STUDENTS-LECTURERS' RELATIONSHIP ON BUSINESS EDUCATION STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN NNAMDI AZIKIWE UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

The study ascertained the student-lecturers relationship on Business Education students' academic performance in Nnamdi Azikwe University. Three objectives, three corresponding research questions guided the study. Three null hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance. A descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. The population comprised 462 Business Education undergraduate students in the Department of Business Education. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select 214 students for the study. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire titled "Questionnaire on Students-Lecturer's Relationship on Business Education Students' Academic Performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University (QSLRBESAPNAU)". Reliability of the instrument was ensured by trial-testing it at Chuwkuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Anambra State. Cronbach Alpha was used to test responses from the trial-test, and it yielded coefficient values of 0.82, 0.85, and 0.87 for clusters one, two, and three, respectively. The mean value was used in answering the research questions, standard deviation was used to test the homogeneity or otherwise of the mean ratings. A benchmark Mean of 2.50 was used as a criterion for decision-making. Any item with a mean score of 2.50 and above was considered "Agreed," indicating a positive perception, while a Mean score below 2.50 was interpreted as "Disagreed. The t-test statistical tool was used to test null hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study revealed that the students-lecturer relationship in terms of effective communication, mentorship, and feedback significantly influences the academic

performance of business education students. The study concluded that effective communication, academic mentorship, and lecturer feedback are all positively perceived by students as important factors influencing their academic performance**.** The study recommended, among others, that lecturers should adopt effective communication strategies, strengthen mentorship practices, and provide timely feedback to improve students' academic performance.

Keywords: Students, lecturers' relationship, business education, and academic performance

Introduction

The positive productive students and lecturer rapport is a critical predictor of academic success, influencing educational institutions. Positive student-lecturers' relationships are one of the strategies to improve student engagement, motivation, and ultimately learning outcomes. This dynamic is particularly significant in higher education contexts, where the interplay of theoretical knowledge and practical application requires effective communication, mentorship, and guidance from lecturers. One of the leading institutions in Nigeria, the quality of the students-lecturers relationship seems to be a critical factor influencing the academic performance of Business Education students. This study seeks to explore the nature of this relationship and its implications for student success.

Students are central stakeholders in the educational process, and their academic success is closely tied to the quality of interaction they have with lecturers. In recent years, scholars have emphasized that the student-lecturer's relationship significantly influences students' motivation, self-efficacy, and academic performance (Czerkawski & Lyman 2020). Students in this Business Education program are aspiring professionals pursuing degrees in areas like accounting, marketing, human resource management, or entrepreneurship. Okoli and Okeke (2020) emphasize that the business education curriculum is developed to have hands-on tasks, crafting business plans, and conducting market research that demand frequent collaboration with lecturers. Onyekwelu and Onuorah (2024) pointed out that business education is more practical. Therefore, the course requires students to master both technical skills and soft skills, which will be achieved when there is a cordial relationship between students and lecturers.

When students perceive their lecturers as supportive and approachable, they are more likely to engage in meaningful academic discussions, seek clarification, and participate actively in class Arinze and Chukwuma, 2023). This supportive approach is likely to foster a sense of academic belonging in the students. which can be positively linked to better learning outcomes. Building rapport and mutual respect between students and lecturers contributes to students' academic confidence and persistence in their studies. Often face challenges such as academic pressure, financial stress, and psychological strain, but supportive relationships with lecturers can act as a buffer, providing guidance and emotional encouragement. In business education specifically, where real-world application, teamwork, and communication are vital, the relational dynamics between students and lecturers are particularly important for developing professional competencies and ensuring academic success.

The crucial role of lecturers as facilitators of both academic and personal development. According to Moore and Wardle (2020), lecturers serve not only as sources of knowledge but also as mentors, motivators, and role models. The ability of the lecturers to communicate effectively with their students can provide timely feedback and demonstrate empathy, strongly shaping the learning climate of a classroom (Trigwell, 2020). A lecturer in the business

education department is an academic professional with dual expertise in pedagogy and industry practice. Business education lecturers play vital roles in ensuring that our educational system achieves its objectives. Ekechukwu and Ifeanyichukwu (2021) opine that Lecturers play an indispensable role in shaping the future of their students and society at large by instilling values, knowledge, and skills that are beneficial to themselves and society. If lecturers cannot carry out these duties as expected by society, then the quality of education will be headed for disaster. When lecturers foster an environment of mutual respect and openness, students feel valued, which enhances their willingness to learn and perform well.

