



Effect of Emotional Intelligence on Academic Employees Performance in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined the effect of emotional intelligence on academic employees' performance in federal universities in South-South Nigeria. Specifically, this study sought to assess the influence of social skills on communication with students in federal universities in South-South Nigeria. Research questions and five hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. The study employed a descriptive survey design. The population comprised four thousand, four hundred and seventy-eight (4,478) staff members, from which a sample size of 354 was determined using Freund and Williams' formula. Two hundred and eighty-seven (287) respondents returned their questionnaires accurately completed. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and analysed using descriptive statistics. The Z-test was used to test the hypotheses. The findings indicated that social skills had a significant positive influence on communication with students in federal universities in South-South Nigeria ($Z = 11.171, p < .05$). The study concluded that social skills had a significant positive influence on instructional effectiveness, maintaining discipline, handling diverse learning needs, providing career guidance, and communicating with students in federal universities in South-South Nigeria. The study recommended, among other things, that federal universities in South-South Nigeria should incorporate self-awareness training workshops into academic staff development programmes to help lecturers identify their strengths, weaknesses, emotions, and teaching styles

Keywords: Academic employees' performance, communication, emotional intelligence, social skills.

Cite: Nicholas, O. E. U., Akpan, J. W. & Ubong, E. U. (2026). Effect of Emotional Intelligence on Academic Employees Performance in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria. *International Journal of Management Foresight and Strategy*, 4(7), 607-621. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.23611770>

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Introduction

Historically, employee performance was largely viewed from the perspective of intellectual ability, technical competence, experience, and the capacity to accomplish assigned tasks. Over time, scholars and organizations increasingly recognized that workplace effectiveness is also influenced by how employees understand, regulate, and respond to emotions (Matjie, 2025). Recent reviews describe emotional intelligence as a multidimensional capability involving awareness and management of one's emotions, understanding the emotions of others, and using emotional information constructively in interpersonal situations. In academic institutions, these capabilities are particularly relevant because academic employees constantly interact with students, colleagues, administrators, and other stakeholders while performing teaching, research, supervision, and administrative responsibilities (Khan & Khan, 2025).

From a global perspective, emotional intelligence has increasingly attracted attention in higher education because of its potential relationship with academic and workplace outcomes. Recent evidence from higher-education research indicates that emotional intelligence can contribute to engagement, interpersonal relationships, learning outcomes, and effective educational interactions. Suson et al. (2025), for example, found emotional intelligence to be a relevant predictor of learning performance in higher education, while recent reviews of educators' emotional intelligence show increasing scholarly interest in the role of emotional competencies in educational practice. These findings suggest that emotional capabilities can complement professional and cognitive competencies in achieving effective performance within academic environments.

In Nigeria, the importance of emotional intelligence has become increasingly evident within tertiary institutions, where academic employees operate under demanding teaching, research, supervision, and administrative responsibilities. Sifawa and Umar (2024), in their study of academic staff at Shehu Shagari University of Education, examined emotional-intelligence training and job performance and reported evidence supporting the relevance of emotional intelligence to lecturers' performance. Similarly, Asogwa and Oboreh (2024), studying academic staff in federal universities in South-East Nigeria, found positive and significant relationships between self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and academic staff job performance. These findings indicate that employees' ability to understand and manage emotional experiences may be relevant to effective performance in Nigerian higher education.

At the local level, the issue is particularly relevant to federal universities in South-South Nigeria, comprising Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, and Rivers States. Academic employees in this region are expected to manage diverse students, maintain effective relationships with colleagues, undertake research and publications, supervise students, participate in university administration, and provide other academic services. Evidence from the region is emerging: Olobia et al. (2025) examined lecturers in universities in Delta and Edo States and found a significant difference in the influence of emotional intelligence on lecturers' job productivity. Eguonor et al. (2025) also examined emotional intelligence and teacher job performance in Delta and Edo States, further demonstrating the growing regional interest in the relationship between emotional competencies and educational work performance.

