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THE IMPACT OF SOFT SKILLS TRAINING ON WORKERS COMMUNICATION AND TEAMWORK IN THE BANKING INDUSTRY IN IBADAN-NORTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT, OYO STATE, NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT

In today's dynamic work environment, soft skills such as communication and teamwork are essential for employee efficiency and organizational success. The banking industry, characterized by constant customer interactions and collaborative work structures, requires employees to possess strong interpersonal abilities to enhance service delivery and operational performance. This study examines the impact of soft skills training on workers' communication and teamwork in the banking industry within Ibadan-North Local Government, Ibadan, Oyo State. The study adopts a descriptive survey research design, utilizing a structured questionnaire to gather data from employees across various banks within the study area. The sample consists of 100 bank employees selected using a stratified and simple random sampling techniques to ensure adequate representation of different job roles and experience levels. The research objectives include assessing the effectiveness of soft skills training in improving employees' communication skills, evaluating its influence on teamwork efficiency, and identifying challenges associated with implementing such training in the banking sector. The findings reveal that soft skills training significantly enhances workers' communication competence, enabling them to engage effectively with clients, resolve conflicts, and foster productive workplace interactions ($r = .621$, $n = 97$, $p>.05$). Furthermore, the study demonstrates that teamwork improves as employees become more collaborative, adaptive, and supportive of one another after undergoing training. Employees reported greater cohesion in team projects, reduced misunderstandings, and improved problem-solving capabilities ($r = .566$, $n = 97$, $p>.05$). The study also identifies common barriers to effective soft skills training, such as inadequate training resources, lack of management support, and employee resistance to change. Based on these findings, the study recommends that banks invest more in periodic soft skills training programs to enhance employee interactions and teamwork. Additionally, integrating soft skills training into the onboarding process for new employees and offering refresher courses for existing staff can sustain long-term benefits. Therefore, the study highlights the critical role of soft skills training in optimizing employee communication and teamwork in the banking sector. By equipping employees with essential interpersonal skills, banks can improve service quality, enhance customer satisfaction, and promote a more harmonious and productive workplace.

Keywords: Soft Skills, Soft Skills Training, Communication, Teamwork

Introduction

Every form of organisation that exists rely on communication for their basic functioning as it is the channel used for the transfer of information to their audience about the organisations' mission and vision, policies, and procedures, tasks and duties, and various activities within the company. As simple as communication can be, research has shown that it can build or destroy an organisation's existence. Hence, communication is very important for a business to thrive. Communication acts as a link between decision-makers and all employees. When poorly carried out, communication has been said to cause interpersonal and work-related conflict in organisations.

Communication is inherently double-sided as it is involving both the speaker and the receiver. As a speaker, one conveys ideas, emotions, or information through words, tone, and body language, striving for clarity and impact. Effective communication requires empathy, ensuring the message resonates with the receiver. As a receiver, one interprets and processes the message, considering the context, emotions, and intent. Active listening, feedback, and critical thinking are essential to fully grasp the message and respond meaningfully. Miscommunication can arise when either side lacks clarity, attentiveness, or understanding. Thus, successful communication hinges on the interplay between expression and reception in a dynamic exchange.

Communication is both an art and a science. As an art, it is trying to explain details in simple ways while connecting to the human feelings and emotions. Communication as an art involves the thoughtful and creative expression of ideas, emotions, and information to foster understanding and connection. It requires more than just words—it blends tone, body language, timing, and emotional intelligence to convey meaning effectively. Just like any art form, communication relies on creativity to tailor messages to the audience, adapting to their needs, preferences, and cultural contexts. The artistic element lies in balancing logic and emotion, clarity and persuasion, as well as personal expression and audience engagement. Mastering the art of communication allows one to inspire, influence, resolve conflicts, and build strong relationships. It's not just about conveying information but about creating shared understanding and emotional resonance that leave a lasting impact.

As a science, communication explores the systematic processes, principles, and methods underlying the exchange of information. It examines how messages are created, transmitted, and received using evidence-based approaches rooted in psychology, sociology, linguistics, and technology. Scientific study of communication involves understanding how factors like perception, cognition, culture, and media influence how individuals interpret and respond to messages. This field uses data-driven analysis to evaluate communication effectiveness, addressing variables such as message clarity, audience demographics, and channel efficiency. It also investigates patterns of behaviour, such as non-verbal cues, decision-making processes, and the impact of communication barriers. In the digital age, communication science incorporates advanced tools like data analytics and network theory to assess interactions in complex systems. Ultimately, it seeks to enhance understanding, collaboration, and problem-solving by applying systematic methods to refine communication across

diverse contexts. Communication can be classed into various types based on their mode, purpose, or participants. Some of the major types are Visual communication, Written communication, Verbal communication which is the use of spoken words to convey a message, Non-verbal communication which is communicating without words but rather with gestures, facial expressions, posture and body language.

E-communication (electronic communication) is one of the most used forms of communication in this digital age and it refers to the exchange of information and ideas through digital platforms and electronic devices. It encompasses methods like emails, instant messaging, video calls, social media, and collaborative tools. E-communication has revolutionized how people connect, enabling faster, more efficient, and often asynchronous interactions across the globe. It is convenient, fast and cost-effective. Communication skills are attributes that help effective communication and some of them, include active listening skills, friendliness, confidence, empathy, adaptability volume and tone, sharing feedback, respect, conflict resolution non-verbal clues and so on.

