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INTERVIEW MISTAKES TO AVOID AND JOB SEEKERS' PERFORMANCE OF TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study examined Interview Mistakes to Avoid and Job Seekers' Performance of Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State. The specific objectives are stated in line with research questions and research hypotheses. This study was anchored on Impression Management Theory. Survey research design was adopted. The population of this study consists of 229 employees from the Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State, sample size of 146 employees was determined using Taro Yemen formula. The instrument for data collection was questionnaire, the instrument was validated by my thesis supervisor and reliability of 0.84 was gotten. The data were presented and analyzed using mean score rating to analyze the research questions and statistical tool used for testing their associated hypotheses were Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23. The study therefore conclude that avoiding interview mistakes is important for improving job seekers' performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Poor interview preparation may reduce candidates' ability to answer questions confidently and demonstrate their knowledge, thereby affecting their interview performance. Similarly, poor communication and inappropriate body language may create negative impressions and reduce job seekers' chances of securing employment. Therefore, job seekers should prepare adequately, research prospective employers, practise interview questions, communicate clearly, and maintain appropriate body language. These practices an improves interview performance and increase the likelihood of employment success. It was therefore, recommended that the management of tertiary institutions should review to job seekers how to understanding the job requirements, practising likely interview questions, and organising relevant documents to improve their confidence, interview preparation and interview performance. Management of tertiary institutions should develop effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills to job seekers that enable them speak clearly, maintain appropriate eye contact, demonstrate confidence, listen attentively, and measures of using professional body language to create positive impressions and to achieve employment success.

Keywords: Interview Mistakes to Avoid, Poor Interview Preparation, Poor Communication/Body Language, Job Seekers' Performance, Interview Performance, Employment Success

Introduction

Job seekers' performance is an important aspect of human resource management because it influences how candidates demonstrate their qualifications, knowledge, skills, abilities, and personal attributes during recruitment and selection. Famuyiwa (2025) noted that the recruitment process

enables employers to identify individuals who possess the competencies required to achieve organisational objectives. For graduates and other prospective employees, the employment interview provides an opportunity to communicate their suitability for available positions and demonstrate their readiness to undertake professional responsibilities. Famuyiwa (2025) further reinforced that candidates' performance during interviews may be affected by inadequate preparation, inappropriate professional conduct, ineffective communication, and other avoidable mistakes.

Tertiary institutions play an important role in developing human capital through teaching, learning, research, and skills acquisition. In Rivers State, institutions such as the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, and Kenule Beeson Saro-Wiwa Polytechnic contribute to the education and preparation of individuals for employment and professional development. Campion, et al. (2009) opined that graduates from these institutions enter a labour market in which they must demonstrate not only academic qualifications but also communication skills, professional behaviour, problem-solving abilities, and readiness to meet employers' expectations. Consequently, the ability to perform effectively during employment interviews is relevant to graduates seeking to translate their educational achievements into employment opportunities (Campion, et al., 2009).

Campion, et al. (2008) stated that interview mistakes to avoid refer to errors or inappropriate behaviours that candidates should minimise or eliminate when participating in employment interviews. Such mistakes can influence the impressions interviewers form about candidates and may affect their assessment of candidates' suitability for a position. Campion, et al. (2008) reported that common interview mistakes include poor interview preparation, poor communication and body language and these mistakes may prevent job seekers from communicating their qualifications and abilities effectively, even when they possess the educational background and technical knowledge required for the position. A Nigerian career report by Famuyiwa (2025), for example, highlights inadequate organisational research and insufficient preparation among common interview challenges faced by graduates entering the labour market.

Interview mistakes can be examined through several dimensions and their possible relationship with job seekers' performance. Levashina, et al. (2014) highlighted that the first dimension, poor interview preparation, concerns candidates' failure to research the institution, understand the advertised position, and prepare relevant responses. Adequate preparation may improve job readiness by helping candidates demonstrate knowledge of the institution and the responsibilities associated with the position. The second dimension is poor communication and body language, which involves unclear responses, ineffective listening, inappropriate non-verbal communication, and difficulty expressing ideas confidently. Communication is recognised as an important career-readiness competency because it enables individuals to exchange information clearly and interact effectively in professional settings (National Association of Colleges and Employers, 2024). Such conduct may undermine the credibility of applicants and make it difficult for employers to assess their actual suitability.

