PERCEPTION AND COMMUNICATION IN MANAGING PANDEMIC COVID 19 AMONG ROYAL MALAY REGIMENT

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Abstract: In the last several years, a virus known as the coronavirus has been a problem for the whole world. Coronavirus is a specific type of virus that can cause infections in the respiratory tract and has a deadly outcome. Coronavirus 2019, a coronavirus discovered in China, is spreading (COVID-19). The efficacy of these mitigation measures is primarily contingent on personnel of the Royal Malay Regiment's cooperation and compliance. Personnel attitudes on health issues are extremely important in changing people's behaviour. This research seeks to determine the perception and communications align with the Royal Malay Regiment's efforts to this COVID-19. Utilizing 249 respondents from the Royal Malay Regiment, this correlational study design was conducted using questionnaires, and the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences 25.0 and Smart PLS 3.3.2 were used to analyse the results. The research results proved that accurate perception and communication skills play a vital role in regulating the COVID-19 pandemic. This study's findings can help commanding officers by supplying the necessary guidance in planning to boost their soldiers' skill in working through the hard missions that are to come. Most personnel think that they need to understand how to effectively communicate in an emergency, and to do so, it's crucial to educate the soldiers and help them become more alert.

Keywords: Perception, Communication, Royal Malay Regiment

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1. Introduction

In the last several years, a virus known as the coronavirus has been a problem for the whole world. Coronavirus is a viral disease that impacts the respiratory system. There are many coronaviruses, such as SARS and MERS-related coronavirus (MER-CoV). Coronavirus 2019 is the latest coronavirus discovered in China. The World Health Organization (WHO) constantly works with other organizations, such as the Ministry of Health, to study the attributes and behavior of the Coronavirus, a new virus (Rabbani, 2020; Bazaid, 2020; Saifuddin, 2020; Mohd Rashid, 2019). Even though this new virus, COVID-19, is completely new, the MOH has dealt with previous viruses in the same category including SARS and MERS CoV in the past. When it comes to managing SARS and MERS CoV epidemics, the most effective course of action is to use public health practices as well as appropriate infection control methods. The MOH is optimistic about the COVID-19 virus being defeated if we do the same things as we did previously. The first known case of COVID-19 in Malaysia occurred on January 25th, 2020 and was found among three Chinese tourists. before the country's first recorded fatality on March 17th, the number of illnesses had progressively climbed (Azlan et al, 2020). The CPRC uses Telegram to share the daily data about Covid-19 cases with the MCO, which is then reported to the MOH. One of the essential resources for the public to learn about the status of the Covid-19 case in Malaysia is the Big Data source of the CPRC Telegram application that provides genuine and unique inputs for the community to know about the progress of the case (Bazaid, 2020; Saifuddin, 2020; Azlan et al, 2020). The COVID-19 epidemic poses a worldwide threat to security, as well as to Malaysia, because security has moved beyond military intervention in the 21st century. This is seen in Malaysia's choice to quell the spread of the pandemic to preserve freedom in their country. Everyone must take part in fighting the epidemic because they have a duty to the greater good to do so. This includes citizens, the government, and other organizations. (Azlan et al, 2020). MAF as the main security and defense body, government organizations assisting government and civil agencies in security affairs is not a new, but it is established as its secondary roles upholding Civil Military Cooperation or known as CIMIC. The objective of this study in to determine the relationship between the perception and communication with the managing pandemic COVID-19 among Royal Malay Regiment.

2. Literature Review

The issue of Covid-19 in the midst of the life of a society with a variety of people, then the compliance of life in social interaction should be observed throughout this MCO even if the compliance deviates from the norms of normalcy but the impact is for the society together and also Royal Malay Regiment. Communication by using

words that are easily understood by the head of government to the people through mass media channels is also clearly utilized during the MCO period.The movement restriction method is seen as an optimal approach to control and reduce the spread of infectious epidemic networks such as the COVID-19 pandemic Throughout the implementation of the MCO for the first phase, the Royal Malaysian Police and Royal Malay Regiment has imposed roadblocks throughout the country to ensure and warn Malaysians to stay at home and abide by the rules. Royal Malay Regiment has been mobilized to assist the Royal Malaysian Police to ensure the effectiveness of the implementation of the Movement Control Order in an effort to curb the spread of COVID-19. (Bazaid, 2020; Saifuddin, 2020; Azlan et al, 2020).