Workers' communication refers to the exchange of information, ideas, and feedback among employees and between employees and management within a workplace. It is essential for collaboration, productivity, and maintaining a positive work environment. Effective communication among workers ensures tasks are completed efficiently, fosters understanding, and promotes teamwork. The layman sees workers communication merely as the interaction of workers in the workplace. To them, it is just about workers telling each other what they need to know about to get the job done, collaborating, discussing tasks, finding solutions, resolving conflicts and creating a positive work environment. While this is true, the concept of workers communication is rather deeper. Globally, the tripartite system that runs in every workplace is a kind of system that embraces organisational communication and workplace relationship. A few globally accepted definitions of workers communication are as follows;

According to Ali et al., (2018) internal communication is defined as "communication between an organisation's strategic managers and its internal stakeholders, designated to promote commitment to the organisation, a sense of belonging to it, awareness of its changing environment and understanding of its evolving aims". Sulaiman et al., (2023) discussed employee communication as "the process through which information is exchanged between employees and management, influencing organisational performance. "The strategic management of information, dialogue, and engagement to foster a productive, committed, and aligned workforce". (International Association of Business Communicators). In Nigeria, we see a workplace culture that strongly aligns with everything that is globally acceptable in the workplace. There is emphasis on productivity, creativity, workplace harmony, effective communication, industrial peace and job and customer satisfaction and this explains why the country is invested in industrial education generally.

A team is a group of persons that come together to achieve a set goal and so we can define teamwork as the collaborative effort of persons working together towards a common goal, sharing responsibilities, resources, and expertise to achieve a shared objective, plan, goal or milestone. Team work is crucial to the

successful execution of any and every form of group project and a number of elements are necessary for effective team work to happen. The communication skills, interdependence, flexibility, trust, accountability and notion of shared responsibility that a team has will help them invest in active problem solving, effective communication and yield benefits like improved productivity, enhanced creativity increased job satisfaction, improved customer satisfaction and a greater competitive advantage.

Soft skills are character traits that allow one to communicate with others productively and peacefully. A group of constructive personality traits (soft skills) define an individual's relationships in a social setting. These competencies include time management, leadership qualities, and communication skills. Soft skills are defined as an umbrella term for skills falling under three major functional elements: people skills, social skills, and personal career attributes (Omokhabi & Omokhabi, 2024). These skills go a long way in determining the academic achievements of adult learners (Osiesi et al., 2023). Soft skills are non-technical skills that improves an individual's ability to work effectively with others in the industry. It is an essential component of professional development that focuses on enhancing personal attributes and interpersonal skills that complement technical expertise. These skills, including communication, teamwork, problem-solving, adaptability, leadership, and emotional intelligence, are vital for effective collaboration, customer satisfaction, and organisational success. Soft skills training enables individuals to navigate complex work environments, build strong relationships, and adapt to changing circumstances. By investing in soft skills training, organisations can foster a culture of collaboration, innovation, and continuous learning, ultimately driving business growth and competitiveness.

Effective soft skills training programs address various aspects, such as self-awareness, conflict resolution, time management, and active listening. These programs may incorporate interactive workshops, role-playing exercises, case studies, and coaching sessions to facilitate experiential learning. The benefits of soft skills training are numerous and far-reaching. Organisations that prioritize soft skills training experience improved employee engagement, retention, and productivity. Soft skills training also enhances customer satisfaction, as employees develop essential skills to provide exceptional service. Furthermore, soft skills training fosters a positive work environment, encouraging collaboration, creativity, and innovation. Despite the importance of soft skills, communication, and teamwork in the banking industry, there is limited research focused specifically on the impact of soft skills on workers' communication and teamwork in banks within Ibadan, Oyo State and this study seeks to delve into that discourse so as to measure effectiveness and offer recommendations.

Statement of the problem

The clashes and dysfunction in communication and teamwork affects the entire workplace harmony and even reduces customer satisfaction because the people will not work as a team to be able to deliver their best. All these issues can be traced to how solid workers training must have been for the workers, if any form of the training focused on soft skill enhancement and the impact of the trainings on the workers.

Every worker in an organisation must have gone through a form of training that makes them qualified to work in the sector they are in however, emphasis has not been on soft skill training in the industry. People management requires some form of knowledge that a number of industries have neglected and it has in turn affected the workplace relations. It is important to note that even the organisations that focus adequately on soft skill training may not get as much output as desired based on a number of contributing factors.

This study aims to investigate the impact of soft skills training on workers' communication and teamwork using the banking industry in Ibadan as our case study with a view to identifying strategies for introducing, enhancing and improving soft skills development and overall organisational performance.

Objectives of the study

The general objective of this study is to investigate the impact that soft skills training has on communication, teamwork and the overall productivity of workers in the banking industry in Ibadan-North local government, Oyo State. However, this study still seeks to achieve the following specific objectives which are to:

I. investigate the impact of soft skill training on workers communication in the banking industry in Ibadan North Local Government, Oyo State, Nigeria.

II. determine the relationship between soft skills training and job performance among banking workers.

Hypotheses: There is no significant relationship between Soft Skills Training and Ccommunication Skills among Banking Workers in Ibadan North Local Government Area

H0$_2$: There is no significant relationship between Soft Skills Training and Tteamwork of workers in the banking industry in Ibadan-North local government, Oyo State, Nigeria

Literature Review

Communication as Interaction and Influence

Communication is the dynamic process through which individuals and groups interact, influence one another, and create shared understanding (Littlejohn & Foss, 2021). Littlejohn and Foss (2021) define communication as a dynamic process through which individuals and groups interact, influence one another, and create shared understanding. This definition emphasizes that communication is not static; it is a constantly evolving process that involves both verbal and non-verbal interactions. Communication, in this view, is a fundamental mechanism for influencing and shaping the behaviours, thoughts, and perceptions of others within a given context. The "dynamic process" component highlights that communication is continuous and fluid, adapting to new information, feedback, and changing social situations. This means that communication is not just a simple exchange of messages, but a series of ongoing interactions where participants influence each other's thoughts, beliefs, and actions. The idea of creating "shared understanding" is central to this definition. Communication is seen as a collaborative process where people come together to create common ground, whether in a small group, organisational, or societal setting. This shared understanding is crucial for building relationships, resolving conflicts, and maintaining social cohesion. Communication is an essential part of daily

life and the workplace, influencing every interaction, relationship, and activity. It serves as the foundation for human connection and is crucial for the smooth functioning of both personal and professional environments.