National Association of Colleges and Employers, (2024) posits that job seekers' performance, as the dependent variable be examined through interview performance and employment success. Interview performance relates to their ability to respond appropriately to questions and present relevant qualifications. Employment success concerns recruitment outcomes, including progressing through selection stages and obtaining a job. These measures are related but distinct, and employment success may also depend on the number of vacancies, selection criteria, and the quality of the recruitment process.

The importance of avoiding interview mistakes is also supported by research on employment interviews. Campion et al. (2007) explained that structuring interviews can improve the reliability and validity of the selection process. Similarly, Levashina et al. (2014) reviewed research on structured employment interviews and examined issues such as impression management, interview questions, rating scales, and applicants' reactions. These studies highlight the importance of

evaluating candidates systematically rather than relying exclusively on superficial impressions. Therefore, while job seekers should avoid preventable interview mistakes, tertiary institutions and employers should also promote fair and job-related recruitment practices.

National Association of Colleges and Employers, (2024) indicated that in Rivers State, graduates and other prospective employees from tertiary institutions compete for positions across educational, public, and private organisations. The University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State University, Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, and other tertiary institutions provide educational and professional development opportunities for individuals preparing to participate in the labour market. National Association of Colleges and Employers, (2024) pointed out that in this context, interview preparation and professional conduct are relevant to graduates seeking to demonstrate their suitability for employment, academic qualifications alone may not guarantee successful interview outcomes if candidates experience difficulties communicating their abilities, preparing for questions, arriving punctually, or presenting accurate information.

Therefore, this study seeks to fill the knowledge gap by examining how poor interview preparation and poor communication and body language relate interview performance, and employment success among job seekers in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The study will provide evidence that help job seekers improve their interview conduct and enhance their employment opportunities

Statement of the Problem

The problem of interview mistakes to avoid and job seekers' performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State is triggered by the challenges job seekers encounter when participating in employment interviews. Despite obtaining academic qualifications and acquiring relevant knowledge, some job seekers may experience difficulties presenting themselves effectively to prospective employers. These challenges may arise from poor interview preparation, such as failure to research the institution, understand job requirements, and prepare appropriate answers to interview questions. Consequently, candidates may struggle to demonstrate their suitability for available positions, thereby affecting their interview performance.

Furthermore, poor communication and body language may constitute another problem affecting job seekers' performance. Some candidates may find it difficult to express their ideas clearly, respond appropriately to interview questions, or demonstrate confidence during interviews. These shortcomings may create unfavourable impressions and reduce their chances of progressing through the recruitment process. Such difficulties may also affect employment success, as candidates who fail to communicate their qualifications and competencies effectively may find it difficult to secure available employment opportunities.

The problem, therefore, is that avoidable interview mistakes may prevent qualified job seekers associated with tertiary institutions in Rivers State from demonstrating their abilities effectively during recruitment and selection. However, the extent to which poor interview preparation and poor communication and body language relate to interview performance and employment success requires empirical investigation. It is against this background that the study examines interview mistakes to avoid and job seekers' performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Conceptual Framework