Lecturers who actively support student engagement, maintain positive attitudes, and build interpersonal relationships can significantly reduce dropout rates and improve academic resilience among students. The lecturer's attitude, teaching style, and relational approach play pivotal factors that interact with students' efforts to determine academic outcomes. In essence, the student-lecturer's relationship is a two-way dynamic that influences the quality of education and the success of academic goals in higher institutions. Effective communication, however, depends on the foundation of academic relationships. For business education students, the lecturer's role in facilitating understanding, offering mentorship, and maintaining approachability is especially impactful in shaping learning outcomes.

Business Education is a specialized field that equips students with the knowledge, skills, and competencies required to thrive in the dynamic world of commerce, finance, and entrepreneurship. Okoli and Okeke (2020) emphasize that business education programs are a broad and comprehensive discipline whose instructional program encompasses knowledge, skills, vocation and aptitude needed by citizens to effectively manage their personal businesses and function in the economic system. (Oguejofor, 2020) asserted that business education is an organized effort and activities of individuals to produce and sell goods and services for profit, ranging from a sole proprietorship to an international corporation. Paul-mgbeafulike (2023) views business education as the structured education that students receive in a school environment to equip them with the fundamental skills and abilities necessary to be informed consumers and efficient producers of products. Lecturers are expected to serve as role models, providing students with the tools and support necessary to navigate the complexities of the business world. Students, on the other hand, are expected to cooperate and respect their lecturers, thereby making them assimilate the subjects. Therefore, understanding how student-lecturer relationships influence the academic performance of Business Education students becomes central to improving educational strategies and outcomes. A crucial component of these relationships is communication.

Effective communication between lecturers and students fosters a conducive learning environment, facilitates clarity in instruction, and encourages the exchange of academic feedback. Communication is the act of transferring ideas, knowledge, and information to individuals or groups (Ashfague, 2020). A lecturer who encourages questions during lectures enhances comprehension. Conversely, hierarchical cultural norms in Nigeria may deter students from seeking clarifications, leading to knowledge gaps. Rabo (2022) asserts that most students are unable to communicate and expand their minds because of limitations imposed in the classroom by their teacher. When communication flows seamlessly, it creates opportunities for mentorship, a more personalized dimension of academic support.

Building upon the foundation of communication, mentorship plays a pivotal role in guiding business education students towards academic excellence. Mentorship involves sustained, goal-oriented guidance where lecturers advise students on academic challenges, career

planning and skill development. According to Dada (2020) significant relationship between academic mentoring and students' academic performance, emphasizing the role of mentorship in enhancing educational outcomes. However, there are some challenges in mentoring within Nigerian universities, including victimization and work-life imbalance, which can hinder effective mentorship. Despite these challenges, the positive impact of mentorship on students' academic performance remains significant. However, mentorship requires lecturers to invest time beyond teaching possess. Mentorship's value is magnified when paired with actionable feedback, ensuring students apply guidance to tangible tasks. Complementing communication and mentorship is the provision of timely and constructive feedback. Feedback refers to lecturers' evaluative responses to assignments, examinations, and projects.

In the Nigerian context, the relationship between students and lecturers is a multifaceted construct that encompasses various dimensions, including communication, respect, trust, and support. Conversely, poor relationships characterized by inadequate communication, lack of support, or perceived bias can hinder students' academic progress and overall satisfaction with their educational experience. These challenges include large class sizes, limited resources, and inadequate training for lecturers on effective communication and student engagement strategies (Okafor and Ezeani, 2021). The Department of Business Education seems to have produced graduates who excel in various sectors of the economy. However, recent observations suggest that the academic performance of some business education students has been inadequate, raising concerns about the factors contributing to this trend. Students' prior academic preparation, study habits, and socioeconomic background have been explored; the role of the student-lecturer's relationship remains under-examined in this context.

Despite the increasing acknowledgement of the pivotal role that the students-lecturer's relationship plays in facilitating academic success, a significant research gap persists regarding the dynamics of this relationship within the context of business education in Nigeria university. Unlike other disciplines, business education places a strong emphasis on practical skills such as teamwork, communication, and problem-solving, which are best developed through active engagement with lecturers. Therefore, the quality of the students-lecturer's relationship can have a profound impact on students' ability to acquire these skills and succeed in their academic and professional pursuits. This study seeks to address this gap by exploring the nature of the students-lecturer's relationship on business education students' academic performance.

