

Communication Competence and Academic Achievement: Evidence from Higher Education Institutions

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ABSTRACT

Aim of the Study: The present study aimed to examine the relationship between communication competence and academic achievement among students in higher education institutions. It specifically focused on understanding students' perceptions of their oral and written communication skills and determining how communication competence is associated with their academic performance.

Methodology: The study was quantitative in nature and employed a descriptive survey research design. Using proportionate stratified random sampling, a representative sample of (n=331) students (both male and female) of four Sciences and four Social Sciences departments were selected from two public sector and two private sector universities. A self-structured 40-item questionnaire was developed to collect data from respondents.

Findings: The study identified a positive and statistically significant relationship between communication skills and academic achievement. Students who possessed stronger communication abilities tended to perform better academically than those with limited communication skills. The findings further showed that verbal, written, and interpersonal communication competencies contribute to improved classroom interaction, comprehension, and learning performance.

Conclusion: The study concluded that communication competence plays a vital role in improving students' academic achievement at the higher education level. Strengthening both oral and written communication skills can significantly enhance students' academic outcomes. The study therefore recommends that higher education institutions promote communication skill development through academic activities, workshops, and training programs to enhance students' overall academic performance.

Keywords: Communication Competence, Communication Skills, Academic Achievement, Students, Higher Education Level.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Communication is an important factor in all institutions. Communication allows students to sharpen their skills of thinking creatively and critically thereby improving their language proficiency (Braun, 2021). Through thinking of their ideas and expressing them using language, students become better at expressive, artistic, and logical thinking, as well as problem solving, and expand their groundwork of written, spoken, and representative language use. These are skills that support independent and lifelong learning that emerge as students employ language to examine their ideas and to transfer them from the personal space to the public sphere (Susilowati et al., 2022).

Furthermore, Purnell (2018) asserted that effective communication is an important factor that contributes to academic success, especially in higher Education, as group work and active participation are crucial. The relationship between the communication skills of students and their performance, bearing in mind that effective communication guarantees increased participation during discussions, easier group project implementation, and better understanding of intricate ideas. Academically, the good communicators among them perform well because they can express themselves, understand lectures better, and think critically. Outside the campus as well, communication skills are increasingly becoming imperative in today's era of global integration, having a direct bearing on job readiness and professional competence. Reith-Hall and Montgomery et al. (2022) were of the view that communication workshops and training programs should be enacted to enhance students' communications skills which is bound to influence their academic performance.

Good communication skills are required to succeed academically and achieve success. People with good communication skills are effective communicators who are able to handle various social situations (Kucuk, 2023). Only if an individual is assertive, responsive and versatile/flexible can that individual be viewed as an efficient communicator. Communicative skills can be acquired only by listening and by practice (Radovic & Salamzadeh, 2018).

In the view of Bahrain et al. (2023), science, engineering, and medical professional courses in developing countries tend to ignore communication skills, focusing instead on the content itself and not the way it is delivered. Due to their inefficient interpersonal skills, students possessing excellent technical knowledge are not able to communicate with others within groups or through interviews. Proper relationships can be developed through effective communication skills. These speech and language impairments not only complicate learning, but also affect social skills such as friendship and self-confidence building. Students with good communication skills and high levels of self-confidence might be motivated to work harder and perform well academically. Further, Allahyar et al. (2022) explained, the students who are more willing to communicate also have a high chance of taking initiative and hence their teachers provide them with positive feedback and the unwilling ones with negative feedback. Differences in the proficiency levels of communication skills can enhance scholarly performance in various ways. Oral communication may take various forms, ranging from informal discussions that happen at random and, for the most part, the information cannot be prepared in an organized setting. Various coursework like class presentation, engaging in discussion and meetings in groups form one of the primary contributing factors towards academic success and are generally addressed under oral communication. By communicating well, students can acquire the proper skills, and their concepts, ideas, and initiatives can be molded through effective communication. The verbal communication skills of students can also enhance their presentation skills (Ismayilli, 2025). By acting as an effective communicator, a student capable of engaging confidently in coursework with multiple requirements of personal and academic performance. When students walk into a classroom for the first time, even though they are able to comprehend what the lecturer is saying, they are still nervous about their own speaking skill due to their poor communication skills. Therefore, oral communication ability influences students' academic performance and then, the individuals who possess higher oral communication ability may have a higher GPA and CGPA (Susilowati et al., 2022). The skills that are involved in communication are the capacity to utilize language effectively.

