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EXPLORING THE SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC SKILLS OF STUDENTS: THE CASE OF COLLEGE OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE EDUCATION OF CICOSAT COLLEGES

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the impact of the social skills and academic skills of the students of the college of criminal justice education in cicosat colleges, lingsat, city of san fernando, la union. This study made used of mixed method using convergent parallel design. Convergent parallel design is use for the collection and analysis of quantitative data and qualitative data at the same time, then analyze them separately. Weighted mean was used to determine level of the student's social skills, academic skill and the impact of in the college of criminal justice education in cicosat colleges, lingsat, city of san fernando, la union. While thematic analysis was used to identify, analyze and reporting patterns within data of the impact do social and academic skills have on students' academic performance within the college of criminal justice education at cicosat colleges. Based on the findings of the study, the students at the college of criminal justice education at cicosat colleges possess strong social skills, with notable strengths in communication, active listening, and empathy. However, areas such as conflict resolution and the integration of student feedback into teaching practices present opportunities for further development. These insights can guide targeted interventions and programs to enhance students' social skills, ultimately contributing to their personal growth and professional readiness. The students at the college of criminal justice education at cicosat colleges demonstrate strong academic skills, particularly in communication, critical thinking, and research. These skills are essential for success in their field, enabling them to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations, engage in ethical considerations, and prepare for professional roles in criminal justice. However, areas such as presenting personal interpretations under communication, troubleshooting computer issues under computer literacy, and using diverse research tools present opportunities for further development. These insights can guide targeted interventions to enhance students' academic skills, contributing to their personal and professional growth.

KEYWORDS: *social skill, academic skill, criminology*

INTRODUCTION

Rationale

In the ever-evolving field of education, the integration of social skills with academic instruction is paramount to equipping students with the tools they need to navigate the complexities of the modern world. As Burke (2018) emphasizes, combining social and academic skills fosters adaptability and resilience, empowering students to address challenges effectively. This intersection is particularly critical because social and academic skills are not isolated competencies but interdependent abilities that contribute to holistic development.

Social skills, encompassing communication, empathy, and emotional regulation, are essential for fostering positive interactions in diverse social settings (Walker, 2023). These skills extend beyond mere behavior to include the nuanced competencies that enable individuals to understand, connect, and thrive in various environments, including classrooms. Research by McClelland et al. (2000) and Yen et al. (2004) underscores that these learning-related social behaviors significantly predict academic performance, highlighting their integral role in school success.

Conversely, academic skills—such as critical thinking, time management, and research proficiency—form the foundation for scholastic achievement and are transferable to broader life contexts (Skillyouneed, 2023). These skills enable students to engage with content, collaborate effectively, and excel in intellectual pursuits. Importantly, the development of academic skills is enhanced through active classroom discourse and interactions, which are deeply rooted in social competencies (Sung, 2009).

In the Philippine context, where higher education is regarded as a pathway to secure a better future, fostering both social and academic skills is imperative. Studies conducted in local institutions, such as La Salle University and the University of Bohol, highlight the importance of social competencies like cooperation in enhancing academic engagement and performance (Cadosales, 2013; Paroginog, 2018). These findings are

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consistent with research emphasizing the interplay between social skills, academic engagement, and overall achievement.

Furthermore, the role of educators in cultivating these skills is pivotal. Through deliberate pedagogical strategies, such as leveraging narratives to explore emotions and fostering inclusive classroom environments, educators can promote both academic success and emotional growth (Burke, 2018; Govindaraju, 2022). Recognizing this synergy, institutions like CICOSAT Colleges are poised to implement targeted programs that nurture both skill sets, preparing students for professional success in fields like criminology (Abbott, 2022).

This study is motivated by the growing recognition of the interplay between social and academic skills in shaping students' educational experiences and outcomes. By examining the impact of these skills on academic performance, the research aims to provide actionable insights that will inform the development of student programs to enhance their holistic growth and success.

Research Objectives/Questions

The study aimed to assess the influence of students' Social and Academic Skills on their academic performance.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the level of the student's social skills in the College of Criminal Justice Education of CICOSAT Colleges?
2. What is the level of the student's academic skills in the College of Criminal Justice Education of CICOSAT Colleges?
3. The impact does social and academic skills have on students' academic performance within the College of Criminal Justice Education at CICOSAT Colleges?
4. What are the different measures to enhance the social skill and academic skill of the College of Criminal Justice Education student?