The main purpose of the study was to explore the nature of students-lecturers' relationships and their impact on the academic performance of business education students. The study examined:

1. The influence of effective communication on the academic performance of Business Education students.
2. The influence of academic mentorship on the practical competency of Business Education students.
3. The influence of feedback on the academic outcomes of Business Education students.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. What is the influence of effective communication on the academic performance of Business Education students?

2. What is the influence of academic mentorship on the practical competency of Business Education students?
3. What is the influence of feedback on academic outcome of Business Education students?

Hypothesis

The null hypothesis was tested at 0.05 level of significance

1. There is no significant difference in the mean rating on the influence of effective communication on the academic performance of Business Education students with respect to gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the mean rating on the influence of academic mentorship on practical competency of Business Education students with respect to gender.
3. There is no significant difference in the mean rating on the influence of feedback on the academic outcome of Business Education students with respect to gender.

Methods

This study adopted descriptive research design. The descriptive survey design is suitable for studies that seek data on opinions, attitudes, behaviours, or characteristics of a group of people. According to Nworgu (2015), descriptive survey design is most effective when the objective is to describe and interpret conditions as they exist, thereby providing a clear picture of relationships among variables in a natural setting. The area of this study is Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State. The population of the study comprised 462 undergraduate students in the Business Education Department from 100 to 400 2025/2026 academic session. The stratified random sampling technique was adopted. The instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire designed by the researcher, titled "Questionnaire on Students-Lecturer's Relationship on Business Education Students' Academic Performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University (QSLRBESAPNAU). A 4-point Likert scale was used, Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1) respectively. The instrument was validated by three experts, one from Education Management and Policy and two department Business Education, all from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The reliability of the instrument was determined to ensure consistency and stability in measuring the constructions of interest using 20 Business Education students from Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (COOU), Igbariam Campus, who were not part of the main study population. Cronbach's alpha coefficient yielded 0.82, 0.85, and 0.87, respectively. The hypotheses were tested at a 0.05 level of significance. The data was analyzed using mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data collected. A benchmark Mean of 2.50 was used as a criterion for decision-making. Any item with a mean score of 2.50 and above was considered "Agreed," indicating a positive perception, while a Mean score below 2.50 was interpreted as "Disagreed."

Results

Research Question 1; What is the influence of effective communication on the academic performance of Business Education students?

Table 1: mean response on the influence of effective communication on the academic performance of Business Education students

SN	Items on Effective Communication	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks

1	My lecturers explain the course content clearly.	3.34	0.63	Agree
2	I find it easy to approach my lecturers to resolve academic issues.	3.13	0.71	Agree
3	Lecturers use multiple channels to communicate to students.	3.26	0.70	Agree
4	Class announcements and expectations are clearly communicated.	3.27	0.65	Agree
5	Lecturers are available after class for follow-up discussions.	3.17	0.74	Agree
6	I feel that my contributions during class discussions are valued.	3.23	0.60	Agree
7	Poor communication from lecturers has affected my understanding of some courses.	3.21	0.71	Agree
	Grand Mean	**3.23**	**0.67**	Agree

The data presented in Table 1 indicate that effective communication in the Business Education programme is perceived positively by students, with the highest-rated item being my lecturers explaining course content clearly and understandably. This is closely followed by Class announcements and expectations clearly communicated, and Lecturers use multiple communication channels. Other items, such as lecturers' availability for follow-up discussions, ease of approaching lecturers with academic questions, and students feeling that their contributions are valued, were also rated positively. Interestingly, students also acknowledged that Poor communication from lecturers has affected their understanding of some topics, indicating that gaps still exist. The grand mean of 3.92 confirms that students generally perceive communication from their lecturers as effective in supporting their academic performance. The relatively low standard deviations, ranging from 0.60 to 0.74 suggest a high level of consistency in these perceptions across respondents. However, there is still slight room for improvement in ensuring that all lecturers maintain clarity, timeliness, and openness in communication to further enhance student learning outcomes.

Research question 2: What is the influence of academic mentorship on the practical competency of Business Education students?

