

Ethical Foundation for Assertive Communication in Libraries: An Analysis of Librarian-User Interactions

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ABSTRACT

Purpose Research. This study analyzes the ethical basis of assertive communication in interactions between librarians and library users. **Research Method.** Through the bibliometric analysis method, this study identifies research trends related to assertive communication in the library environment and explores the underlying ethical concepts. **Analysis Data.** The results of the analysis show that assertive communication plays an important role in improving the quality of library services, as well as building good relationships between librarians and users. **Results.** This research also provides insight into how ethical principles can enhance the effectiveness of librarian communication in meeting user needs. **Conclusions.** The findings are expected to contribute to the development of communication theory and practice in the library field. Contains the research method used.

Keywords: Assertive Communication; Libraries; Librarian; User Interactions

A. INTRODUCTION

To provide the services available in the library, a librarian, as an information expert, must have good communication skills, personally and organizationally, because librarians must be involved in communication activities as an institution engaged in information. The existence of library communication activities is shown. One type of communication activity in the library is the interaction of librarians with librarians or readers, the messages conveyed and received, and the consequences of the messages received (Rahayu, 2022). Knowledge is one of the fastest-growing fields, primarily in psychology, education, and social science. These factors make personal learning more important in the classroom, including the most important one, which is assertive learning. Assertive behavior is the key. If the librarians do not control, it is a reflection that the emotions must positively impact the recipient. The assertive behavior of librarians can easily increase their skills and self-confidence in handling any problem, whether personal or between people. (Darmayanti et al., 2024).

Every individual has a communication style that reflects their own authority in the eyes of the message's recipient. How a person communicates will determine how the interlocutor responds, positively or negatively. One effective communication style is the constructive communication style. Communicators with this style are open to listening to other people's opinions, do not feel they are the most righteous, and prioritize deliberation over unilateral decisions. Conversely, there is also a style of communicator that tends to control. They are more dominant in conversations and less open to input from others. There are also disengaged communicators. They prefer to listen to others' arguments, but often avoid responsibility by leaving it to others. Finally, there are withdrawn communicators, who are usually pessimistic, see things as they are, and tend to avoid situations that could worsen things (Farhan et al., 2023).

Librarians must ensure that they can improve their abilities in knowledge and skills, and have assertive behavior. Employees who are not easily influenced are employees who have assertive behavior. Someone who can communicate effectively through assertiveness can form positive and negative opinions in a calm, impassioned, and concise manner. Assertive librarians can be done by assisting without harming others. This allows librarians to accept their actions without judgment or condescension (Husna, 2018). Visitors and users are expected to be satisfied with communication intelligence in library services to fulfill their scientific needs. This will be one of the techniques or strategies in library promotion or publication. In addition, effective communication greatly influences user satisfaction; librarian communication is also a skill that library managers must understand and master to foster good relationships with users and increase visitor satisfaction (Mantasa, 2022).

This study analyzes the ethical basis of assertive communication in interactions between librarians and library users. This study uses the bibliometric analysis method to identify research trends related to assertive communication in the library environment and explores the underlying ethical concepts. In addition, this study also explores the relationship between assertive communication and library service quality based on references and citations in academic literature. Through bibliometric analysis, this research provides insights into how ethical principles can enhance the effectiveness of librarian communication in meeting user needs. The understanding gained is expected to contribute to developing communication theory and practice in librarianship. Thus, this research not only enriches the academic literature but also serves as a reference for librarians in implementing assertive communication based on ethics to improve the quality of library services.

B. METHODS

In this study, the authors used the bibliometric analysis method. Bibliometric analysis is a study that examines the pattern of scientific publications based on bibliography. This study used descriptive bibliometrics to describe the characteristics of literature related to assertive communication in the library. This method helps identify research trends, publication distribution, and reference

relationships within a particular field. In addition, bibliometric analysis also contributes to understanding the development of science through collaborative studies on specialized topics (Lestary et al., 2023). Bibliometric mapping is important in understanding credit risk management themes, including developments, research trends, and influential authors and affiliations. This method presents a visualization in the form of a network, displaying interrelationships between items to provide a comprehensive picture of the research landscape in the field (Dian et al., 2024). Bibliometric analysis is a method to measure the quantity of publications, and in this discussion, it is the morphology of urban settlement (Dian Susanti & Fosterharoldas Swasto, 2021).

