Examing Communication Effectiveness of The Globalized Fitness Program - F45

Ran Wei, Western Michigan University
Yuanlong Liu (Advisor), Western Michigan University
Elizabeth Northuis, Western Michigan University

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Introduction/Background: The fitness industry has been world-wide growing and expending rapidly in the past decades. In 2015, $77.5 billion revenue were generated from over 150,000 health clubs cross the world (Chang, Robinson, Shu & Ma, 2019). In the United States, there were 36,000 fitness gym in 2015 (Iranmanesh, Gholipour & Hyun, 2019). In such a competitive industry, according to the Functional 45 fitness training program (F45) official site, 1,800 studios have been launched across 45 countries in just seven years, with an average of 260 new branches per year (F45, 2019), which is a successful case for fitness program development. Effective communication skills have played a vital role on management success (Hartman & McCambridge, 2011). Communication would be more effective if the managers have a greater understanding of their customers among the multicultural environments (Mukherji & Jain, 2015). Effective communication would contribute to customers’ satisfaction and loyalty (Iranmanesh, Gholipour & Hyun, 2019), quality of the relationship between individuals and the organization (Mukherji & Jain, 2015), and managerial success (Hartman, McCambridge, 2011). However, to our knowledge, it is not so clear regarding the communication effectiveness on the F45 fitness program. The purpose of this study is to explore communication effectiveness among the F45 program trainers and participants in a diverse culture setting.

Methods: The population of this study is the fitness programs with diverse participants background. The sample site was selected via convenience sampling strategy in the Midwest region with the F45 program. The two-sided communication will be investigated. One side from the F45 trainers who provide the services and the training instructions. Another side from the participants that associated with four groups: domestic students (DS), domestic university staff or faculty (DSF), international students (IS), non-domestic university staff or faculty (ISF). The Communication Effectiveness Model (CEM, Mukherji & Jain, 2015) will guide this study. The validity confirmed Communication Effectiveness Scale (CSE) will be utilized and modified as the data collection instrument. CSE will be distributed to the participants for a pre-test in order to identify their prior knowledge of the F45 program. Then same questionnaire will be followed up as post-test to examine how much knowledge they gain after the F45 training. The F45 trainers will be examined after the session with the modified questionnaires to identify how much service and information they cover during the training. The F45 trainers’ responses will subtract participants’ pre-test responses which will be treated as pre-training fitness knowledge gap and subtract the post-test responses as post-training fitness knowledge gap.

Data collection: Human Subject Institute Review Board (HSIRB) approval will be pursued for ethical consideration. The permission and gate access were granted. Self-administered 5-point likert-scale questionnaires mentioned above will be distributed at the F45 studio site.

Data Analysis: Two (pre/post) by four (DS/DSF/IS/ISF) mixed design multivariate analysis will be employed to analyze the data. Four main factors (self-concept, reaction to strangers, group interaction and mindfulness) will be analyzed to seek the F45 program communication effectiveness differences among four groups of customers. Based on the research findings, final conclusions and implications will be presented.