Table 2: Mean response on the influence of academic mentorship on practical competency of Business Education students

SN	Items on Academic Mentorship	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
8	My lecturers provide career advice relevant to my course.	3.37	0.68	Agree
9	I have at least one lecturer I can turn to for academic support.	3.34	0.62	Agree
10	Lecturers motivate me to pursue academic excellence.	3.40	0.55	Agree
11	Some lecturers act as role models for me	3.35	0.66	Agree
12	I have benefited from one-on-one academic mentorship by a lecturer.	3.28	0.68	Agree

13	Mentorship by lecturers has helped me stay focused on my studies.	3.33	0.59	Agree
14	I feel more confident when lecturers encourage my academic efforts.	3.33	0.62	Agree
	Grand Mean	**3.34**	**0.62**	Agree

The data presented in Table 2 indicate that academic mentorship in the Business Education programme is perceived positively by students. The highest-rated item was that Lecturers motivate me to pursue academic excellence, some lecturers act as role models for me, and my lecturers provide career advice relevant to my course. Other indicators, such as having at least one lecturer for academic support, benefiting from one-on-one academic guidance, staying focused through mentorship, and feeling more confident due to encouragement, were all rated positively. The weighted mean of 3.34 shows that students generally agree that mentorship contributes meaningfully to their academic performance. The relatively low standard deviation 0.62 indicates that students' perceptions were consistent, reflecting a shared view of mentorship as a supportive and motivating factor in their studies. However, moderate mean values suggest that while mentorship is effective, there is room for strengthening structured mentorship programmes to maximize its impact on students' academic performance.

Research Question 3: What is the influence of feedback on academic outcome of Business Education students?

Table 3: Mean response on influence of feedback on academic outcome of Business Education students

SN	Items on Feedback	$\bar{x}$	SD	Remarks
15	Lecturers return graded assignments with meaningful feedback.	3.30	0.76	Agree
16	The feedback I receive from lecturers improves my academic work.	3.22	0.57	Agree
17	I can ask lecturers for clarification when feedback is not clear.	3.32	0.60	Agree
18	I use lecturers' feedback to improve in future tasks.	3.26	0.58	Agree
19	Feedback helps me understand my mistakes.	3.37	0.57	Agree
20	Feedback is usually given before the next assessment.	3.29	0.67	Agree
21	I feel demotivated when I don't receive any feedback from lecturers.	3.30	0.70	Agree
	Grand Mean	**3.29**	**0.63**	Agree

The data presented in Table 3 indicate that feedback from lecturers is perceived positively by Business Education students in tertiary institutions. The highest-rated item was that feedback helps me understand my mistakes and correct them, I can ask lecturers for clarification when feedback is not clear, and lecturers return graded assignments/tests with meaningful feedback. Other indicators, such as timely feedback, using feedback to improve future tasks, improvement of academic work through feedback, and feeling demotivated when feedback is absent, were also rated positively. The Mean of 3.29 suggests that students generally agree that lecturer feedback contributes to their academic performance. The relatively low standard deviation 0.63 indicates that perceptions were consistent across students, reflecting a shared

recognition of the importance of feedback in enhancing performance. The moderate mean values imply that while feedback is beneficial, there is scope for lecturers to provide more frequent, timely, and actionable feedback to further strengthen its influence on students' academic outcomes.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis one: There is no significant difference in the mean rating on the influence of effective communication on the academic performance of business Education students with respect to gender

Table 4: Summary of t-test analysis on the mean ratings on the influence of effective communication on the academic performance of business Education students with respect to gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	Df	t-value	p-value	Decision
Male	102	3.27	0.49	198	1.119	.265	Accept Ho
Female	98	3.19	0.46				

The data presented in Table 4 indicate that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female Business Education students on the influence of effective communication on academic performance, t = 1.119, df = 198, p = 0.265 > 0.05. The hypothesis was accepted, indicating that male and female students do not differ significantly in their perceptions regarding how effective communication by lecturers affects their academic performance.

Hypothesis two: There is no significant difference in the mean rating on the influence of academic mentorship on practical competency of business Education students with respect to gender

Table 5: Summary of t-test analysis on the mean ratings on the influence of academic mentorship on practical competency of business Education students with respect to gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value	Decision
Male	102	3.34	0.44	198	1.119	.895	Accept Ho
Female	98	3.34	0.41				

The data presented in Table 5 indicate that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female Business Education students on the influence of academic mentorship on practical competency, t = 1.119, df = 198, p = 0.895> 0.05. The hypothesis was accepted, indicating that male and female students do not differ significantly in their perceptions regarding how academic mentorship by lecturers affects their academic performance.