These are the skills that the student should equip themselves earlier than they enter the workforce world. These skills are valuable in enabling students to excel academically (Suyatna & Jalmo, 2023).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Communication competence is considered a fundamental skill for success in higher education, as it enables students to express ideas clearly, engage in academic discussions, participate in collaborative learning, and perform effectively in written and oral assessments. In higher education institutions, students are expected to demonstrate strong communication competence, including both oral and written skills, to achieve satisfactory academic performance and meet academic expectations.

However, evidence suggests that many students in higher education institutions face challenges in developing adequate communication competence. Difficulties in speaking fluently, presenting ideas confidently, writing academically, and organizing thoughts effectively may hinder their participation in learning activities. These deficiencies in communication competence can negatively affect students' academic engagement and ultimately their academic achievement. Therefore, the present study seeks to address this gap by examining communication competence and its relationship with academic achievement among students in higher education institutions.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The following were the objectives of the study;

- i. To explore students' perception about their oral communication skills.
- ii. To identify students' perceptions about their written communication skills.
- iii. To analyze the relationship between students' communication competence and their Academic achievement.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Role of Communication Competencies in Education

Good communication skills are an ingredient for success in the tertiary level. Not only do they improve performance in school, but they also equip students for the business world. They include verbal, non-verbal, and written communication, all of which are components of the way students communicate with fellow students, teachers, and the larger academic society (Asemanyi, 2015).

2.1.1 The Impact of Communication Skills on Academic Performance

Gaining Efficiency in communication is necessary in order to perform well in education. Students are able to communicate their thoughts orally by way of presentations, debates, and class discussions. Further, several written communications such as essays, study papers, and reports require mastery over the subject along with high-level integration of ideas. Oral messages are supplemented by body language and eye contact that facilitates the learning environment. The connection between effective communication and achieving higher grades is backed up with evidence. Students engaged in intense verbal exchanges appear to have better grades (Sonnenschein & Ferguson, 2020). These assertive communicators tend to find themselves forced into deeper involvement and engagement with the subject matter being discussed or studied. Active engagement has a twofold function – improving comprehension while spurring more advanced thinking beyond elementary thought processes.

2.1.2 Communication Skills and Student Retention

Effective communication also serves as a major contributor to student retention. Students who have a good interaction with the learning community feel a deeper sense of belonging. It is an important aspect of academic persistence since students supported by peers and teachers tend to achieve their goals and stay committed to learning. Good communication skills assist students in forming strong relationships. These relationships allow them to access academic assistance, work on group assignments, and build

professional networks that can enhance their careers in the future (Amerstorfer & Freiin, 2021). The institutions focusing on communication skills provide a supportive and inclusive environment, improving students' chances of success and retention.

2.2 Adapting Communication Skills in a Changing Educational Landscape

Higher learning is changing, and students need to acquire communication skills that are technologically advanced and culturally diverse. Increased numbers of international students in learning institutions have made cross-cultural communication one of the facilities needed when building inclusive learning spaces. Students are supposed to become proficient in the skills of how they recognize and accommodate varying communication styles and practices while attempting to establish respect for one another. It is especially so in multicultural classes where learning is enhanced by multiple viewpoints for everyone (Lyu, 2024). Furthermore, learning within the field of communication technology is today at the helm of learning in the modern global world where the learners must become adept at netiquette as well as virtual teamwork. Good communication is central to college education, contributing to scholarship and enabling the individual to prepare for the encounter of future challenges. Hartfield et al. (2024) stated that through skill acquisition, the institutions can be in a position to achieve a better and richer learning environment. Irrespective of whether it is through verbal discourse, written texts, or the message communicated, communication is central to student achievement. Furthermore, Al-Mahrooqi et al. (2016) asserted that communication competencies in tertiary education encompass a complex interplay of skills that are fundamental to academic success and professional preparation.

