journals.unizik.edu.ng/jgcs **ISSN:** 1596-1141

JOURNAL OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING STUDIES

INFLUENCE OF SMALL GROUP TUTORIAL ON COMMUNICATION SKILLS AMONG SECOND-YEAR STUDENTS OF KOGI STATE UNIVERSITIES, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the influence of small group tutorial on the communication skills among second-year students Kogi State Universities, Nigeria. The study was guided by three research questions and three hypotheses. Descriptive research design was used for the study. A sample of 368 respondents was randomly drawn through the use of multistage sampling technique. The data collected were analyzed using mean and standard deviation to answer the research questions, one way Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study among others revealed that small group tutorial always influenced communication skills of second-year students of Kogi state Universities, Nigeria; that one-on-one tutorial always influence the second-year students` communication skills; that online tutorial often and always influence the second-year students` communication skills; small group tutorial influence the second-year students` communication skills among second-year students of Kogi State Universities. The study concluded that small group tutorial influence the communication skills among second-year students of Kogi State Universities, Nigeria. Based on the findings above, the study recommended that; Institutions should emphasize on interactive and participatory tutorial to achieve more and greater improvements in students' communication abilities.

Keywords: Tutorial, Communication Skills, Second-year Students, Universities

INTRODUCTION

Nigeria where English is an official language for communication and instruction, teachers need to assess the English performance of their students and consider their English language proficiency, such as correct usage, sentence structure, and appropriate subject verb agreement. According to Vajirakachorn, Ratasuk, and Anuwong (2023), English is popular in everyday communication as well as in the academic, business, and entertainment fields. The role assigned to English in Nigerian education is outlined in the 2004 National Language Policy on Education; it states that "English shall be the medium of instruction in the upper primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education". The National Policy on Education (2013) stipulates the importance of English language as one of the core subjects that will enable a student to offer any course in higher institution (Adekola, Shoaga & Lawal, 2015).

Despite the fact that English language remains a very important language and course of study in Nigerian tertiary schools, the programme is not without its challenges which include lack of interest on the part of students, teachers having so many students to teach than recommended, inadequate resources, individual differences, and limited time among others. Several studies have shown that activities within the classrooms alone cannot provide students with the educational, social, and personal resources they need to overcome the many issues that surround them (Darling-Hammond, 2012; Sundell *et al.,*2012). It is therefore, strongly recommended that schools should encourage extra tutorial, activities and effective programs after school and on weekends to increase student` achievement. (Darling-Hammond, 2012; Karns *et al.,* 2007; Pierce, 2010; Sundell *et al.,* 2012).

Tutorial is a formal process that involves a relationship between a more experienced and knowledgeable person that plays a supportive role with a less experienced and knowledgeable person, so as to facilitate that person's career and personal development (Guerra-Martín, 2014). Tutorial are important because they offer a more tailored, engaging, and effective way of learning, helping individuals grasp complex concepts and develop critical skills. Tutorial complement other forms of instruction, such as lectures or textbooks, by providing an opportunity to delve deeper into complex topics and clarify any confusion. Tutoring interventions increase student learning outcomes by over one-third of a standard-deviation (Nickow *et al.,* 2020).

Communication is a very important feature of all aspects of life. Every human being, regardless of occupation, responsibility, authority, station in life, age or gender needs to communicate. It is, therefore, necessary that we are able to communicate effectively. Effective communication is achieved when we speak, write or express ourselves through body actions; visual symbols to achieve the intended purpose. When we write, speak, persuade, inform, entertain, explain, convince or educate, we strive to achieve one or more of the following objectives: to be heard and to be understood; to read and comprehend; to be acceptable and to have an action taken. According to Joseph (2023), successful and effective communication within and among tertiary institution students stems from the implementation of the communication process which is learnt and acquired by students either formally or informally. Good

communication skills are skills that facilitate tertiary students to communicate effectively with one another.

Tutorial acts as support mechanism, but their impact on communication skills development is yet to be determined. Some of the existing studies examined the effect of tutorial on secondary school students` performance (Okafor, 2023; Godfrey, 2018). Others examined the effect of tutorial on the academic performance of undergraduates of Universities (Baleni *et al.*, 2016; Omoni *et al.*,2019; & Brasser, 2020). The development of communication skills among university students is a matter of concern for both learners and language experts. The impact of tutorial on communication skills development among second-year students of Kogi State Universities remain unclear. This lack of understanding creates a need to investigate the effectiveness of tutorial in improving communication skills. Second-year students at Kogi State Universities, face challenges in developing essential communication skills. It is against this backdrop that this study examined the influence of tutorial on communication skills development among second-year students of Kogi State Universities.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to examine the influence of tutorials on Communication skills among second-year students of Kogi State Universities, Nigeria.

