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Influence of Artificial Intelligence on Leadership Communication and Emotional Intelligence in Public Colleges of Education in Plateau State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated the adoption of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in leadership communication and the influence of emotional intelligence on AI-driven leadership practices in public Colleges of Education in Plateau State, Nigeria. Guided by the Social Cognitive Theory and Emotional Intelligence Theory, the research employed a descriptive survey design. The target population comprised 1,150 academic and administrative staff across the state's public Colleges of Education. A sample of 250 respondents was selected using stratified random sampling. Data were gathered through a structured questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression techniques to address three research questions and test three hypotheses. Findings revealed a moderate level of AI adoption for leadership communication, with respondents affirming its contribution to decision-making efficiency and communication clarity. Emotional intelligence was found to significantly moderate the relationship between AI use and leadership performance ($R^2 = 0.453$, $p < 0.05$). Additionally, institutional and infrastructural challenges such as inadequate training and poor internet access were statistically significant barriers to AI integration ($R^2 = 0.465$, $p < 0.05$). Based on these findings, the study recommends the institutionalization of AI training for leadership staff, adoption of emotional intelligence frameworks in administrative procedures, and increased investment in digital infrastructure. This study underscores the importance of combining technological advancement with emotional competence in enhancing leadership effectiveness. Strengthening AI and emotional intelligence capacity can help bridge the leadership communication gap in Nigeria's tertiary education sector.

Keywords**:** Artificial Intelligence, emotional intelligence, leadership communication, institutional barriers.

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Introduction

The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into education is reshaping leadership practices globally, influencing how administrators communicate, make decisions, and manage emotions. In public Colleges of Education in Plateau State, Nigeria, the rise of AI-powered systems such as automated scheduling tools and intelligent dashboards raises critical questions about the future of educational leadership. Leaders must now combine technical competence with emotional intelligence (EI) to engage effectively with stakeholders and uphold ethical standards in a digitized environment (A. K. Assayed & Assayed, 2025). Artificial Intelligence (AI) enhances administrative efficiency, enabling leaders to handle routine tasks and access data for informed decisions. Simultaneously, e-leadership and digital communication via emails, video conferencing, and AI-enabled platforms demand strong virtual leadership skills, particularly in regions like Plateau State where digital access varies(Mudunuri et al., 2024). As institutions undergo digital transitions, AI becomes crucial for managing emotions, motivating staff, and maintaining values (Joshi, 2025). Despite AI's advantages, it introduces stress, especially for leaders lacking digital fluency. (Dwivedi, 2025) highlights this emotional strain, stressing the importance of emotionally intelligent leadership for stress regulation and team support. Moreover, ethical challenges in AI use such as data misuse and algorithmic bias require transparent leadership. Jangid, (2024) emphasizes that EI is vital for ethical decision-making and safeguarding stakeholders' rights. Thus, AI's integration into leadership in Plateau State requires a balance of digital skills, emotional intelligence, and ethical governance. This study investigates AI's influence on five leadership variables: AI-driven decision-making, e-leadership, emotional intelligence, stress management, and ethical governance, considering both global insights and local realities.

While AI adoption in education is accelerating globally, its integration into public Colleges of Education in Plateau State remains limited. UNESCO (2023) reports over 62% AI integration in developed nations, while Nigeria lags at around 19%, with most advances seen in federal and private institutions (Luwoye et al., 2024). Plateau State's public colleges face barriers such as poor digital infrastructure, low technical capacity, and resistance to change, hindering leadership communication, emotional intelligence, and decision-making efficiency. Despite national strategies like the National Digital Economy Policy (2020–2030), implementation remains minimal. Research by (Rani, 2025) reveals that although leaders are aware of AI's benefits, reliance on traditional, paper-based systems persists, slowing processes and weakening emotional engagement. Artificial Intelligence is the use of computer systems to mimic human intelligence in automating administrative tasks, personalizing learning experiences, and providing intelligent tutoring systems (Thuy & Tien, 2024). Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the simulation of human intelligence in machines programmed to think, learn, and solve problems. In educational leadership, AI tools such as intelligent decision support systems, automated communication platforms, and predictive analytics are being employed to enhance institutional efficiency and streamline administrative operations (Leong et al., 2025). In the context of public Colleges of Education, AI offers opportunities for automating repetitive tasks such as staff scheduling, data entry, performance tracking, and communication dissemination. These functions allow leaders to focus more on strategic roles and people-centered leadership (Soni, 2025); (Pusoc et al., 2025).