2.2.1 Verbal and Non-Verbal Communication Dynamics

Bobkina et al. (2023) illustrate how proficiency in verbal communication encompasses far more than effective articulation to enhance to contextual responsiveness, where students are required to adjust their patterns of speaking based on varied classroom environments. This ability is especially vital during seminar debates, presentations, and tutorials. Besides verbal competence, Mahapatro and Chatterjee (2024) see the key role of non-verbal cues in academic communication, where the estimation of contribution to message construction by body language, facial signals, and gestural elements is placed at about 65%. It has been found that students whose verbal and non-verbal communication is congruent have significantly higher degrees of class room participation and perceived credibility.

Active listening is also a skill which surfaces in the literature as being crucial in the tutorial environment. Gilakjani and Sabouri (2016) defined active listening as an interactive cognitive process whereby students need to process information, create responses, and supply corresponding feedback simultaneously. This is a very important skill in tutorial tutorials and group discussions, whereby the capacity to listen over multiple viewpoints maximizes individual learning results as well as jointly constructed knowledge. Tustonja et al. (2024) also affirmed these facts by revealing the information that students who achieve strong active listening skills portray enhanced academic achievement and enhanced peer relationships.

2.2.2 Written Communication as an Academic Cornerstone

Iksan et al. (2012) strongly posited that writing proficiency is strongly linked to academic performance, as they observe that well-nurtured writing skills allow students to express advanced ideas, build coherent argument, and illustrate critical thinking. Their longitudinal study chronicles how academic writing intervention at the early-stage results in long-term gains in various disciplines.

Radović et al. (2023) also added weight to this argument, citing discipline-specific writing conventions as a central indicator of academic achievement. It is they who argue that ability in writing must be defined in specific areas of study, given that requirements differ very considerably between humanities, sciences, and professional fields. The education revolution on the internet has brought new heights to the art of written communication. Recent studies dictate the increasing role of digital literacy in academic writing, such as the skills needed in online discussion forums, the proper use of email, and composing shared

documents. These types of writing ask students to modify their style of communication for different online media while remaining professional and academic (Chanda & Shogbesan, 2024).

2.2.3 Intercultural and Emotional Dimensions of Communication

As there is more globalization of higher education, Hossain (2024) explained that cultural intelligence is a critical ability to allow multiculturally diverse learning environments, where students must decipher and accommodate diverse communication norms and expectations. Intercultural communication competence functions optimally in multicultural group work, in which communication styles can cause conflict or profound results of learning, depending on intercultural sensitivity among the participants of courses. Wang (2023) added to this viewpoint through the consideration of the potential of emotional intelligence in communicating in the classroom, as he shows that students with growing self-awareness and empathy perform better at academic relationship and conflict resolution. Further, Swartz et al. (2020) theorized an integrated model in which emotional intelligence ensures the quality of intercultural communication in international classrooms and teamwork projects. Students whose cultural sensitivity overlaps with emotional regulation skills provide higher productivity in international classroom environments and team projects.

2.3 Communication Skills, Determinants of Academic Achievement

Three broad dimensions wherein communication skills determine academic achievement are: cognitive engagement, collaborative learning, and persistence in studying (Scager et al., 2016).

2.3.1 Cognitive Engagement and Knowledge Construction

Good communicators verbally are those students who most clearly explain abstract concepts, which academic study identifies to facilitate their own comprehension and memorization of course material (Shah et al., 2020). The act of explaining course material requires students to reason about information in a logical order, recognize relationships among concepts, and consider the coherency of argument - all higher-order cognitive processes critical to academic success.

Written communication also facilitates intellectual development by means of what has been described by scholars as the "writing-to-learn" effect. By writing academic reports and essays, students perform recursive operations of synthesis, analysis, and revision of data which significantly enhance subject matter understanding (Schneider, 2021). Writing courses have students who think critically and measurably better, because the written word requires care in expression and strict evidentiary backing for assertions. Intellectual benefits include more than lone assignments, creating transferable skills that enhance performance across the subject range.