Pandemic centers on strong communication, whether it is working with colleagues, partners, or other team members or engaging with communities, nations, and the public at large. It is critical to avoid making errors when communicating. (Bazaid, 2020; Saifuddin, 2020; Azlan et al, 2020).Interpersonal communication is an important feature that must be present in managing crisis because if do not have a good level of communication, this will cause them difficulty in establishing relationships with individuals or communities around them Therefore, learning with respect to interpersonal communication and methods of handling communication problems is important so that can deal with communication problems with other individuals using effective methods Farukuzzaman& Rahman, (2019).Interpersonal communication skills are also important so that can communicate well between their colleagues in the crisis. They must have good interpersonal communication skills with their coworker's help contribute to good work quality compared to those who do not have good interpersonal communication. Interpersonal communication skills are a skill that needs to be mastered because they will face the situations from communities with the different backgrounds. Therefore, they should take the communication skills as an important part of our life in managing all the situation especially in these crises (Bazaid, 2020; Saifuddin, 2020; Azlan et al, 2020).According to Mohd Rashid (2019) effective the communication system is practiced, the more efficient the management and administration of an organization. Whether the communication is through formal or informal channels, the communication system needs to go through the right methods with good ethics to ensure its effectiveness. Communication knowledge is knowledge learned by human beings to make it easier for a person to convey what is contained in his mind to others. Therefore, the knowledge of communication in social interaction also contributes to the success of the government in addressing the issue of Covid-19. Clearly showing, the issue of Covid-19 has made the community more sensitive and careful while interacting socially in daily life.

3. Methodology

To achieve the study's objectives, the researchers conducted a mixed-method study by employing correlational research design, since this helped blend several techniques, including the literature, semi-structured interviews, and a survey. This research strategy is ideal for assisting researchers in finding quality data, which will be both more accurate and less biased (Cresswell, 2012; Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). The survey, broken down into three main categories of communication, perception, and managing pandemic, is comprised of 25 total items. The five components of COVID-19 were based on the use of interview data, study conducted by scholars, and little adaptation. A 5-point scale that went from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5) was used to grade all of the test items (5). This study focuses on the communication and perspective of Royal Malay Regiment personnel, hence demographic characteristics were employed as controlling variables. This study was about perception and communication, therefore demographic characteristics were utilised as control variables. To perform the study, the researchers secured consent from the Malaysian Army HQ, received advise from the Malaysian Army HQ, and worked with the Royal Malay Regimentto use their official unit. This study's focus was on the infantry unit. Though this study was given permission by this commander, the researchers weren't given the Royal Malay Regiment personnel names as an ethical. In light of the circumstances, an efficient distribution method was designed to enable Royal Malay Regimentpersonnel who had served in peninsular to easily take part in the survey. We handed out 250 questionnaires in all. Almost all (99.6%) of the questionnaires sent out came back to the researchers. The researchers received 249 useable questionnaires, which amounted to a 99.6% response rate. Participants responded to the survey questions with their own accord and voluntarily. It has been determined that this dataset may be studied using inference statistics due to the fact that it contains more than the minimum number of participants required (30) by probability sampling techniques (Chua, 2006; Sekaran & Bougie, 2013).

4. Findings and Discussions

The data shows that 85.1 percent of the respondents were male, and 14.9 percent were female. The results of the study found that respondents ages 31–40 years old make up 46.2% (N=115) of the respondent base, followed by respondents who are 21–30 years old at 37.8% (N=94), then those 41–50 years old at 14.1% (N=35), and those 51 years and older at 1.6% (N=4). The youngest respondents (under 20 years) make up 0.4% (N=1) of the population. The findings reveal that the majority of the respondents have SPM/STPM qualification, which accounts for 55.4% (N=138) of respondents. These results were followed by qualifications obtained in the form of degrees, at 28.9% (N=72). The findings indicate that less than 10% of the respondents are equipped with diplomas or master's degrees.

Table 1: Demographic profile

Demographic profile	Frequency	Percentages
Gender		
Male	212	85.1
Female	37	14.9
Age		
Below than 20 years	1	0.4
21 – 30 years	94	37.8
31 – 40 years	115	46.2
41 – 50 years	35	14.1
51 years and above	4	1.6
Academic Level		
SPM / STPM	138	55.4
Diploma	23	9.2
Degree	72	28.9
Master	16	6.4
Total	**249**	**100.0**

As demonstrated in Table 2, Managing Pandemic Covid-19, Perception and Communication all had higher AVE values than 0.5, therefore satisfying the test's convergent validity (Henseler et.al, 2009). Additionally, the table reveals that all constructs with the off-diagonal values of $\sqrt{AVE}$ greater than squared correlation with other constructs on the diagonal have a high degree of discriminant validity, because all of these constructs meet an acceptable criterion (Henseler et al., 2009). The results in Figure 2 confirm that the data are reliable and valid.