Theoretical Background

This study draws upon Behaviorism Theory (Skinner, 1974), Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1985), and Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979):

- Behaviorism Theory posits that learning occurs through conditioning and reinforcement, where behaviors are shaped by repeated associations between stimuli and responses.
- Self-Determination Theory (SDT) emphasizes the fulfillment of three psychological needs—competence, autonomy, and relatedness—as critical to motivation and well-being.
- Ecological Systems Theory suggest a comprehensive perspective on how multiple environmental systems influence individual development.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The integration of social and academic skills is crucial for students to navigate the complexities of the modern world. Combining these skills helps students develop the adaptability needed to address challenges (Burke, 2018). Social skills, including communication and emotional regulation, facilitate effective interaction, while academic skills like critical thinking and time management form the foundation for success (Skillyouneed, 2023). The classroom serves as a key environment for developing and applying these skills, with positive social interactions enhancing academic performance (Levin et al., 2008). Underdeveloped social skills can hinder academic engagement, leading to frustration and negative behavior (Calvin, 2009).

Research indicates that social competencies significantly impact academic performance, with studies showing that these skills predict success in both early and higher education (McClelland et al., 2000; Yen et al., 2004). Studies in the Philippines, such as those by Cadosales (2013) and the University of Bohol, reveal that students possess moderate social skills, particularly in cooperation, but require targeted programs to enhance other skills (Paroginog, 2018). Institutions like Northwestern University and CICOSAT Colleges recognize the importance of fostering both skill sets, as this contributes to academic success and career readiness (Abbott, 2022).

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed-method approach with a convergent parallel design:

1. Quantitative Phase: Surveys assessed social skills and academic skills.
2. Qualitative Phase: Semi-structured interviews explored the impact of these skills on students and faculty members.

Research Locale

This study was conducted at CICOSAT Colleges, located in Lingsat, City of San Fernando, La Union. The location was chosen because the researcher, a faculty member at the institution, was motivated to contribute to the improvement of criminology students' academic performance.

Data Measure/ Instruments

1. Survey Questionnaire:
    - Likert-scale items captured data on social skill and academic skills.
2. Interview Guide:
    - Validated by experts to explore the effects of social and academic skills on both students and faculty members.

Data Gathering Procedures (with Ethical Guidelines)

- Participants were informed of the purpose, procedures, and potential benefits of the study before participating. Written consent was obtained from each respondent.
- Surveys were distributed to 294 students and 32 faculty members.
- Interviews were conducted with a subset of participants to collect qualitative data.

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- Participants' identities and responses were kept confidential, with personal information being excluded from the report to protect their privacy.
- Participation in the study was voluntary, and participants were free to withdraw at any point without any negative consequences.
- The researcher ensured that the data collected was accurately recorded and analyzed, and findings were reported honestly and without manipulation.

Data Analysis

- Quantitative Data: Weighted Mean was used to analyze the survey responses, categorizing results into descriptive equivalents.
- Qualitative Data: Thematic analysis identified recurring themes, including gaps in resources, needs for training, and connectivity problems.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Presentation/Report on the Results or Findings

Table 1: Level of Social Skills

Dimension	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Equivalent	Key Observations
Communication	3.20	Very Good	Students excel in verbal and written communication, enabling clear expression of ideas and active listening in discussions.
Active Listening	3.33	Excellent	Students work well in teams, respecting diverse perspectives and contributing positively to group efforts.
Interpersonal Relationship	3.16	Very Good	Students value diversity, fostering a respectful and inclusive environment by appreciating different cultures and viewpoints.
Conflict Resolution	3.10	Very Good	Students are skilled in conflict resolution, managing disagreements constructively and seeking peaceful solutions.
Empathy	3.17	Very Good	Students adapt to changing situations, perform well under pressure, and embrace new challenges.
Feedback	3.26	Very Good	Teachers' feedback plays a crucial role in students' academic growth, offering constructive criticism and guidance for improvement.

Table 2: Level of Academic Skills

Dimension	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Equivalent	Key Observations
1. Communication	3.21	**Very Good**	Students who present ideas confidently and respond constructively to feedback demonstrate a high level of professionalism, using appropriate language and adapting their style to suit academic and professional contexts
2. Computer Literacy	3.04	**Very Good**	Students' adeptness in presentation software allows them to effectively communicate ideas in both academic and professional settings.
3. Critical Thinking	3.21	**Very Good**	Students can approach complex problems systematically, consider multiple perspectives, and generate innovative solutions.
4. Research	3.20	**Very Good**	Students develop the skills necessary for conducting independent research, contributing to scholarly discussions, and producing original work that contributes to their personal and professional growth.