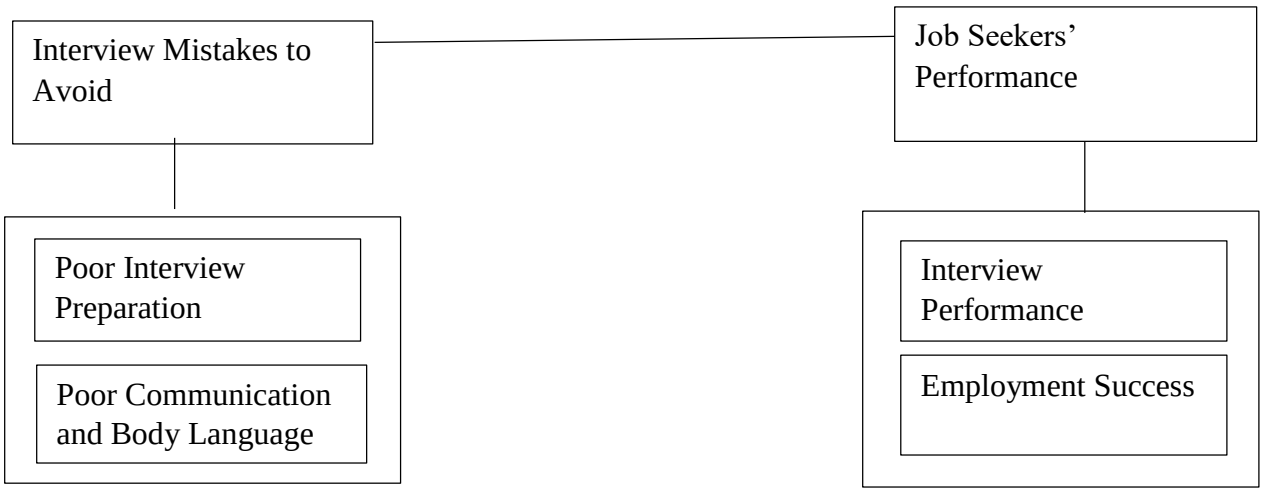


Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework showing the Independent and Dependent Variables of Interview Mistakes to Avoid and Job Seekers' Performance**.**
Source: Njoku, C. C., & Eze, H. N. (2026).

Aim and Objectives of the Study
The aim of the study was to examine Interview Mistakes to Avoid and Job Seekers' Performance of Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State. The specific objectives of the study shows as follows:
1. to examine the relationship between poor interview preparation and interview performance of Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State.
2. to determine the relationship between poor communication/body language and employment success of Tertiary Institution in Rivers State.

Research Questions
The following research questions were formulated to achieve the objectives of this study:
1. What is the relationship between poor interview preparation and interview performance of Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State?

2. What is the relationship between poor communication/body language and employment success of Tertiary Institution in Rivers State?

Research Hypotheses
The following null hypotheses are formulated to guide this study.

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between poor interview preparation and interview performance of Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State.
Ho_2: There is no significant relationship between poor communication/body language and employment success of Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Concept of Interview Mistakes to Avoid

Interview mistakes to avoid refers to errors, inappropriate behaviours, or omissions that job seekers should minimise before and during employment interviews to improve their presentation and demonstrate their suitability for available positions. Campion et al. (2007) indicated that an employment interview is a personnel selection method through which employers obtain information about applicants' qualifications, knowledge, skills, experience, and personal attributes relevant to a job. They further states that interview mistakes are important because candidates may possess the necessary academic qualifications but failed to communicate their competencies effectively during recruitment.

According to Campion et al. (2007), opined that structuring employment interviews improve the reliability and validity of candidate assessment and their review identified several components of interview structure that can improve interview content and evaluation procedures. Similarly, Levashina et al. (2014) reviewed research on structured employment interviews, examining interview questions, impression management, rating procedures, and applicants' reactions. These studies demonstrate that employment interviews require appropriate preparation, systematic assessment, and job-related evaluation. Levashina et al. (2014) argue that interview mistakes to avoid are relevant to graduates and other job seekers seeking employment in educational institutions, government establishments, and private organisations. Candidates are expected to prepare adequately, communicate effectively, demonstrate professional conduct, and provide truthful information about their qualifications and experience. Failure to observe these expectations may affect how they present their suitability for available positions.

Poor Interview Preparation

Peck and Levashina (2017) reported that poor interview preparation refers to a situation in which job seekers fail to make adequate preparations before attending an employment interview. It includes failure to research the recruiting organisation, understand the advertised position, review relevant qualifications, prepare answers to likely interview questions, and identify how their skills relate to the job requirements.

Peck and Levashina (2017) explained that poor preparation cause candidates to provide vague answers, demonstrate limited knowledge of the organisation, or struggle to explain their suitability for a particular position. Adequate preparation, conversely, enables job seekers to understand the responsibilities associated with the position and communicate their qualifications more effectively. Peck and Levashina (2017) further noted that for graduates and other job seekers associated with tertiary institutions in Rivers State, poor interview preparation may arise when candidates rely exclusively on their academic qualifications without preparing to explain their knowledge, skills, and suitability for specific positions. Avoiding this mistake may help candidates demonstrate readiness, answer questions appropriately, and present their competencies more effectively.