Hypothesis three: There is no significant difference in the mean rating on the influence of feedback on the academic outcome of business Education students with respect to gender

Table 6: Summary of t-test analysis on the mean ratings on the influence of feedback on the academic outcome of business Education students with respect to gender

Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t-value	p-value	Decision
Male	102	3.33	0.47	198	1.200	.231	Accept Ho
Female	98	3.25	0.43				

The data from the table indicate that there is no significant difference between the mean ratings of male and female Business Education students on the influence of feedback on

academic outcome t = 1.119, df = 198, p = 0.231> 0.05. The hypothesis was accepted, indicating that male and female students do not differ significantly in their perceptions regarding how feedback by lecturers affects their academic outcomes.

Discussion of Findings

The findings in research question 1 of the study revealed that students generally perceive communication from their lecturers as effective in supporting their academic performance. Lecturers are viewed as clear, approachable, and responsive, using multiple communication channels to support learning. The findings further showed no significant differences in perceptions based on gender, indicating that male and female students consistently view lecturer communication as beneficial. This is in line with the findings of Estrela, Silva, and Costa (2024), who reported that clear and structured communication between professors and students significantly enhanced learning outcomes in higher education. Similarly, Keelson and Addo (2024) found that both verbal and non-verbal communication strategies by lecturers positively influenced students' perception of teaching quality, supporting academic engagement across genders. Wu (2025) also confirmed that students' positive perception of teacher talk improves learning outcomes, highlighting the critical role of effective communication in sustaining motivation and performance.

The finding in question 2 of the study revealed that students generally agree that academic mentorship by lecturers contributes meaningfully to their academic performance. Akinwale and Bello (2020) perceived mentorship as a process offering guidance, motivation, career advice, and one-on-one support, which helps students stay focused and build confidence. Ashfague, Zumaya, and Sehrish (2020) agreed with the finding that mentorship is the most significant strategy in gaining students' interest in education. The findings also showed no significant differences in perceptions based on gender, indicating that male and female students consistently value mentorship as an effective academic support strategy. This is in line with the findings of Buba and Nwabufo (2020), who reported that mentorship positively impacts student engagement, confidence, and academic performance in higher education settings. Similarly, Arinze and Chukwuma (2023) found that students who had access to dedicated academic mentors demonstrated better focus, resilience, and higher academic achievement, irrespective of gender. Furthermore, Lee and Carter (2025) emphasized that mentorship relationships contribute significantly to students' self-efficacy and academic motivation, reinforcing the importance of sustained guidance in tertiary education.

The findings in the research question 3 study revealed that students generally agree that lecturer feedback contributes to their academic outcomes. Feedback was perceived as offering valuable insights into learners' progress, helping them understand their mistakes and correct them. The findings also showed no significant differences in perceptions based on gender, indicating that male and female students consistently value feedback as an effective academic support strategy. Rabo (2022) identifies the lecturer-student relationship as a tool for positive academic performance. This is in line with the findings of Ejinkonye (2021), who reported that feedback is crucial for students' academic performance, as it helps them understand their mistakes and correct them. Similarly, Okeke (2025) found that students perceive feedback as essential for their personal growth and learning, holding positive views of it. Furthermore, Metu (2024) emphasized that students perceive assessment feedback as crucial for their personal growth and learning, holding positive and favorable views. The study conducted by Enoch and Ezeonwuka

(2022) revealed that assessment feedback energizes students to put more effort due to the outcome of their scores.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concluded that effective communication, academic mentorship, and lecturer feedback are all positively perceived by students as important factors influencing their academic performance**.** Furthermore, the consistency in perceptions across male and female students indicates that these instructional strategies are universally recognized as beneficial, regardless of gender, highlighting their critical role in supporting learning and academic success in Business Education programmes

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made

1. Lecturers should maintain and enhance clear, timely, and accessible communication with students to ensure that course content is well understood, and academic performance is supported.
2. Departmental Heads should strengthen structured academic mentorship programmes by assigning mentors and providing guidance frameworks to help students stay motivated, focused, and resilient in their studies.
3. Lecturers should provide consistent, constructive, and timely feedback on assignments and assessments to help students identify areas for improvement and adopt better learning strategies for enhanced academic performance.

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