



Interpersonal Communication Skills in Shaping Academic Performance among University Students

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HIGHLIGHTS

- Communication skills are one of the most indispensable skills for students enrolled in academics for their holistic growth.
- The role of interpersonal communication in an educational setting is foundational for a smooth, successful learning process.
- Module, an extra-curricular activity designed to enhance communication skills, will prove picturesque for university students.

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Communication proficiency, Emotional expression, Undergraduate students, Academic outcomes, Communication levels.

<https://doi.org/10.48165/IJEE.2025.613RN01>

Conflict of Interest: None

Research ethics statement(s):

Informed consent of the participants

ABSTRACT

Excellent academic performers need good communicative students who must have the skill to represent their thoughts and ideas with clarity and confidence, whether verbally or non-verbally. It's about upholding skills of transmitting knowledge and information systematically channeled through the presentation of written form, easy for others to understand. The study aimed to find out communication skills academically and their value in encompassing academic performance among students enrolled in undergraduate courses in various faculties of Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi, 2024. Responses were obtained from 111 total respondents, both boys and girls, based on the communication skill inventory. The data was collected using a closed-ended self-structured questionnaire using a simple random sampling technique. The results were analyzed using SPSS version 16, which showed levels of achievement from moderate to high levels of communication skills in listening, speaking, reading, and presentation skills. The result shows that the majority of the students agreed that their communication skill level falls at a moderate level.

INTRODUCTION

A message when transmitted via a particular medium that involves systematic steps of sending to receiving, and then giving feedback as a whole is called communication; it is fundamentally applied to spheres of life (Katherasala & Rao, 2023). Communication is a compilation of multiple skills engaged in informing, educating, and motivating; it even works towards whisking, swapping, or modifying behavior. Interpersonal communication is said to be a set of affective cognitive, social behavioral skills through which individuals express emotions, and give and take information, they tend to do conversation to express themselves, it is the joint understanding among individuals for successful social survival

(Febrianita & Hardjati, 2019). Interpersonal skills are a pivotal factor in shaping communication which develops expertise in sharing opinions, emotions, and feelings. It improves relationships by deepening connections at home with family members, and at work improving teamwork cooperation, coordination, and decision-making, it helps and improves establishing relatedness between one another (Mali & Patil, 2023). The emergence of communication came with the revolution of humankind and it eventually became the most important of human life historically, humans constantly communicate even before they take birth they communicate through and inside the mother's womb. Communication makes it easy to be a social entity (Karasu & Faiz, 2020).

Academic achievements are often termed academic performance; they are a component generally used in terms of student academic performance in school, college, or university. It typically does not include music or sports but calculates the performance of students in the laboratory, library, or fieldwork (Chacko, 2019). Skill or knowledge-based performance of an individual in given certain criteria academically, which is decided by certain scores, grades, and marks distinct by the institution, school, or college, is called academic achievement. It is an important part of the academic life of an individual as it works as a pillar of strength and confidence through walks of life, it gives recognition and promotion, to individuals. Academic achievement of an individual cannot be ignored, indeed it acts as a source of motivation (Ramana & Kausalya, 2012). Nain & Trikha (2009) study highlights about training needs and preferences of farm journalists, regarding journalism for effective persuasion of communication and information flow through the means of journals and periodicals available from governmental and non-governmental sources, which demands a continuous flow of training for this professionalism and to produce crisp participatory communication. For participatory communication, the journalist and writer must gear up about their readers' mindset, context, and situation; they must be clear about the layers of journalism to be professional and develop a better understanding of their readers and audiences.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a cross-sectional research approach to investigate undergraduate students' interpersonal communication abilities and how they relate to academic achievement. 111 undergraduate students from Banaras Hindu University, a well-known university in India, took part. To ensure a broad sample, these students were enrolled in a range of three-year graduation courses. Because the participants' ages ranged from 17 to 25, people at various phases of their college studies could be included. A pre-structured questionnaire was used to collect data. This tool was painstakingly created to gather comprehensive data regarding the student's academic achievement and interpersonal communication abilities. The questionnaire was divided into several sections, each of which focused on a distinct facet of communication abilities, such

as empathy, active listening, rapport-building, verbal and nonverbal communication, and more. It also contained information about the student's academic achievement, including grades, attendance, and involvement in class activities.