Consequently, examining the effect of emotional intelligence on academic employees' performance in federal universities in South-South Nigeria is important because it provides an opportunity to establish how emotional capabilities relate to the effective discharge of academic responsibilities within the region. The study can particularly examine dimensions such as self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management in relation to academic employees' performance in teaching, research, student supervision, and institutional responsibilities. This focus also provides a basis for generating evidence that is specific to federal universities in South-South Nigeria, rather than relying entirely on findings from other regions or educational levels.

Statement of the Problem

Ideally, academic employees in federal universities should possess adequate emotional intelligence to manage their emotions, communicate effectively, maintain positive relationships, handle conflicts, and perform their teaching, research, supervision, and administrative responsibilities efficiently.

The problem, however, is that academic employees may experience difficulties in emotional regulation, interpersonal relationships, communication, work pressure, and managing diverse student needs. These challenges may affect how effectively they carry out their academic responsibilities in federal universities in South-South Nigeria.

If the problem is not addressed, it may result in poor lecturer-student relationships, reduced teaching effectiveness, weak teamwork, lower research productivity, ineffective student supervision, and declining academic service delivery. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the effect of emotional intelligence on academic employees' performance in federal universities in South-South Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of the study was to assess the effect of emotional intelligence on Academic employees' performance in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- i. Assess the relationship between Social Skills and communication with students in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following questions were raised for the study:

- i. What is the relationship between Social Skills and communication with students in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria?

Hypotheses of the Study

The following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

- i. Social Skills does not have a significant influence on communication with students in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria.

Significance of the Study

The findings of this study would be of immense benefits to the government, financial institutions, management consultancy firms, managers public and private enterprises, researchers, and job educators. Government would benefit immensely from the findings of the study during recruitment, selection, placement and promotion of lecturers. It would also open government's eye to the need for training and re-training of employees on emotional intelligence.

Managers and leaders of both public and private institutions would benefit from the findings of this study during recruitment, selection, placement and promotion exercises in their organizations. It would also assist them in devising appropriate tools to motivate their employees. Researchers would gain more insight on emotional intelligence and also identify areas for further research on emotional intelligence in this study.

Vice chancellors would benefit from the findings of this study during recruitment, selection, placement and promotion of their staff. It would also help them not to employ or post staff with temper tantrum to areas that need endurance and patience. Management of universities would have the understanding that some difficult, recalcitrant

and dull students are to be treated with love and care, which would in no small measure lead to improvement in their performance.

Finally, job educators (lecturers) would be able to regulate negative impulses and remain motivated on the job irrespective of poor salary, unfavorable work conditions and environment through the findings of this study. It would also give them the acumen or skill to handle dull, unserious, recalcitrant students, especially the opposite sex and co-workers. It would further assist them to become better leaders, co-workers, parents, husbands and wives.

Review of Related Literature

Conceptual Framework

Emotion

Emotion refers to a complex psychological response involving feelings, physiological reactions, thoughts, and behavioural tendencies that arise in response to situations or experiences. Niedenthal et al. (2025) explain that emotions play an important role in motivating behaviour and shaping how individuals respond to their circumstances. Recent research also recognizes that emotions involve processes such as appraisal, experience, expression, and action tendencies (Roseman, 2025).

Intelligence

Intelligence refers to the general mental capacity to learn, understand information, reason, solve problems, adapt to new situations, and apply knowledge effectively. Harden (2025) describes intelligence broadly in terms of remembering information, understanding meaning, applying learned knowledge, and solving novel problems. Matjie (2025) similarly identifies intelligence as the capacity to think, learn, reason, and solve problems.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize, understand, regulate, and appropriately use emotions in oneself and in interactions with others. Matjie (2025) explains that emotional intelligence involves recognizing, understanding, and managing emotions, while Savina et al. (2025) emphasize emotional skills such as perceiving, understanding, and regulating emotions. In an academic workplace, emotional intelligence therefore enables academic employees to manage their emotions, understand students and colleagues, maintain effective relationships, and respond appropriately to interpersonal situations.