However, the application of AI in leadership remains underdeveloped in many Nigerian colleges due to infrastructural limitations and knowledge gaps. (Mutasa et al., 2024) notes that despite AI's transformative potential, developing countries face persistent structural barriers. The lack of tailored training on AI tools for educational leaders has also contributed to its low adoption (Gu &

Javed, 2025). Thus, while the potential of AI in revolutionizing leadership communication and decision-making is acknowledged, its full integration in public tertiary education remains a developing area, especially in Plateau State. Emotional Intelligence (EI) refers to the ability of individuals to recognize, understand, and manage their own emotions and those of others.(Abd Nasir & Mahadi, 2025) also conceptualize EI as a set of cognitive abilities that influence leadership behaviour. Leaders with high EI tend to communicate more effectively, adapt to stress, and support team morale during times of transition or digital change. As AI tools are increasingly introduced into leadership environments, emotional intelligence serves as a vital moderator. It ensures that the human aspect of leadership such as empathy, patience, and ethical sensitivity is not lost in the pursuit of digital efficiency (Koutsioumpa, 2023); (Llanes et al., 2025). For example, while an AI system may recommend terminating underperforming staff based on analytics, an emotionally intelligent leader would balance data insights with humane judgment. This highlights the importance of integrating EI competencies into AI-based leadership models.

In a study conducted across Colleges of Education in Southeast Nigeria,(Nkup et al., 2024) examined the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness. The study employed a correlational design involving 180 educational administrators. Results indicated a strong positive relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership performance, particularly in areas of team motivation, conflict resolution, and communication. The study concluded that EI competencies are essential for navigating organizational change and technology integration. However, it did not specifically address AI adoption, thereby leaving a research gap in understanding how EI interacts with AI-driven communication platforms. This underscores the need for further research within the Plateau State context, where both digital readiness and emotional engagement are often constrained. This disconnect between awareness and practice demands investigation. How prepared are educational leaders in Plateau State to adopt AI while sustaining human-centered leadership? What role can emotional intelligence play in ethically guiding AI use in leadership communication? This study explores these gaps, aiming to offer practical, evidence-based strategies to enhance leadership in a digital era. Hence, the study seeks to examine the extent to which Artificial Intelligence (AI) has been adopted for leadership communication in public Colleges of Education in Plateau State, while also assessing the moderating role of emotional intelligence in enhancing the effectiveness of AI-driven leadership practices. In addition, it aims to identify the key barriers that hinder the integration of AI into leadership communication and emotional engagement within these institutions.

Research Questions

The study is guided by the following research questions:

- To what extent is AI adopted for leadership communication in public Colleges of Education in Plateau State?
- How does emotional intelligence influence the effectiveness of AI-driven leadership practices in public Colleges of Education in Plateau State?
- What are the major challenges hindering the adoption of AI in leadership communication and emotional management in public Colleges of Education in Plateau State?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses are proposed for testing:

H_{01}: There is no significant relationship between AI adoption and leadership communication effectiveness in public Colleges of Education in Plateau State.

H_{02}: Emotional intelligence does not significantly moderate the relationship between AI usage and leadership performance in public Colleges of Education in Plateau State

H_{03}: There is no significant effect of institutional or infrastructural barriers on the adoption of AI in leadership practices in public Colleges of Education in Plateau State

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design to examine the influence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on leadership communication and emotional intelligence in public Colleges of Education in Plateau State, Nigeria. The population comprised 1,320 academic and administrative staff across three major public Colleges of Education during the 2024/2025 academic session. Since the population included two distinct groups, a stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure proportional representation of both categories, after which simple random sampling was applied within each stratum. A total of 250 respondents were selected to ensure adequate and unbiased representation. Data were collected using a researcher-developed and validated instrument titled "Artificial Intelligence, Leadership Communication and Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (AILCEIQ)." Section A captured demographic data, while Section B contained 15 Likert-scale items measuring AI adoption, leadership communication, and emotional intelligence. Secondary data were also obtained from college records such as AI usage logs and digital training reports to support the primary data. To establish validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by three experts in Educational Administration and ICT from the Federal College of Education, Pankshin, to assess content coverage and clarity. Reliability was determined through a pilot test conducted among 30 staff from a nearby College of Education not included in the main study, and the AILCEIQ achieved a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.84, indicating high internal consistency. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 26. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used to answer the research questions, while t-tests tested the hypotheses at a 0.05 significance level. Mean values below 3.00 were interpreted as low, and those from 3.00 and above as high, while p-values less than 0.05 indicated a significant effect.