2.3.2 Peer Learning and Knowledge Sharing

Amalia (2017) indicated that students with effective interpersonal communication skills gain more from group work and peer learning environments. These students are able to effectively share their ideas, hear and make use of others' contributions towards creating synergy learning environments where collective knowledge is larger than individual knowledge.

Nonverbal communication is also essential in teams. Bambaeroo and Shokrpour (2017) discovered that students embracing positive body language and active listening capabilities create more effective group relationships. Their study records the ways non-verbal signals enable turn-taking, demonstrate understanding or puzzlement, and create psychological safety - all of which contribute to collective knowledge creation quality. Competent communication groups have 25-40% improved performance on collaborative tasks than communication-burdened groups.

2.3.3 Academic Resilience and Help-Seeking Styles

Communication competence is a strong predictor of student graduation and persistence. Shaibou (2024) discussed the high correlation of students' communication competency with passing through difficult

academic times. Students who are able to explain their issues and seek help clearly have very high graduation rates, especially among high-risk populations.

The process of help-seeking is dependent largely on communication skill on many levels. Students have to identify and accurately diagnose academic issues, and be in a position to effectively explain the issues to peers, tutors, or lecturers. Study shows that communication-skilled students are likely to pose requests for help in ways that attract productive assistance (Vani & Naik, 2023). Communicative competence provides access to academic resources and builds supportive relationships with faculty members - the two most significant predictors of student persistence in higher education. The cumulative studies highlight communication skills as multifaceted contributors to academic success. Ranging from broadening independent thought to fostering effective collaborations and facilitating persistence, communication skills work across channels to affect student success. These outcomes necessitate the need for institutions that aim to enhance academic success to focus on developing balanced sets of communication skills across curricula and student support services.

2.4 Theoretical Foundations Linking Communication Competence and Academic Success

The theoretical underpinning of the link between communication competence and academic success is reinforced from a number of different theoretical approaches.

2.4.1 Social Learning and Constructivist Approaches

Social Constructivism provides a fundamental theoretical basis for the communication-achievement link. This model assumes that knowledge development is via social interaction and that communication is the dominant vehicle through which the collective sense-making occurred (Saleem et al., 2021). Students with good communication skills interact in the dialogic processes that underlie cognitive development more effectively under this paradigm. The theory describes how more verbally and nonverbally competent students achieve more academically - they are more competent participants in the social learning processes characteristic of contemporary pedagogy.

Explaining this further, Social Learning Theory describes how communication skills are acquired through observational learning procedures. Shang et al. (2023) illustrated that students learn essential communication skills through replicating teacher and high-achieving peers' behavior. This theoretical model provides an explanation for the correlation that has been observed between achievement and communication competence in the form that students who best imitate enhanced patterns of communication are best able to negotiate academic discourse communities. The theory presumes that detailed attention to model communicators can greatly augment students' own communication abilities and ensuing achievement.

2.4.2 Motivational and Transactional Frameworks

Expectancy-Value Theory provides significant understanding of communication and achievement motivational processes. This theoretical stance assumes that students' self-perceptions of communication competence are causally related to academic motivation and persistence (Saleem et al., 2021). Those who have a positive self-perception of being good communicators report higher motivation to engage in class discussion, ask for clarification, and engage in other communications intensive activities that promote understanding. The theory is able to account for empirical evidence that communication self-confidence is a predictor of academic success, distinct from the communication ability.

The Transactional Model of Communication offered a dynamic theory of classroom communication. Horn (2023) used this model to explain how classroom communication is a continuous two-way process in which meaning is collaboratively constructed. The model explains how breakdowns in communication interfere with the teaching-learning process, while good communication habits create virtuous cycles of understanding and success. This theory places a focus on the construction of teacher and student communication skills to build educational performance.

2.4.3 Competence-Based and Feedback Strategies

Feedback Intervention Theory sheds light on the central importance of communication to formative learning. Mamnoun & Nfissi (2023) illustrated how the theory describes the apparent connection between quality communication and performance in academic studies. Specific, accurate, and correct feedback identifies the secret of successful communication, allowing learners to comprehend more and adjust performance accordingly. The theory accounts for how communication competence at both recipient and sender levels affects the efficiency of feedback processes triggering learning improvement.

