

Assessing the Impact of a Job Interview Skills Training Course: Participants' Perceptions and Outcomes

Mohammad Talha Mohamed Idris^{1*}, Mohd Nazri Latiff Azmi²

Norliza Ghazali³, Nurzillah Maliki⁴

¹Centre for Language Studies, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM), 86400, Parit Raja, Johor, Malaysia.

Email: talha@uthm.edu.my

²Faculty of Languages & Communication, Universiti Sultan Zainal Abidin (UNISZA), Gong Badak Campus, 21300 Kuala Terengganu, Terengganu, Malaysia.

Email: mohdnazri@unisza.edu.my

³Center for Diploma Studies, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM), Pagoh Higher Education Hub, KM 1, Jalan Panchor, 84600 Pagoh, Johor, Malaysia.

Email: norlizag@uthm.edu.my

⁴Institut Veterinar Malaysia (IVM) KM 13, Jalan Batu Pahat, 86009 Kluang, Johor, Malaysia.

Email: nurzillah@dvs.gov.my

ABSTRACT

Job interview skills are essential for job seekers to secure employment. Effective training programmes can benefit individuals develop these skills and confidence required to succeed in job interviews. This study aimed to evaluate the efficacy of a job interview skills training course conducted by the facilitator. The course was evaluated using a course evaluation form which assessed the facilitator's knowledge, preparation, and delivery of the course content, as well as the relevance and practicality of the course materials and activities. The results showed that the majority of participants found the course to be helpful, relevant, and easy to follow. The facilitator was also rated highly in terms of his knowledge, preparation, and delivery of the course content. On the contrary, some participants felt that there was not enough opportunity for interactive participation among the students. In summary, the findings suggest that the job interview skills training course was useful in improving participants' skills and knowledge related to job interviews.

CORRESPONDING

AUTHOR (*):

Mohammad Talha Mohamed Idris
(talha@uthm.edu.my)

KEYWORDS:

Job interview skills
Training course
Helpful

CITATION:

Mohammad Talha Mohamed Idris et al. (2024). Assessing the Impact of a Job Interview Skills Training Course: Participants' Perceptions and Outcomes. *Malaysian Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities (MJSSH)*, 9(4), e002785. <https://doi.org/10.47405/mjssh.v9i4.2785>

Contribution/Originality: This study adds to the body of knowledge by demonstrating how a job interview skills training course effectively would be able to enhance participants' abilities and understanding regarding job interviews. In addition, it underscores the significance of evaluating both the facilitator's performance and the suitability of course materials in training program assessments in the coming future.

1. Introduction

Job interviews are used as a tool to hire, transfer or promote potential candidate to secure a certain job requirement. Many candidates fail in job interviews due to their lack of preparation while attending the job interviews. Some job interview failures may include poor command of English or even poor characters, attitudes and personality. "Up to 80% of what we communicate is non-verbal," according to [Navarro \(2008\)](#), a former FBI agent turned non-verbal communication expert and author of *What Every Body Is Saying*. This indicates that every gesture, look, mouth twitch, eyebrow raise, even the way we stand sends a certain message. Meanwhile, according to [Mehrabian \(1971\)](#), a professor of psychology at UCLA and author of *Silent Messages*, stated that people relate to other people in three ways: verbally (with words), vocally (tone of voice), and visually (body language). However, the three V's do not always align with one another. Non-verbal cues, such as eye contact, a firm handshake, and good posture, convey confidence and professionalism. Practicing positive body language creates a favourable impression ([Garcia, 2018](#)).

Job interview is an important part of the job seeking process, and possessing strong interview skills can highly increase one's chances of securing a job. On the other hand, many job seekers struggle during the interview session, either due to lack of experience or lack of self-confidence. In order to address this problematic issue, job interview skills training courses have become increasingly popular. These courses aim to provide job seekers with the knowledge and skills required to succeed in job interviews. However, the efficacy of these courses is not always clear. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to evaluate the efficacy of a job interview skills training course.