Component of Emotional Intelligence used in the study

Social skills

The assumption that social skills are necessary ingredients of collaborative learning is well established but rarely empirically tested. In addition, most theories on collaborative learning focus on social skills only at the personal level, while the social skill configurations within a learning group might be of equal importance. Social skills are crucial for effective communication and interaction, encompassing verbal and nonverbal cues, empathy, and understanding social cues, which are essential for students to build relationships, navigate social situations, and succeed academically and socially (Notari et al., 2023).

Social skills are the skills that are used by human beings to interact and communicate with others to assist status in the social structure and other motivations. Social rules and social relations are created, communicated, and changed in verbal and non-verbal ways creating social complexity useful in identifying outsiders and intelligent breeding partners. The process of learning these skills is called socialization. The development of social skills constitutes a major area of child development. Deficits, delays or disturbance in social behaviours may either be the cause or consequence of developmental disabilities in toddlers and young children. Their linguistic, pre-academic and/or

academic failures distance them from their age peers in many social-play situations. It may be that their social-play skills are deficient, thereby leading to non-acceptance by their peers, or it may be that other children are not accommodating to their vagaries in social situations (Baliga, 2016). Social skills are the skills that are used by human beings to interact and communicate with others to assist status in the social structure and other motivations. Social rules and social relations are created, communicated, and changed in verbal and non-verbal ways creating social complexity useful in identifying outsiders and intelligent breeding partners. The process of learning these skills is called socialization. The development of social skills constitutes a major area of child development. Deficits, delays or disturbance in social behaviours may either be the cause or consequence of developmental disabilities in toddlers and young children. Their linguistic, pre –academic and/or academic failures distance them from their age peers in many social -play situations. It may be that their social-play skills are deficient, thereby leading to non-acceptance by their peers, or it may be that other children are not accommodating to their vagaries in social situations. Social skills are defined as interpersonal behaviors that help the individual in society.

Social skills are specific behaviors, exhibited by children in free play or academic situations, which initiate or maintain social interactions with others. Social skills are discrete, teachable behaviors that are associated with direct measures of social competence, and as such serve as ‘building blocks’ for the establishment of interpersonal relations, effective social participation, and cooperation or affiliation with peers and others. Important social behaviors include greeting others, sharing, asking for assistance when needed, initiating conversations, giving complements, following games and classroom rules, being able to talk about such things as current movies and television show, having sense of humor, helping classmates, and knowing current slang words. Unacceptable social behaviors include not responding to peer social initiations, misinterpreting the approach behaviors of peers, and entering games of group activities uninvited. Since many children with special needs do not have the social skills necessary to interact positively with their peers, it seems imperative that teachers assess their levels of social skills and begin remediation of deficits. In addition to any deficits in cognitive, motor, language and other development areas, young children with disabilities typically exhibit problems in social skills. When placed in mainstreamed settings, many preschoolers with disabilities interact infrequently and incompletely with other children. The procedure involves teaching non-disabled peers to direct social overtures to their classmates with disabilities. Social skills are discrete, observable, and teachable behaviors that initiate and sustain social interaction and that are decently associated to measures of social competence (Odom *et al.*, 2019), for all children social skills include social initiations (behaviors that direct attention to another individual and that set the occasion for social interaction), social responses (behaviors that follow social initiations and that establish an interaction with the initiator), and maintenance responses (behaviors that extend a social interaction beyond the initiation/response sequence). Social skills also include social problem solving skills (identification and resolution of interpersonal conflict), pro-social skills (sharing, giving assistance, expressing affection), and other components of social discourse. Social skills including responses that are verbal, meteoric, or gestural; each is identified as ‘social’ to the extent that it establishes or maintains interaction with one or more partners (Baliga, 2016).

Academic Employees Performance

Academic employees’ performance refers to the extent to which lecturers effectively and efficiently accomplish their assigned academic responsibilities and contribute to the objectives of their university. These responsibilities commonly include teaching, research and publication, student supervision or academic advising, administration, and community service. Recent Nigerian research identifies teaching, research, academic advising, and administration as important components of lecturers’ job performance (Ojo *et al.* 2024).