Research Questions

This study seeks to find answer to the following research questions:

1. What is the influence of one-on-one tutorial on communication skills among second-year students of Kogi State Universities?
2. What is the influence of online tutorial on communication skills among second-year students of Kogi State Universities?
3. What is the influence of small group tutorial on communication skills among second-year students of Kogi State Universities?

Hypotheses of the Study

The following null hypotheses formulated to guide this study was tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H_{01}: There is no significant difference between the mean score responses of second-year students on the extent to which one-on-one tutorial influence the communication skills in Kogi state Universities, Nigeria

H_{02}: There is no significant difference between the mean score responses of second-year students on the extent to which online tutorials influence the communication skills in Kogi state Universities, Nigeria.

H_{03}: There is no significant difference between the mean score responses of second-year students on the extent to which small group tutorials influence the communication skills in Kogi state Universities, Nigeria.

Method

This study adopted descriptive survey design to establish the assessment of the influence of tutorial on the communication skills among second-year students in Kogi State Universities, Nigeria. The population for the study were second-year students (200 level) across the three (3) Kogi State owned Universities. Prince Abubakar Audu University, Confluence University of Technology, and Kogi State University. The instrument was validated by three experts from the Department of Art Education, Prince Abubakar Audu University, Ayingba. The instrument was validated by three experts from the Department of Art Education, Prince Abubakar Audu University, Ayingba, their criticisms was used to produce the final draft of the questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha was used to carry out the reliability of the instrument, with Cronbach alpha value of 0.89 which is in the acceptable range. This means that the instrument is reliable for generating data and therefore was used for the study. The total population of second-year students across Kogi State Universities is eight thousand nine hundred and forty-two (8,942) students. The sample size for this study comprised of three hundred and sixty-eight (368) students. The sampled size was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan table. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to select the sample, using sampling fraction to get the proportion of each stratum. The researcher and her research assistants collected the filled questionnaire and a total number of 345 questionnaire were completely filled out.

The data for the study was analysed using both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics will be achieved through the use of simple frequency, percentage, mean score and standard deviation while the inferential statistics involve the use of one way analysis of variance (ANOVA). The respondents` responses was measured using a four point rating scale of Often =4, Always= 3, Sometimes =2, and Never =1.

The options was assigned values or points to real limit of each option

Often = 3.50 to 4.00
Always = 2.50 to 3.49
Sometimes = 1.50 to 2.49
Never = 0.01 to 1.49

Results

This section presents the result of the data analysis and results of the study. The result revealed the influence of tutorial on communication skills among second-year students of Kogi State Universities, Nigeria. Four hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

What is the influence of one-on-one tutorial on communication skills among second-year students of Kogi State Universities?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation on extent to which one-on-one tutorial influence communication skills of second-year students of Kogi State Universities (N =345)

S/No.	Items	$\bar{X}$	*SD*	Remark
1.	I regularly participate in one-on-one tutorial organized by my peers or lecturers.	2.92	.95	**Always**
2.	One-on-one tutorial have improved my ability to articulate my ideas clearly.	2.94	.85	**Always**
3.	I feel more confident speaking in front of others after participating in one-on-one tutorial.	2.69	.92	**Always**
4.	One-on-one tutorial have helped me to reduce verbal communication barriers, such as stuttering or hesitation.	2.88	.97	**Always**
5.	One-on-one tutorial have improved my ability to use appropriate body language during conversations.	2.98	.98	**Always**
6.	I have become better at reading after attending one-on-one tutorial.	1.94	1.06	**Sometimes**
7.	My listening skills have improved as a result of participating in one-on-one tutorial.	2.93	.88	**Always**
8.	One-on-one tutorial have positively influenced my overall communication skills.	2.83	.89	**Always**
9.	I write better and effective after attending one-on-one tutorial.	3.39	.87	**Always**
10.	Tutorial have helped me overcome challenges in expressing myself academically.	3.21	.81	**Always**
	Cluster mean	**2.87**	**.92**	**Always**

$\bar{X}$ = Mean of the respondents, *SD*= Standard Deviation of the respondents

Data in Table 1 revealed that the cluster mean for all the 10 items (items 1-10) is which is within the real limit of 2.50 - 3.49. The 10 items had their mean ranged from 1.94 to 3.39. This showed that the means were above the cut-off point of 2.50 indicating except for item 16 with a mean

score of 1.94. The results showed one-on-one tutorial influence the second-year students` communication skills in Kogi State Universities, Nigeria. The cluster standard deviation value of all the 10 items is .92 which indicated that the responses of the respondents are close to the mean and one another. The result revealed that the respondents agreed that the items were the influence of one-one tutorial on the communication skills of second-year students in Kogi State Universities Nigeria.

