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Publication Type	Local Publication
Publisher (Journal name, issue no., page no etc.)	Yadanabon University Research Journal, Vol.1, No.1, pg 39-45
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Keywords	Interpersonal, Communication
Citation	
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## **Construction of Interpersonal Communication Skill Test**

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### **Abstract**

In this study, we aim to construct an Interpersonal Communication Skill Tests which is suitable for Myanmar cultural setting. The preliminary test included 34 items. Of 34 items, two items were rejected because of which were not suitable for Myanmar culture. Therefore 32 items were tested for item analysis. In this paper, the test was administered to 200 students of Yandanabon University. Their scores of each item were used to compute  $\chi^2$  for item analysis. The item analysis resulted in the new scale 30 items. The Pearson product moment correlation was computed to check the realability coefficient. Test-retest reliability coefficient was found to be .70. The present Interpersonal Communication Skill test consists of 30 items which were categorized into six effective communication skill related factors such as honesty, openness, positiveness, supportiveness, empathy and equality.

**Key words :** interpersonal, communcation

### **Introduction**

Understanding human activity means understanding the process of human communication. The unique activity that distinguishes them from other members in the animal kingdom is the ability to develop and utilize symbols. People's communication symbol systems are both verbal and nonverbal, and they transmit meaning and stimulate from those people who receive them. The response of others is not always what others' desire because listener's reactions to words are affected by their previous language experiences that are unique to that individual. This people's primary concern must be with the way that people react to what they say. People must concern themselves with the naure of the people they talk to and their feelings about that they say. They must put "symbolic interaction" at the center of their communication concern.

The term "communication" comes from the Latin word "communicare" is defined in many ways depending on the frames of reference of the various writing as follows.

- Communication is effective self-expresson.
- Communication is the exchange of messages in writing, speaking, or images.
- Communication is sharing information or providing entertainment through words or speech or other method.

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- Communication is the transfer of information from one person to another.
- Communication is the exchange of meanings between individuals using a common symbol system.
- Communication is the process where by one person transmit a message through a channel to another person, with some effect. (Wahlstrom. J. Billie; 1992)

Interpersonal communication is a transactional process of exchanging message and negotiating meaning to convey information and to establish and maintain relationship. The term interpersonal means between people. Interpersonal communication usually, but not always, occurs face to face. When face-to-face communication involves only two persons, we refer to it as dyadic communication. Interpersonal also suggests something about what is going on between the people involved (Wilson L. Genald, Hantz M. Alan & Hanna 3. Michael; 1992).

Effective interpersonal communication can be characterized by certain, well-defined features. The six characteristics are honesty, openness, empathy, positiveness, supportiveness, and equality.

**Honesty** implies freedom from deceit or fraud. The event is characterized by truthfulness, sincerity, and frankness. To be honest is to behave in a way that is genuine. We can achieve the goal of honesty in communication events if we understand that is, as all the other characteristics of effective interpersonal communication, includes both attitude and behaviour. Both the attitude, or pre-disposition to behave honesty, and the behaviour are entirely a matter of choice.

**Openness or self-disclosure** is defined as revealing one's thinking, feelings and beliefs to another. There is a good deal of literature to support the ideas that self-disclose is essential to interpersonal growth and intimacy and that self-disclosure and trust are reciprocal. Hence, trust is necessary precondition to self-disclosure and trust are reciprocal. Hence, trust is necessary precondition to self-discloser, and self-discloser is a necessary precondition to trust.

**Empathy** refers to supportive behaviour that is characterized by identification with the experience, feelings, and problems of others, and with the affirmations of the other's self-worth. Thus, empathy is reaction to someone that reflects recognition and identity with a similar emotional state. When empathetic people talk with each other, they make an effort to experience each other's point of view, and they look for opportunities to confirm each other.

**Positiveness** refers to behaviour that is sure and constructive, rather than to behaviour that is skeptical and doubtful. Positiveness emphasizes the hopeful side of things

by looking to the good in people and events. Positiveness affirms and builds; it does not attack or tear down.

Positiveness is both attitude and skill. The attitude is that other people are basically OK, just the way they are. The skill is in learning to reflect the attitude with verbal and nonverbal messages.

**Supportiveness** refers to behaviour characterized by description (rather than evaluation); problem orientation (rather than control); spontaneity (rather than strategy); empathy (as opposed to neutrality); equality (as opposed to superiority); and provisionalism (rather than certainty). Supportiveness aims to sustain a person to back him up, and to reinforce him. Supportiveness is behaviour that maintains a relationship rather than damages it.