Similarly, Olayiwola and Osasona (2026) examined lecturers’ performance through teaching, research and publications, and community service, reporting that these dimensions were significantly related to institutional goal achievement. Aduma *et al.* (2026), in research involving universities in Cross River State, also assessed academic

staff performance in terms of teaching, research, and community service, reinforcing the importance of these activities in evaluating academic employees' effectiveness.

Communication with students

Effective communication between teachers and students fosters a positive learning environment, improves academic performance, enhances social skills, and ultimately contributes to student success both academically and personally. Clear communication is integral to effective problem-solving, enabling students to express challenges and engage in constructive dialogue. Confidence Building: Effective communication builds confidence, encouraging active participation and assurance in learning tasks. Effective communication is crucial for successful learning, extending beyond academic subjects to shape well-rounded individuals. This piece explores the importance, impact, and reasons why cultivating robust communication skills are vital in the classroom. Communication encompasses listening, understanding, and expressing ideas clearly. In the classroom, strong communication skills contribute significantly to academic achievement, social development, and future career success (Gavin, 2024).

The educational institution is a social system in which stakeholders interact within a given system of values and rules. These bodies operate within the educational institution. The teachers' association is the main management body of the educational institution, because it deals with the key issues relative to its operation. It is a collective body made up of all school teachers in all forms of working relationships and is chaired by the head of the educational institution (Brinia, 2012). The issue of defining an effective educational institution is particularly complex. The school effectiveness is defined as the ability of the educational organization to achieve its goals with the least possible waste of resources or with the body's ability to provide resources. Communication, as a concept, has attracted the interest of scholars and researchers of different scientific fields and backgrounds. Communication constitutes a crucial factor in each organization and has great importance for goal achievement in each organization as the persons involved cultivate a team spirit and unite their forces by communicating with each other. They obtain a common vision and manage their behaviors so that they correspond to their common goals. Communication in the educational institution is the basis on which the educational practice is built. It is the process that leads to the achievement of its goals. Educational organization has its own culture that determines the communication climate, such as the atmosphere and conditions within which ideas, information, actions, and feelings are exchanged. Effective communication presupposes an open communication climate that provides security to people and will encourage them to take initiatives aimed at improving the functioning of the organization. In this climate, the communicating members develop equal communication relationships with each other and learn to cooperate and understand each other.

Communication is the cornerstone of human interaction, enabling the exchange of ideas, thoughts, and information. In the realm of education, effective communication is not merely a beneficial attribute; it is a fundamental skill that shapes students' academic achievements and paves the way for success in various facets of life. From classroom discussions to presentations, from group projects to job interviews, proficiency in communication empowers students to navigate challenges, collaborate effectively, and express themselves with clarity and confidence. Effective communication enhances learning outcomes by facilitating comprehension and knowledge retention. Students who can articulate their thoughts clearly are better equipped to engage in discussions, ask questions, and seek clarification when needed. Moreover, clear communication skills enable students to express their understanding of complex concepts in exams and assignments, thereby improving academic performance (Jeevan, 2024). Effective communication and common understanding about roles and responsibilities is important to the optimization of a system. When one component, function, or subsystem benefits without concern for the impact on the total system, then the total system is sub-optimized. The objectives of the system must be clearly communicated to all and consistent with the needs of the system's customers. A school is a system that should be optimized. Some of the school activities may not contribute to the objectives of the total system: optimizing the extracurricular and

assigning extra resources to one department may optimize the total system or may damage the curricular programme. It must be noted that each action taken for the improvement of one function has implications for the others. Therefore, schools must communicate regularly with the students, parents, and other stakeholders, informing them of the progress of the students and challenges of the school (Emenike, 2023).

Education is the cornerstone of development in any society, and effective communication plays a pivotal role in shaping the academic landscape (Zardari and Ali, 2023). Effective communication strategies could potentially catalyze improving academic outcomes in these schools. Communication practices in the educational context encompass various activities, including teacher-student interactions, peer-to-peer communication, school-parent communication, and educational technology. These practices influence the flow of information, feedback, and support within the school ecosystem, ultimately affecting students' learning experiences and academic outcomes. Effective communication between teachers and students is not merely a pedagogical tool but the very bedrock upon which a vibrant and successful learning environment is built. This facet of communication encompasses more than just the impartation of knowledge; it extends to providing guidance, feedback, and, crucially, nurturing a supportive and respectful rapport (Han & Tosten, 2016).