What is the influence of online tutorials on communication skills among second-year students of Kogi State Universities?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation on extent to which online tutorial influence communication skills of second-year students of Kogi State Universities.

S/No.	Items	$\bar{X}$	*SD*	Remark
11.	I regularly participate in online tutorial organized by my lecturers or peers.	2.69	.98	**Always**
12.	The platforms used for online tutorial (e.g., Zoom, Google Meet) are user-friendly.	2.71	.71	**Always**
13.	Online tutorial enhances my reading skills.	2.61	.94	**Always**
14.	Online tutorial have improved my ability to express my ideas clearly during virtual discussions.	2.66	.95	**Always**
15.	I feel more confident speaking during online group discussions and presentations.	2.69	.95	**Always**
16.	Online tutorial have helped me overcome challenges in verbal communication.	2.63	.93	**Always**
17.	Participating in online tutorial has enhanced my ability to write effectively.	2.75	1.04	**Always**
18.	Online tutorial have improved my ability to maintain virtual eye contact with tutors and peers.	2.75	.97	**Always**
19.	My listening skills have improved as a result of participating in online tutorial.	2.79	.92	**Always**
20.	Online tutorial have positively impacted my overall communication skills.	2.76	.94	**Always**
	Cluster mean	2.70	.95	**Always**

$\bar{X}$ = Mean of the respondents, *SD*= Standard Deviation of the respondents

Table 2 revealed that the cluster mean for all the 10 items (items 11-20) is 2.70 which is within the real limit of 2.50 - 3.49. The 10 items had their mean ranged from 2.61 to 2.79. This showed that the means were above the cut-off point of 2.50 indicating, online tutorial influence the second-year students` communication skills in Kogi State Universities, Nigeria. The cluster standard deviation value of all the 10 items is .95 which indicates that the responses of the

respondents are close to the mean and one another. The result revealed that the respondents agreed that the items were the influence of online tutorial on the communication skills of second-year students in Kogi State Universities Nigeria.

What is the influence of small group tutorials on communication skills among second-year students of Kogi State Universities?

Table 3: Mean and standard deviation on extent to which small group tutorial influence communication skills of second-year students of Kogi State Universities (N =345)

S/No.	Items	$\bar{X}$	*SD*	**Remark**
31.	I regularly attend small-group tutorial in my university.	2.97	.95	**Always**
32.	Small group tutorial encourage me to speak or express my opinions freely.	3.55	.78	**Often**
33.	Small group tutorial provide a supportive environment for improving skills.	2.96	.84	**Always**
34.	The size of the tutorial group helps me feel more confident in speaking.	2.90	.87	**Always**
35.	Small group tutorial have improved my ability to articulate my ideas clearly.	2.88	.85	**Always**
36.	My listening skills have improved as a result of participating in small group tutorial.	2.91	.84	**Always**
37.	I have learned to use body language (e.g., gestures, eye contact) effectively during discussions.	2.76	.92	**Always**
38.	Participating in small group tutorial has enhanced my reading skills.	2.83	.88	**Always**
39.	Small group tutorial have helped me respect and consider diverse perspectives.	2.91	.83	**Always**
40.	My communication with peers has become more effective due to tutorial participation.	3.63	.66	**Often**
	Cluster mean	3.03	.84	**Always**

$\bar{X}$ = Mean of the respondents, *SD*= Standard Deviation of the respondents

Data in Table 3 revealed that the cluster mean for all the 10 items (items 21-30) is 3.03 which is within the real limit of 2.50 - 3.49. The 10 items had their mean ranged from 2.76 to 3.63. This

showed that the means were above the cut-off point of 2.50 indicating small group tutorial influence the second-year students` communication skills in Kogi State Universities, Nigeria. The cluster standard deviation value of all the 10 items is .84 which indicated that the responses of the respondents are close to the mean of one another. The result revealed that the respondents agreed that the items were the influence of small group tutorial on the communication skills of second-year students in Kogi State Universities Nigeria.