Poor Communication and Body Language

Levashina et al. (2014) affirmed that poor communication and body language refer to difficulties in expressing ideas clearly, listening attentively, answering questions appropriately, and using suitable non-verbal communication during an employment interview. Such difficulties may include unclear responses, excessive interruption, failure to address interview questions directly, or distracting non-verbal behaviours. Levashina et al. (2014) emphasized that effective communication is important because employment interviews require candidates to explain their qualifications, discuss previous experiences, demonstrate their knowledge, and respond to questions concerning job responsibilities. When candidates cannot communicate their abilities clearly, interviewers may find it difficult to assess their suitability accurately.

Levashina et al. (2014) examined impression management and candidate evaluation in structured employment interviews. Their review discussed how applicants present themselves and how

interview procedures influence candidate assessment. McGovern, et al. (2008) emphasised the importance of appropriate interview structure and rating procedures in improving the selection process and among job seekers associated with tertiary institutions in Rivers State, poor communication and body language may be reflected in difficulty explaining academic qualifications, providing relevant examples, responding confidently, and communicating professional capabilities. Such difficulties may affect interview performance, particularly when candidates possess relevant competencies but cannot explain them effectively.

McGovern, et al. (2008) confirmed that interviewers should assess communication in relation to the actual requirements of the position and should not automatically interpret individual communication styles or non-verbal behaviours as evidence of incompetence. They further avoiding poor communication and body language help job seekers communicate their qualifications more effectively and improve their presentation during recruitment interviews.

Concept of Job Seekers' Performance

Martín-Raugh, et al. (2023) assert that job seekers' performance refers to the extent to which individuals demonstrate the preparedness, knowledge, skills, communication abilities, and professional behaviours required to participate effectively in recruitment and selection processes. It concerns how applicants present their qualifications, respond to interview questions, demonstrate relevant competencies, and communicate their suitability for available positions. Martín-Raugh, et al. (2023) reported that job seekers' performance is important because employers need to identify candidates who possess the capabilities required for particular jobs. However, performance during an interview should not be confused with actual performance after employment. A candidate may perform well during an interview but require additional training to perform effectively in the workplace.

Levashina et al. (2014) also reviewed research on interview procedures, applicants' responses, impression management, and candidate-rating methods. These studies provide a foundation for understanding employment interviews as a means of assessing applicants, although they do not directly establish the relationship between the proposed dimensions of interview mistakes and job seekers' performance of tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Interview Performance

McGovern and Tinsley (2008) indicated that interview performance refers to the ability of job seekers to respond appropriately to interview questions, communicate their qualifications clearly, demonstrate relevant experience, and present themselves professionally during recruitment interviews. McGovern and Tinsley (2008) noted that effective interview performance requires adequate preparation, clear communication, active listening, and the ability to provide relevant examples when answering questions and candidates who understand the purpose of an interview may be better prepared to explain their strengths and demonstrate their suitability for a position. For graduates of tertiary institutions in Rivers State, interview performance may be reflected in their ability to answer questions accurately, explain their academic and professional experiences, and communicate their suitability for available employment opportunities.

Employment Success

Famuyiwa (2025) posits that employment success refers to favourable outcomes achieved by job seekers during recruitment and selection, including progressing through interview stages, receiving job offers, and securing suitable employment. Employment success may be influenced by candidates' qualifications, interview preparation, communication abilities, professional conduct, work experience, and suitability for available positions. However, it is also affected by factors outside the candidates' control, including the number of vacancies, the employer's selection criteria, recruitment procedures, and labour-market conditions (Famuyiwa, 2025).

National Association of Colleges and Employers. (2024) discovered that for graduates of tertiary institutions in Rivers State, employment success may be reflected in their ability to progress through recruitment procedures and obtain employment opportunities that correspond with their qualifications and competencies. Avoiding preventable interview mistakes may help candidates communicate their suitability more effectively, but it does not guarantee employment.