To guarantee accuracy and consistency in data collection, the participants were given the questionnaire in a controlled environment. Participants received a briefing on the goals and methods of the study before the questionnaire was distributed. They were told that participation was entirely voluntary and that their answers would be kept private. All participants gave their informed consent. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20 was used to thoroughly analyze the gathered data. Because of its strong analytical skills, this statistical program is frequently utilized in social science research. Frequency, mean, standard deviation, and chi-square were computed to provide an overview of the participants' demographics, including age distribution. This made it easier to comprehend the overall traits of the research population and gave a clear picture of the sample's makeup. To establish statistical significance, a p-value criterion of less than 0.05 was established. Accordingly, a p-value below this cut-off would suggest a statistically significant outcome, giving assurance that the correlations found were not the result of chance.

RESULTS

The data indicates that a significant proportion of individuals (32.7%) do not find it characteristic to feel comfortable while speaking to strangers. However, a notable percentage (34.5%) find it moderately characteristic. A large proportion (37.6%) find it very characteristic to feel tense and insecure in most social gatherings. This indicates that social anxiety is a prevalent issue among the individuals surveyed. The data suggests that 32.7 per cent of individuals find it very characteristic to have difficulty getting along with new people, highlighting potential challenges in forming new social connections. A significant percentage (36.4%) of respondents agreed that they find it difficult to choose the right words to express themselves, indicating challenges in verbal communication. The table sheds light on various social behaviour traits, with a considerable number of individuals experiencing discomfort, tension, and communication challenges in social settings. These insights may be

Table 1. Distribution of respondents based on their emotions (relaxation or comfort level)

Particulars	Not all characteristics of me (%)	Not really characteristic of me (%)	Moderately characteristic of me (%)	Characteristic of me (%)	Very characteristic of me (%)
Feel relaxed and comfortable while speaking to strangers	19.1	32.7	34.5	6.4	7.3
Feeling tense and insecure in most social gatherings	16.5	18.3	26.6	0.9	37.6
Difficult to get along with new people	10.9	20.9	26.4	9.1	32.7
Difficult to find right word to express oneself	10.9	20.9	27.3	36.4	4.5

Table 2. Distribution of respondents on their perception of academic performance

Particulars	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
Communication Skills Impact Academic Performance	2.8	3.7	19.4	43.5	30.6
Communication Skills increase confidence, which directly boosts academic performance	1.8	2.7	10	49.1	36.4
Incorporation of communication skills in the curriculum will improve academic performance	3.6	3.6	16.4	45.5	30.9

valuable for designing interventions to improve social skills and reduce anxiety in interpersonal interactions.

Table 2 this demonstrates that the majority of respondents (74.1%) either agree or strongly agree that communication skills have an impact on academic performance, indicating a significant recognition of the importance of communication skills in educational contexts. A substantial proportion of respondents (85.5%) agree or strongly agree that communication skills boost confidence, which in turn enhances academic performance. This underscores the perceived interrelationship between communication skills, self-confidence, and academic success. The majority of respondents (76.4%) are in agreement or strongly agree that integrating communication skills into the curriculum will lead to improved academic performance. This suggests strong support for educational interventions that include communication skills training. The table reflects a strong consensus among respondents on the positive impact of communication skills on academic performance. Most individuals agree that communication skills not only directly affect academic success but also boost confidence, which further enhances performance. There is also considerable support for the inclusion of communication skills training in educational curricula to improve overall academic outcomes.

In the Table 3, the Communication level of students from urban areas was high. Less than a quarter of the respondents (21) who were from semi-urban areas said that their communication level was moderate. (20) Rural respondents agreed that their communication level was low. The chi-square test was computed to determine the association between students from different demographic areas and their communication skill levels. A null hypothesis was formed to 'there is no association between demographic area and student's communication skill level'. The analysis shows that the differences among students and their communication skill levels are significant.

$X^2(4, N=111) = 20.769, p = 0.000$. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. The study reveals that there is not any significant difference in communication skills between male and female students, it was found that they have similar levels of communication skills among, students from urban and rural backgrounds possessed to have alike communication level studying in university, but all the students enrolled have had fairly good catch communication proficiency Shah et al., (2020). The level of communication skills level between genders. Less than half of the female respondents (11.7%) said that their communication skills level is high followed by male respondents (15.95%) who thought that their communication skills level was moderate. The chi-square test was computed to determine the association between students from different demographic areas and their communication skill levels. A null hypothesis was formed to 'there is no association between male and female students and their communication skill level'. The analysis shows that differences among students and their communication skill levels are significant. $X^2(2, N=111) = 7.366, p = 0.025$. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 4 demonstrates those students whose communication skills were high and said that their communication skills are a factor in their academic performance. The chi-square test was computed to determine the association between communication skills and academic performance. A null hypothesis was formed to 'there is no association between level of communication skills and academic performance'. The analysis shows that differences among students and their communication skill levels are significant. $X^2(8, N=111) = 18.799, p = 0.016$. Thus, the null hypothesis was rejected. The majority of the students (20) whose communication skill level was on the moderate level agreed that their academic performance in classrooms as well as outside is an indicator of their communication skills.