Theoretical Framework

- i. The John Mayer (1990) and Mixed theory of EI by Daniel Goleman (1998) guided the study

Mixed Theory of EI - Daniel Goleman (1998)

Goleman (1998) mixed theory focused on EI as a wide array of competencies and skills that drive leadership performance. EI competencies are not innate talents, but rather learned capabilities that must be worked on and can be developed to achieve outstanding performance. Goleman posited that individuals are born with a general emotional intelligence that determines their potential for learning emotional competencies. The theory is described as mixed because the theorist re-conceptualized EI as a combination of trait and ability theory. Goleman (1998) developed the new theory because of the limitations and criticisms of the (1995) theory for not considering empathy as a separate domain. Empathy, which is an independent and indispensable skill in the discourse of EI was incorporated in the domain of social-awareness in the (1995) theory. This made the construct of empathy not fully explored in subsequent researches using Goleman's (1995) theory. However, Goleman's research over the years has allowed him to modify and re-categorize the domains of EI. The theorist currently asserts that, there are five main EI constructs:

- a. self-awareness: the ability to know one's emotions, strengths, weaknesses, drives, values and goals and recognize their impact on others while using gut feelings to guide decisions.
- b. self-regulation: involves controlling or redirecting one's disruptive emotions and impulses and adapting to changing circumstances.
- c. motivation: being aware of what motivates them.
- d. The relevance of the mixed theory to the present study is that, the theory considered the entire emotional intelligence variables or constructs outlined in the objectives of this study without variations in words usage. It also met the scientific criteria of a standard intelligence and was therefore adopted for the study.

Empirical Review

Sariet al. (2023) analyzed the influence of speaking skills on student social interaction at STIAB Jinarakkhita Lampung. The research method used was a quantitative study using questionnaires distributed to the active student population on the campus. The results showed that the ability to speak significantly influenced the social interaction of students at STIAB Jinarakkhita Lampung. Students with good speaking skills tend to express their thoughts and

ideas better clearly and in structure, facilitating effective communication in various social interaction situations. In addition, good speaking skills also affect students' ability to listen well and understand other people's perspectives. With good speaking skills, students can avoid misunderstandings and increase empathy for others, which in turn will strengthen healthy and harmonious social interactions in the campus environment. This research has important implications for academics and decision-makers at STIAB Jinarakkhita Lampung in designing strategies and activities to develop speaking skills for students. By improving speaking skills, it is hoped that social interaction on campus can be improved, create an inclusive environment, support each other, and contribute positively to students' educational experience at STIAB Jinarakkhita Lampung.

Saeediet *al.* (2024) examined the effect of a social skills-based blended education on the social adjustment, self-esteem and social skills of new nursing students. First-year undergraduate nursing students in Tehran, Iran, participated in this experimental study in 2023. Participants were selected from two classrooms, one as a control group (26 people) and the other as an intervention group (26 people). The study instruments included the California Personality Test, the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory and the Teenage Inventory of Social Skills. The social skills-based blended education was delivered in 10 sessions of blended education (traditional and virtual education). Data were collected at three stages including baseline, immediately and one month after the intervention. A significance level of 0.05 was used. According to the results, the average score of social adjustment and social skills of the students in the intervention group increased significantly from baseline to one month after the intervention ($P < 0.001$). In the control group, this variable did not increase significantly. The results of the two-way repeated measures ANOVA (comparing the effect of time and group) showed that social skills-based blended education can improve the overall average score of students' social adjustment and social skills ($P < 0.001$ and $P = 0.01$ respectively), but it had no significant effect on their self-esteem.