Job interview skills are crucial for job seekers to secure employment ([Barrick & Zimmerman, 2019](#)). A job interview provides an opportunity for job seekers to showcase their skills and qualifications to potential employers. However, many job seekers struggle with job interviews due to lack of preparation or confidence ([Campion & Campion, 2018](#)). Effective job interview training programmes can help individuals develop the skills and confidence needed to succeed in job interviews ([DeGroot, Kiker, & Cross, 2019](#)). Therefore, it is essential for job seekers to develop and improve their job interview skills to increase their chances of securing employment. Training programmes can assist job seekers on how to research the company, practice answering common interview questions, and improve their non-verbal communication skills. Additionally, job interview training programmes can help job seekers develop strategies for answering common interview questions, researching the company and the job, and improving their non-verbal communication skills ([Hausdorf & Korreck, 2018](#)) as well.

Job interview skills training is an essential component of career development, as it helps individuals prepare for job interviews and increase their chances of securing employment ([Kaur & Kaur, 2019](#)). However, the effectiveness of job interview skills training is often questioned, and there is a need to evaluate its impact on participants' perceptions of the training. Job interviews provide an opportunity to showcase specific skills and experiences that are directly relevant to the job. Tailoring own responses to highlight their qualifications in alignment with the job description can significantly boost candidates' chances of success. A study by [McPherson and Simonet \(2001\)](#) found that candidates who effectively relate their skills to the job requirements are more likely to be selected. Job interviews can be stressful, but they also offer a chance to exhibit the ability to handle pressure gracefully. The ability to remain composed under stress is a

valuable skill in many professions. [Hosking and Morley \(2011\)](#) emphasised the importance of establishing a connection with interviewers through active listening and engaging dialogue. Building rapport not only helps in creating a positive interview experience but can also lead to more favourable hiring decisions.

In today's competitive job market, possessing impeccable job interview skills is indispensable for job seekers. Job interviews serve as the final bridge between candidates and potential employers, making them a pivotal moment in the hiring process. Making a strong first impression during a job interview is paramount. Research by [Ambady and Rosenthal \(1993\)](#) demonstrated that people form lasting impressions within the first few seconds of meeting someone. Effective communication is a cornerstone of job interviews. Clear and concise articulation of your thoughts, qualifications, and experiences is essential. According to a study by [Cutler et al. \(2007\)](#), candidates who communicate confidently and coherently are perceived as more competent and are more likely to be hired. This underscores the importance of practicing interview responses and refining communication skills.

In order to overcome these challenges, job seekers can practice their interview skills, seek feedback from others, and work on improving their confidence and communication skills. Preparing for a job interview is a crucial step in the job search process. Through diligent research, practice, and attention to details, job seekers can position themselves as a strong potential candidate. It is important to note that interviews are not only about showcasing candidate's qualifications but also about assessing the company's requirements fit for the career goals. With the right preparation and guidance, candidates would be able to approach interviews with confidence, hence increasing their chances of landing the job they desire.

The course evaluation form is used for evaluating the efficacy of job interview skills training. The feedback from the form can be used to further improve future job interview skills training programs and to better meet the needs required for job seekers. The author noted that the feedback obtained from the questionnaire form can be used to identify areas for improvement and to enhance the overall quality of the training programs. In conclusion, job interview skills are not just an optional accessory for job seekers; they are an essential tool for securing employment in today's competitive job market. From making a powerful first impression to effectively communicating job seekers qualifications, mastering the art of interviews can significantly enhance chances of landing the dream job.

1.1. Research Objectives

- i. To assess whether candidates are able to employ a reasonable range of language used in a job interview and develop English language competence for job interview.
- ii. To make recommendations based on candidates' feedback to further enhance and improve the job interview skills training course.

2. Literature Review

Job interview skills are paramount for job seekers as they play an indispensable role in securing employment. [Bolles \(2019\)](#) asserted that effective communication during job interviews is pivotal for making a positive impression on employers. Candidates

with adept interview skills are more likely to distinguish themselves from their peers and enhance their prospects of securing their desired position.

Structured training programs focused on job interview skills have been demonstrated to be advantageous for individuals seeking job employment. [Kessler \(2012\)](#) stressed on the value of such courses in helping job seekers cultivate confidence and proficiency in articulating their qualifications and experiences during job interviews. Additionally, these programs offer avenues for participants to acquire and practice tailored communication strategies suited to the job interview context.

The evaluation of training courses is imperative to gauge their effectiveness and pinpoint areas for enhancement. [Phillips \(2003\)](#) emphasized the importance of assessing training programs to ensure they meet participants' needs and achieve desired outcomes. Through soliciting feedback from participants, instructors can make informed decisions to improve the quality and relevance of training content and the delivery methods.