Campion et al. (2007) emphasized that Interview mistakes to avoid and job seekers' performance are related concepts because avoidable errors may affect how candidates present their qualifications and demonstrate their suitability during recruitment. Campion et al. (2007) suggest that poor interview preparation may be associated with job readiness because candidates who fail to understand the organisation and job requirements may struggle to demonstrate their preparedness. Inappropriate dressing and poor appearance may influence interview performance by affecting the professional impression candidates create. Poor communication and body language may affect employability when candidates are unable to explain their competencies clearly. Lack of punctuality may raise concerns about candidates' preparation and professional conduct, while dishonesty and exaggeration may undermine credibility and affect employment prospects.

These relationships should be investigated rather than assumed to exist in every case. Campion et al. (2007) and Levashina et al. (2014) emphasised the importance of interview structure and systematic assessment, supporting the need to evaluate candidates using relevant criteria. Consequently, avoiding interview mistakes should complement fair recruitment practices and objective assessments of candidates' knowledge, skills, and qualifications. Levashina et al. (2014) observed that in tertiary institutions in Rivers State, career guidance units, academic departments, and employability programmes can help students and graduates prepare for recruitment through mock interviews, professional communication training, interview preparation workshops, and guidance on ethical conduct. Such initiatives may help candidates develop the skills needed to present their qualifications effectively.

Theoretical Review

Impression Management Theory

Impression Management Theory, associated with Erving Goffman (1959), explains how individuals attempt to influence the perceptions others form of them through their behaviour, communication, appearance, and presentation. In employment interviews, job seekers try to create a positive impression on interviewers by demonstrating confidence, communicating effectively, dressing appropriately, and presenting their qualifications convincingly.

The theory is relevant to the study because poor interview preparation may prevent job seekers from presenting their qualifications and abilities effectively, while poor communication and body language may create negative impressions during interviews. These mistakes may reduce candidates' interview performance and affect their chances of securing employment. Therefore, job seekers need to prepare adequately, communicate clearly, maintain appropriate eye contact, and demonstrate professional behaviour during interviews.

Empirical Review

Martín-Raugh et al. (2023) conducted a meta-analysis of research spanning more than 70 years to examine the relationship between nonverbal cues and job interview performance. The study synthesised evidence from 63 studies involving 4,868 participants. The findings indicated that professional appearance, eye contact, and head movement were associated with interview performance. Professional appearance had the strongest reported association, followed by eye contact and head movement. The researchers concluded that nonverbal cues influence interviewers' assessments of job applicants. The study is relevant because it demonstrates how inappropriate body language and poor professional presentation may affect job seekers' interview performance. However, the study did not focus specifically on tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Peck and Levashina (2017) conducted a meta-analysis examining impression management tactics and their relationship with interview and job performance ratings. Their analysis included 18 articles and 42 effect sizes, covering 8,635 participants. The findings indicated that impression management was used more frequently during interviews than during actual job performance. Self-focused impression management tactics had a stronger influence on interview ratings than on job performance ratings. The study demonstrated that the way applicants present themselves can influence interviewers' evaluations. This finding is relevant because job seekers who fail to communicate their strengths effectively or present themselves professionally may receive less favourable interview evaluations. Nevertheless, the study examined impression management broadly rather than poor interview preparation alone.

Levashina et al. (2014) reviewed the literature on structured employment interviews, examining interview structure, impression management, question types, rating scales, and methods of reducing bias. Their review incorporated narrative and quantitative evidence from previous research. The authors observed that structured interviews can improve the assessment of applicants when questions and evaluation procedures are systematically designed. They also identified continuing research questions concerning impression management, candidate reactions, and interview assessment. This study is relevant because it shows that interview performance depends partly on candidates' responses and partly on the way interviews are organised and evaluated. It supports the need to investigate how poor preparation and ineffective communication may affect job seekers' interview performance and employment success.