Hypothesis One: *There is no significant difference between the mean score responses of second-year students on the extent to which one-on-one tutorial influence communication skills among second-year students of Kogi state Universities, Nigeria.*

Table 4: Summary of ANOVA table for testing influence of one-on-one Tutorial on Communication skills of second-year Students in Kogi State Universities Nigeria

Source	Sum of Square	Mean Square	Df	Cal-F	Crit-F	Sig.
Between groups	5.356	2.678	2	2.99	3.00	0.051
Within groups	306.751	.896	342			
Total	311.728	0.906	344			

Table 4 showed that F-calculated is 2.99 and F-Critical is 3.00, and the null hypothesis is therefore accepted. There is no significant difference among the mean ratings of second-year students of Confluence University of Science and Technology, Osara, Kogi State University, Kabba and Prince Abubakar Audu University, Ayingba on the influence of one-on-one tutorial on communication skills of second-year students of Kogi State Universities, Nigeria.

Research Two: *There is no significant difference in the mean score responses of second-year students on the extent to which online tutorial influence the communication skills of second-year students in Kogi state Universities, Nigeria.*

Table 5: Summary of ANOVA table for testing influence of online Tutorial on Communication skills of second-year Students in Kogi State Universities Nigeria

Source	Sum of Square	Mean Square	Df	Cal-F	Crit-F	Sig.
Between groups	3.723	1.862	2	2.11	3.00	0.1229
Within groups	301.824	0.882	342			
Total	305.548	0.888	344			

Table 5 showed that F-calculated is 2.11 and F-Critical is 3.00, and the null hypothesis is therefore accepted. There is no significant difference among the mean ratings of second-year students of Confluence University of Science and Technology, Osara, Kogi State University, Kabba and Prince Abubakar Audu University, Ayingba on the influence of online tutorial on communication skills of second-year students of Kogi State Universities in Nigeria.

Hypothesis Three: *There is no significant difference between the mean score responses of second-year students on the extent to which small group tutorial influence communication skills among second-year students in Kogi state Universities, Nigeria.*

Table 6: Summary of ANOVA table for testing influence of Small group Tutorial on Communication skills of second-year Students in Kogi State Universities Nigeria

Source	Sum of Square	Mean Square	Df	Cal-F	Crit-F	Sig.
Between groups	8.765	4.383	2	6.23	3.00	0.0022
Within groups	240.591	0.703	342			
Total	249.362	0.725	344			

Table 6 showed that F-calculated is 6.23 and F-Critical is 3.00, and the null hypothesis is therefore rejected. The alternative hypothesis was therefore accepted that there is significant difference among the mean ratings of second-year students of Confluence University of Science and Technology, Osara, Kogi State University, Kabba and Prince Abubakar Audu University, Ayingba on the influence of small group tutorial on communication skills of second-year students of Kogi State Universities in Nigeria.

There is significant difference in the mean score responses of second-year students on the extent to which small group tutorial influence the communication skills in Kogi state Universities, Nigeria. Hence, a post-hoc is pursued to determine the direction of the significant difference.

Table 7: Post-Hoc result using Tukey for testing influence of Small group tutorial on Communication skill of second-year Students of Kogi State Universities in Kogi State Nigeria.

Second-year cluster	Contrast	Std. Err.	t	p>/t/
Confluence University of Science and Technology, Osara vs. Prince Abubakar Audu University, Ayingba	-0.560	0.159	-3.52	0.001
Kogi State University, Kabba vs. Prince Abubakar Audu University, Ayingba	-0.093	0.132	-0.71	0.759
Kogi State University, Kabba vs. Confluence University of Science and Technology, Osara	0.467	0.193	2.42	0.043

From the post-hoc results, it is discovered that there is a significant difference between the mean of second-year students at Confluence University of Science and Technology, Osara and Prince Abubakar Audu University, Ayingba. Similarly there is a significant difference between the mean of Kogi State University, Kabba second-year Students and that of Confluence University of Science and Technology, Osara.

Discussion

The result showed that one-on-one tutorial always influenced communication skills among second-year students of Kogi State Universities, Nigeria. Unlike large-group lectures, where students may hesitate to ask questions due to fear of judgment, one-on-one tutorial create a supportive learning environment that fosters self-expression and critical thinking.

One-on-one tutorial offer several advantages over group-based learning strategies. Studies indicate that individualized instruction allows students to receive immediate feedback, clarify doubts in real time, and engage in deeper learning experiences (Chi *et al.,* 2001). In the context of communication skills development, one-on-one tutorial help student to refine their verbal expression, enhance articulation, and improve confidence in academic discussions (Topping, 2005). The result of the study aligns with previous research demonstrating that direct interaction with an instructor or tutor leads to higher engagement and improved academic outcomes (Zimmerman & Schunk, 2011). This pedagogical approach is particularly effective for second-year students who are in a transitional academic phase, requiring more intensive communication skill development to excel in coursework and future careers (Gibbs, 2018).

