



Analysis of Effective Communication Between Interview Officers and Passport Applicants

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine effective communication and the obstacles to building effective communication between interview officers and passport applicants at the Makassar Class I Special Immigration Office. It used a qualitative approach and involved 10 informants, consisting of 6 passport applicants and 4 photo and interview officers. Data were collected through interviews and analyzed using data reduction, data display, triangulation, and conclusion drawing and verification. The findings show that effective communication during the passport interview process was reflected in several practices. Officers delivered questions clearly, in detail, coherently, and in a friendly manner. They were also highly informative and applied the 5S principles, namely smile, greet, say hello, polite, and courteous. In addition, officers explained the legal basis and passport processing procedures according to standard operating procedures, while also educating applicants about passport storage and its functions. Effective communication was further seen in the provision of clear explanations regarding the basis of interview questions and in the officers' ability to build understanding, influence emotions positively, and encourage good attitudes through clear, simple, and friendly language. The study also found several obstacles to effective communication, including applicants who were not accustomed to speaking Indonesian, differences in regional languages, limited public knowledge about immigration, the use of formal and unfamiliar immigration terms, insufficient information about passport requirements, differences in applicant backgrounds, and limited understanding of the passport application process.

Introduction

Human Resources (HR) are an essential element in determining the success of an organization. Planned and sustainable human resource development is an absolute necessity, particularly for the future of an organization. To achieve this, human resource management is required, with activities that begin from HR planning, recruitment and selection, orientation, education and training, performance appraisal, promotion, transfer, provision of rewards or compensation, leadership, and communication. The quality of human resources (HR) is one of the key factors in improving employee performance in an organization or institution. Therefore, it is necessary to have human resources with high competence, as skills and competencies support the improvement of employee performance. Employee performance is the overall result or level of achievement of an individual during a certain period in carrying out their tasks, compared with various possibilities, such as work standards, targets, or criteria that have been determined in advance and agreed upon collectively (Vuong & Nguyen, 2022; Susanto et al., 2023; Rivaldo & Nabella, 2023). When managing human resources in a company or organization, one must

be truly committed to achieving the organization's goals. Hence, experience, discipline, and responsibility for the work performed are essential to producing quality human resources. To achieve all company objectives, having qualified human resources in their fields is very important. According to Hajiali et al. (2022), human resource management is a design of planning, organizing, and supervising various matters related to a series of activities directed toward achieving company goals. To reach these objectives, an important aspect to implement is information and communication among employees (Atmaja et al., 2022; Oktafiany et al., 2023). Relevant and accurate information and communication are needed to achieve company goals. Iskanto (2022) state that the circulation of news, data, and facts between the sender and receiver of information produces useful information for company activities. Behind this circulation of information, there are challenges faced by both parties in ensuring that the message can be well understood and properly conveyed to the recipient (Sutaguna et al., 2023; Nurbaeti, 2022; Susilowati et al., 2023).

In daily work activities, employees interact with each other. Communication also occurs between employees and their superiors, both verbally and non-verbally. The exchange of ideas or discussions is also carried out among employees as a way to obtain clearer information. Communication is considered successful if it is conducted effectively. Effective communication occurs when the communicator can deliver the intended message accurately to the receiver, and the message is fully understood. If the message is conveyed correctly, the receiver will respond as expected by the communicator. Employee performance is influenced by several factors, including compensation, work environment, organizational culture, leadership and work motivation, work discipline, job satisfaction, communication, and other factors (Zuleha et al., 2024; Rachmad et al., 2023). Among these factors, communication plays a significant role in influencing employee performance, as it is a key driver of successful organizational performance. A company can achieve good results if leaders can communicate effectively and mobilize their subordinates.

Communication is a tool used in daily life and serves as a medium for exchanging information between two or more people commonly known as the exchange of ideas or messages delivered to others so that the information can influence attitudes and behaviors and be well understood (Meylani, 2024; Lewar et al., 2023; Ohara, 2023). Communication serves two main functions: social and decision-making. The social function aims to provide enjoyment, show relationships, and build and maintain interactions with others. Meanwhile, the decision-making function is to determine whether or not to act upon something at a particular time. Good communication delivery occurs when the recipient can fully understand the message, which also helps avoid miscommunication that may lead to misunderstandings. Effective communication means that both the communicator and the receiver share the same understanding and perspective of the message. According to Xie et al. (2024), communication within organizations also serves as a medium of interaction between individuals in a company. Organizational communication becomes a means of exchanging opinions or information among members (Obermayer et al., 2022). According Lin (2022) state that communication can be effective if five aspects are considered: clarity, accuracy, context, flow, and culture. Clarity: communication should be clear and easily understood by the receiver, using simple language, structured sentences, and avoiding ambiguity or confusing jargon. Accuracy: communication should be precise and relevant to the context discussed, delivered accurately, and aligned with the needs, expectations, and knowledge of the receiver. Misinterpretations and misuse of information can be avoided through accurate communication (Koch & Denner, 2022; Ausat, 2023; Sivakumar et al., 2023). Context: this is an important aspect of communication, referring to the environment or situation in which communication occurs (Hadiyanto et al., 2025). A good understanding of context enables the communicator to choose the right communication

