# Omega Graduate School

# Dissertation Research Prospectus (Pre-Proposal)

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# Problem Statement

The problem is Toastmasters International may not adequately assess its development on the communication competence and leadership practices of its diverse members.. Assessment of mission attainment and organizational objectives is a best practice for membership associations like Toastmasters International ().

# Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to examine how participation in Toastmasters International contributes to the development of communication competence and leadership practices among its members.

# Background of the Problem (1-2 pages)

The contemporary landscape of personal and professional development is marked by diverse organizations and programs aimed at enhancing individuals' communication competence and leadership skills and the task of assessing the communication competence is a complex process. (Schirmer, Mauksch, Lang, F., Marvel, M. K., Zoppi, K., Epstein, R. M., Brock, D., & Pryzbylski, M., 2005) While there is a substantial body of literature addressing these areas, a significant gap exists concerning the specific impact of Toastmasters International, a global organization renowned for its commitment to these skillsets. This absence of comprehensive examination presents an opportunity for scholarly inquiry.

The rationale for pursuing research on the impact of Toastmasters International in this context is two-fold. First, it is imperative to address the research gap to provide a more nuanced understanding of the organization's effectiveness in fostering communication competence and leadership development. While general principles of communication and leadership abound in the literature, the distinct context, practices, and community dynamics within Toastmasters International necessitate a dedicated investigation.

Second, the practical significance of this research cannot be understated. By conducting a rigorous examination of Toastmasters International, this study not only contributes to the scholarly discourse but also offers actionable insights for the organization itself. Findings from this research can inform program improvements, enhance member experiences, and, importantly, facilitate the design of more effective communication and leadership development programs not only within Toastmasters International but also in analogous organizational settings. Thus, this research is poised to make an original contribution to the field by illuminating the unique impact of Toastmasters International and by paving the way for future focused investigations in this domain.

The scarcity of literature on Toastmasters International's influence on communication competence and leadership development underscores the pressing need for this research endeavor. Its exploratory nature, emphasis on practical applications, and potential to expand the discourse in the field render it both academically valuable and practically relevant. Consequently, this study seeks to bridge the existing gap by conducting a comprehensive investigation that promises to enrich our understanding of how Toastmasters International contributes to the development of communication and leadership skills, benefiting both the organization and individuals aspiring for personal and professional growth.

# Significance

This study will contribute to the gap in literature by identifying the specific ways in which Toastmasters International develops communication competence and leadership among its diverse membership.

# Research Questions

**RQ1**: What relationship exists, if any, between years of membership and self-perceived communication competence among diverse members in Toastmasters International?

**RQ2**: What relationship exists, if any, between years of membership and self-perceived leadership practices among diverse members in Toastmasters International?

**H01:** No statistically relationship exists between years of membership and self-perceived communication competence among diverse members in Toastmasters International.

**Ha1:** A statistically relationship exists between years of membership and self-perceived communication competence among diverse members in Toastmasters International.

**H02:** No statistically relationship exists between years of membership and self-perceived leadership practices competence among diverse members in Toastmasters International.

**Ha2:** A statistically relationship exists between years of membership and self-perceived leadership practices among diverse members in Toastmasters International.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Participant ID | Years of Membership | Communication | Leadership |
| 1 | 18 | 4.80 | 4.75 |
| 2 | 7 | 2.20 | 3.10 |
| 3 | 3 | 1.70 | 2.20 |

# Research Methodology

This study will utilize a quantitative methodology because hypotheses derived from research questions will be tested using statistical analysis.

Additionally, a quantitative methodology is particularly suitable for this research due to its ability to provide precise and numerical insights into the impact of Toastmasters International on communication competence and leadership development. By collecting and analyzing quantitative data, this study aims to uncover quantifiable patterns, trends, and associations within a diverse member population, offering a comprehensive understanding of the organization's effects on these crucial aspects of personal and professional growth. This quantitative approach ensures the generation of empirical evidence that can contribute significantly to the existing body of knowledge in the field of communication and leadership development.

# Theoretical/Conceptual Framework

This study is framed by \_\_\_\_\_\_ theory because… (cite).

# Instrumentation

Validated survey instrument that measures attitudes, knowledge, beliefs, or behaviors… (quantitative)

This study will utilize the Communication Competence Scale (CCS), instrument, which measures individuals' self-perceived communication competence. It assesses various dimensions of communication competence, such as verbal, nonverbal, and listening skills. This instrument can be used to evaluate the impact of Toastmasters International on enhancing communication competence using \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ subscales (cite).

This study will utilize the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI): Developed by James Kouzes and Barry Posner, the LPI measures leadership behaviors and practices. It assesses five dimensions of leadership: modeling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart. The LPI can be used to evaluate the development of leadership skills among Toastmasters International members.

# Research Design

Quasi-Experimental: compare differences in a continuous dependent variable between groups split on one or more independent variables from a validated instrument (quantitative, deductive)

This quantitative study will utilize a quasi-experimental design because it will examine \_\_\_\_\_ scores between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_ for statistically significant differences among \_\_\_\_\_.

# Population and Sampling

The target population for this study will be current Toastmasters International members, comprising over 270,000 individuals from the 148 countries where Toastmasters International has a presence through its individual Toastmasters Clubs. To obtain a representative sample from this extensive population, a calculated sample size of approximately 403 members will be selected. This sample size has been determined with a 95% confidence level and a margin of error of ±5%, while assuming maximum variability within the population. This approach ensures that the study's findings maintain a high degree of statistical confidence, allowing for meaningful insights into the experiences and perceptions of Toastmasters International members worldwide. The sampling method employed will be designed to ensure fairness and inclusivity, aiming to capture diverse perspectives within the organization.

# Hypotheses (Quantitative Only)

Quasi-Experimental:

H0: No statistically significant difference exists in communication competence and leadership skillsets between Toastmasters International members before and after joining a Toastmasters Club and undertaking the proposed educational program among members with varying levels of Toastmasters experience.

Ha: A statistically significant difference exists in in communication competence and leadership skillsets between Toastmasters International members before and after joining a Toastmasters Club and undertaking the proposed educational program among members with varying levels of Toastmasters experience.

# Data Analysis Plan

Quantitative:

This study will test data for normality and relevant assumptions of appropriate statistical procedures. If data do not meet assumptions for parametric procedures (results apply to the population), nonparametric procedures (results apply only to the sample) will be utilized.

This study will utilize Pearson’s Product Moment of Correlation (parametric) or Spearman’s Rank Correlation (nonparametric) to test the hypotheses for statistically significant relationships.

This study will utilize a t-Test (parametric) or a Mann-Whitney U procedure (nonparametric) to test the hypotheses for statistically significant differences.