Workers Communication and Communication in Banking Industry

Communication in the workplace is an essential tool that fosters collaboration, productivity, and overall success within an organisation. Workers' communication encompasses both verbal and non-verbal methods of exchanging information between employees, managers, and teams. As the backbone of every professional relationship, effective communication enhances teamwork, problem-solving, and decision-making, which are crucial for achieving organisational goals. The role of communication has evolved in today's digital age, where the fast-paced, globalized environment requires seamless interaction across various platforms. In the workplace, effective communication can improve employee engagement, reduce misunderstandings, and enhance job satisfaction (Barge & Hirokawa, 2020). According to Ojebode (2020), communication within a work environment also plays a pivotal role in employee empowerment and motivation. When employees feel that their voices are heard and their feedback is considered, their engagement with work increases. This leads to a more harmonious work environment and a culture of respect. Littlejohn and Foss (2021) define workplace communication as a reciprocal process where information is exchanged through both formal and informal channels to support mutual understanding and organisational objectives.

In Nigeria, workplace communication is particularly significant in bridging the gap between management and workers, especially in diverse organisational structures. According to Nwodu (2021), effective communication in Nigerian organisations can improve the flow of information and reduce cultural and language barriers, facilitating smoother decision-making and cooperation. Furthermore, communication in the workplace extends beyond just the dissemination of information; it includes non-verbal communication such as gestures, facial expressions, and posture, which are powerful elements of interaction (DeVito, 2020). For instance, body language can indicate an employee's engagement or disengagement, influencing the work atmosphere.

While communication is essential, challenges such as technological barriers, miscommunication, and inadequate listening skills often undermine its effectiveness. According to Duck and McMahan (2019), poor communication can lead to misunderstandings and conflicts, thereby reducing overall productivity. In this regard, workers need to be trained on active listening, clear articulation, and the appropriate use of communication technologies to overcome these challenges.

In conclusion, workers' communication is a dynamic, ongoing process that underpins every successful organisation. It ensures that employees are informed, motivated, and engaged in their roles. For organisations, fostering a culture of effective communication is essential for achieving long-term success. According to scholars like Nwodu (2021) and Littlejohn & Foss (2021), workplace communication is an essential tool for building healthy relationships, enhancing productivity, and ensuring sustainable growth.

Communication within the banking industry plays a pivotal role in facilitating smooth

operations, ensuring customer satisfaction, and enhancing organisational efficiency. In a highly competitive and regulated sector, effective communication serves as the foundation for building trust with customers, maintaining regulatory compliance, and ensuring the seamless flow of financial transactions. As the industry increasingly embraces digital technology, the dynamics of communication are evolving, requiring banks to adapt to new platforms and methods to engage with customers and internal teams.

In the banking industry, communication is crucial for both internal and external interactions. Internally, clear communication channels enable teams to coordinate efficiently, exchange important information, and make timely decisions (Barge & Hirokawa, 2020). For example, banks rely on effective communication between departments, such as customer service, operations, and risk management, to prevent errors and streamline their services. According to Nwodu (2021), poor internal communication can lead to significant inefficiencies, particularly in terms of service delivery and decision-making.

Externally, communication is the key to fostering positive relationships with customers. Verbal and written communication in banking is used to explain financial products, address customer concerns, and offer guidance on financial planning (DeVito, 2020). Customers often interact with bank representatives through phone calls, emails, or online chats, seeking assistance with various financial products. Therefore, the ability of bank employees to communicate clearly and professionally is crucial in delivering quality customer service. Littlejohn and Foss (2021) argue that well-crafted communication between banks and their customers can build trust and loyalty, which is vital for customer retention in a competitive industry.

Teamwork

Teamwork is the collaborative effort of a group of individuals working together to achieve a common goal or complete a task. It involves pooling together diverse skills, knowledge, and resources to solve problems, make decisions, and accomplish objectives that would be difficult to achieve alone. Successful teamwork relies on clear communication, mutual respect, and the willingness to support and trust one another. Each team member brings a unique perspective and contribution, making the collective effort stronger than individual action.

Effective communication is central to fostering collaboration, reducing misunderstandings, and ensuring clarity in team goals and tasks. According to Littlejohn and Foss (2021), clear and transparent communication helps team members align their efforts toward common objectives, minimizing ambiguity and promoting cohesive action. When team members communicate openly, they can share ideas, ask questions, and provide feedback, which improves problem-solving and decision-making. This enhances collaboration by ensuring everyone is on the same page and working toward a unified goal. Moreover, communication reduces misunderstandings by facilitating the exchange of information in a manner that is easy to comprehend and respond to. As Barge and Hirokawa (2020) argue, when team members communicate effectively, they reduce the likelihood of confusion or misinterpretation of tasks, deadlines, or roles. By clarifying expectations through ongoing dialogue, teams can avoid mistakes that arise from assumptions or

unclear instructions. Finally, effective communication ensures clarity in team goals and tasks. Duck and McMahan (2019) note that when clearly communicated goals and responsibilities, teams can focus on achieving objectives efficiently without redundant efforts. Clear communication establishes accountability and allows teams to track progress, adjust strategies when needed, and ultimately achieve success.

According to Littlejohn and Foss (2021), trust strengthens interpersonal relationships within teams, allowing individuals to focus on collective goals rather than personal insecurities or doubts. Trust also encourages risk-taking, innovation, and problem-solving, as team members are confident that others will support them. Furthermore, trust directly contributes to team cohesion, which is vital for effective collaboration. Cohesion occurs when team members feel connected to each other, share common values, and align their efforts toward the team's objectives. Barge and Hirokawa (2020) assert that team cohesion enhances collaboration by ensuring that individuals work together harmoniously, leveraging each other's strengths to accomplish tasks efficiently. A cohesive team operates with a unified purpose, leading to better decision-making and faster problem resolution. Trust and cohesion also play a significant role in conflict resolution. As Duck and McMahan (2019) highlight, when team members trust one another, they are more likely to engage in healthy discussions during conflicts and work collaboratively to find solutions. This reduces the chances of unresolved issues escalating and helps teams maintain productivity and morale. The stages of team development, as proposed by Tuckman (1965), are a widely recognized framework for understanding how teams evolve and work together over time. These stages forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning highlight the progression of team dynamics, from initial interactions to the completion of tasks and eventual disbandment. Recent scholars emphasize the importance of navigating these stages effectively to ensure team success.