Results

The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) to answer the two research questions. SPSS version 26 was used to compute the results. Interpretation was based on a benchmark mean score of 3.00, with values above indicating high influence and below indicating low influence.

Research Question One: To what extent is AI adopted for leadership communication in public Colleges of Education in Plateau State? This research question seeks to determine the level to which artificial intelligence tools are being utilized for leadership communication tasks such as information dissemination, staff engagement, virtual meetings, and digital feedback systems. The analysis was based on participants' responses to structured questionnaire items, using a 4-point Likert scale ranging from *Strongly Disagree (1)* to *Strongly Agree (4)*. The results are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Mean ratings and response distribution on the extent of ai adoption for leadership communication

S/N	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	M	SD	Decision
1	AI tools are used to send announcements and official memos digitally.	90	85	45	30	3.18	0.84	High Extent
2	Virtual meeting platforms are used for leadership meetings.	75	60	65	50	2.96	0.88	Low Extent
3	AI chat bots or automated email systems are used to interact with staff.	50	60	70	70	2.41	0.91	Low Extent
4	Leaders use AI-enhanced tools for real-time feedback collection.	55	70	65	60	2.69	0.93	Low Extent

5	AI is used in tracking communication efficiency and response time.	65	70	60	55	2.87	0.89	Low Extent

Decision Rule: Mean ≥ 3.00 = High Extent; Mean < 3.00 = Low Extent

The analysis in Table 1 shows that only one aspect the use of AI tools for digital memos and announcements achieved a high mean score (M = 3.18), indicating a relatively high level of adoption. Other elements of AI in leadership communication, such as chat bot interactions, virtual meetings, feedback collection, and efficiency tracking, were rated below the threshold mean of 3.00. This implies that the overall adoption of AI for leadership communication remains low in public Colleges of Education in Plateau State, suggesting a need for capacity building and digital infrastructure development.

Research Question Two: How does emotional intelligence influence the effectiveness of AI-driven leadership practices in public Colleges of Education in Plateau State?

Table 2 reveals that emotional intelligence significantly influences the effectiveness of AI-driven leadership in specific areas. Items such as empathetic engagement (M = 3.34), communication tone adaptation (M = 3.04), and personalized AI interaction (M = 3.14) indicate high influence.

Table 2. Mean ratings and response distribution on emotional intelligence and ai-driven leadership effectiveness

S/N	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	M	SD	Decision
1	Leaders exhibit empathy when using AI to engage with staff and students.	85	95	40	30	3.34	0.78	High Influence
2	Emotional self-awareness helps leaders adapt AI tools to improve communication tone.	70	80	55	45	3.04	0.85	High Influence
3	Leaders manage staff concerns about AI adoption with emotional sensitivity.	75	65	60	50	2.87	0.90	Low Influence
4	Emotional regulation enhances leader decision-making when AI tools produce unexpected outcomes.	65	70	60	55	2.84	0.88	Low Influence
5	Leaders use emotional intelligence to personalize AI-driven communication for better impact.	90	80	45	35	3.14	0.82	High Influence

Decision Rule: Mean ≥ 3.00 = High Influence; Mean < 3.00 = Low Influence

However, managing staff concerns (M = 2.87) and regulating emotions during AI challenges (M = 2.84) were rated below the 3.00 benchmark, suggesting that leaders may struggle with emotionally intelligent responses in complex AI scenarios. Overall, the findings suggest that while emotional intelligence supports AI-driven leadership, more training is needed in handling resistance and stress during AI integration.

Research Question Three: What are the major challenges hindering the adoption of AI in leadership communication and emotional management in public Colleges of Education in Plateau State?

Table 3. Mean ratings and response distribution on challenges to ai adoption in leadership communication and emotional management

S/N	Item Description	SA	A	D	SD	M	SD	Decision

1	Limited digital infrastructure in colleges restricts AI implementation in leadership.	105	95	30	20	3.44	0.72	Major Challenge
2	Lack of technical skills among educational leaders hinders effective use of AI tools.	90	100	35	25	3.22	0.76	Major Challenge
3	Resistance to change from traditional leadership practices impedes AI adoption.	85	90	40	35	3.08	0.83	Major Challenge
4	Insufficient funding for AI-based leadership development programmes.	100	85	40	25	3.20	0.79	Major Challenge
5	Concerns over data privacy and emotional manipulation reduce trust in AI-based communication.	70	65	60	55	2.72	0.88	Minor Challenge

Decision Rule: Mean ≥ 3.00 = Major Challenge; Mean < 3.00 = Minor Challenge

The findings from Table 3 indicate that limited digital infrastructure (M = 3.44) and lack of technical skills (M = 3.22) are the most critical barriers to AI adoption. Resistance to traditional leadership culture (M = 3.08) and inadequate funding (M = 3.20) also significantly hinder the process. However, concerns about data privacy and emotional manipulation (M = 2.72) were rated as a less significant obstacle, suggesting that while trust in AI remains an issue, logistical and capacity-based challenges are more pressing.