Supportiveness is both attitude and skill. It is an attitude in the sense that you think in other-directed and supportive ways. It is skill because the behavioural choices do not seem to come naturally. We have to develop the habit of supportiveness.

**Equality** refers to showing respect for another person and minimizing differences in ability, status, power and intellectual ability. It is based on the idea that people are equally meritorious in their essential humanity. You may be bigger or smaller, older or younger, richer or poorer, but these things do not make you more or less human. You have equal humanity, and you are entitled as a right of birth to your dignity as a human being.

As a characteristic of effective interpersonal communication, equality is both attitude and skill. How you think about yourself and others is a matter of habit and of choice. So is how you treat other people. (Gibson W. James & Hanna S. Michael; 1992)

Effective interpersonal communication is important in this regard in several ways. Thoughts, facts, and opinions that go unheard and or are misunderstood may seriously reduce the logical soundness of the decision. Picture yourself in a meeting where your ideas and inputs seem to be ignored or not seriously considered by others. Effective interpersonal communication is also very important in ensuring the acceptance of certain decisions in another way. (Kolb A. David, Rubin M. Irwin & McL Ntyre M. James; 1971).

Effective interpersonal communication skills are essential to building the trust necessary to bring out these concerns and deal with them effectively.

Spouses who claim that they have a communication problem, children who feel their parents "Just don't understand them", bosses who cannot understand why their performance evaluations of subordinates seem to have no impact the situations where effective interpersonal communication is important are infinite.

Therefore the purpose of this paper is to construct as Interpersonal Communication Skill Test.

### **Writing the Items and Planning the Test**

Firstly, the original 34 items were studied and translated into Myanmar. And then, several Myanmar people were asked to answer whether they can easily understand the meaning of each translated item or not. Of 34 items, two items were rejected because they were not suitable for Myanmar culture. Therefore 32 items were tested for item analysis.

These items were organized and printed in a booklet form as a preliminary test. Each item has five multiple choice questions, A, B, C, D and E. The respondent has to choose either A or B or C or D or E.

## **Method**

### **Item Analysis**

The methods of extreme groups can be applied to compute a very simple measurement of the discriminating power of a test item. If a test is given to a large group of people, the discriminating power of an item can be measured by comparing the number of people with high test scores who answered that item correctly with the number of people with low scores who answered the same item correctly. If a particular item is doing a good job of discriminating between those who score high and those who score low, more people in the top-scoring group will have answered the item correctly.

### **Subjects**

The subjects were used a group of 200 students of Yadanabon University.

### **Procedure**

The preliminary test which included 32 items was given to the group of 200 subjects. Before the test was administered to the subjects the test instruction was read to them to have uniformity of procedure. Next the responses of the subjects were scored to obtain the score of these 200 subjects arranged in decreasing order. Of the total scores of the 200 subjects, the upper 27 percent was taken as high scoring group and lower 27 percent as low scoring group to compute an item scale for correlation for each item. In the correlation of item-scale, the Chi-square method was used. Chi-square value and significant level of each item are shown in Table (1).