method and style. Context includes factors such as culture, background, values, and social norms that influence how messages are delivered and received. Flow: effective communication involves a good flow between the communicator and the receiver. A good flow means the message is delivered in an orderly, structured, and logical manner. Using a systematic approach and organizing the message properly helps ensure effective communication. Finally, culture: cultural aspects play an important role in communication. Awareness of cultural diversity and differences in communication styles helps prevent misunderstandings and conflicts. Cultural sensitivity and the ability to adapt communication styles according to the receiver's culture are key to effective communication. By paying attention to and applying these aspects, communication can be carried out more effectively, enhancing understanding and success in interactions (Siregar, 2025; Alam & Mohanty, 2022; Darmawan, 2023; Alzboun et al., 2024; Muthmainnah et al., 2022). This is particularly important for new employees, as the lack of proper orientation, adaptation opportunities, and explanation of work processes or systems often becomes an obstacle for them (Marge et al., 2022; Lamri & Lubart, 2023; Lubis, 2024). Through effective communication, employees are expected to build good relationships with colleagues and superiors, thereby minimizing misunderstandings in receiving and delivering information (Lubis et al., 2023; Subagja et al., 2023).

Methods

Research Approach and Type

This study employs a qualitative research approach with a descriptive design. A qualitative approach was chosen because the purpose of the study is to gain an in-depth understanding and provide a comprehensive description of the communication process between interview officers and passport applicants in the context of passport issuance. Through descriptive qualitative research, the researcher is able to illustrate both the practices of effective communication and the challenges that arise throughout the interaction process.

Role of the Researcher

In qualitative research, the researcher acts as the primary instrument in data collection. The researcher is directly engaged in gathering data through observation and interviews, and is actively involved in interactions with the research subjects. During this process, the researcher records all relevant and meaningful information to ensure the richness of the data. In addition, the researcher upholds objectivity and research ethics, ensuring that the observations and interviews are conducted politely and without disrupting the service operations at the immigration office. This role also involves building rapport with participants to foster openness while maintaining neutrality and accuracy in data collection.

Research Location

The study is conducted at the Class I Special Immigration Office for TPI Makassar, located at Jl. Perintis Kemerdekaan No.KM.13, Kapasa, Tamalanrea District, Makassar City. This site is selected because it represents a strategic setting where direct communication between interview officers and passport applicants occurs regularly during the passport issuance process.

Data Sources

The research utilizes both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data are obtained directly through observations and in-depth interviews with interview officers and passport applicants who are directly involved in the issuance process. These data provide firsthand insights into how communication takes place as well as the difficulties encountered. Secondary data, on the other hand, are drawn from relevant documents such as work guidelines, passport service Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), and supporting literature that provides the

theoretical foundation of the study. The integration of both primary and secondary sources ensures a comprehensive and contextual understanding of effective communication in the research setting.

Data Collection Techniques

Observation is carried out by directly monitoring the interactions between interview officers and passport applicants during the passport issuance process. The purpose of observation is to identify how communication unfolds in practice, document both verbal and non-verbal exchanges, examine the extent to which elements of effective communication are applied, and identify barriers that may hinder understanding or clarity.

In addition to observation, semi-structured and in-depth interviews are conducted with selected interview officers and passport applicants. The aim is to gather detailed accounts of their experiences, perceptions of effective communication, and the challenges they encounter. Open-ended questions are used to allow respondents the freedom to elaborate on their answers, thereby generating richer and more nuanced data.

Supporting documents, such as official service procedures, internal notes, and other relevant records from the Immigration Office, are collected to complement the findings from observation and interviews. These documents serve as secondary evidence to validate the primary data and provide contextual support for the analysis.