The results further showed that online tutorial always influenced communication skills among second-year students of Kogi State Universities, Nigeria. This finding is consistent with other findings from previous studies that reported that online tutorial provide a unique opportunity for students to engage in structured learning experiences beyond traditional classroom settings. Previous research suggests that digital learning platforms enhance communication skills by promoting collaborative engagement, critical thinking, and self-paced learning (Means *et al.*, 2014; Bates, 2019). Students participating in online tutorial often engage in virtual discussions, video presentations, and written assignments, all of which contribute to improved verbal and written communication skills (Anderson, 2008). Additionally, online tutorial expose students to diverse communication styles and cultural perspectives, improving their adaptability and global communication competence (Salmon, 2013).

The results on small group influence of tutorial on communication skills among second-year students of Kogi State Universities revealed that small group tutorial always influence communication skills. Tutorial impact the effectiveness of interactive and student-centered learning methods in enhancing language proficiency, critical thinking, and interpersonal communication (Garside, 1996; Prince, 2004). Additionally, the structured nature of small group tutorial fosters active participation, making students more comfortable in engaging with academic discourse. This is particularly important in developing communication skills, as students refine their ability to present arguments, ask critical questions, and negotiate meanings in a collaborative setting (Brookfield & Preskill, 2012). The hypothesis testing results indicate a statistically significant difference in the impact of small group tutorial across the three universities. This variation may be attributed to several institutional factors, including differences in tutorial implementation strategies, tutor-student ratios, availability of learning resources, and institutional emphasis on student-centered learning (Biggs & Tang, 2011).

Conclusion

The study investigated the influence of tutorials on communication skills among second-year students of Kogi State Universities, Nigeria. The findings of the study revealed that the different dimensions of tutorials namely one-on-one tutorial, online tutorial, and small group tutorial each influenced the communication skills of the second-year students of Kogi State Universities. The results for one-on-one and online tutorials had no significant difference in the influence of tutorial on communication skills among second-year students of Kogi State Universities, Nigeria. While small group tutorial had no significant difference in the response of the students on the influence of tutorial on communication skills among second-year students of Kogi State Universities, Nigeria. Based on the findings, it was concluded that tutorial influence communication skills among second-year students of Kogi State Universities, there was no significant difference in the mean ratings of the responses of the students across the three universities of Kogi State University, Nigeria.

Implications for Education

The results of the study have educational implications to students, lecturers, school administrator, education planners, government and future researchers. The results of the influence of one-on-one tutorials on communication skills, educational implication is the need for students and universities to keep promoting one-on-one tutorial programmes into their teaching and learning process. The findings highlight the need for universities to invest in structured one-on-one tutorial programs to enhance students' communication skills. Institutions should adopt policies that ensure all students have access to individualized learning support, regardless of their academic discipline or background. Institutions should put in place framework that can enhance student-centered teaching approaches that encourage participation and teaching-learning among peers and tutors. Universities, policymakers and educators should continue to monitor and evaluate their tutorial frameworks to identify best practices that can be adapted to promote one-on-one tutorials across institutions.

The education implication of the finding of the influence of online tutorials on communication skills highlight the need for universities to strengthen their online tutorial programs to maximize the benefits of digital learning for communication skills development. Universities should invest in robust learning management systems, ensuring that students have access to high-quality digital resources, discussion forums, and real-time virtual interactions with instructors and peers. Furthermore, institutions should focus on digital literacy training for both students and lecturers to enhance the effectiveness of online tutorials. Providing workshops on virtual communication, academic writing, and online public speaking can significantly improve students' confidence and engagement in digital learning environments. The correspondents hypothesis affirmed that there is no significant difference between the mean score responses of second-year students in Kogi State Universities on the extent online tutorials influence communication skills in Kogi State Universities.

Given the result of the influence of small group tutorials on communication skills, universities should consider institutionalizing and enhancing tutorial-based learning approaches that take cognizance of ensuring that facilitators are well-equipped with pedagogical skills to foster productive communication engagement. Also, there is the need for universities and organizers of tutorials to optimize student-tutor ratios when organizing tutorials to achieve well-managed tutorial groups capable of leading to better student engagement and skill development. Furthermore, management should providing adequate infrastructure, including discussion spaces and digital platforms, to support interactive learning. Consequently, considering the differences observed among universities in the study hypothesis result, regular evaluation of tutorial effectiveness and structured feedback can help bridge the gap to enhance better student learning outcomes. By addressing these factors, universities can maximize the benefits of small group tutorials and ensure equitable enhancement of communication skills across institutions.

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