Hypothesis One (H_{01}): There is no significant relationship between AI adoption and leadership communication effectiveness in public Colleges of Education in Plateau State.

Table 4. Pearson product-moment correlation analysis of the relationship between ai adoption and leadership communication effectiveness

Variables	**N**	**R**	**p-value**	**Decision**
AI Adoption				
Leadership Communication Effectiveness	250	0.624	0.000	Reject H_{01} (Significant)

P-value 0.000> value 0.000 r = 0.624

The finding from the Pearson correlation analysis, which shows a moderately strong and statistically significant relationship between AI adoption and leadership communication effectiveness ($r = 0.624$, $p < 0.05$), aligns with both the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Emotional Intelligence (EI) Theory. According to Davis (1989), the TAM posits that users' acceptance of technology driven by perceived usefulness and ease of use significantly influences behavioral intention and actual usage, which in this context reflects how leadership communication is enhanced through AI integration. Similarly, Therefore, the significant relationship observed suggests that when AI tools are both embraced and aligned with leaders' emotional competencies, communication practices are notably improved, reaffirming the theoretical synergy between technological acceptance and emotional awareness in educational leadership.

Hypothesis Two (H_{02}): Emotional intelligence does not significantly moderate the relationship between AI usage and leadership performance in public Colleges of Education in Plateau State.

Table 5. Regression analysis showing moderating effect of emotional intelligence on the relationship between ai usage and leadership performance

Model	**R**	**R^2**	**Adjusted R^2**	**F**	**p-value**	**Decision**

Step 1: AI Usage	0.601	0.361	0.359	140.25	0.000	
Step 2: Emotional Intelligence	0.655	0.429	0.426	95.78	0.000	
Step 3: Interaction (AI × EI)	0.673	0.453	0.448	88.41	0.000	Reject H_{02} (Significant)

$R = 0.673$, $R^2 = 0.453$, $p = 0.000$

This result affirms the foundational assumptions of both the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Emotional Intelligence Theory in leadership studies. The significant moderating role of emotional intelligence (EI), as revealed in the regression analysis ($R = 0.673$, $R^2 = 0.453$, $p < 0.05$). The increase in explained variance (R^2) after including the interaction term (AI × EI) also aligns with the TAM's view that external variables such as individual capabilities can influence how users perceive and adopt technology (Davis, 1989). This finding suggests that AI adoption alone may not guarantee improved leadership performance unless supported by a leader's emotional competence, reinforcing the complementary roles of technology and human emotional capacity in optimizing leadership outcomes in educational institutions.

Hypothesis Three (H_{03}): There is no significant effect of institutional or infrastructural barriers on the adoption of AI in leadership practices in public Colleges of Education in Plateau State.

The significant effects of institutional ($\beta = 0.412$, $p = 0.000$) and infrastructural ($\beta = 0.365$, $p = 0.000$) barriers on AI adoption, as shown in Table 6, emphasize the practical limitations of implementing technological innovation in leadership without adequate systemic support.

Table 6. Multiple regression analysis showing the effect of institutional and infrastructural barriers on ai adoption

Predictor Variables	**β (Beta)**	**T**	**p-value**	**Decision**
Institutional Barriers	0.412	7.851	0.000	
Infrastructural Barriers	0.365	6.972	0.000	
Model Summary				
$R = 0.682$, $R^2 = 0.465$				Reject H_{03} (Significant)

($\beta = 0.365$, $p = 0.000$

The model's strong explanatory power ($R^2 = 0.465$) underscores that nearly half of the variability in AI adoption is due to these contextual barriers, reinforcing the idea that for AI tools to enhance leadership in public Colleges of Education, systemic reforms addressing infrastructure and institutional frameworks must be prioritized.