Kumari (2024) investigated the impact of extracurricular activities (ECAs) on students' social skills by conducting a "surgery" of 5 different students' daily routines. The study observed and recorded their participation in ECAs, including sports, music, and clubs, during the 2023 academic year. Our research material comprised 5 case studies, each representing a unique student profile. The study analyzed significant parameters such as time management, social interactions, and conflict resolution skills. The findings showed that Student-I demonstrated maximum time management skills, while Student-I exhibited exceptional social interaction skills. Student-III showed significant improvements in conflict resolution skills, while Student-IV and Student-Demonstrated excellent teamwork skills. Our results suggest that ECAs have a profound impact on students' social skills, and we recommend that educators and policymakers promote ECAs in school curricula.

Nkwusi (2024) examined the impact of social use and communication skills on academic performance among students of Imo state college of education, Nigeria. The study is a quantitative research which employed the stratified sampling technique with sample size of 100 students for the study. Data were collected using online google form and were analyzed using statistical tool (SPSS 25.0). Pearson Chi-square test of independence and Multiple Regression were used to analyze the data. Findings of the descriptive analysis revealed that, the level of communication skills and in academic performance were good. However, the level of social media use was moderate. therefore, all the variables significantly contributed to academic performance among students. The study revealed that, communication skills has the highest significant contribution to academic performance among students. The study recommended among other, that in other to minimize the limitation of self-reporting data, further study is required to adopt a qualitative research technique.

Rafida & Astuti (2024) measured the effectiveness of social skills training (SST) in improving students' interpersonal communication skills. A quantitative experimental method was adopted, using the Quasi-Experimental Design in the form of a Nonequivalent Control Group Design. Students from grade VIII MadrasahTsanauiyah (MTs) Negeri 3 Bantul were selected as respondents through purposive sampling and were analyzed using paired sample t-tests. The pre-

test and post-test results showed significant improvements in students' interpersonal communication skills in the experimental group, whereas no such improvements were observed in the control group. In conclusion, SST effectively improved interpersonal communication skills of students at MTs Negeri 3Bantul.

Gap in Knowledge

Despite the extensive research on the influence of emotional intelligence (EI) on students' academic performance and behaviors, there remains a significant gap in understanding how EI affects academic staff job performance in higher education contexts. Existing studies, such as those by Ashrafi *et al.* (2024) and Ramos and Angus (2024), have focused primarily on students, examining how self-awareness, self-regulation, and motivation influence their academic achievement. However, these studies do not address how these emotional intelligence components shape educators' professional performance, particularly in the realm of teaching effectiveness, classroom management, and student interaction. In the specific context of Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria, there is a lack of empirical evidence linking EI in job educators to their ability to maintain discipline, address diverse learning needs, or provide career guidance, all of which are vital components of effective teaching in higher education. This gap highlights an important area of inquiry for educational researchers to explore, as understanding how EI influences educators' job performance can provide valuable insights into improving teaching strategies and fostering a supportive learning environment.

Furthermore, while emotional intelligence has been linked to positive outcomes in students' behavior and academic performance, its role in enhancing academic staff communication with students and their overall job performance remains underexplored. Studies like those by Saeedi *et al.* (2024) and Suman *et al.* (2023) have examined the effects of social skills and empathy on student-teacher relationships, but these findings have not been extended to how educators can use these skills to enhance their professional effectiveness in a university setting. In South-South Nigeria, where the educational landscape is unique and challenging, understanding the role of educators' EI in handling classroom dynamics, improving student engagement, and facilitating career development can significantly improve the overall educational experience. This lack of research into the application of EI within Nigerian higher education settings limits the practical strategies that can be employed to enhance academic staff teaching practices and their interactions with students, ultimately impacting the quality of education.

Methodology

The area of the study comprised of five (5) Federal Universities in South South, Nigeria namely - University of Uyo, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State; University of Calabar, Calabar, Cross River State; University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State; University of Benin, Edo State; and Federal University Otuoke, Balyelsa State. The study used the descriptive survey design approach. The primary source of data was the administration of questionnaire. A total population of the study (4478) consists of the Academic staff of Federal Universities in South-South Nigeria. The adequate sample size of three hundred and fifty-four (354) using Freund and William's statistic formula at 5 percent margin of error. Two hundred and eighty-four (284) staff returned the questionnaire and accurately filled. That gave 80 percent response rate. The validity of the instrument was tested using content analysis and the result was good. The reliability was tested using the Pearson correlation coefficient (r). It gave a reliability co-efficient of 0.760 which was also good. Data was presented and analyzed by mean score and standard deviation using Sprint Likert Scale. The hypotheses were analyzed using Z – test statistic tool.