The **forming** stage occurs when a team first comes together. During this phase, members are often polite and reserved, focusing on understanding the team's purpose, goals, and structure (Littlejohn & Foss, 2021). Team members may not fully understand their roles, and the team leader's role is crucial in providing clear direction and structure.

The **storming** stage is characterized by conflict and competition, as individuals begin to express differing opinions and challenge authority or ideas (Duck & McMahan, 2019). This phase can be difficult, but it is necessary for team members to voice their concerns and resolve conflicts. Effective leadership and open communication are critical in addressing misunderstandings and maintaining focus on the team's goals.

During the **norming** stage, team members start to collaborate more effectively as they establish roles, build trust, and resolve conflicts (Barge & Hirokawa, 2020). At this point, norms and expectations are solidified, and the team's dynamics shift toward cooperation and mutual respect. Clear communication and understanding of individual roles help teams move through this phase successfully.

In the **performing** stage, the team reaches a high level of effectiveness. Members work together seamlessly, leveraging each other's strengths to accomplish the team's goals (Littlejohn & Foss, 2021). Trust, open

communication, and shared leadership contribute to the team's ability to operate efficiently and successfully.

Finally, the **adjourning** stage occurs when the team completes its tasks or disbands. During this phase, members reflect on their experiences, celebrate achievements, and transition to new projects or roles (Barge & Hirokawa, 2020). Proper closure is essential for team members to feel valued and for the team to move forward with clarity.

Effective teams progress through these stages by fostering strong communication, trust, and leadership at each phase. As noted by Littlejohn and Foss (2021), navigating these stages with a focus on cooperation and conflict resolution enables teams to reach their full potential and achieve organisational goals.

Digital tools such as Slack, Microsoft Teams, and Zoom have significantly transformed the way teams communicate, manage projects, and collaborate remotely. These tools have become essential in today's workplace, where remote work and virtual collaboration are increasingly prevalent. According to Ojebode (2020), these tools offer instant communication, enabling teams to stay connected in real-time, regardless of geographical location. By integrating messaging, file sharing, and video conferencing features, they create a more seamless experience for team members, enhancing efficiency and productivity. Slack, for instance, facilitates quick, organised communication through channels, making it easier for teams to share updates, ask questions, and collaborate without relying on email (Barge & Hirokawa, 2020).

Decision-making is a critical aspect of teamwork, influencing the effectiveness and overall success of the team. Various decision-making models, such as consensus, majority vote, and leader-driven decisions, each have unique impacts on team dynamics and outcomes. These models determine how decisions are made and how team members contribute to the process, affecting both the quality of the decisions and the team's cohesion.

In leader-driven decision model, the team leader or manager makes the final decision, often based on their expertise or authority. This model can be effective when quick decisions are needed, and the leader is trusted to make the right call (Ojebode, 2020). However, it may undermine team collaboration, as it can foster a sense of disengagement among team members if their opinions are not sought or valued. While leader-driven decisions can lead to efficient outcomes, they can also result in a lack of team cohesion and decreased motivation if used excessively (Littlejohn & Foss, 2021). In conclusion, the choice of decision-making model significantly influences team dynamics and outcomes. Consensus decision-making promotes inclusivity and collaboration, while majority voting enables efficiency but may create divisions. Leader-driven decisions provide clarity and speed but can undermine team morale if overused. The most effective teams often blend these models, using consensus for strategic decisions, majority votes for routine issues, and leader-driven decisions when swift action is necessary.

Assessing team effectiveness, providing feedback, and implementing strategies to enhance future team performance are essential practices for continuous improvement in any team environment. These processes ensure

that teams remain aligned with their goals, identify areas for growth, and optimize their collaboration and output. Various methods and strategies have been developed to support these objectives, each contributing to a more effective and efficient team dynamic. Assessing team effectiveness involves evaluating both individual and collective performance in relation to established goals. According to Barge and Hirokawa (2020), Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), such as task completion rates, quality of work, and adherence to deadlines, are essential metrics for determining a team's success. Littlejohn and Foss (2021) recommend creating an environment where team members can regularly share knowledge, ideas, and solutions to ongoing challenges. Teams can also benefit from team-building activities that enhance communication, trust, and cohesion, further enhancing collaboration.

In conclusion, assessing team effectiveness, providing constructive feedback, and implementing improvement strategies are integral to a team's long-term success. Regular evaluations and feedback ensure that teams stay focused, while continuous learning and adaptation foster growth and improved performance.

Concept of Soft Skills

Soft skills, often referred to as interpersonal or people skills, are a critical component of personal and professional development. Unlike technical skills, which are specific and measurable, soft skills are intangible qualities that enable individuals to interact effectively with others and navigate social environments. These skills encompass a wide range of attributes, including communication, teamwork, adaptability, problem-solving, emotional intelligence, and leadership (Robles, 2017). Soft skills are integral to career success and are increasingly recognized as key to fostering positive work environments, improving job performance, and driving organisational success (Okoye & Madu, 2019).

Over the past decade, there has been a growing recognition of the importance of soft skills in various fields, both for individual and collective advancement. Scholars have highlighted the relevance of soft skills in enhancing employability and career progression. In a global context, it has been shown that soft skills play an essential role in shaping workplace dynamics. According to Akinwale and Alabi (2020), the rapid transformation in work environments, due to globalization and technological advancements, has made soft skills indispensable. The modern workforce is no longer defined solely by technical competencies but also by the ability to collaborate, solve complex problems, and engage in critical thinking. Soft skills are particularly significant in the Nigerian context, where the youth population faces numerous challenges such as high unemployment rates and a competitive job market. The ability to demonstrate strong soft skills can differentiate job candidates and significantly influence their chances of securing employment (Ogunyemi, 2018). In Nigeria, soft skills training has gained prominence as a means to enhance the employability of graduates and young professionals. However, scholars such as Akinbode (2021) argue that while academic institutions and training programs have begun to recognize the importance of soft skills, there is still a gap in integrating these competencies into curricula and practical training.

