with skills required for a particular job so as to increase and establish their performance level towards the organizational growth. In this process, the organisations are on the look-out for the best performing students which at times remains as an ivory tower. It has become very difficult for the Business schools to fulfill the greater expectations from the changing situation in the organisations. Perhaps having realized and understood the need and demand, the business schools have started offering campus training programmes for the MBA graduates in all Business schools. Soft skills training is being offered by the Business Schools but still after providing the students with all these trainings, the problem remains the same and students still have difficulties. Thus, the researcher tries to explore and make a comparative study on communication training based on the learning through reading, writing, listening, talking for MBA students in Tiruchirappalli in Tamil Nadu and Guwahati in Assam.

I. INTRODUCTION

As India is having multi- linguistic tradition, the choice of preference to English language takes a prime place. Everyone wants to get educated in English medium school. The researcher would like to highlight a few definitions and explanations as described below;

1.1. Communication Skill: The ability to convey or share ideas and feelings effectively.

1.2 Soft Skills: Personal attributes that enable someone to interact effectively and harmoniously with other people.

Desirable qualities for certain forms of employment that do not depend on acquired knowledge: they include common sense, the ability to deal with people and a positive flexible attitude.

1.3 Reading: The cognitive process of decoding symbols to derive meaning

1.4 Writing: Writing is a medium of human communication that represents language and emotion with signs and symbols. In most languages, writing is a complement to speech or spoken language. Writing is not a language, but a tool used to make languages be read.

1.5 Listening: Listening is to give one's concentration to various sounds.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Arif Ahmed M. H. Al-Ahdal and et al (2014), concluded that although English is being taught in the Arab region for a few decades or so now, the results are nowhere near the expected outcomes: Young adults are ill equipped to use the language as fluently or efficiently as can be desired.

This is specially worrying when one sees that many, if not all, factors present are helpful to effective learning of English as a foreign language. Further, unless learning of a language is vital little can be achieved: In most institutions and at most levels in the region the medium of instruction is the mother tongue.

Speaking and writing skills are as important as listening and reading. English language learners are ought to develop those four skills evenly. There should be more focus on the productive skills (speaking and writing) if not equal to the receptive skills (listening and reading).

Shashi Sharma and et al (2013), stated that at Higher Secondary level, Mean scores in English communication skill (listening & speaking) was found to be 11.4. The reason behind such skewed result is that the present period is a period of shift. We are constantly emphasizing the need and importance of English language, but our home environment with Hindi languages in spite of the pressures exerted by the society to adopt English language.

Asghar Ali Ansari (2012) stated that language teaching or language learning, are concerned with the four language skills.

a. Reading

b. Writing:

c. Speaking

d. Listening

All these four skills are very important and so all of them should be taught with equal emphasis. All the four skills are related with one another. We cannot say that one particular skill is more important than others. Of course the method and the style of teaching of all the four skills are different.

There are many different methods to teach the four skills of English language. Which skill, out of the four, is the most important depends on the purpose of the learners. But from the technical point of view, reading and writing skills are the most important ones. So the emphasis should be on reading and writing. If a student learns how to read words or sentences, he would automatically become able to write and speak English. If he does not know how to read, listening words would fall flat on his ears. He will not understand anything because he is not acquainted with words or sentences in English. So, first of all, a student of EFL (English Foreign Language) should be trained in reading the English alphabets, words and sentences.

The above cited reviews directly relate to the research title and would enhance the research.

III.METHODOLOGY

The general objective is to study the effectiveness of the campus training programmes for communication training based on the learning through reading, writing, listening, talking for the MBA students.

3.1. The Specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- To study the learning aspect of communication through reading, writing, listening and talking.
- To measure communication skills.
- To suggest probable measures for further improvement.

3.2. Research Question:

- Do the medium of instructions help the communication skill of MBA students?

3.3. Significance of the Study:

The significance lies in the employability of the MBA students. As the students lack skills required for managerial levels of leadership and other qualities, the rate of placement also goes down in the colleges. Skills and placement go together and the students with good communication skills are able to get better employment. The students who lack skills struggle to get a job even after the MBA studies.

3.4. Operational Definition: The researcher by its operational definition limits herself to MBA students in selected colleges in Assam and Tamil Nadu only.

3.5. Area of the Study: Five Colleges in Assam and Five Colleges in Tamil Nadu

3.6. Research Design: Descriptive method is being adopted.

3.7. Sampling Method: The researcher has applied stratified random sampling method. At the initial stage, colleges from each city are being stratified with the population.