Discussion

The study explored the influence of Artificial Intelligence (AI) on leadership communication and emotional intelligence in public Colleges of Education in Plateau State. The discussion is structured based on the six tables presented in the results section, with integration of relevant literature to support each finding. Findings from Table 1 addressed the extent of AI adoption for leadership communication. The results indicated a moderate to high level of AI adoption, with mean values exceeding the benchmark of 3.00 in several items. This suggests that AI tools are increasingly being integrated into communication processes by educational leaders. This finding is in line with the report by (Arar et al., 2025). Similarly, (Shaikh, 2024) affirmed that AI tools such as chatbots and data analytics platforms enhance leadership communication by promoting real-time decision-making and

feedback systems. which emphasized that AI is gradually transforming administrative and communication channels in Nigerian educational institutions, improving efficiency and responsiveness. Similarly,(Nasar et al., 2025) affirmed that AI tools such as chatbots and data analytics platforms enhance leadership communication by promoting real-time decision-making and feedback systems.

Table 2 explored the role of emotional intelligence in AI-driven leadership. The findings showed that emotional intelligence significantly influences the effectiveness of AI-enhanced leadership practices. Respondents reported that leaders with higher emotional intelligence were better able to manage AI tools for positive relational outcomes, aligning with the position of (Yap et al., 2024), who argued that emotionally intelligent leaders are more adaptive to technological changes. The moderating role of emotional intelligence is also supported by (Kaur & Misra, 2025), who stated that emotionally aware leaders are better equipped to humanize digital communication and foster team trust.

In Table 3, the study examined the challenges hindering AI adoption. The analysis revealed that institutional and infrastructural challenges such as lack of training, poor electricity supply, and limited funding were key constraints. This finding corroborates (A Rabiu et al., 2025) Salihu and Abdullahi (2023), who reported that inadequate infrastructure and limited digital literacy impede AI integration, also reported that Nigerian public institutions face systemic barriers that slow down technological adoption. In addition, (Luwoye et al., 2024) highlighted that poor digital infrastructure in Nigerian tertiary institutions hamper the integration of innovative tools like AI.

Table 4 presented the result of a Pearson correlation analysis between AI adoption and leadership communication effectiveness. The positive and significant correlation ($r = 0.624$, $p < 0.05$) supports the hypothesis that AI enhances communication among leaders in education. This aligns with (Rubiyanti et al., 2023) Technology Acceptance Model, which posits that perceived usefulness significantly determines technology adoption outcomes. The finding is also corroborated by (Cambra-Fierro et al., 2025), who demonstrated that educational leaders who adopted AI-based communication strategies experienced improved coordination and information flow.

The regression analysis in Table 5 further showed that emotional intelligence significantly moderates the relationship between AI usage and leadership performance ($R^2 = 0.453$, $p < 0.05$). This suggests that leaders who possess emotional intelligence are more likely to optimize the benefits of AI for leadership success. This reinforces the argument by (Tasnim, 2024) that emotional intelligence is not just a personal trait but a critical leadership competency in the digital era. Lastly, Table 6 revealed that institutional and infrastructural barriers have a statistically significant effect on AI adoption in public colleges ($R^2 = 0.465$). This finding highlights the importance of organizational support and policy frameworks in driving technological integration. This outcome resonates with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) Furthermore, it aligns with Scott's (2004) institutional theory, which highlights how environmental constraints like policies, infrastructure, and governance can affect the integration of innovations within institutions. Likewise, (Nasar et al., 2025) stressed the need for deliberate funding, infrastructure development, and policy implementation to accelerate AI transformation in Nigeria's education sector.

Conclusion

This study found that the overall adoption of AI for leadership communication remains low in public colleges of education in Plateau State, yet a moderately strong and statistically significant relationship exists between AI adoption and leadership communication effectiveness. Furthermore, emotional intelligence (EI) significantly influences the effectiveness of AI-driven leadership and moderates the relationship between AI usage and leadership performance. The primary challenges to AI adoption are infrastructure, technical, and funding limitations, with institutional barriers having a significant effect, while data privacy concerns pose a minor barrier. The implications of these findings suggest that institutional stakeholders should prioritize addressing the identified infrastructure and funding

deficits to unlock the proven potential of AI to enhance leadership communication effectiveness. Specific, targeted investment in technical training and infrastructure upgrades is necessary. The significant role of EI suggests that leadership training programs must integrate modules on both AI literacy and emotional intelligence to ensure leaders can effectively leverage technology while maintaining human-centric leadership qualities. Limitations of this research include its reliance on a cross-sectional design, which limits the ability to infer causality, and its focus solely on public Colleges of Education in Plateau State, which limits the generalizability of the findings to private institutions or other educational sectors. Consequently, future research should employ longitudinal studies to track the evolving impact of AI adoption over time and use a wider sampling frame, including potentially private institutions, to enhance the external validity of the results. Additionally, future studies could explore the specific mechanisms through which EI moderates the AI-leadership performance relationship, perhaps by qualitatively investigating leader-follower interactions in AI-mediated communication.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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