Emotional intelligence, a key component of soft skills, has been identified as essential for effective leadership and conflict management in organisations (Goleman, 2018). According to Olatunji et al. (2020), Nigerian organisations can achieve greater productivity and employee satisfaction when leaders exhibit emotional intelligence, which allows for better interpersonal relationships and decision-making. Internationally, research supports the notion that soft skills are central to professional success across diverse industries. Scholars like McKinsey & Company (2020) have stressed that future employees need both technical and soft skills to thrive in an increasingly automated and digital economy. As such, investing in soft skills development is crucial for both individuals and organisations seeking to adapt to ever-evolving challenges in the global labour market.

Soft skills are essential for both personal growth and professional success in today's complex, interconnected world. The need to cultivate and enhance these skills has never been more urgent, as individuals and organisations navigate the demands of the 21st century workforce. Some soft skills are;

Communication Skills

Effective communication is one of the most important soft skills, as it allows individuals to express ideas clearly and listen to others. In the workplace, communication skills are essential for team collaboration, resolving conflicts, and presenting ideas. Nigerian scholars, such as Ojebode (2020), emphasize that clear communication is crucial for fostering positive relationships and ensuring that goals are understood by all team members. Communication involves both verbal and non-verbal cues, and being able to adjust one's communication style based on the audience is vital. It also includes active listening and showing respect for others' viewpoints and providing thoughtful feedback. Teams that communicate well are more productive, as there is less ambiguity and confusion in task execution. Poor communication, on the other hand, can lead to misunderstandings, mistakes, and strained relationships within the workplace. Therefore, strengthening communication skills can greatly enhance both individual and team performance in any work setting.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to the ability to understand and manage one's emotions and recognize and influence the emotions of others. Emotional intelligence is essential for fostering strong relationships and effective teamwork. As noted by Ayeni and Ojebode (2019), employees with high EI are better able to handle stress, navigate social complexities, and make more empathetic decisions. In the workplace, high EI allows individuals to respond appropriately to feedback, manage conflicts with tact, and collaborate more harmoniously with others. For leaders, emotional intelligence is particularly valuable as it fosters an environment of trust and mutual respect, which ultimately boosts employee morale and productivity.

Problem-Solving Skills

Problem-solving is another critical soft skill that involves identifying issues, analysing possible solutions, and implementing strategies to resolve problems effectively. In the workplace, problem-solving is often required when facing unforeseen challenges, such as technical difficulties, customer complaints, or conflicts between team members. Nigerian scholars like Ojebode (2020) argue that a proactive problem-solver

not only resolves issues promptly but also anticipates potential challenges before they arise. A strong problem-solving mindset involves creative thinking and the ability to approach problems from multiple perspectives.

Teamwork and Collaboration

Teamwork and collaboration are essential soft skills, particularly in today's work environment where cross-functional teams are the norm. Effective collaboration requires individuals to work together, combining their diverse skills and strengths toward a shared objective. Nigerian scholars like Ayeni and Ojebode (2019) argue that successful teams are built on a foundation of mutual respect, open communication, and shared accountability. Teamwork skills involve knowing when to take the lead, when to follow, and when to offer support to colleagues. When employees collaborate well, they are more likely to reach innovative solutions and achieve complex tasks more efficiently. However, poor teamwork can result in frustration, miscommunication, and a decline in productivity. As such, organisations that prioritize fostering collaboration and teamwork through training and development are more likely to enjoy higher performance levels and improved employee engagement.

Time Management

Time management refers to the ability to organize and plan how to divide one's time between various tasks effectively. In the workplace, time management is critical for meeting deadlines, maintaining work-life balance, and enhancing productivity. Nigerian scholars, such as Ojebode (2020), emphasize that employees who manage their time efficiently can prioritize tasks, reduce stress, and improve their overall job performance. Proper time management involves setting realistic goals, breaking large tasks into smaller, manageable steps, and using tools such as calendars or task management software

Adaptability

Adaptability is the ability to adjust to new conditions and challenges in the workplace. This skill is particularly important in fast-changing industries, where workers must be able to learn new technologies, adopt new processes, or adjust to evolving market conditions. Nigerian scholars like Ayeni and Ojebode (2019) argue that adaptability enables employees to thrive in dynamic environments, as they can quickly respond to changes in tasks, goals, or organisational structures. Employees who are adaptable are more likely to embrace new opportunities, learn from feedback, and pivot when necessary.

Concept of Soft Skill Training

Soft skills training refers to structured efforts aimed at developing non-technical, interpersonal, and cognitive abilities that improve an individual's interactions, decision-making, and problem-solving skills in both personal and professional contexts. Over the past decade, the need for soft skills training has gained significant attention, driven by the growing recognition of these competencies as key factors for career success and organisational effectiveness. Scholars and experts worldwide agree that technical knowledge alone is insufficient for excelling in today's dynamic work environments. As such, soft skills training has emerged as a pivotal strategy for enhancing employability and organisational productivity (Robles, 2017; Olatunji et al., 2020).

The emergence of soft skills training can be traced to the shifting demands of the modern

workforce. As globalization, technological advancements, and organisational changes reshape industries, the ability to collaborate, communicate effectively, lead teams, and resolve conflicts has become critical for success (McKinsey & Company, 2020). Soft skills are now seen as integral to complementing hard skills, providing individuals with the tools needed to thrive in increasingly complex and fast-paced environments. In Nigeria, the importance of soft skills training has been recognized within the context of a competitive labor market. Akinwale and Alabi (2020) highlighted that, Nigerian graduates, often armed with strong technical qualifications, face challenges in securing employment due to deficiencies in soft skills such as communication, emotional intelligence, and teamwork.

The prevalence of soft skills training has surged in recent years, with organisations and educational institutions investing in programs designed to enhance these competencies. In Nigeria, private companies, educational institutions, and even governmental organisations have incorporated soft skills training into their curricula and professional development programs (Ogunyemi, 2018). Akinbode (2021) noted that such initiatives are becoming more widespread, though they are often not as robust or consistent as they should be, leaving room for improvement in the depth of training offered.