Table 3. Communication proficiency levels were used to group individuals

	Score/Communication level (%)			Total (N=111)	p-value
	High	Moderate	Low		
Semi-urban	2.96	7.77	2.96	37	0.000
Rural	1.85	4.44	7.4	37	
Urban	6.29	5.18	2.22	37	
Total	30	47	34	111	
Identity	Communication level (%)			Total	p-value
	High	Moderate	Low		
Girl	11.76	10.08	9.52	56	0.025
Boys	4.95	15.95	9.35	55	
Total	30	47	34	111	

Table 4. Distribution of respondents based on their communication skills and academic performance

Communication level	Academic Performance					Total	p-value
	Agree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Strongly agree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)		
High	2.4	0.9	2.7	2.7	0.3	30	0.016
Moderate	9.4	4.23	5.17	2.39	0	47	
Low	6.12	1.02	2.72	0.34	1.36	34	
Total	46	15	28	17	5	111	

DISCUSSION

Sabbah's (2020) study suggests that there is no major difference in the communication skills of students enrolled in university based on gender or demographic factors, the study revealed that enrolled students had good command over communication because the university as an educational institution provides opportunities to its students to sharpen their skills through group discussion, interaction, and social communication at various stages. Braun (2021) highlights how a higher educational institution plays a crucial role in molding the communication skills of enrolled students, The University is giving importance to communication skills by declaring it as a competence to act for the procurement of knowledge and cognitive achievement. Haqwar et al., (2025) study was conducted on the usage of information and communication technologies which is one of the important tools for educational advancement, for accurate coding, storage, retrieval, dissemination, and transmission of data for enrichment of knowledge, improving decision-making capacity, problem-solving ability, positively impacting communication between student and teacher, the overall embrace of ICT can give expected outcomes, enhance and strengthen result in all around fields. Sikdar et al., (2025) investigated a study conducted among the students, stating that students were in favor of training programs specifically for communication in their initial academic years or before completion of the academic degree program. It is found in the study that students enrolled in universities come from rural backgrounds hold a strong grip on their industrial profession; they need profound communication skills, to upscale participation of students in the industry. there is an urgent need to develop courses, and training programs to sharpen communication especially oral and written communication skills. Yulikhah et al., (2019) successful communication is a major determinant of students' preaching, and learning though not all students have good command over interpersonal communication skills, it can be indeed achieved through developing self-concept and self-efficacy which means how students perceive themselves to be ideal selves.

Swanson (2018) explored the study speaks about the skills of university students regarding communication, they generally prefer face-to-face communication along with face-to-face interaction use of technology, the study reveals their mode of communication in various scenarios, for academic communication mostly students use email and text messaging, they rather use less social media like Facebook for academic communication, however, university students smartly merge technology innovativeness while communicating to improve the impact of communication. Meinam et al., (2023) study talks about students' educational aspirations among students and influencing factors. Academic achievement is said to be how a student, completely based on their ecosystem, mental attributes, and physical strength defines educational boundaries and how much goal has to be achieved, according to well-prepared plans within the academic context because ultimately the goal defined by students makes it different from other and defines its aura both personally and professionally. Sampithrao (2016) communication is highly influenced by self-concept and self-esteem, communication becomes smooth when these both are blended into it, and people tend to be more generous, understanding,

forgiving, responsible, and genuine. Communication becomes gracious when a person is clear about self-concept which indicates involvement of self attributes like inner confidence, thoughts strengths, and weaknesses it, is not merely limited to physical involvement. Students who are pro in this skill have good command over language through which they explain their ideas better which is fundamental for social and professional success. Besides this can be recommended to teach communication skills as part of the curriculum or vocational skills in faculties of the university which will enhance students' written, and speaking skills primarily followed by listening skills.

CONCLUSION

Students enrolled in universities must be given exposure to vocational activities for communication skill learning from the early years of enrollment to prepare them for the challenges of the globalized world and open new platforms to work professionally. Interpersonal communication skills are essential for the maintenance of human relations in the social system with the workplace, community, friends, and family. Students enrolled in higher education tend to develop their relations with their peers, teachers and outside based on many factors like family, language, ethnic group and culture, political influence, and most importantly interpersonal communication skills. The role of interpersonal communication in an educational setting is foundational for a smooth successful learning process. The key factor is, that communication when practiced in a classroom setting between educators and students creates a positive atmosphere enforcing an environment of understanding, self-esteem, concentration, and closeness, impacting altogether the academic settings.

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