Research Instruments

The instruments used in this study consist of observation guidelines, interview guides, and documentation sheets. The observation guideline assists the researcher in systematically recording communication interactions, focusing on aspects such as clarity of information delivery, applicant responses, verbal and non-verbal communication, communication flow, and obstacles encountered. The interview guide is designed to probe deeply into participants' experiences, perceptions, and suggestions for improving communication. Open-ended questions encourage participants to share freely and comprehensively. The documentation sheet is employed to record and organize relevant institutional documents, such as SOPs and service manuals, that serve as additional references.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data analysis in this study follows a qualitative descriptive approach. First, the researcher collects and organizes the data obtained from observations, interviews, and documentation. The process then continues with data reduction, where irrelevant or repetitive information is eliminated while key findings are highlighted and categorized according to the research focus: effective communication and communication barriers. Next, the researcher conducts data display by presenting the reduced data in descriptive narratives that depict the realities observed in the field. Finally, data interpretation is performed by linking the empirical findings with relevant theories of effective communication and human resource management. To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, triangulation is applied by comparing and cross-verifying information from different sources (observation, interviews, and documentation). This systematic process allows the study to present a clear and comprehensive picture of the dynamics of communication during the passport issuance process.

Research Stages

At this stage, the researcher prepares the research proposal, obtains research permission from the Class I Special Immigration Office TPI Makassar, and develops research instruments such

as observation sheets and interview guides. Coordination with relevant officials at the immigration office is also conducted to ensure smooth access and facilitate the data collection process.

This stage involves fieldwork for data collection. The researcher observes communication interactions between interview officers and passport applicants during the service process and conducts interviews with selected participants. During this process, the researcher systematically records, notes, and where possible, transcribes responses to ensure data richness.

After the data collection phase, the researcher proceeds with analysis by organizing, reducing, and interpreting the data according to the research focus. The findings are then compiled into a comprehensive research report, which includes the discussion of results, conclusions, and practical recommendations for enhancing communication effectiveness in passport issuance services.

Results and Discussion

Effective Communication between Interviewing Officers and Passport Applicants during the Passport Issuance Process at the Immigration Office Class I Special TPI Makassar

The interviews with passport applicants revealed that communication between officers and applicants was generally clear, polite, and easy to understand. SP (Applicant, July 9, 2025) expressed that:

“The interviewing officer communicated politely, so the instructions could be well understood.”

Similarly, SM (Applicant, July 15, 2025) stated that:

“The officer explained in detail and asked whether we understood the questions, so the instructions were easy to follow.” SS

(Applicant, July 17, 2025) emphasized that:

“The communication was clear and the information was easy to understand.”

Alma (Applicant, July 21, 2025) added that:

“The officer explained using clear language that was easy to understand, so I could follow the message well.”

On the same day, YLT (Applicant, July 21, 2025) confirmed this, saying:

“The immigration officer provided clear information about passport processing.”

Finally, MWT (Applicant, August 1, 2025) noted that:

“The officer gave explanations about the passport process that were simple and easy to understand.”

The officers themselves also described their approaches to communication. SKP (Officer, July 9, 2025) explained that:

“The information must be delivered clearly and in sequence, so applicants can understand the content and message.”

Meanwhile, DCN (Officer, July 15, 2025) pointed out:

“I use a communication style that is easy for applicants to understand, but I also dig deeper into applicants’ information, considering immigration’s dual role in service and law enforcement.”

ADA (Officer, July 21, 2025) highlighted the importance of adapting to applicants, saying

“I use language that is easy for applicants to understand and adjust my communication style according to their age.”

Similarly, ANV (Officer, July 21, 2025) stressed professionalism by stating:

“I provide explanations according to the SOP for passport issuance while using polite and clear language.” BP (Officer, August 1, 2025)

also mentioned cultural sensitivity, noting that:

“I provide explanations that are easy to understand by adjusting the language to the applicant’s regional background.”

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that effective communication between officers and applicants is achieved through clarity, politeness, detailed explanations, the use of simple and easy-to-understand language, and adjustments according to applicants’ age or cultural background. Officers not only ensure compliance with SOPs but also emphasize empathy and adaptability, which enhances the applicants’ understanding and overall experience.

Applicants’ Comfort and Satisfaction during the Interview Process

The interview data also revealed that most applicants felt satisfied and comfortable during their interactions with immigration officers. SP (Applicant, July 9, 2025) stated,

“I was happy because the officer was very informative.” SM (Applicant, July 15, 2025)

shared a similar experience, saying,

“I felt happy and satisfied because the officer explained well and thoroughly.”

SS (Applicant, July 17, 2025) also noted:

“I was happy because the officer provided good and detailed explanations.”