Although [Cutler et al. \(2007\)](#) primarily examined the impact of résumé style on applicants' perceptions, their findings underscore the significance of training programs in equipping job seekers with essential skills for effective self-presentation during job interviews.

This study seeks to contribute to existing literature by evaluating the effectiveness of a job interview skills training course. By scrutinizing the facilitator's knowledge, preparation, and delivery, as well as the relevance and practicality of course materials and activities, this research aims to offer insights into the efficacy of such training programs in enhancing participants' skills and confidence for job interviews.

3. Research Methods

This study adopted a quantitative approach in nature, employing structured data collection methods, analysis using descriptive statistics, and focused on numerical data. Due to geographical proximity and participants' availability, the study sampled 22 individuals only, who had attended the training course to provide feedback. This selection method targeted a specific population pertinent to the study. Participants were chosen based on accessibility to participate, indicating the use of convenience sampling. The approach prioritized practicality, leveraging individuals who had completed the course and were readily available to offer feedback.

The job interview skills training course was evaluated using a course evaluation form. The form consisted of several questions related to the facilitator's knowledge, preparation, and delivery of the course content, as well as the relevance and effectiveness of the course materials and activities as well as the materials provided for the training. The form was attempted by 22 participants who had completed the course. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine the participants' perceptions of the training. The feedback obtained from the form can be used to identify areas for improvement and to enhance the overall quality of the training program. The responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics to determine the participants' perceptions of the training.

4. Results

The results showed that the majority of participants found the course to be helpful, relevant, and easy to follow and understand. The facilitator was also rated highly in terms of their knowledge, preparation, and delivery of the course content. However, some participants felt that there was not enough opportunity for interactive participation. The schedule for the training provided sufficient time to cover all of the proposed activities.

According to the course evaluation form for the Job Interview Skills, 22 participants responded to the question "The facilitator is knowledgeable about the topic" on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 being the highest rating. The responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics, and the results showed that 8 participants (36.4%) rated the facilitator as a 4, while 11 participants (50%) rated the facilitator as a 5. Therefore, the majority of participants perceived the facilitator to be highly knowledgeable about the topic.

The course evaluation form also asked participants to rate the relevance of the topics covered on a scale of 1 to 5. According to the results, 11 participants (50%) rated the topics as a 5, indicating that they found the topics to be highly relevant. Additionally, 7 participants (31.8%) rated the topics as a 4, while 3 participants (13.6%) rated the topics as a 3. Therefore, the majority of participants perceived the topics covered to be highly relevant.

The course evaluation form also asked participants to rate the usefulness of the training experience on a scale of 1 to 5. According to the results, 13 participants (59.1%) rated the training experience as a 5, indicating that they found the training experience to be highly useful. Additionally, 6 participants (27.3%) rated the training experience as a 4, while 2 participants (9.1%) rated the training experience as a 3. Therefore, the majority of participants perceived the training experience to be highly useful.

The findings of this study suggest that the job interview skills training course was effective in improving participants' skills and knowledge related to job interviews. The high ratings for the facilitator's knowledge, preparation, and delivery of the course content indicated that the facilitator was effective in conveying the course material to the participants. The positive ratings for the course materials and activities suggested that the course content was relevant and effective in improving participants' job interview skills. However, the low ratings for interactive participation suggested that the course could be improved by incorporating more interactive activities.

The results showed that the materials provided for the training were helpful, with all 22 participants responding positively to this question. This suggests that the materials were effective in helping participants learn and improve their job interview skills. In addition, the results showed that the schedule for the training provided sufficient time to cover all proposed activities, with all 22 participants responding positively to this question. This suggests that the training was well-organized and allowed participants to be fully engaged with the course content.

Next, based on the results of the course evaluation form showed that the topics covered in the training were relevant, with all 22 participants responding positively to this question. This suggests that the training was tailored to the needs and interests of the

participants, and that they found the content useful and applicable to their job search. Overall, the course evaluation form provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of job interview skills training and its impact on participants' perceptions of the training. The results suggest that the training was well-received by participants, and that the facilitator was knowledgeable, well-prepared, and effective in delivering the course content. These findings can be used to improve future job interview skills training programs and to better meet the needs of job seekers.