Knowledge Gap

The existing literature on employment interviews, including Campion et al. (1997) and Levashina et al. (2014), has examined interview structure, candidate assessment, and impression management. However, limited attention has been given to how specific interview mistakes, particularly poor interview preparation and poor communication/body language, relate to job seekers' performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

Furthermore, the relationship between these dimensions and the measures of job seekers' performance, namely interview performance and employment success, requires further empirical investigation within the study area. Therefore, this study seeks to fill the knowledge gap by examining how poor interview preparation and poor communication/body language relate to interview performance and employment success among job seekers associated with tertiary institutions in Rivers State.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the survey research design. The population of study consists of all the tertiary institutions – (VCs/Rectors/Provosts, Registrars, ICT Directors, Deans, HODs and office managers) in the tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The total population for the study is 229. The study adopted survey sampling techniques and a sample size of (146) was used in the study which was drawn from employees (VCs/Rectors/Provosts, Registrars, ICT Directors, Deans, HODs and office managers) of the tertiary institutions in Rivers State. The sample size was obtained using Taro Yemen formula. The method through which study data were collected was from the primary source, the primary source of data gathering was adopted which was questionnaire. The instrument was validated by research supervisor and two other experts inn Office and Information Management, their comments, observations and responses were used to effect corrections on the final copies of the questionnaire that were administered to the respondents. The researcher carried out the reliability test for the research instrument using the Cronbach's Alpha Correlation Coefficient. The result of the reliability test was carried out using statistical analysis software, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23, showing Cronbach's Alpha Correlation Coefficient of 0.84 for all the items in the questionnaire used for the study. This indicates that the research instrument was highly reliable and appropriate which was administered for the purpose of eliciting answers to the

research questions stated in the study. The bivariate analysis was carried out using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient at 0.05 level of significance. All the coefficient (r) values that indicate levels of significance as calculated using SPSS were accepted and thus our alternate hypotheses were accepted and when no significance was indicated in the coefficient (r) value, we reject the null hypotheses. We set out confidence interval at 0.05 level of significance to test the statistical significance of this study. Both the significance values and coefficient values were used.

Research Question 1: What is the relationship between Poor Interview Preparation and Interview Performance of Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State?

S/N	Question for Poor Interview Preparation and Interview Performance	SD 1	DA 2	A 3	SA 4	TOTAL x/n	Mean $\bar{X}$
1.	Inadequate preparation for employment interviews reduces job seekers' ability to answer interview questions correctly.	10 (10)	11 (22)	45 (135)	65 (260)	427/131	3.25
2..	Failure to research tertiary institutions before an interview negatively affects job seekers' interview performance.	6 (6)	20 (40)	60 (180)	45 (180)	406/131	3.09
3..	Practising likely interview questions helps job seekers improve their confidence and interview performance.	20 (20)	31 (62)	30 (90)	50 (200)	372/131	2.83
4..	Failure to prepare relevant documents and information reduces job seekers' effectiveness during interviews	10 (10)	21 (42)	70 (210)	30 (120)	382/131	2.91
	Grand Mean					**1587/524**	**3.02**

Source: Survey Data, 2026.

Table 4.2 shows the summary of mean procedure on what is the relationship between poor interview preparation and interview performance of Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State with grand mean (M=3.02). The highest mean rating was inadequate preparation for employment interviews reduces job seekers' ability to answer interview questions correctly (M=3.25). This was followed by failure to research tertiary institution before an interview negatively affects job seekers' interview performance (M=3.09). Next was on Failure to prepare relevant documents and information reduces job seekers' effectiveness during interviews (M=2.91). The least was on practising likely interview questions helps job seekers improve their confidence and interview performance (M=2.83).
Based on the responses from the respondents, it was concluded that poor interview preparation relates to interview performance of Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State, since all the items of mean are above the cut-off point of 2.5. This implies that majority of the respondents used for the study indicated positive response in all the items with grand mean score of $\bar{X}$=3.02.

Research Question 2: What is the relationship between poor communication/body language and employment success of Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State?

