

THE INFLUENCE OF VIRTUAL COMMUNICATION TOWARDS
RESPONSIVENESS IN MANUFACTURING COMMUNITY

By

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ABSTRACT

With the rapid development of Information Communication Technology, many types of virtual communication channels are available to the employees. Email has been commonly used by the manufacturing community for virtual communication due to disparity of locations and time constraint. Responsive delivery of job with short cycle time requires zero waste information flow. Therefore, effective communication is essential for time-based job performance to keep a manufacturing company competitive. Additionally, effective communication has the mediating influence in the relationship between job satisfaction and behavioural intentions towards job accomplishment. Therefore, the relationship of communication satisfaction and job performance is crucial and need to be investigated. This experimental study was conducted to examine the responsiveness of job performance induced with time pressure by using email communication. Results show that email is a moderately effective communication channel for assigning job to a group of virtual workers, in some cases for repetitive and organized jobs that could not be completed within 24 hours. Quantitative analysis was also conducted to measure satisfaction level of communication using email as perceived by virtual workers towards performance of completed job. The relatively high in perceived communication satisfaction showed that email is effective in collaborative aspects of work. The communication satisfaction factors of communication climate and relation with superior could be enhanced by the organization in order to increase employees' job performance.

Keyword: virtual communication, email, responsiveness, job performance, communication satisfaction.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction to the Study

Statistically reported by Department of Statistics Malaysia, there are total 1,020,265 employees engaged in the Manufacturing sector in December 2012. As compare to December 2011, the number of employees increased by 16,339 persons year-on-year basis. Based on the Malaysia Standard Industrial Classification 2000, there are total of 197 industries in the Manufacturing Sector. The three major contributors of the manufacturing groups to the gross output in 2009 were manufacture of refined petroleum products; manufacture of vegetable and animal oils and fats; and manufacture of electronic components and boards. Collectively, these three groups accounted for more than one-third of the gross output. However, the manufacture of electronic components and boards industry accounted for the highest number of employees totaling 183,579 persons or 10.8% in 2009.

According to SME Corp Malaysia, the annual sales turnover or number of full-time employees classified the small and medium enterprise in each of the respective sectors. In manufacturing, manufacturing-related services and agro-based industries classify micro-enterprise has less than 5 employees whereas for small and medium enterprise having the employees between 5 to 50, and 51 to 150 respectively. Meanwhile, a medium or large Malaysian company is defined as a business entity with an annual sales turnover of more than RM10 million or more than 50 full-time employees. There were a total of 30,607 companies in Malaysia as reported in 2009. Statistically, 24,992 companies employed 50 employees and below which accounted for 81.6%, whereas their contribution to gross output and total employment was only 6.1% and 15.4% respectively. On the contrary, the only 2,169 large companies with 151 workers and above contributed to 77.4% of gross output and 66.9% of total employment respectively.

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