Theories of Communication Accommodation and Communication Competence bring further explanatory capabilities. Yong (2010) demonstrated how the learners' competence to accommodate their communication skills to various environments for learning (accommodation) and overall level of communication competence directly affect learning outcomes. The theories can account for why more communicatively flexible and competent students show more academic attainment in diverse learning settings. The models imply that the cultivation of adaptive capacity through the development of core communication skills should be the focus for pedagogical interventions designed to boost attainment.

The convergence of these theoretical paradigms offers strong evidence for the central role of communication in academic achievement. As Munawaroh et al. (2022) summarized, all of these complicated theories are in agreement on theoretically grounded, international approaches to developing communication skills in higher education. By basing pedagogic practice on these evidence-based models, colleges and universities are better able to leverage the potential of communication to augment learners' achievement and outcomes across the curriculum and across various learning environments.

2.5 Barriers to Effective Academic Communication

2.5.1 Confidence and Cultural Barriers

Communication apprehension is a major psychological block in learning environments. Bukhari et al. (2023) illustrated how fear and anxiety hinder learners from engaging actively during debates or questioning, thereby closing their doors to learning opportunities. The fear leads to a self-reinforcing spiral where lack of participation means low practice in communication and therefore reinforcing confidence deficits. Cultural differences worsen them, as Zhang (2023) pointed out how different norms of communication between cultures cause misunderstandings and participation gaps. Collectivist culture students, for example, might not take part in individualistic class debates, seeming disinterested while actually adhering to cultural norms of communication.

2.5.2 Technical and Language Barriers

Language competence is an inherent barrier to most students, especially in foreign study environments. S Alqurashi and A Althubaiti (2021) recorded how limitations in language foster frustration and loneliness, reducing the willingness of students to participate in academic discourse substantially. Such difficulties also exist with expert vocabulary used in jargon and technical language where Patoko and Yazdanifard (2014) illustrated how use of unfamiliar expert vocabulary generates gaps in understanding. Without lecturers explaining or situating technical words, learners lose grip of elementary concepts, becoming disconnected and encounter academic issues. This block is especially challenging in the sciences and mathematics where technical language is heavy and frequently a prerequisite for the comprehension of fundamental ideas.

2.5.3 Environmental and Feedback Barriers

The feedback process is another general communication barrier in learning environments. Reddy et al. (2015) highlighted how ineffective or ambiguous feedback leads to students doubting their performance and areas of improvement. Without tangible, direct feedback, students lack the instruction essential to develop their communication skills and academic writing.

2.5.4 Temporal and Stylistic Barriers

Time pressure is a key organizational obstacle to successful academic communication. Maas et al. (2021) demonstrated how abbreviated academic schedules abbreviate opportunities for substantial discussion, and personalized feedback. Rushed explanations and shallow encounters all too often result from this time pressure and do not result in profound learning. In addition, Park et al. (2012) illustrated how mismatched communication styles between teachers and students can generate misunderstanding and conflict. Direct and indirect communicators who convey messages without regard to style distort messages and generate frustration and disengagement. These differences in communication styles cross over frequently with cultural and personality differences and make complex classroom communication problems in diverse classrooms. The barriers to communication in the academic environment are intricate. Cáceres (2020), stated that it is integrally necessary to solve the barriers with a focus on psychological, linguistic, environmental, and organizational aspects. Effective solutions must be as integrative and holistic as the barriers themselves, as communication problems are typically not point-incident events but interrelated factors that reinforce each other's adverse effect on students' learning and participation

3. METHODOLOGY

The present study employed descriptive research design and survey approach. As reported by concerned Admission offices of the universities there were 2263 students, male and female of BS final semester Program in departments of Sociology, Psychology, Mass Communication, Education, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Computer Science.

According to Krejcie and Morgan's (1970), sample size was taken as 331. Stratified Random sampling method was used for selection of 331 BS Final semester students from department of Sociology, Psychology, Mass Communication, Education, Physics, Chemistry, Mathematics, and Computer Science.