The long-term and short-term benefits of soft skills training are far-reaching. In the short term, individuals who participate in soft skills development programs often experience improved communication, teamwork, and leadership abilities. This can translate to more effective collaboration and enhanced relationships in both personal and professional contexts. In the long term, soft skills training can lead to sustained career growth, with employees demonstrating higher adaptability, conflict resolution, and emotional intelligence—traits highly valued by employers. Research by Okoye & Madu (2019) emphasizes that employees who possess strong soft skills are more likely to be promoted and excel in leadership roles, as these skills are crucial for navigating complex organisational landscapes.

For organisations, investing in soft skills training yields significant benefits in terms of productivity, employee engagement, and retention. A workplace that prioritizes soft skills development fosters a culture of effective communication, trust, and collaboration, leading to enhanced performance and lower turnover rates (Goleman, 2018). In the long run, organisations with well-developed teams of employees who exhibit strong interpersonal skills are better equipped to adapt to change and innovate in a competitive marketplace.
Soft skills training has become an essential component of modern education and professional development. As the demand for these skills continues to grow globally, both individuals and organisations must recognize the value of investing in soft skills to ensure long-term success and growth in an increasingly complex world.

Impact of Soft Skill Training on Workers Communication and Teamwork

Soft skill training plays a significant role in enhancing workers' communication and teamwork in the modern workplace. In organisations, these interpersonal skills, such as effective communication, problem-solving, emotional intelligence, and time management, are crucial for fostering a harmonious work environment. As noted by Ayeni and Ojebode

(2019), soft skill training equips workers with the necessary tools to interact effectively with colleagues, resolve conflicts, and collaborate more productively. In an age where many industries rely heavily on collaboration and teamwork, enhancing soft skills has become essential to achieving organisational goals. By focusing on both individual and collective development, soft skill training helps improve communication efficiency, creating a more productive and positive workplace environment. Workers who are trained in soft skills are better able to navigate the complexities of interpersonal relationships, leading to smoother interactions and more effective teamwork.

Enhancing Communication Skills

Communication is the foundation of effective teamwork. Soft skill training that focuses on communication helps workers develop their ability to convey ideas clearly and listen attentively. Littlejohn and Foss (2021) emphasize that effective communication is essential for problem-solving, conflict resolution, and decision-making in team settings.

Building Teamwork and Collaboration

Soft skill training not only improves communication but also enhances teamwork and collaboration. Effective collaboration requires workers to be open-minded, adaptable, and willing to cooperate with others. Ayeni and Ojebode (2019) argue that soft skill training equips individuals with the mindset and tools to work effectively in a team environment. These training programs focus on building trust, fostering mutual respect, and encouraging active participation from all team members. Workers are taught how to share responsibilities, manage conflicts, and leverage each other's strengths, which leads to better synergy and outcomes.

Conflict Management and Resolution

Conflict is an inevitable aspect of teamwork, but soft skill training can equip workers with the tools to manage and resolve disputes effectively. According to Ojebode (2020), workers who receive training in conflict management techniques are more adept at navigating interpersonal differences without escalating tensions. These workers are trained to approach conflicts with a solution-oriented mindset, focusing on resolving issues constructively rather than letting them disrupt the team's cohesion.

Improving Emotional Intelligence and Trust

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a vital component of teamwork and communication, and soft skill training often includes a focus on developing EI. As Ayeni and Ojebode (2019) highlight, individuals with high emotional intelligence are more empathetic, self-aware, and able to manage their emotions in professional settings. Training in emotional intelligence helps workers understand their emotions and the emotions of others, which is key to building trust within teams.

Soft Skills Training and Workers Communication

Effective communication is a cornerstone of any successful organisation, and the development of soft skills plays a crucial role in enhancing workers' ability to communicate effectively. Soft skills refer to non-technical skills, such as interpersonal communication, emotional intelligence, teamwork, adaptability, and problem solving. In the workplace, these skills complement technical abilities and are essential for fostering a

positive work environment, improving productivity, and achieving organisational goals.

Improving Interpersonal Communication

One of the key components of soft skills training is enhancing interpersonal communication. According to Goleman (1998), emotional intelligence a vital soft skill allows employees to navigate social interactions and manage their emotions, leading to more effective communication. Workers who receive training in active listening, empathy, and conflict resolution are better equipped to communicate clearly and respectfully with colleagues.

Enhancing Teamwork and Collaboration

Soft skills training enhances teamwork and collaboration by encouraging effective communication within groups. In team settings, workers need to communicate their ideas, listen to others, and engage in constructive feedback. Brown (2017) argues that workers who develop skills in cooperation, flexibility, and adaptability are more likely to participate actively in team discussions, share information, and support team goals. Effective teamwork requires good communication, and soft skills training helps workers navigate group dynamics, contributing to a harmonious work atmosphere.

Promoting Conflict Resolution

Workplace conflicts are inevitable, but soft skills training can equip workers with the tools to manage and resolve conflicts constructively. By developing skills in negotiation, mediation, and emotional regulation, employees can handle disagreements more professionally. According to Rahim (2002), soft skills training improves conflict resolution by teaching employees how to express their concerns and listen to opposing viewpoints without escalating tensions. This, in turn, leads to more open and respectful communication, reducing the likelihood of prolonged disputes that disrupt organisational harmony.

Facilitating Effective Leadership Communication

Leadership in the workplace requires clear, concise, and motivating communication. Soft skills training, particularly in areas such as emotional intelligence and persuasive communication, enhances leaders' ability to communicate effectively with their teams. Leaders who are adept at expressing empathy, motivating employees, and providing constructive feedback can improve team morale and performance (Northouse, 2018). Through soft skills training, leaders learn to adapt their communication style to the needs of different individuals, fostering an environment of trust and open communication.