Alma (Applicant, July 21, 2025) reflected that:

“I felt happy because I was calmer and more relaxed during the interview process, which allowed me to communicate better with the officer.”

Supporting this, YLT (Applicant, July 21, 2025) explained,

“I was happy as an applicant because the officer was friendly, and the explanations given were easy to understand.”

Finally, MWT (Applicant, August 1, 2025) highlighted cultural closeness by saying:

“I was happy because the officer was friendly and smiled often, even using the Bugis language when explaining.”

The officers themselves confirmed that they actively sought to create a positive communication atmosphere. SKP (Officer, July 9, 2025) explained,

“Tone of voice and facial expressions when speaking with applicants are important aspects that make them feel happy during the interview.”

DCN (Officer, July 15, 2025) added,

“By applying the interview techniques I use, applicants not only feel happy but also understand and grasp the information delivered.”

ADA (Officer, July 21, 2025) emphasized a customer-service approach:

“I try to ensure that applicants are satisfied with the service I provide, using good communication and a smile so applicants feel happy.”

Similarly, ANV (Officer, July 21, 2025) stated,

“Yes, I can make applicants feel happy; this is my duty as an interviewer by applying the 5S principles (Smile, Greet, Address, Politeness, and Courtesy).”

Finally, BP (Officer, August 1, 2025) noted:

“Yes, because applicants can easily understand what I convey.”

Both applicants and officers highlighted that comfort and satisfaction in the interview process were achieved through friendliness, informative and clear explanations, calm interactions, and the use of polite and culturally sensitive communication. Officers’ use of the 5S principles, appropriate body language, and occasional use of local languages further strengthened applicants’ positive experiences, making the interview process not only efficient but also pleasant.

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On the same day, YLT (Applicant, July 21, 2025) stated:

“The immigration officer provided clear information about passport processing.”

MWT (Applicant, August 1, 2025) further confirmed this by saying:

“The officer gave explanations about the passport process that were simple and easy to understand.”

The officers also described their communication approaches. SKP (Officer, July 9, 2025) emphasized that:

“The information must be delivered clearly and in sequence, so applicants can understand the content and message.”

DCN (Officer, July 15, 2025) noted:

“I use a communication style that is easy for applicants to understand, but I also dig deeper into applicants’ information, considering immigration’s dual role in service and law enforcement.”

ADA (Officer, July 21, 2025) highlighted adaptability by saying:

“I use language that is easy for applicants to understand and adjust my communication style according to their age.”

Similarly, ANV (Officer, July 21, 2025) stressed professionalism, stating:

“I provide explanations according to the SOP for passport issuance while using polite and clear language.”

BP (Officer, August 1, 2025) also mentioned cultural sensitivity, saying:

“I provide explanations that are easy to understand by adjusting the language to the applicant’s regional background.”

Based on these findings, it can be concluded that effective communication between officers and applicants is achieved through clarity, politeness, detailed explanations, the use of simple and easy-to-understand language, and adjustments according to applicants’ age or cultural background. Officers not only ensure compliance with SOPs but also emphasize empathy and adaptability, which enhance the applicants’ understanding and overall experience.

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ADA (Officer, July 21, 2025) emphasized customer service by saying:

“I try to ensure that applicants are satisfied with the service I provide, using good communication and a smile so applicants feel happy.”

ANV (Officer, July 21, 2025) mentioned the importance of service principles:

“Yes, I can make applicants feel happy; this is my duty as an interviewer by applying the 5S principles (Smile, Greet, Address, Politeness, and Courtesy).”

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Effective Communication between Interviewing Officers and Passport Applicants during Passport Issuance at the Immigration Office Class I Special TPI Makassar

The findings of this study are in line with the view that communication provides the necessary information for individuals and groups in decision-making by transferring data to understand and evaluate alternative choices. Information is an essential component of communication, as it allows the dissemination of new knowledge on a broad and general scale, thereby facilitating effective understanding. According to Taufiq (2020), an individual receives information, processes it, stores it, and later produces a decision in the form of either acceptance or rejection of the information conveyed. In the context of passport services at the Immigration Office, communication demonstrates several key characteristics: (1) Openness, where communicators and communicants share ideas and issues freely without concealment, fear, or shame, and both parties strive to understand each other; (2) Empathy, which reflects the ability of an individual to project themselves into another person’s situation within their environment; (3) Supportiveness, meaning that every idea or opinion expressed receives acknowledgment and support from the other party; (4) Positiveness, where communication is carried out with positive intent, thus reducing suspicion or prejudice that could hinder interaction; and (5) Equality, where communication becomes closer and more personal when parties share similarities such as perspectives, attitudes, age, or ideology.