Databases such as Scopus, Taylor & Francis, Wiley, and Springer. This study uses the Scopus, Taylor & Francis, Wiley, and Springer databases because all four have international reputations with extensive, credible, and scientifically valid literature coverage. Scopus was chosen to obtain reputable articles and citation analysis, while Taylor & Francis, Wiley, and Springer provide high-quality journals and scientific publications in various fields, particularly the social sciences, education, and science. Thus, these databases ensure the referenced literature is relevant, up-to-date, and academically accountable. A search was conducted for peer-reviewed journal articles published between 2018 and 2025. Articles were then assessed according to predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria, focusing on relevance to assertive communication.

We used VOSviewer to visualize and identify research frontiers through analysis of co-citation, bibliographic coupling, and keyword co-occurrence (Zhou & Liao, 2020). VOSviewer is a software used to build and visualize bibliometric networks, such as journals, titles, authors, and publications. In addition, this software can map various bibliometric analyses and produce bibliographic databases with sophisticated visualizations and informative labelling (Akhira et al., 2023).

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Judging from the results of the development of scientific publications on assertive communication in libraries from 2018 to 2025, based on a literature search of four reputable international databases, namely Scopus, Taylor & Francis, Wiley, and Springer, 125 publications relevant to the research topic were obtained. However, after screening using the established inclusion and exclusion criteria, only 25 articles met the criteria and were used for further analysis in this study. This shows the importance of a rigorous selection process to ensure that the literature used is truly relevant, of high quality, and in line with the focus of the study.

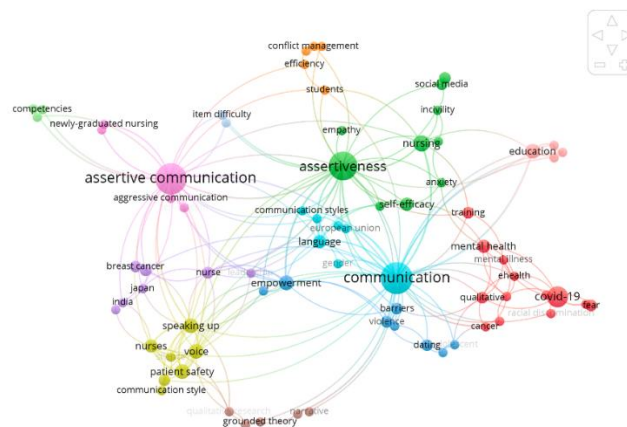


Figure 1. Network Visualization VOS Viewer

The figure above shows a network visualization of shared keywords (at least 6). The keywords "Assertiveness", "communication", and "Assertive communication" are the most commonly found. The circle's size can be seen in the three keywords; the larger the circle, the more keywords have been widely used by researchers related to assertive communication of nurses, students, and social media. The results of network visualization in Figure 2 show that there are 6 clusters with 29 items regarding communication assertiveness, namely, 1) Cluster 1 (pink) consists of 3 items (Assertive communication, aggressive communication, newly graduated nursing); 2) cluster 2 (green) consists of 6 items (empathy, nursing, anxiety, self-efficacy, social media, incivility); 3) cluster 3 (light blue) consists of 4 items (communication styles, language, gender, european union), 4) cluster 4 (red) consists of 7 items (covid-19, training, qualitative, cancer, ehealth, fear, mental health), 5) cluster 5 (purple) consists of 4 items (breast cancer, nurse, india, japan), 6) cluster 6 (orange) consists of 3 items (conflict management, efficiency, students).