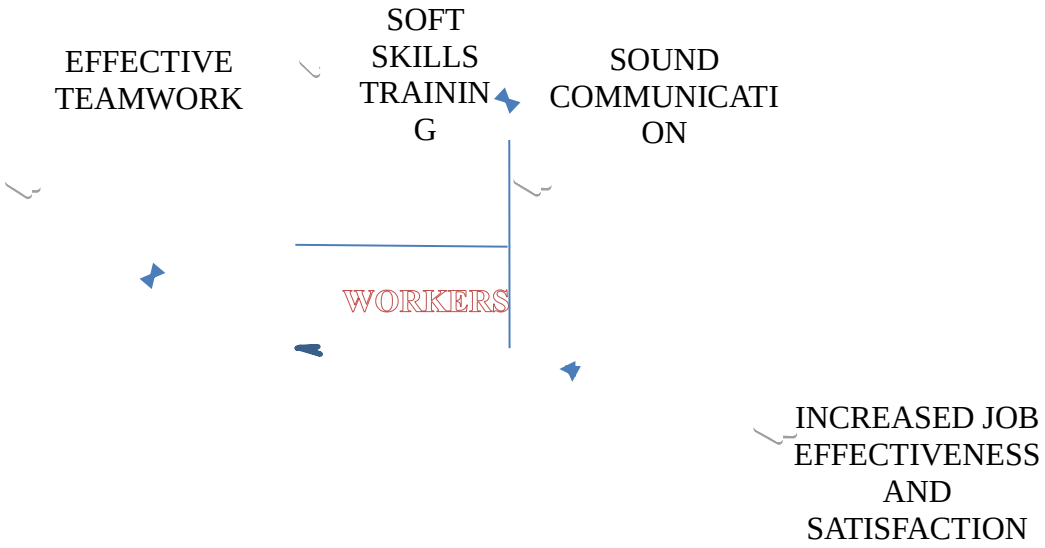
Theoretical Framework

Organisational Behaviour Theory

Organisational Behavior (OB) theory explores how individuals, groups, and structures within an organisation influence behavior, performance, and overall organisational effectiveness. The study of OB is critical for understanding how employees interact within their organisations and how these interactions can be shaped to foster a productive and harmonious work environment. A key aspect of OB is the understanding of communication, teamwork, and soft skills training, all of which are vital for creating a productive organisational culture. This essay delves into OB theory, linking it to workers'

communication, teamwork, and soft skills training, while emphasizing their importance in improving organisational outcomes.

Conceptual Framework of The Study



The diagram above was a self-developed concept by the researcher to perfectly explain the relationship that exists between the variables in review. Sound Communication and Effective Teamwork are by-products of Soft Skills Training which are bound to the worker. A worker is expected to not only take on industrial training in terms of technical training but also Soft Skills Training. Soft Skills Training helps the worker to develop necessary skill for day-to-day work relationship and it makes Teamwork effective and makes Communication better. All these variables affect the worker positively to lead to an increase in Job Effectiveness and Satisfaction.

Methodology

The descriptive research method was employed to carry out this survey. Descriptive research is a type of research that aims to accurately describe and document the characteristics of a particular phenomenon or population. One hundred samples were selected for for the study, using multi-stage sampling procedure. Five (5) banks were purposively selected for the study, the banks were within University of Ibadan for Conveniency sake. And Twenty (20) workers were randomly selected from each banks.

A self-developed questionnaire was used to collect information from the respondents. Section A: This section was used to gather information on the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Five items were generated in this section including age bracket, sex, level of education, years of work experience and current position or title. While the section B contains questions on the subject matter.

The collected Questionnaires were coded and analyzed using descriptive statistics of percentages and frequency counts for demographic information of respondents and research questions while inferential statistics

of Statistical Package for Social Sciences was used to test the hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results and Discussion of Findings

The demographic characteristics of this study indicates that 19(19.6%) of the respondents were 18 22years, 38(39.2%) age range 23-27years, while 31(31.9%) age range 30-34 years and 9(9.3%) were within age range 35 and above. The majority of the respondents in the study were in the age range of 23-27 years of age. Also, 46(47.4%) were male while 51(52.6%) were female. This shows that there are more female respondents than male during the data collection on the field. 69(71.1%) of the respondents had first degree while 23(23.7%) had masters degree and 5(5.2%) had PhD. The majority of the respondents in the study had first degree. Consequently, the study indicates that, 40(41.2%) of the respondents had spent 1-4 years in service, 26(26.8%) 5-8years, while 19 (19.6%) 9-12 years and 12 (12.4%) 13years and above. The majority of the respondents had spent 1-4 years in service. 54(56.7.0%) of the respondents were Christians and 43(43.3%) were Muslim. The majority of the respondents in the study were Christians

Hypotheses Testing

$H0_1$: There is no significant relationship between Soft Skills Training and Ccommunication Skills among Banking Workers in Ibadan North Local Government Area

Table 1: Pearson correlation showing significant relationship between soft skills training and communication skills among banking workers in Ibadan North Local Government Area

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	r	P	Remark
Soft Skills Training	16.84	2.37	97	.621	.010	Sig.
Communication Skills	18.43	2.81				

Table 1 revealed ($r = .621$, $n= 97$, $p < .05$) the p-value was less than 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This shows that there was a significant relationship between soft skills training and communication skills among banking workers in Ibadan North Local Government Area. This implies a strong relationship between two variables.

The H01 tested if there was no significant relationship between soft skills training and communication skills among banking workers. The study found that there was a significant relationship between soft skills training and communication skills among banking workers; ($r = .621$, $p < .05$). This is in line with a study conducted by Sutherland and Houghton (2015) which found out that banks that invest in soft skills training programs for their employees experience more efficient communication both internally and with clients. These improvements lead to enhanced customer satisfaction, as employees are able to respond more appropriately to customer inquiries, complaints, and requests. Furthermore, banks with skilled communicators tend to have stronger relationships with customers, contributing to long-term customer loyalty. Soft skills training helps workers overcome barriers to

communication. In a study conducted by Zhang (2019), it was observed that employees who received training in active listening, conflict resolution, and non-verbal communication were better equipped to handle interpersonal conflicts and misunderstandings. This aligns with research by Johnson and Johnson (2017), who argued that effective communication in the workplace is not just about the words spoken, but also about understanding the context, emotions, and intentions behind those words. Employees with well-developed communication skills can interpret subtle cues, reduce misunderstandings, and navigate challenging conversations more effectively, which is especially important in the customer-oriented banking environment.