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Table 3: Impact Of Social and Academic Skills on Students' Academic Performance Students Perspective

Challenges	Frequency (Students)	Key Observations
Role of Social Skills in Interactions within the Criminology Program	13 %	Students recognize the importance of strong social skills but struggle to apply them in diverse group settings.
Conflict Resolution and Interpersonal Communication Skills	20 %	A significant number of students face difficulties in resolving conflicts and managing interpersonal dynamics in group work.
Academic Efficiency	17 %	Some students report challenges with maintaining focus, meeting deadlines, and managing academic workload efficiently.
Academic Engagement and Personal Development	23 %	Many students express a need for more motivation and engagement in their academic pursuits, especially in theory-heavy subjects.
Building a Supportive Social Network	27 %	The majority of students highlight challenges in forming strong peer relationships and building a supportive network, which is crucial for academic success.

Table 4: Impact Of Social and Academic Skills on Students' Academic Performance Faculty Perspective

Challenges	Frequency (Faculty)	Key Observations
The Importance of Social Skills in Collaborative Academic Settings	27 %	Strong social skills are essential for collaboration in academic settings, enhancing teamwork and academic performance.
The Importance of Communication and Interpersonal Skills	23 %	Effective communication and interpersonal skills were noted as key factors in student success, both in academic and professional environments.
The Impact of Social and Academic Skills on Career Success in Criminology.	20 %	Faculty observed that students' social and academic skills significantly influence their career preparedness and ability to succeed in criminology.
Personal and Professional Development for a Career in Criminology.	17 %	Faculty emphasized the need for students to focus on both personal and professional development to thrive in the criminology field.
Self-improvement and Academic Growth in Criminology	13 %	Faculty discussed the importance of continuous self-improvement and academic growth in preparing students for future criminology careers.

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS/FINDINGS

The study found that students at the College of Criminal Justice Education at CICOSAT Colleges exhibit strong proficiency in both social and academic skills, essential for their academic success and future careers in criminal justice. In terms of social skills, students excel in communication, collaboration, respect for diversity, conflict resolution, and adaptability. These skills enable them to express ideas clearly, work effectively in teams, respect diverse perspectives, manage conflicts constructively, and adapt to changing situations, all of which are crucial for success in the criminal justice field. Regarding academic skills, students demonstrate solid capabilities in critical thinking, research, and writing, which are key for analyzing complex issues in criminal justice. They are also proficient in applying theoretical knowledge to practical situations, integrating insights from various disciplines, and preparing for professional roles across criminal justice sectors. With that the students are well-equipped with the necessary skills for both academic achievement and professional excellence in criminology.

DISCUSSION

The study highlights the importance of developing a well-rounded skill set that includes strong communication, interpersonal abilities, time management, and research proficiency. Such skills not only contribute to academic success but also prepare criminology students for professional excellence in the criminal justice field. Therefore, continuous improvement in these areas is essential for the students' future career growth and their ability to contribute meaningfully to the field of criminology.

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Recommendations

Table 5: Recommendation for the Improvement of the Students Social and Academic Skills

Conflict Resolution Training Workshops			
Challenge	**Objectives**	**Proposed Solution**	**Responsible Parties**
Limited resources for organizing workshops and engaging qualified experts. Some students may be reluctant to participate or may find the exercises difficult to relate to their field.	To improve students' ability to resolve conflicts effectively, a vital skill in criminal justice.	Conduct conflict resolution workshops led by experts, using interactive methods such as role-playing and group discussions to help students practice real-world scenarios.	The College of Criminal Justice Education's faculty, in collaboration with external experts in conflict resolution, should coordinate and facilitate the workshops.
Establishing a Structured Feedback Integration Program			
Challenge	**Objectives**	**Proposed Solution**	**Responsible Parties**
Ensuring consistent student participation and honest feedback, as well as ensuring faculty members are willing to adapt based on the feedback received.	To enhance teaching effectiveness and foster student engagement by ensuring feedback is properly integrated into the learning process.	Create a formal system for collecting student feedback regularly and ensure that feedback is used to adjust teaching methods and communicated back to students, explaining the changes made based on their input.	The Dean and Program Head of the College of Criminal Justice Education, in collaboration with faculty members, should oversee the implementation and management of this program.
Implementing Targeted Workshops on Public Speaking, IT Troubleshooting, Research Methodology, and Time Management			
Challenge	**Objectives**	**Proposed Solution**	**Responsible Parties**
Securing qualified instructors for diverse workshops, scheduling these sessions without disrupting regular academic commitments, and ensuring sufficient student participation.	To enhance criminology students' academic performance and career readiness by addressing gaps in key skills.	Organize workshops focusing on public speaking, IT troubleshooting, research methodology, and time management to provide students with practical skills that directly support their academic and professional success.	The College of Criminal Justice Education, along with the campus IT department and external experts in research methodology and public speaking, should be responsible for organizing and facilitating these workshops.

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