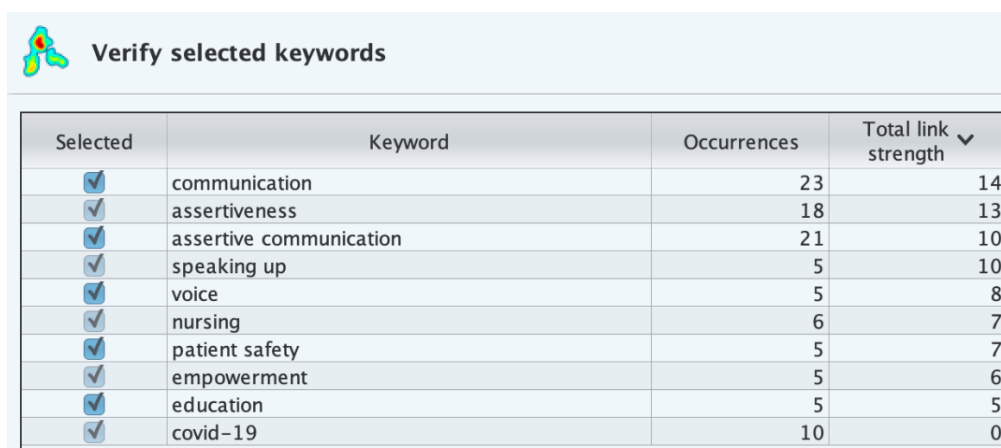
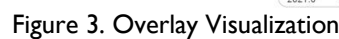


Figure 2. Keywords that have the most co-occurrences related to Assertive Communication in the Library



Based on the results of research conducted by Gloria and Sambo (2023), it was concluded that the assertiveness of librarians plays an important role in their job satisfaction. In carrying out their duties to library users, which include non-teaching staff, teaching staff, students, researchers, and others. The assertiveness of librarians is indeed important. Librarians will inform users if they borrow books and are late in returning them. They have the right to say "I do not know" or "I do not understand," they are willing to engage in discussions, they have the right to

choose not to take responsibility for other people's feelings and problems, and they have the right to say "No" to requests from others (Oyovwe-Tinuoye & Sambo, 2023).

Discussion

Assertive communication is about conveying messages firmly and must align with professional library ethics principles such as honesty, respect for user dignity, and fairness. Ethics as a foundation ensures that although librarians are firm, they maintain integrity and do not violate user rights. A study on Librarian Ethics in Medan shows that librarians strive to maintain professionalism and distinguish between personal interests and professional duties in providing services to visitors (Nur'ainii & Nasution, 2021).

One important element in assertive communication is the librarian's confidence in expressing opinions, answering questions, or firmly handling difficult situations (such as conflicts or complex questions) while respecting users. The article "Exploration of Librarians' Assertive Behavior in Improving Service Quality in the Digital Age" highlights that the ability to express opinions assertively is seen as helpful in improving user satisfaction and adapting to the demands of the digital age (Zevira & Zulaikha, 2024).

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Based on the results of the discussion, assertive communication is an important skill for librarians in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. This communication is not merely the delivery of a firm message, but must also be based on library professional ethics that uphold honesty, respect, and fairness. With assertive communication, librarians can maintain healthy relationships with users while adapting to the demands of educational institutions and the digital age. In addition, assertive attitudes have positively affected librarian job satisfaction and service quality, and created a professional, inclusive, and user-oriented library environment. However, there is still a lack of empirical studies that directly link assertive communication with library performance indicators, such as increased user information literacy or effective conflict management. Therefore, further research should emphasize case studies and practical approaches to see the impact of assertive communication in libraries.

E. CONCLUSION

This study found that assertive communication significantly influences the interaction between librarians and users, which positively impacts user satisfaction and library service quality. Using bibliometric analysis, it was identified that there is an increasing trend of publications related to assertive communication from 2018 to 2025, indicating a growing interest among researchers. Follow-up recommendations include the need for training for librarians to improve their assertive communication skills and further research to explore the specific impact of assertive communication on different aspects of library services. These conclusions are consistent with the research objective to understand the role of ethics in librarian communication and are expected to serve as a reference for better library practice.

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