H0$_2$: There is no significant relationship between soft skills training and teamwork of workers in the banking industry in Ibadan-North local government, Oyo State, Nigeria

Table 2: Pearson correlation showing significant relationship between soft skills training and teamwork of workers in the banking industry in Ibadan-North local government, Oyo State, Nigeria

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	N	R	p	Remark
Soft Skills Training	16.84	2.37	97	.566	.000	Sig.
Teamwork	17.01	3.23				

As shown in table 2, ($r = .566$, $n = 97$, $p < .05$) the p-value was less than 0.05 level of significance. Hence, the null hypothesis was rejected. This shows that there was a significant relationship between soft skills training and teamwork of workers in the banking industry in Ibadan-North local government, Oyo State, Nigeria. The correlation coefficient of 0.566 implies that there was a strong relationship between the two variables. The Ho2 tested if there was no significant relationship between soft skills training and teamwork among banking workers in Ibadan North Local Government Area. The study found that there is a significant relationship between soft skills training and teamwork among banking workers; ($r = .621$, $p < .05$). This is in tandem with Duffy (2020) who emphasized that employees with higher levels of emotional intelligence tend to collaborate better with their colleagues, as they can manage their emotions, understand others' perspectives, and resolve conflicts constructively. In a banking context, where teams often work under pressure to meet targets and deadlines, these interpersonal skills are crucial for maintaining a harmonious and productive team dynamic. For example, banks in Ibadan with employees who have undergone soft skills training are more likely to see improvements in team performance, as workers can communicate effectively, share ideas openly, and resolve disagreements without escalating them. Also corroborated with Tharp and Keller (2020), who opined that, workers in the banking sector who receive training in soft skills such as conflict management, collaboration, and negotiation are better equipped to adapt to changes and collaborate effectively within diverse teams. This is particularly important in the context of banks in Ibadan, where technological advancements are reshaping the industry.

Team members must work together to learn and implement new systems and processes, and soft skills training can help them manage the stress and uncertainty that accompany such changes.

Table 3: Summary of Regression Analysis among predicting factors (communication skills and teamwork and overall productivity) on soft skills training in the banking industry in Ibadan North Local Government, Oyo State, Nigeria.

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	932.845	3	310.948	181.310	.000
Residual	543.878	93	1.715		
Total	1476.723	96			

R=.821, R^2 = .742, Adj R^2 =.384

It was shown in the table 3 above that the joint influence of the (communication skills and teamwork and overall productivity) on soft skills training in the banking industry was significant ($F_{(3, 93)}$ = 181.310; R = .821, R^2 = .742; P < .05). About 74% of the variation was accounted for by the independent variables. Thus, the three variables are good predictors of soft skills in the banking industry in Ibadan North Local Government, Oyo State, Nigeria.

The study found out that that there was significant joint influence of the (communication skills and teamwork and overall productivity) on soft skills training in the banking industry was significant (F (3, 93) = 181.310; R = .821, R2 = .742; P < .05). Research conducted by Smith and Gupta (2020) further corroborated the importance of soft skills for teamwork in the banking sector. Their study found that teamwork is most effective when employees are equipped with communication and conflict resolution skills, as these skills facilitate smoother collaboration, better decision making, and higher job satisfaction. In the case of Ibadan's banking industry, soft skills training programs designed to improve communication and teamwork have been linked to improved collaboration across departments, leading to more efficient service delivery and higher customer satisfaction rates. Research conducted by Zhou (2020) highlighted that, employees who receive soft skills training that emphasizes cultural sensitivity tend to be more effective in their communication with diverse groups. In the context of Ibadan, where the banking sector serves people from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, understanding cultural nuances is essential for maintaining positive relationships and delivering excellent customer service. Soft skills training programs that address cultural differences can help employees better understand and respect these differences, fostering a more inclusive and harmonious work environment. The empirical evidence underscores the significant role that soft skills training plays in improving workers' communication and teamwork in the banking industry in Ibadan. Studies consistently demonstrate that when employees undergo soft skills training, their communication abilities, teamwork dynamics, and overall performance improve, leading to better organisational outcomes. In the banking industry, where effective communication and collaboration are essential for customer satisfaction, team performance, and organisational success, soft skills training is an indispensable tool for enhancing employee

interactions and fostering a positive work environment. As the banking industry continues to evolve, especially with the increasing adoption of technology, the importance of soft skills training in maintaining effective communication and collaboration will only continue to grow.

Conclusion

This study was carried out on the impact of Soft Skills Training on Workers' Communication and Teamwork in the banking industry in Ibadan-North Local Government, Ibadan, Oyo State. This study has provided a comprehensive examination of soft skills training, offering valuable insights into its impact on communication and teamwork in the workplace. The findings underscore the importance of these skills in driving organisational success and highlight the need for further research to address the gaps identified in existing studies. By embracing the recommendations outlined here, organisations can enhance their training programs, ensuring that employees are equipped with the essential skills to navigate the increasingly complex and dynamic work environments of the future.

Recommendations

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

1. The Government should endeavour to implement long-term evaluation programmes on soft skills training to measure its sustained impact on employee performance and teamwork over extended periods.
2. It is essential for industrial education researchers to broaden the scope of their research beyond specific sectors, such as banking, to include diverse industries. This will ensure that findings are more generalizable and applicable to a wide range of organisational settings and help identify industry-specific needs and challenges regarding soft skills training.
3. Future research should account for individual differences, such as personality traits, prior soft skills experience, and educational background. This can provide a clearer understanding of how these factors influence the effectiveness of soft skills training and enable more personalized training programs.
4. Employers of labour should focus on the Integration of Soft Skills into daily operations. It is important to integrate soft skills training into regular workplace activities rather than treating it as a one-time event.
5. Organisations should customize soft skills training to the specific needs of their workforce, considering both the industry-specific requirements and the individual needs of employees.

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