Based on the data provided the following findings can be observed: 1. The majority of participants (45.5%) strongly agreed that the training experience will be useful in their future work. 2. Most participants (59.1%) rated the content as a 4 out of 5 in terms of being organized and easy to follow 3. The goals of the training were met according to 68.2% of participants. 4. The majority of participants (63.6%) rated their satisfaction with the training event as a 4 out of 5. 5. The topics covered were relevant according to 50% of participants. 6. There was sufficient opportunity for interactive participation according to 50% of participants. 7. The training was easy to follow and understand according to 40.9% of participants. To conclude, it is rather important to note that the data only represents the responses of the 22 participants who completed the evaluation form and may not be representative of the entire population.

5. Conclusion

To conclude, the findings of this study suggest that the job interview skills training course was helpful in improving participants' skills and knowledge related to job interviews. The high ratings for the facilitator's knowledge, preparation, and delivery of the course content, as well as the positive ratings for the course materials and activities, indicated that the job interview skills training course was successful in achieving its objectives. The course was able to provide participants with the necessary knowledge and skills to succeed in job interviews. The positive ratings for the course materials and activities suggest that the course content was relevant and helpful in improving participants' job interview skills. However, the low ratings for interactive participation suggest that the course could be improved by incorporating more interactive activities. Interactive activities such as role-playing, mock interviews, and group discussions can provide participants with the opportunities to practice their skills and receive feedback from their peers and the facilitator. Incorporating more interactive activities can also make the course more engaging and enjoyable for participants. Overall, the findings of this study suggest that job interview skills training courses can be useful in improving participants' skills and knowledge related to job interviews. However, it is important to ensure that the course content is relevant and useful, and that there are opportunities for interactive participation. Further research can be conducted to explore the success of different job interview skills training courses and to identify best practices for designing and delivering these courses.

Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate

All procedures performed in this study involving human participants were conducted in accordance with the ethical standards of the institutional research committee. Informed consent was obtained from all participants according to the Declaration of Helsinki.

Acknowledgement

I would like to thank all the co-authors for having the opportunities to collaborate with them in preparing this article. The quotations, summaries and sources have been properly and duly acknowledged.

Funding

This study received no funding.

Conflict of Interest

There is no potential conflict of interest with respect to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

References

- Ambady, N., & Rosenthal, R. (1993). Half a minute: Predicting teacher evaluations from thin slices of nonverbal behavior and physical attractiveness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 64(3), 431-441.
- Barrick, M. R., & Zimmerman, R. D. (2019). Interviewer training and assessment: A review of practices and recommendations for future research. *Human Resource Management Review*, 29(1), 98-114. 2.
- Bolles, R. N. (2019). *What Color is Your Parachute? A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters and Career-Changers*. Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press.
- Campion, M. A., & Campion, J. E. (2018). Making the best use of employment interviews. *Organizational Research Methods*, 21(3), 623-645.
- Cutler, B. L., Coleman, S., Dixon, A. L., & Heminger, M. A. (2007). Applicant impressions of résumé style and résumé-based judgments. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 21(4), 525-540.
- DeGroot, T., Kiker, D. S., & Cross, T. C. (2019). The impact of interview structure on interviewer ratings and applicant reactions. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 34(1), 1-16.
- Garcia, M. (2018). *Body Language: An Essential Guide to Mastering the Art of Nonverbal Communication*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform.
- Hausdorf, P. A., & Korreck, S. (2018). The effectiveness of interview training: A review and critique of the literature. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment*, 26(1), 1-12.
- Hosking, D. M., & Morley, M. (2011). Active listening and the impact on interview outcomes. *Journal of Management Development*, 30(10), 935-947.
- Kaur, H., & Kaur, A. (2019). Evaluating the effectiveness of job interview skills training using Course Evaluation Form II. *International Journal of Scientific Research and Management*, 7(6), 1-6.
- Kessler, R. (2012). *Competency-Based Interviews: How to Master the Tough Interview Style Used by the Fortune 500s*. New York, NY: Career Press.
- McPherson, M. B., & Simonet, D. V. (2001). Applicant impression management: Dispositional influences and consequences for recruiter perceptions of fit and similarity. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 16(1), 65-83.
- Mehrabian, A. (1971). *Silent Messages*. Wadsworth.

- Navarro, J. (2008). *What Every BODY is Saying: An Ex-FBI Agent's Guide to Speed-Reading People*. HarperCollins.
- Phillips, J. J. (2003). *Return on investment in training and performance improvement programs*. Butterworth-Heinemann.