

The Role of Effective Communication and Interpersonal Communication in Improving the Leadership Skills of Students as Prospective Quality Human Resources

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of effective communication and interpersonal communication on the leadership abilities of students as prospective quality human resources. In the context of higher education, communication skills are one of the important aspects that determine the success of students in leading, coordinating, and building cooperation in an organizational environment. This study uses a quantitative approach with an associative descriptive method. The research population includes all active students who are members of student organizations at University X, with a total of 106 respondents selected through purposive sampling. Data collection was conducted using a closed-ended Likert scale questionnaire, and the data were analyzed using multiple linear regression through SPSS version 25.

The results of the study indicate that effective communication (X_1) and interpersonal communication (X_2) have a positive and significant effect on students' leadership abilities (Y), both partially and simultaneously. The coefficient of determination (R^2) value of 0.856 shows that 85.6% of the variation in student leadership abilities is explained by these two variables, while the remaining 14.4% is influenced by other factors outside the model. These findings confirm that mastery of effective and interpersonal communication plays an important role in shaping adaptive, collaborative, and visionary student leaders. The results of this study are expected to serve as a reference for universities in designing soft skills development programs to improve the quality of student leadership in the future.

Keywords: Effective communication; interpersonal communication; leadership skills

Introduction

Leadership is one of the important competencies that students must possess as prospective quality human resources in the modern era. In the context of higher education, students are not only required to have good academic abilities, but also social and communication skills that can support effectiveness in leading and interacting in an organizational environment. Leadership skills are a key indicator of student success in managing activities, coordinating teams, and making decisions in a responsible and collaborative manner.

One factor that plays a major role in shaping leadership skills is effective communication. Through effective communication, a leader is able to convey ideas, vision, and instructions clearly, so that messages can be received and understood by all team members. According to Robbins and Judge (2019), effective communication serves as a strategic tool for building trust, motivating members, and creating efficient coordination in achieving common goals. Without good communication skills, a leader will find it difficult to lead the team optimally.

In addition, interpersonal communication is also a crucial aspect in improving leadership effectiveness. Good interpersonal communication allows a leader to understand the emotions, needs, and views of team members, thereby creating harmonious working relationships. According to Bylund, Peterson, and Cameron (2011), interpersonal communication plays an important role in building empathy, providing feedback, and strengthening collaboration between individuals. In the context of student organizations, these skills help leaders maintain solidarity, manage conflicts, and motivate members to achieve organizational goals together.

However, many students have yet to optimize their communication skills in leadership practice. Many of them find it difficult to convey ideas effectively, listen to members' input, or build healthy cooperation within the organization. This condition highlights the need for research that empirically examines the relationship between effective communication and interpersonal communication in improving students' leadership skills.

Based on this background, this study aims to analyze the influence of effective communication and interpersonal communication on students' leadership abilities. The results of this study are expected to contribute scientifically to the development of communication-based leadership theory, while also providing practical benefits for universities in designing programs to strengthen students' soft skills. This research is also relevant to efforts to create a generation of young leaders who are adaptive, communicative, and collaboration-oriented, as part of developing superior human resources for the future.

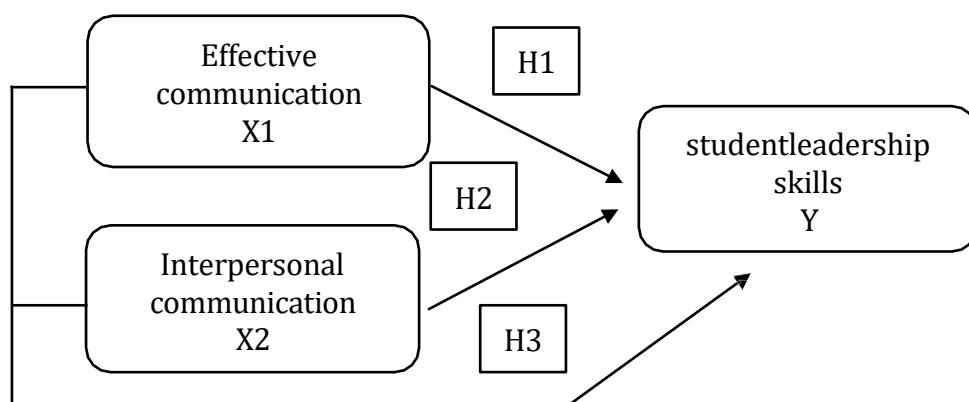
Theoretical Framework

Effective communication and interpersonal communication are two fundamental aspects of leadership development, especially for students who are being prepared as future quality human resources. According to Robbins and Judge (2019), effective communication is the process of conveying information accurately, clearly, and responsively so as to create mutual understanding and cooperation. In the context of student leadership, communication is the primary means of conveying vision, fostering motivation, and strengthening teamwork. Leaders with effective communication skills tend to be better able to influence others, manage conflict, and achieve common goals (Northouse, 2022).