Table 1: Lists of respondents with the colleges

		Total Students	Unit of Study		Colleges in Tamil Nadu	Total Students	Unit of Study
i	Girijananda Chowdhury Institute of Management & Technology	34	30	i	Bishop Heber College	120	30
ii	Don Bosco Institute of Management	34	30	ii	St. Joshep's Institute of Management	116	30
iii	Royal Institute of Business	40	30	iii	J.J College of Engineering and Technology	39	30
iv	Gauhati Commerce College	55	30	iv	Shivani School of Business Management	30	30
v	NEF College of Management & Technology	30	30	v	Indra Ganesan College of Engineering	40	30
	Total	183	150		Total	345	150

At the next stage, the total population of the study is taken to account with 300 respondents; one hundred and fifty respondents from Guwahati city in Assam and one hundred and fifty respondents from Tiruchirappalli city, Tamil Nadu. Then five MBA colleges from Guwahati city and five colleges from Tiruchirappalli city, Tamil Nadu were identified based on the basis of educational index development of India 2011. The average literacy level shows 91.47 per cent in Guwahati city and 91.37 per cent in Tiruchirappalli city. Following this standard in mind i.e the researcher selected these two cities' MBA colleges. The researcher has adopted stratified random sampling method. The researcher met the principals/directors of those colleges and collected data from the students in a random method. Here the researcher went to each college, met the students and collected data through the questionnaire from them.

3.8. Sources of Data Collection: The researcher has used both primary and secondary data for the research purpose.

Primary data: As primary data the researcher has used direct questionnaire filled by the respondents.

Secondary data: As secondary data the researcher has used journals, articles, reviews, books and different sources from internet.

3.9. Tools of Data: The researcher has used statistical tools like ANOVA and Chi- Square Test for the research.

3.10. Limitations of the study:

The researcher found that a few staff members in some colleges were not ready to cooperate with the researcher. College timing was also a concern as each college's timing was different. The environment also was something new for the researcher and to get acquainted with the students took more time.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

It is an important element in the research that collected data have been processed, analyzed and given interpretations and inferences based on objectives and hypotheses.

Table 2. Distribution of the respondents by Medium of Education in school

	ASSAM		TAMIL NADU		Total	
	(n=150)	(100%)	(n=150)	(100%)	(n=300)	(100%)
Medium of education in School						
English	150	100.0%	76	50.7%	226	75.3%
Tamil	0	.0%	74	49.3%	74	24.7%
Total	150	100%	150	100%	300	100%

The above table illustrates about the medium of education in school showed 50.7 per cent of the respondents from Tamil Nadu are from English medium against 100 per cent of the respondents from Assam. Also 49.3 per cent of the respondents from Tamil Nadu are from vernacular medium against nil per cent of the respondents from Assam.

The inference is that the students in Guwahati from English medium schools prefer MBA at post graduation level whereas, in Tiruchirappalli, both English and Tamil medium prefer MBA at post graduation level.

Table 3. Distribution of the respondents by percentage of learning through the following aspects (reading, writing, speaking and talking)

	ASSAM		TAMIL NADU		Total	
	(n=150)	(100%)	(n=150)	(100%)	(n=300)	(100%)
Reading						
Below 25%	37	24.7%	17	11.3%	54	18.0%
26 to 50%	31	20.7%	35	23.3%	66	22.0%
51 to 75%	34	22.7%	39	26.0%	73	24.3%
76 to 100%	48	32.0%	59	39.3%	107	35.7%
Writing						

Below 25%	34	22.7%	20	13.3%	54	18.0%
26 to 50%	39	26.0%	31	20.7%	70	23.3%
51 to 75%	38	25.3%	46	30.7%	84	28.0%
76 to 100%	39	26.0%	53	35.3%	92	30.7%
Talking						
Below 25%	25	16.7%	16	10.7%	41	13.7%
26 to 50%	33	22.0%	24	16.0%	57	19.0%
51 to 75%	35	23.3%	37	24.7%	72	24.0%
76 to 100%	57	38.0%	73	48.7%	130	43.3%
Listening						
Below 25%	34	22.7%	18	12.0%	52	17.3%
26 to 50%	25	16.7%	20	13.3%	45	15.0%
51 to 75%	27	18.0%	37	24.7%	64	21.3%
76 to 100%	64	42.7%	75	50.0%	139	46.3%

The above table illustrates 26 per cent of the respondents belong to the category between 51-75 % in Tamil Nadu against 22.7 per cent in Assam prefer reading. 30.7 per cent of the respondents belong to the group 51-71 % in Tamil Nadu against 25.3 per cent in Assam prefer writing. 24.7 per cent of the respondents belong to the group 51-75 % in Tamil Nadu against 23.3 per cent in Assam prefer talking. 24.7 per cent of the respondents belong to the group 51-75 % in Tamil Nadu against 18 per cent in Assam prefer listening. The inference is that both Tamil Nadu and Assam students prefer reading, writing, talking and listening with little difference for developing their English Communication Skill. It is a dire need today for the students to acquire communication skill.