**Table (1) Showing the items with chi-square values significant at 0.01, 0.05 and .005 level.**

Items No.	Description of items	$\chi^2$ values	Level of significance
1.	ကျွန်ုပ်တစ်ခုခုကို ရှင်းပြတိုင်း နားထောင်သူများကို ကျွန်ုပ်ပြောတာ နားလည်ပါသလားဟု မေးတတ်သည်။	10.88	0.05
2.	ကျွန်တော် တစ်စုံတစ်ခုကို ပြောလိုက်တိုင်း လူတွေက ကျွန်တော် ဘာပြောတယ်ဆိုတာ နားမလည်ကြပါ။	11.74	0.05
3.	ကျွန်ုပ်သည် ကျွန်ုပ်၏ အယူအဆများကို ပေါ်လွင် ပြတ်သားအောင် ရှင်းပြနိုင်သည်။	10.30	0.05
4.	တခြားသူများနှင့် သဘောချင်း မကိုက်ညီသော ကျွန်ုပ်၏ ထင်မြင်ချက်များကို ဖော်ပြရန် ခက်ခဲသည်။	10.82	0.05
5.	ကျွန်ုပ်အား မေးသော မေးခွန်းတစ်ခုကို နားမလည်လျှင် ၎င်းကို ထပ်ရှင်းပြပေးပါရန် တောင်းဆိုသည်။	12.09	0.05
6.	သူတို့ ဘာရည်ရွယ်ပြီး ပြောနေတယ်ဆိုတဲ့ အကြောင်း ကျွန်ုပ် နားမလည်ပါ။	11.31	0.05
7.	အရာရာကို တခြားသူတစ်ဦး၏ ရှုဒေါင့်မှ မြင်ရန် လွယ်ကူပါသည်။	15.58	0.01
8.	ကျွန်ုပ်စိတ်က တခြားရောက်သည့်တိုင် ပြောစကားများကို ကျွန်ုပ် နားထောင်ဟန်ဆောင်လေ့ ရှိသည်။	9.58	0.05
9.	ကျွန်ုပ်သည် ကျွန်ုပ်၏ ခံစားမှုများကို ဖော်ပြရန် ခက်ခဲသည်။	11.54	0.05
10.	ကျွန်ုပ်သည် တခြားသူများနှင့် စကားပြောနေစဉ် ထိုသူအား ကြည့်လိုက်ခြင်းဖြင့် သူတို့၏ စိတ်ကို သိနိုင်သည်။	14.04	0.01
11.	ကျွန်ုပ်ကို သူဘာပြောမည်ဆိုတာသိလျှင် သူ့စကားကို ဆုံးအောင် နားမထောင်ဘဲ စကားကို ဖြတ်ပြောတတ်သည်။	19.74	0.005
12.	ကျွန် ပြောစရာရှိတာကိုပဲ အာရုံစိုက်လွန်းတော့ နားထောင်သူများ၏ အရိပ်အကွင်းနှင့် တုန်ပြန်မှုများကို သတိထားမိခြင်း မရှိပါ။	17.42	0.005
13.	ကျွန်ုပ်၏ အားနည်းချက်များသည် တခြားသူများနှင့် မဆိုင်သော ကြောင့် ဖုံးကွယ်ထားလေ့ ရှိသည်။	13.06	0.001
14.	ကျွန်ုပ် အမှားပြုလုပ်မိသည့်အခါတိုင်း ဝန်ခံလေ့ ရှိသည်။	16.02	0.005
15.	ကျွန်ုပ်ကို တခြားသူများ နားလည်သွားစေရန်အတွက် ကျွန်ုပ် ခံစားချက် ယုံကြည်ချက်များကို တခြားသူများအား ပြောတတ်သည်။	10.24	0.05
16.	ကျွန်ုပ်၏ ခံစားချက်များကို ပြောပြရန် ခဲယဉ်းသည်။	11.86	0.05
17.	ကျွန်ုပ်ကြောင့် တစ်စုံတစ်ဦး စိတ်ထိခိုက်စရာ ဖြစ်သည်ဟု ထင်ပါက တောင်းပန်တတ်သည်။	15.58	0.005