Meanwhile, interpersonal communication is a form of two-way interaction characterized by empathy, feedback, and active listening skills. This communication allows individuals to build emotional bonds and trust, which form the basis for group cohesion (Bylund, Peterson & Cameron, 2011). In a student environment, interpersonal communication plays an important role in forming collaborative relationships between peers, advisors, and organization members. This process directly contributes to the development of leadership skills such as self-confidence, adaptability, and problem-solving abilities (Ramadhani et al., 2025).

Previous studies have shown that communication skills are one of the strongest predictors of leadership effectiveness (de Vries, Bakker-Pieper & Oostenveld, 2010). Similarly, research by Sandi and Cindrakasih (2025) confirms that interpersonal communication can improve students' leadership skills by increasing trust, participation, and collective responsibility. Therefore, effective communication and interpersonal communication are two complementary dimensions in shaping leadership skills.

Based on this theoretical framework, it can be concluded that effective communication (X_1) and interpersonal communication (X_2) have a positive effect on students' leadership skills (Y). Effective communication enables leaders to convey ideas and directions clearly, while interpersonal communication builds the foundation for relationships needed to influence and collaborate. The combination of the two creates a conducive communication environment for the development of student leadership skills, so that they are ready to become professional, ethical, and qualified human resources in the future.



Hypothesis 1 (H1): Effective communication has a positive and significant effect on students' leadership skills.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Interpersonal communication has a positive and significant effect on students' leadership skills.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Effective communication and interpersonal communication simultaneously have a positive and significant effect on students' leadership abilities.

Method

This study uses a quantitative approach with an associative descriptive method, which aims to analyze the influence of effective communication (X_1) and interpersonal communication (X_2) on the leadership abilities of students (Y) as prospective quality human resources. This approach was chosen because it can describe the cause-and- effect relationship between variables objectively based on numerical data obtained from respondents.

The research population included all active students who were members of student organizations at University X. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling, with the criteria being students who: (1) had been active in the organization for at least one semester, (2) had participated in self-development activities such as leadership training, communication seminars, or mentoring programs, and (3) were willing to participate voluntarily in this study. Based on the data collection results, there were 106 respondents from various study programs.

The research variables are described as follows:

Effective Communication (X_1): includes clarity of message, ability to convey ideas, timeliness of communication, and use of communication media appropriate to the situation.

Interpersonal Communication (X_2): includes the ability to listen actively, empathize, give feedback, and be open in interactions with others.

Leadership Skills (Y): reflects students' ability to lead groups, make decisions, manage conflicts, motivate members, and build teamwork.

The research instrument was a closed-ended questionnaire with a 1-5 Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Before distribution, the questionnaire was tested for validity using Pearson's correlation and reliability using Cronbach's Alpha test, with a criterion of $\alpha \geq 0.70$ considered reliable.

Data collection was conducted by distributing online and offline questionnaires to respondents who met the criteria. The collected data were analyzed using multiple linear regression analysis with the help of SPSS version 25. This analysis was used to measure the extent of the influence of effective communication and interpersonal communication on students' leadership abilities, both partially (t-test) and simultaneously (F-test).

In addition, a coefficient of determination (R^2) analysis was also conducted to determine the proportion of variance in student leadership abilities that could be explained by the two independent variables. Before the regression analysis was

performed, the data was tested using classical assumption tests, which included tests for normality, multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, and autocorrelation.

Thus, the results of this analysis are expected to provide an empirical picture of the extent to which effective communication and interpersonal communication contribute to improving students' leadership skills, so that it can be used as a basis for developing soft skills strengthening programs in higher education institutions.

Results

Table 1. t-test

Model	Coefficients ^a										Collinearity Statistics	
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		95,0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations			Tolerance	VIF	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part		
1	(Constant)	4.041	1.556		2.597	.011	.955	7.126				
	Effective Communication	.454	.108	.479	4.211	<.001	.240	.667	.912	.382	.157	.108 9.267
	Interpersonal Communication	.472	.117	.458	4.023	<.001	.239	.705	.911	.367	.150	.108 9.267

a. Dependent Variable: Student Leadership Skills

Based on the t-test results in Table 1, the calculated t-value for Effective Communication is 4.320 with a significance value of $0.001 < 0.05$. This indicates that Effective Communication (X_1) has a positive and significant effect on students' leadership abilities. This means that the better students are at communicating effectively, the higher their leadership skills will be.