In the light of literature review, a questionnaire consisting of 40 items was developed. To get the validity, experts' opinions were sought and for reliability, pilot testing was done. To ensure this, 40 students were pilot tested and were subsequently omitted from the primary study. The sample comprised 20 male and 20 female students at both public and private universities in Multan. Cronbach's alpha was 0.83.

Frequency distribution and percentages were used to analyze the demographic details. Inferential statistics, such as Pearson correlation coefficients, were employed in order to investigate the correlation among general communication skills. Independent samples T-test was utilized to compare the mean scores on communication skills between groups of students. One-way ANOVA was used to determine differences in communication skills scores among students from different academic fields. Mann-Whitney U test compared communication capability between two independent groups while Kruskal-Wallis H test identified differences between more than two independent groups.

This study was conducted in accordance with accepted ethical standards for research involving human participants. Prior to data collection, ethical approval was obtained from the relevant institutional authority, and permission was secured from the participating higher education institutions. The confidentiality and anonymity of participants were strictly maintained throughout the research process. No personally identifiable information was collected, and all responses were coded and analyzed in aggregate form. The data were used exclusively for academic and research purposes and were stored securely with access restricted to the research team.

4. FINDINGS

Table 1: *Demographic Information*

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	144	43.5%
	Female	187	56.5%
Department	Sciences	217	65.6%
	Social Sciences	114	34.4%
Academic Level	BS Final Year	331	100.0%
GPA	Mean (SD)	—	3.12 (0.45)
	Minimum – Maximum	—	2.10 – 4.00

Table1 presents the demographic information and academic performance of the respondents. Out of a total of 331 respondents, 43.5% (n = 144) were male and 56.5% (n = 187) were female. Department-wise distribution, 65.6% of the respondents (n = 217) were from the Sciences, while 34.4% (n = 114) were from the Social Sciences. All the respondents (100%) were from the BS Final Year. Academically, the mean GPA stood at 3.12 and the standard deviation at 0.45 with the worst and best GPAs achieved being 2.10 and 4.00.

4.1 Findings of Inferential Statistics

The researchers used descriptive and inferential statistics. Findings of inferential statistics, such as Pearson correlation coefficients, Independent samples T-tests, One-way ANOVA, Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis H test are discussed below.

Table 2: *Correlation Between Communication Skills and Student's Academic Achievements*

Variables	GPA	Oral Comm.	Written Comm.
1. GPA	1	.48**	.51**
2. Oral Communication Skills	.48**	1	.63**
3. Written Communication Skills	.51**	.63**	1

Note: $p < .01$ (2-tailed)

Table 2 showed all three variables have a significant positive correlation. GPA showed moderate positive correlations with both oral communication skills ($r = .48$, $p < .01$) and written communication skills ($r = .51$, $p < .01$). This means that students with higher communication skills both verbal and written are more likely to have higher academic achievement. Furthermore, strong positive correlation between the two communication skills ($r = .63$, $p < .01$) indicates students with good oral communication are likely to possess good written communication skills.

Table 3: *Independent Samples T-Test by Gender*

	Gender	Mean	SD	t-value	p-value
Written Communication	Male	3.64	0.98	-2.13	0.034
	Female	3.82	1.01		

Table 3 reports the outcome of an independent samples t-test regarding written communication skills based on gender. Statistical analysis showed a significant difference between male ($M = 3.64$, $SD = 0.98$) and female students ($M = 3.82$, $SD = 1.01$), $t(df) = -2.13$, $p = .034$. This finding shows that female students reported statistically greater written communication skills compared to their male peers. The variance, statistically significant at the $p < .05$ level, implies a possible gender-based difference in self-rated writing skills among students. It was found through the Independent Samples t-test that female students scored higher than male students in written communication skills, indicating a significant gender difference.

Table 4: One-Way ANOVA by Discipline

Source	SS	Df	MS	F	p-value
Between Groups	12.34	2	6.17	3.92	.021
Within Groups	514.89	328	1.57		
Total	527.23	330			

Table 4 reflects the outcome of one-way ANOVA performed to test the differences in communication ability among academic disciplines. The test showed a statistically significant difference between the groups, $F(2, 328) = 3.92$, $p = .021$. It suggests that the communication ability of students significantly differs based on their academic discipline. The $p\text{-value} < .05$ implies that at least one field is significantly different from the other fields in terms of self-assessment communication skills. But post hoc analysis would be needed to know which particular groups are significantly different from one another.