Items No.	Description of items	$\chi^2$ values	Level of significance
18.	ကျွန်ုပ်ကို ပြစ်တင်ဝေဖန်ခံနေရပါက ကာကွယ် ပြောဆိုခြင်း လုပ်တတ်သည်။	11.14	0.05
19.	ကျွန်ုပ် စိတ်ဆိုးနေသောအချိန်တွင် တစ်စုံတစ်ယောက်က စိတ်ဆိုး နေသလားဟု မေးမြန်း ခံရလျှင် ဟုတ်မှန်ကြောင်း ဝန်ခံတတ်သည်။	21.04	0.005
20.	ကျွန်ုပ် စကားပြောလျှင် အဆုံးသတ် နိဂုံးဆီသို့ မြန်မြန် ရောက်အောင် ပြောလေ့ ရှိသည်။	12.2	0.05
21.	ကျွန်ုပ်သည် တစ်စုံတစ်ယောက်နှင့် စကားပြောဆိုသောအခါ သူ့နေရာမှ နေ၍ နားလည်နိုင်အောင် ကြိုးစားသည်။	17.48	0.005
22.	တစ်စုံတစ်ယောက် စကားပြောစဉ် ခက်ခဲနေပါက ကျွန်ုပ်သည် ထိုသူပြောချင်သည့် စကားကို ညွှန်းဆို ကူညီလေ့ရှိသည်။	18.4	0.005
23.	ကျွန်ုပ် စကားပြောရာတွင် အသံကျယ်ကျယ်လာသည်ဟု လူတွေက ပြောကြသော်လည်း လုံးဝသတိမထားမိပါ။	15.96	0.005
24.	စကားပြောလျှင် ကျွန်ုပ်ကို လူတွေက ကြောက်နေဟန် ရှိသည်။	16.6	0.005
25.	တခြားသူများပြောသည့် အကြောင်းအရာများကို ကျွန်ုပ်သည် စိတ်ဝင်စားခြင်း ရှိတတ်သည်။	10.56	0.05
26.	အထူးသဖြင့် ကျွန်ုပ်လောက် အတွေ့အကြုံ မရှိသော သူများနှင့် သဘောထားခြင်း မတိုက်ဆိုင်ပါက စိတ်အနှောက်အယှက် ဖြစ်သည်။	1.6	No Significant
27.	ကျွန်ုပ်သည် လူတစ်ယောက်ကို ဝေဖန်ရမည်ဆိုပါက ထိုသူအား ပုဂ္ဂိုလ်ရေးထက် သူ၏ လုပ်ရပ်နှင့် အပြုအမူကိုသာ ရည်ညွှန်းမှုမျိုး လုပ်တတ်သည်။	15.88	0.005
28.	ကျွန်ုပ်သည် ကျွန်ုပ်၏ စိတ်လှုပ်ရှားခံစားမှုများကို ထိန်းချုပ်ပြီး ပြဿနာများကို ဖြေရှင်းနိုင်သည်။	10.8	0.05
29.	စကားပြောဆိုကြရာတွင် ကျွန်ုပ်အား ပြောလိုက်သော အကြောင်းအရာ အတွက် ကျွန်ုပ်၏ စိတ်လှုပ်ရှား တုန်ပြန်မှုများကို သတိပြုမိခြင်း ရှိသည်။	27.19	0.005
30.	ကျွန်ုပ်သည် စိတ်ထိပါးလွယ်မည့် အကြောင်းအရာများကို ဆွေးနွေးရန် ဝန်လေးတတ်သည်။	11.74	0.05
31.	ကျွန်ုပ်ကို နားကျည်းအောင် လုပ်ထားခဲ့သည့်သူများကို ရင်ဆိုင် နိုင်စွမ်း ရှိသည်။	14.34	0.01
32.	ကျွန်ုပ်အပေါ် စိတ်ဆိုးသွားမည်ကို စိုးရိမ်သောကြောင့် တခြားသူများ နှင့် သဘောထားခြင်း မတိုက်ဆိုင်ကြောင်း ပြောရန် ရှောင်ရှားတတ် သည်။	2.63	No Significant

## Results and Discussion

This analysis leads with 30 items out of 32 items for the preliminary test of 32 items. From the preliminary test, 2 items, item number 26 and 32 were not significant either at 0.01 or 0.05 level. Therefore these two items were rejected.

### Determination of Test Reliability

A good scale or a good test must have reliability. Reliability refers to the consistency of scores obtained by the same persons when reexamined with the same test on different occasions, or with different sets of equivalent items.

There are several methods of reliability: test-retest reliability, alternate form reliability, Kuder-Richardson reliability, Split-half reliability and scorer reliability. Among the several methods to find test reliability, the present study utilized the test-retest reliability method.

### Method

#### Participants

Research participants who helped me in test-retest reliability analysis of this study were 150 undergraduate students from Yandanabon University.

#### Procedure

In order to examine test-retest reliability of the interpersonal communication skill test, the test was administered to the participants twice under the same condition. A time interval between the test and retest was two weeks. And then the response of the participants were scored for both occasions and reliability coefficient was computed by using a Pearson Product-Moment correlation procedure.

## Results and Discussion

The reliability coefficient was found to be .70 for the interpersonal communication skill test.

Description of Test	Value for (r)
Reliability of Inerpersonal Communication Skill Test	.70



The result shows that the scale is a considerably stable scale. So, it may be said that the Interpersonal Communication Skill test is a relatively stable scale.

### Conclusion

The present study was the constructions of the Interpersonal Communication Skill Test. In conducting the item analysis, the original ICST was translated and adapted to Myanmar context. But two items were not suitable for Myanmar culture. Therefore, these items were rejected. Next, the items were subjected to item analysis based on items-scale correlations. This item analysis resulted in a new scale of 30 items. The next procedure was to determine reliability coefficient of ICST. In this study, test-retest reliability method was used. It was found to be .70 and it can be said that the Interpersonal Communication Skill Test is a considerable stable scale.

However, the present study needs to perform the next steps of validation and standardization for the scale. When it is totally completed, it will be a useful tool to measure communication skill for various purposes in social setting.

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