Table 2: The Results of Convergent and Discriminant Validity Analyses

Construct	AVE	Managing Pandemic	Perception	Communication
Managing Pandemic	0.662	**0.759**		
Perception	0.721	0.743	**0.813**	
Communication	0.784	0.731	0.748	**0.799**

Note:$\sqrt{AVE}$ shows in diagonal

Table 3 shows that each construct had greater loadings above the required minimum of 0.6, proving that the measurement model had satisfactory validity (Fornell& Larker, 1981; Chin, 1998; Gefen & Straub, 2005). The instrument employed in this investigation also had a value for composite reliability that was more than 0.7, meaning that it maintained strong internal consistency (Henseler, et al, 2009; Nunally & Bernstein, 1994).

Table 3: The Results of Loadings and Composite Reliability

Construct	Number of Item	Cross Factor Loadings	Composite Reliability	Cronbach Alpha
Managing Pandemic Covid-19	5	0.761-0.838	0.895	0.854
Perception	5	0.733-0.837	0.888	0.845
Communication	5	0.815-0.901	0.902	0.837

The results of utilising bootstrapping to test SmartPLS path model are shown in Table 4. The value of R^2 is utilised as a metric for gauging the accuracy of the overall model. R^2 significance is as follows: close to 0.2, weak, approximately 0.33, moderate, and close to 0.67, significant (Hair et al., 2017; Henseler et al., 2009; Wetzels et al., 2009). The perception and communication attributes added to the model testing helped explain 63.3% of the variance in the management of Covid-19. Three crucial findings were discovered in the SmartPLS route model's outcomes, and the data showed that how well people can perceive Covid-19 has an impact on their ability to manage it. Then, Covid-19 contagion was handled by good communication. This shows that communicating well

and perceiving accurately help a lot in research done in this regard. Both the perceptions and the communications are valid (*t*-value 3.316 and 4.129, respectively, p-value = 0.001 for both).

Table 4: Estimation and Prediction Managing pandemic Covid-19

Relationships	β	t	P value	R^2
H1: Perception--> Managing pandemic Covid-19	2.188	3.316	0.001	
H2: Communication-->Managing pandemic Covid-19	1.241	4.129	0.001	0.633

Note: Significant at *t* >1.96

The findings show that perception and communication play an essential role in the correlation between the two issues among Royal Malay Regiment. This study's findings can help commanding officers by supplying the necessary guidance in planning to boost their personnel skill in working through the hard missions that are to come. Most of the people in the organization believe that having good communication skills, understanding, and knowledge of possible threats are critical for helping the personnel stay on top of things. The hypotheses HI the relationship between perception and managing pandemic Covid-19 and H2 the relationship between communication and managing pandemic Covid-19 is supported in this study. Then, the role and involvement of the Royal Malay Regiment in combating the COVID-19 pandemic is one of the duties and commitments to the country and the people. The main task of the Royal Malay Regiment was to ensure the country's sovereignty and defence was not compromised by external threats and also to assist the public authorities in dealing with internal threats. When the country is now hit by a pandemic which is a big threat, the Royal Malay Regiment play an important role dealing with the other enforcement to fight the COVID-19 pandemic and this is their duty. Royal Malay Regiment assist the Royal Malaysian Police in enforcing the Movement Control Order at roadblocks and joint patrols in Ops Penawar. The duties and role of the Royal Malay Regiment are increasing when the Ministry of Health Malaysia (MOH) needs the help of the military to conduct surveillance in the Movement Control Order. Therefore, the Royal Malay Regiment has entered and closed the area with a barbed wire in the MCO area. Royal Malay Regiment has the capability and expertise to assist the enforcement authorities and the MOH in combating COVID-19. Royal Malay Regiment has its own health services such as hospitals, doctors, nurses, medical personnel complete and adequate with the medical equipment.

5.Conclusion

In conclusion, the research found that significant findings on Royal Malay Regimentperception and communication of COVID-19. The results indicate that Royal Malay Regimentpossess a high degree of perception and communication about COVID-19, and that they are positive about addressing the pandemic. Nonetheless, continuous messaging from the government and/or health authority is needed to enhance awareness and comprehension and improve behaviours through increasing public knowledge. This research profound implications and contribution towards Royal Malay Regimentas managing pandemic COVID-19 to the attainment of mission in the organization. Having identified that perception and communication as the three main domains of managing pandemic COVID-19, these results and findings have both theoretical and practical implication contributions. For the theoretical and practical contribution, on this study provides the academics and the practitioners a platform for other studies in the same area, specifically in the context of military organization in Malaysia. Other than that, this study helps practitioners, students and academics to understands the relationship between perception and communication in managing the pandemic COVID-19. This knowledge would enhance their knowledge in area of interest for them to specialize in specifics field of military during managing the crisis or emergency. From the policy perspectives, the research is expected to contribute further understandings on the perception and communication of Royal Malay Regimentin managing COVID-19 that are essential for Malaysian Army doctrine for current and potential leaders. Further understandings on these perception and communication that are important to Royal Malay Regimentpersonnel through appropriate attitude and communication would enhance human resources management ability among the personnel of Royal Malay Regimentin this country.

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