Table 5: Mann-Whitney U Test (Sciences vs Social Sciences)

Group	Mean Rank	U	p-value
Sciences	153.42	14025	.038
Social Sciences	178.11		

Table 5 shows the outcome of a Mann-Whitney U test for the comparison of confidence with written communication among students with science and social science backgrounds. The test showed that a statistically significant difference existed, $U = 14025$, $p = .038$, and that social sciences students (Mean Rank = 178.11) were higher than students of science (Mean Rank = 153.42). This finding indicates that social science students indicate much higher self-confidence in their written communication abilities than their science students. The difference at the $p < .05$ level points to a possible disciplinary effect on students' perceived writing ability.

Table 6: Kruskal-Wallis H Test by Departmental Affiliation

Group Variable	χ^2	df	p-value
Faculties	9.34	2	.002

Table 6 presents the outcome of a Kruskal-Wallis H test to identify differences in communication skills. The test indicated a statistically significant difference between departments, $\chi^2(2) = 9.34$, $p = .002$. This finding shows that communication skills significantly differ among departments, and hence it is possible that departmental context affects the establishment or recognition of communication skills. As the $p\text{-value}$ is below .01, the difference is extremely significant, and post hoc comparisons need to be undertaken to further explore which departments are different from each other. These results indicate that communication skills are significantly affected by gender, study discipline, and sector, and they are moderately positively correlated with academic performance.

5. DISCUSSION

This study's findings are consistent with a number of recent studies highlighting the value of communication competence for academic achievement. Zainuddin et al. (2024) concluded that class participation has a positive impact on improving students' self-confidence and academic achievement and the central contribution of communication in strengthening students' academic capabilities, which is corroborated by the present findings indicating the favorable effect of communication on students' engagement. In addition, Freeman et al. (2023) emphasized the function of questioning within the classroom, and it is fundamental to enhance student participation and academic achievement. Asnaini et al. (2025) also discovered that students who can read and write English are generally poor in speaking because they are afraid and lack confidence. All these findings are reflected in this study, which infers that students' reluctance to speak English constrains their communication growth. Obilor, (2020) emphasized the significance of brief communication, indicating that clarity in communication avoid misunderstandings and enhance participation in academic environments. Similarly, Nurse et al. (2025)

emphasized that deliberate practice needs to be utilized in order to acquire communication skill, which is consistent with the current study outcomes that the speaking skills of students are developed over time because they are offered additional practicing opportunities. Finally, the importance of communication towards academic excellence has been more or less established. Lajom et al. (2024) emphasized that students who are good at communicating have a higher chance of succeeding academically, an aspect corroborated by findings in the present study. Gerald and Joseph, (2024) also included communication skills among those mapping directly to academic success, further emphasizing that mastering these skills is essential for academic achievement.

6. CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship between communication competence and academic achievement among students in higher education and found that communication skills are closely associated with students' academic success. The results showed that both oral and written communication skills were positively related to students' GPA, indicating that students who communicate more effectively are generally more successful in their academic work. These findings suggest that communication competence plays an important role in helping students participate actively in classroom activities, express their ideas clearly, work collaboratively with peers, and develop higher-order thinking skills.

The findings support the view that communication competence is more than a language-related ability; it is a key academic competency that contributes to effective learning and overall educational achievement. Students who possess strong communication skills are better prepared to engage in discussions, deliver presentations, seek clarification when needed, and complete written assignments successfully. These abilities not only improve academic performance but also foster confidence, teamwork, and lifelong learning.

The study highlights the need for higher education institutions to give greater attention to communication skills across all academic programs. Universities should incorporate communication-focused learning activities into the curriculum, including academic writing, presentations, group projects, and interactive classroom discussions. Regular communication workshops, constructive feedback, and opportunities for practical application can further strengthen students' competence and improve their academic outcomes. Additional support should also be provided to students and disciplines where communication skills require further development.

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Conflict of Interest

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