S/N	Question for Poor Communication/Body Language and Employment Success	SD 1	DA 2	A 3	SA 4	TOTAL x/n	Mean $\bar{X}$
5.	Poor communication skills reduce job seekers' chances of securing employment in tertiary institutions as well hinders employment success.	-	51 (102)	45 (135)	35 (140)	377/131	2.87
6.	Inappropriate body language creates negative impressions and affects job seekers' employment success.	26 (26)	30 (60)	25 (75)	50 (200)	361/131	2.75
7.	Clear verbal communication improves job seekers' ability to demonstrate their suitability for employment success.	11 (11)	-	50 (150)	70 (280)	441/131	3.36

8.	Maintaining appropriate eye contact and professional body language increases job seekers' chances of achieve employment success	21 (21)	30 (60)	20 (60)	60 (240)	381/131	2.90
	Grand Mean					**1560/524**	**2.97**

Source: Survey Data, 2026.

Table 4.3 shows the summary of mean procedure on what is the relationship between poor communication/body language and employment success of Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State with grand mean (M=2.97). The highest mean rating was clear verbal communication improves job seekers' ability to demonstrate their suitability for employment success (M=3.36). Next was on maintaining appropriate eye contact and professional body language increases job seekers' chances of achieve employment success (M=2.90). Next was on poor communication skills reduce job seekers' chances of securing employment in tertiary institutions as well hinders employment success (M=2.87). The least was on inappropriate body language creates negative impressions and affects job seekers' employment success (M=2.75).

Based on the responses from the respondents, it was concluded that poor communication/body language relates to employment success of Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State, since all the items of mean are above the cut-off point of 2.5. This implies that majority of the respondents used for the study indicated positive response in all the items with grand mean score of $\overline{X}$=2.97.

Testing of Hypotheses

$Ho_{1:}$ There is no significant relationship between poor interview preparation and interview performance of Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State.

Table 4.3: Correlation analysis showing relationship between poor interview preparation and interview performance

Correlations

		Poor Interview Preparation	**Interview Performance**
Poor Interview Preparation	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.812*
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.	.003
	N	131	131
Interview Performance	Correlation Coefficient	.812*	1.000
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.003	.
	N	131	131

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)

Source: SPSS-generated Output, 2026

Table 4.3 shows the result of the correlation analysis carried out between poor interview preparation and interview performance of Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State. The result indicates that poor interview preparation has a positive correlation with interview performance (r = .812*) and this correlation is significant at 0.05 level as indicated by the symbol *. Consequently, the null hypothesis (Ho_1) is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there is significant relationship between poor interview preparation and interview performance of Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State.

Ho_2: There is no significant relationship between poor communication/body language and employment success of Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State.

Table 4.4: Result of the correlation analysis between poor communication/body language and employment success

Correlations

		Poor Communication/Body Language	Employment Success
Poor Communication/Body Language	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.779*
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.	.004
	N	131	131
Employment Success	Correlation Coefficient	.779*	1.000
	Sig. (2 tailed)	.004	.
	N	131	131

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)
Source: SPSS-generated Output, 2026

Table 4.4 contains the result of the correlation analysis carried out between poor communication/body language and employment success of Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State. The result shows that poor communication/body language is positively correlated to employment success (r= .779*) and the symbol * implies that this correlation is significant at 0.05 level. Based on this result, the null hypothesis (Ho_2) is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This means that we then accept that there is significant relationship between poor communication/body language and employment success of Tertiary Institutions in Rivers State.

CONCLUSION

The study therefore conclude that avoiding interview mistakes is important for improving job seekers' performance in tertiary institutions in Rivers State. Poor interview preparation may reduce candidates' ability to answer questions confidently and demonstrate their knowledge, thereby affecting their interview performance. Similarly, poor communication and inappropriate body language may create negative impressions and reduce job seekers' chances of securing employment. Therefore, job seekers should prepare adequately, research prospective employers, practise interview questions, communicate clearly, and maintain appropriate body language. These practices an improves interview performance and increase the likelihood of employment success.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from this study, the following recommendations were made.

1. Management of tertiary institutions should review to job seekers how to understanding the job requirements, practising likely interview questions, and organising relevant documents to improve their confidence, interview preparation and interview performance.
2. Management of tertiary institutions should develop effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills to job seekers that enable them speak clearly, maintain appropriate eye contact, demonstrate confidence, listen attentively, and measures of using professional body language to create positive impressions and to achieve employment success.

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