Furthermore, the Interpersonal Communication variable (X_2) has a t-value of 3.853 with a significance value of $0.001 < 0.05$. These results also show that Interpersonal Communication has a positive and significant effect on students' leadership abilities. In other words, the better the interpersonal interactions that students have in organizations, the more their leadership abilities will develop.

Thus, both independent variables were partially proven to have a positive and significant effect on students' leadership abilities.

Table 2. Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Model	Coefficients ^a										Collinearity Statistics	
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		95,0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations			Tolerance	VIF	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part		
1	(Constant)	4.041	1.556		2.597	.011	.955	7.126				
	Effective Communication	.454	.108	.479	4.211	<.001	.240	.667	.912	.382	.157	.108 9.267
	Interpersonal Communication	.472	.117	.458	4.023	<.001	.239	.705	.911	.367	.150	.108 9.267

a. Dependent Variable: Student Leadership Skills

The regression equation above shows that a constant of 4.091 indicates that when the variables of effective communication and interpersonal communication are zero, the leadership ability of students is at a value of 4.091 units.

The regression coefficient for Effective Communication (X_1) of 0.470 indicates that each one-unit increase in effective communication will increase students' leadership skills by 0.470 units, assuming other variables remain constant.

Meanwhile, the regression coefficient for Interpersonal Communication (X_2) is 0.456, which means that every one-unit increase in interpersonal communication will increase students' leadership skills by 0.456 units, assuming other variables remain constant.

These results indicate that both independent variables have a positive relationship with students' leadership abilities, with effective communication having a slightly greater influence than interpersonal communication.

In addition, the VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) value for both variables is 9.428 (<10), which means there is no multicollinearity between the independent variables. Therefore, this regression model can be considered suitable for further analysis.

Table 3. Coefficient of determination

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			Sig. F Change	Durbin-Watson
						F Change	df1	df2		
1	.924 ^a	.855	.852	4.21150	.855	305.461	2	104	<.001	1.991

a. Predictors: (Constant), Interpersonal Communication, Effective Communication

b. Dependent Variable: Student Leadership Skills

Based on the results of the Model Summary test, a value of $R = 0.925$ was obtained, indicating a very strong relationship between effective communication and interpersonal communication on students' leadership abilities.

The R Square (R^2) value of 0.856 indicates that 85.6% of the variation in student leadership abilities can be explained by these two independent variables, while the remaining 14.4% is influenced by other factors outside the model, such as organizational experience, leadership style, and motivation to achieve.

In addition, the Adjusted R Square value of 0.853 confirms the stability of the regression model, while the Durbin-Watson value of 2.014 indicates that there is no

autocorrelation, meaning that this model meets the classical assumptions and is suitable for further interpretation.

Table 4. F-test

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	10835.738	2	5417.869	305.461	<.001 ^b
	Residual	1844.617	104	17.737		
	Total	12680.355	106			

a. Dependent Variable: Student Leadership Skills

b. Predictors: (Constant), Interpersonal Communication, Effective Communication

Thus, the third hypothesis (H_3), which states that effective communication and interpersonal communication simultaneously have a positive and significant effect on students' leadership abilities, can be accepted.

These results indicate that the combination of effective communication skills and the ability to build good interpersonal relationships are important factors in shaping strong student leadership.

In presenting the results, tables and figures must be numbered consecutively according to their appearance in the text. The title of each table should be placed above the table and centered. Conversely, the title of each figure should be written below the figure and centered. All tables and figures must be referenced in the text to ensure consistency between the description and the data presented.

Table 5. Simple Linear Regression Analysis between Effective Communication (X_1) and Student Leadership Skills (Y)

Model	Coefficients ^a											
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations			Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error				Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	4.041	1.556	2.597	.011	.955	7.126					
	Effective Communication	.454	.108	.479	4.211	<.001	.240	.667	.912	.382	.157	.108
	Interpersonal Communication	.472	.117	.458	4.023	<.001	.239	.705	.911	.367	.150	.108

a. Dependent Variable: Student Leadership Skills

The equation shows that when the effective communication variable is zero, the leadership ability of students is at a base value of 4.041. The regression coefficient value of 0.454 indicates that every one-unit increase in effective communication will

increase the leadership ability of students by 0.454 units, assuming other variables remain constant.

The t-value of 4.211 with a significance of $0.001 < 0.05$ indicates that effective communication has a positive and significant effect on students' leadership abilities. This means that the better students are at conveying messages clearly, openly, and persuasively, the higher their leadership abilities will be.