This aligns with the study by Sulaiman (2025) on *Communication Strategies in Empowering the Working Group of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Tambora–Taman Sari*, which emphasizes that communication strategies are crucial in controlling the environment. First, information increases an individual’s knowledge and ability to manage their environment. Second, the availability of relevant information provides strength and capacity; conversely, the lack of relevant information results in only partial success in managing the environment, thus reducing its benefits (Tiana et al., 2025; Annisa et al., 2025). Success and failure in environmental

control affect the development of an institution. One effort to mobilize others is closely linked to organization and leadership, which play a central role in community empowerment as a social endeavor to improve unfavorable conditions. This is often influenced by various background factors since human beings naturally seek better living conditions. In the case of Islamic educational institutions, one such effort involves mobilizing people through organizational structures such as the Madrasah Working Group (KKM). The theoretical framework applied in that study involved interpersonal communication, organizational communication, and community empowerment, with communication strategy as the central concept. Using a qualitative descriptive approach and a constructivist paradigm, the study analyzed socially meaningful actions through detailed observations of social actors who create, maintain, and manage their social world, thereby shedding light on communication strategies in empowering the KKMI Tambora–Taman Sari community.

Challenges in Creating Effective Communication between Interviewing Officers and Passport Applicants at the Immigration Office Class I Special TPI Makassar

Challenges in creating effective communication between interviewing officers and passport applicants at the Immigration Office Class I Special TPI Makassar can be understood through Nurul (2012) theory on overcoming communication barriers in organizations to achieve common goals. According to this perspective, effective interpersonal relationships can only be established when both parties are able to maintain close contact without hostility, affirm their identity without exaggerating differences, and deliver information clearly to avoid confusion, misunderstanding, or distortion. Furthermore, open engagement in problem-solving is necessary to prevent defensive attitudes, while officers and applicants alike need to develop interpersonal styles that foster warmth, sincerity, and understanding. Communication is more effective when participants express feelings directly in an honest yet friendly manner, share personal experiences, provide empathetic responses, and demonstrate verbal and non-verbal acceptance. In this sense, even when agreement cannot be reached, communication must remain constructive, careful, and non-judgmental.

In practice, several barriers hinder effective communication during the passport application process. Technical barriers are common, particularly when facilities or communication equipment are limited. These barriers may also arise from the lack of clear procedures, insufficient explanations, or inappropriate communication media. Semantic barriers often occur when messages are misinterpreted, as differences in word choice or language style between officers and applicants can create confusion. To minimize such misunderstandings, officers must carefully select terms that suit the applicant's characteristics and anticipate possible alternative interpretations. Human barriers also play a significant role. Emotional factors, personal prejudices, perceptions, and differences in individual abilities or competencies can lead to communication breakdowns.

According to Balarezo et al. (2024), human barriers can be further analyzed through positional and sequential relationships. Positional barriers occur when organizational roles and responsibilities are unclear, resulting in jealousy, conflict, insecurity, inefficiency, or shifting of responsibilities (Nasution & Kieser, 2024). In such cases, individuals who act as mediators are crucial to ease communication blockages both horizontally among colleagues and vertically between superiors and subordinates. Sequential barriers, meanwhile, are linked to the flow of information within hierarchical structures (Chen et al., 2025). Messages passed down from higher levels to lower ones often undergo distortion, with each repetition risking a loss of meaning or accuracy. Within this process, the key figure is the “message repeater,” who transmits information but also becomes the source of potential miscommunication if clarity is not maintained.

Conclusion

Effective communication between interviewers and passport applicants during passport issuance at the Class I Immigration Office is as follows: 1) Clear, detailed, coherent, and friendly questions are asked; 2) Highly informative officers who implement the 5S (Smile, Greet, Say Hello, Be Polite, and Courteous); 3) Convey the legal basis and passport application process according to SOPs, providing good education on things like passport storage and its function; 4) Providing information and the basis for questions; 5) Providing understanding that successfully influences emotions and fosters positive attitudes, such as: Providing very clear, easy-to-understand information, using friendly language and words; Obstacles to creating effective communication are: a) Applicants are not accustomed to speaking Indonesian; b) Different regional languages used by applicants, making it difficult for officers to understand; c) Lack of immigration-related information; d) Overly formal language using unfamiliar immigration terms. e). Lack of information about passport making requirements. f). Differences in the profile of each applicant and g). Lack of understanding of the applicant regarding the passport making process.

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