IELTS (International English Language Testing System)

It is a tool or measurement for finding out the proficiency of English language of an individual who aspires to study or work where English is used as language. It is being applied to MBA Colleges in India where the medium of instruction and learning takes place in English. Perhaps the researcher wants to follow the IELTS Band-score which is universal in nature. The band score is taken as a universal phenomenon or a standard measurement scale and applied to the MBA students. The MBA Students have been asked to assume of their proficiency level in learning English out of 100 per cent.

Table 4. The Standard Band-core is followed is from 0 – 9. The Assumption is tabled as below.

Standard Band-score	1.5	2	2.5	3	3.5	4	4.5	5	5.5	6	6.5	7	7.5	8	8.5	9
Percentage	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	61-65	66-70	71-75	76-80	81-85	86-90

Based on the above tabulation the percentile calculation is devised while taking into account of average of four components (total of the four individual components scores divided by four) and from it was derived calculated average.

Table 5. Calculated Average score with Band- score.

Respondents	Reading		Writing		Talking		Listening		Average		Band-score	
	Assam	TN	Assam	TN	Assam	TN	Assam	TN	Assam	TN	Assam	TN
<25 %	24.7	11.3	22.7	13.3	16.7	10.7	22.7	12.0	21.7	11.82	2.5	1.5
26 – 50 %	20.7	22.3	26.0	20.7	22.0	16	16.7	13.3	21.35	18	2.5	2
51 – 75%	22.7	26	25.3	30.7	23.3	24.7	18.0	24.7	22.325	26.5	2.5	3
76 – 100%	32.0	39.3	26.0	35.3	38.0	48.7	42.7	50	34.675	43.3	3.5	4.5

(Noted: This source is based on table: 3)

The above table illustrates about calculated average score with band score. The highlighted or bolded areas reveals about band score. Both Tamil Nadu and Assam, below 25 per cent respondents have the lowest band score with 1.5 and 2.5 whereas 75 to 100 per cent respondents have highest band score is 4.5 and 3.5. Both the states, 51 to 75 per cent respondents have an average value of 2.5 in Assam and 3 in Tamil Nadu.

It is inferred from table no. 4 that the students of both Tiruchirappalli and Guwahati, may be from any medium of school do not fulfill the Band- Score criteria given from in table 3.

They still lack in their linguistic skill as they do not cross Band- score 5 which is the minimum eligibility criteria according to the standard band score of IELTS

V. MAJOR FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Major Findings:

- 50.7 per cent of the respondents from Tamil Nadu are from English medium against 100 per cent of the respondents from Assam. Also 49.3 per cent of the respondents from Tamil Nadu are from vernacular medium against Nil per cent of the respondents from Assam. (Table.2)
- 39.3 per cent of the respondents belong to the group 76-100 % in Tamil Nadu against 32 per cent in Assam prefer reading. 35.3 per cent of the respondents belong to the group 76-100 % in Tamil Nadu against 26 per cent in Assam prefer writing. 48.7 per cent of the respondents belong to the group 76-100 % in Tamil Nadu against 38 per cent in Assam prefer talking. 50 per cent of the respondents belong to the group 76-100 % in Tamil Nadu against 42.7 per cent in Assam prefer listening. (Table.3).
- Below 25 per cent respondents have the lowest band score with 1.5 and 2.5 whereas 75 to 100 per cent respondents have highest band score is 4.5 and 3.5. Both the states, 51 to 75 per cent respondents have an average value of 2.5 in Assam and 3 in Tamil Nadu. (Table.5).

CONCLUSION

This research study explored on the level of reading, writing, listening, and talking for MBA students. All of the students from Guwahati preferred English medium while Tiruchirappalli students preferred both English and Tamil medium. Perhaps, whichever medium they belonged to they lack in their communication skill as a whole. Both Guwahati and Tiruchirappalli students did not fulfill the standard IELTS Band score.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- All the students must be provided with communication skill training in all MBA colleges
- Both Assam and Tamil Nadu Higher Education department must pay attention to improve the level of reading, writing, listening and speaking by establishing skill laboratory in all colleges and providing regular training.

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