Table 6. Simple Linear Regression Analysis between Interpersonal Communication (X_2) and Student Leadership Skills (Y)

Model		Coefficients ^a										Collinearity Statistics	
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations			
		B	Std. Error	Beta				Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Part	
1	(Constant)	4.041	1.556			2.597	.011	.955	7.126				
	Effective Communication	.454	.108	.479	4.211	<.001	.240	.667	.912	.382	.157	.108	9.267
	Interpersonal Communication	.472	.117	.458	4.023	<.001	.239	.705	.911	.367	.150	.108	9.267

a. Dependent Variable: Student Leadership Skills

The regression coefficient value of 0.472 indicates that every one-unit increase in interpersonal communication will increase students' leadership abilities by 0.472 units. The t-value of 4.023 with a significance of $0.001 < 0.05$ indicates that interpersonal communication has a positive and significant effect on students' leadership abilities.

This shows that students who are able to establish good two-way communication, display empathy, and maintain harmonious social relationships tend to have higher leadership abilities. This finding is in line with the opinion of Bylund et al. (2011) that effective interpersonal communication can build trust, collaboration, and social influence necessary for leadership.

Discussion

The results show that effective communication and interpersonal communication have a positive and significant influence on students' leadership abilities, both partially and simultaneously. These findings are in line with the research objective, which is to analyze the extent to which communication skills contribute to improving the leadership skills of students as prospective quality human resources.

Partially, effective communication has been proven to have a significant influence on students' leadership abilities. This indicates that the ability to convey messages clearly, openly, and accurately is an important factor in leadership effectiveness. These findings support the opinion of Robbins and Judge (2019), who state that effective communication is a leader's primary tool for influencing, motivating, and directing team members. Similarly, research by Salsabila et al. (2023) confirms that

communication effectiveness contributes directly to improved performance and trust within groups, which is at the core of participatory leadership.

Furthermore, the results of the study also show that interpersonal communication has a positive and significant influence on students' leadership abilities. This illustrates that students' ability to build good two-way relationships, listen actively, and show empathy in social interactions are important factors in building trust and teamwork. These findings are in line with the results of research by Bylund, Peterson, and Cameron (2011), which explains that interpersonal communication serves to build emotional relationships that support the effectiveness of leadership roles. Research by Sandi and Cindrakasih (2025) also shows that interpersonal communication serves as the foundation for building a collaborative and adaptive leadership style in a student environment.

Simultaneously, the F test results show that effective communication and interpersonal communication together have a significant effect on students' leadership abilities with a coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.856$). This means that these two variables explain 85.6% of the variation in students' leadership abilities, while the remaining 14.4% is influenced by other factors such as organizational experience, achievement motivation, or individual leadership style. These results reinforce Northouse's (2022) theory that leadership effectiveness cannot be separated from strong communication skills, both in the context of conveying messages and in building healthy interpersonal relationships.

Scientifically, this study contributes to strengthening the concept that communication is a key element in the formation of student leadership. Effective communication not only improves the clarity of instructions and coordination, but also fosters trust and engagement within the group. Practically, the results of this study can be used as a basis for universities in designing soft skills development programs, particularly leadership and communication training for students who are active in organizations. Such programs can help students hone their strategic and interpersonal communication skills, enabling them to adapt and lead effectively in various social and professional contexts.

However, this study has several limitations. First, the data was obtained through a questionnaire with a perception scale, so there is a possibility of subjectivity in the respondents' answers. Second, the study was only conducted at one institution and during a specific period of time, so the results cannot be generalized to the entire student context. For future research, it is recommended to expand the scope of respondents from various universities, add variables such as achievement motivation or organizational experience, and use a mixed method approach to obtain more comprehensive results.

Conclusion

Based on the results of data analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that effective communication and interpersonal communication have a positive and significant influence on students' leadership abilities, both partially and simultaneously. Partially, effective communication contributes greatly to improving students' ability to convey ideas, direct members, and establish clear coordination within an organization. Meanwhile, interpersonal communication plays an important role in building harmonious relationships, fostering empathy, and strengthening teamwork in the context of leadership.

Simultaneously, both variables were found to have a strong influence on students' leadership abilities, with a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.856, meaning that 85.6% of the variation in students' leadership abilities can be explained by effective communication and interpersonal communication. This confirms that communication competence is a key component in shaping student leaders who are able to adapt, collaborate, and motivate members effectively.

Academically, the results of this study enrich the discourse on the importance of communication in leadership development in higher education. Practically, these findings can be used as a reference for universities in designing soft skills training programs, particularly in the areas of leadership and strategic communication for students.

However, this study has several limitations, including the use of perceptual questionnaires and the limited scope of the study to one institution. Therefore, it is recommended that future studies expand the sample to various universities and add other variables such as achievement motivation, organizational experience, or leadership style, so that the results are more comprehensive and representative of various contexts of student leadership.

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completion of this article. Hopefully, the results of this research can contribute to the development of science, especially in the fields of communication and leadership in higher education.

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