Data presentation

The influence of Social Skills on communication with students in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria.

Table 1: Responses on the influence of Social Skills on communication with students in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria.

		5	4	3	2	1	ΣFX	-	SD	Decision
		SA	A	N	DA	SD		X		
1	Social skills enhance the abilities that facilitate interaction and communication with others effectively.	710	456	36	8	15	1225			Agree
		142	114	12	4	15	287	4.27	.997	
		49.5	39.7	4.2	1.4	5.2	100%			
2	Lecturers with strong social skills foster better student engagement and performance	635	536	21	28	5	1225			Agree
		127	134	7	14	5	287	4.27	.866	
		44.3	46.7	2.4	4.9	1.7	100%			
3	Social Skills improves understanding and retention of lectures	480	500	14	83	16	1093			Agree
		96	125	7	43	16	287	3.84	1.200	
		33.4	43.6	2.4	15.0	5.6	100%			
4	Social skills, such as active listening, conflict resolution, and non-verbal cues, determine how well information is exchanged and understood	475	204	222	60	37	998			Agree
		95	51	74	30	37	287	3.48	1.379	
		33.1	17.8	25.8	10.5	12.9	100%			
5	Social Skills Reduces cases of misinformation and administrative bottlenecks	800	236	36	22	45	1139			Agree
		160	59	12	11	45	287	3.97	1.473	
		55.7	20.6	4.2	3.8	15.7	100%			
Total Grand mean and standard deviation								3.966	1.183	

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Table 1, 256 respondents out of 287 representing 89.2 percent agreed that Social skills enhance the abilities that facilitate interaction and communication with others effectively with mean score 4.27 and standard deviation of .997. Lecturers with strong social skills foster better student engagement and performance 261 respondents representing 91.0 percent agreed with mean score of 4.27 and standard deviation of .866. Social Skills improves understanding and retention of lectures 221 respondents representing 77.0 percent agreed with mean score of 3.84 and standard deviation of 1.200. Social skills, such as active listening, conflict resolution, and non-verbal cues, determine how well information is exchanged and understood 146 respondents representing 50.9 percent agreed with mean score of 3.48 and 1.379. Social Skills Reduces cases of misinformation and administrative bottlenecks 219 respondents representing 76.3 percent agreed with a mean score of 3.97 and standard deviation 1.473

Test of Hypotheses

Test of Hypotheses Five: Social Skills does not have a significant influence on communication with students in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

		Social skills enhance the abilities that facilitate interaction and communication with others effectively.	Lecturers with strong social skills foster better student engagement and performance	Social Skills improves understanding and retention of lectures	Social skills, such as active listening, conflict resolution, and non-verbal cues, determine how well information is exchanged and understood	Social Skills Reduces cases of misinformation and administrative bottlenecks
N		287	287	287	287	287
Uniform Parameters ^{a,b}	Minimum	1	1	1	1	1
	Maximum	5	5	5	5	5
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.642	.659	.520	.331	.557
	Positive	.052	.017	.056	.129	.157
	Negative	-.642	-.659	-.520	-.331	-.557
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z		10.876	11.171	8.810	5.608	9.445
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

a. Test distribution is Uniform.

b. Calculated from data.

Decision Rule

If the calculated Z-value is greater than the critical Z-value (i.e. $Z_{cal} > Z_{critical}$), reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis accordingly.

Result

With Kolmogorov-Smirnon Z – value ranges from $5.608 < 11.171$ and on Asymp. Significance of 0.000, the responses from the respondents as displayed in the table was normally distributed. This affirmed the assertion of most of the respondents that Social Skills had a significant positive influence on communication with students in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria

Decision

Furthermore, comparing the calculated Z- value ranges $5.608 < 11.171$ against the critical Z- value of .000(2-tailed test at 95percent level of confidence) the null hypothesis was rejected. Thus, the alternative hypothesis was accepted which states that.

Discussion of Findings

Social Skills have a significant influence on communication with students

From the result of hypotheses Five, the calculated Z- value ranges $5.608 < 11.171$ against the critical Z- value of .000 which implies that Social Skills had a significant positive influence on communication with students in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria. In support of the result in the literature review, Sumanet *al.* (2023) examined the relationship between social skills and academic achievement of secondary school students. Keeping in view the nature of the study, the findings of the study are (i) it was observed that the female secondary school students are having more social skills than male secondary school students; (ii) it was also noted that the female secondary school students were found to have more academic achievement than male secondary school students; and (iii) there exists a significant and positive relationship between social skills and academic achievement of secondary school students. Sariat *al.* (2023) analyzed the influence of speaking skills on student social interaction at STIAB Jinarakkhita Lampung. The results showed that the ability to speak significantly influenced the social interaction of students at STIAB Jinarakkhita Lampung. Students with good speaking skills tend to express their thoughts and ideas better clearly and in structure, facilitating effective communication in various social interaction situations. In addition, good speaking skills also affect students' ability to listen well and understand other people's perspectives. With good speaking skills, students can avoid misunderstandings and increase empathy for others, which in turn will strengthen healthy and harmonious social interactions in the campus environment. Saeediet *al.* (2024) examined the effect of a social skills-based blended education on the social adjustment, self-esteem and social skills of new nursing students. The results of the two-way repeated measures ANOVA (comparing the effect of time and group) showed that social skills-based blended education can improve the overall average score of students' social adjustment and social skills but it had no significant effect on their self-esteem. Kumari (2024) investigated the impact of extracurricular activities (ECAs) on students' social skills by conducting a "surgery" of 5 different students' daily routines. The findings showed that Student-I demonstrated maximum time management skills, while Student-I exhibited exceptional social interaction skills. Student-III showed significant improvements in conflict resolution skills, while Student-IV and Student-Demonstrated excellent teamwork skills. Nkwusi (2024) examined the impact of social use and communication skills on academic performance among students of Imo state college of education, Nigeria. Findings of the descriptive analysis revealed that, the level of communication skills and in academic performance were good. However, the level of social media use was moderate. therefore, all the variables significantly contributed to academic performance among students. The study revealed that, communication skills has the highest significant contribution to academic performance among students. The study recommended among other, that in other to minimize the limitation of self-reporting data, further study isrequired to adopt a qualitative research technique. Rafida and Astuti (2024) measured the effectiveness of social skills training (SST) in improving students' interpersonal communication skills.

Summary of Findings, Conclusion, and Recommendations

Summary of Findings

- i. Social Skills had significant positive influence on communication with students in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria $Z(11.171, P < .05)$. This implies that academic staff with strong interpersonal abilities—such as active listening, clear expression, and relationship-building—communicate more effectively with students. These skills help create open, respectful, and supportive interactions that enhance student engagement and understanding.

Conclusion

The study concluded that Self-awareness, Self-regulation, Motivation, Empathy and Social Skills had significant positive influence on Instructional Effectiveness, maintaining discipline, handling diverse learning needs, providing career guidance, and communication with students in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria. The study on the Influence of Emotional Intelligence on Academic Staff Job Performance in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria explores how the ability of academic staff to recognize, understands, and manage their emotions and those of others affects their work performance. Emotional intelligence (EI) components such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills play a vital role in how lecturers handle classroom challenges, relate with students and colleagues, manage stress, and maintain professional conduct.

Recommendations

Based on the Findings, the following recommendations were proffered:

- i. Despite findings that social skills may not have a statistically significant influence on communication with students in Federal Universities in South-South, Nigeria, institutions should still encourage the development of interpersonal and collaborative skills among academic staff. While the direct impact may appear limited, strong social skills can enhance team teaching, mentorship, and campus culture, indirectly supporting a more engaging and supportive academic environment for students.

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