

# Interpersonal Relationship and Employee Performance in Selected Nigeria Bank

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**Abstract:** *Background:* The study aims to investigate the connection between interpersonal relationship and employee performance. *Methodology:* Descriptive research survey was adopted as one hundred and sixty-eight (168) employees of Guaranty Trust Bank were sampled using cross sectional data from structured questionnaire. *Findings:* The result revealed that the three measure of interpersonal relationship are commonly rated high by the respondents with average mean of 4.07 for effective communication, 4.02 for team building, and social support has 4.04 mean. Specifically, it was revealed that rise in effective communication within the organization improves the performance of the employee within the threshold of 68%, team building increases same by 63% while social support at 86% appears to be the most important variables for the employee in terms of coefficient magnitude. Findings also showed that high quality interpersonal relationship improves the work performance of the employee through improved communication, motivation, teamwork, assisting each other's and improvement in the performance of the employee while destructive relationship within the organization creates friction and unhealthy rivalry within the organization and tends to dampen the performance of the employee instead of improving. *Recommendation:* Therefore, the management of Guaranty Trust Bank should adopt the dimensions of interpersonal relationship used for the study as strategies for improving their level of performance.

**Keywords:** Effective Communication, Team Building, Social Support, Employee Performance, Interpersonal Relationship

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## 1. Introduction

A healthy interpersonal relationship between and among the workforce in the organization has been judged to yield dividends to organization which promotes its existence. Interpersonal relationship is therefore an association or relationship between two or more people within the organization. Simialrly, an organization can be viewed as a body that bring together people who share similar aims, objectives, goals, and who coming together is posed to achieve greater things (goals) that is beyond the achievement of the individuals [1]. This implies that organization exist to promote achievement of greater objectives that individuals might not be able to achieve working as an individual. While most business organization exists for profit making, organization existence goes beyond profit making but to bring together people that is passionate about solving a

particular set of societal needs [2].

Literature suggest that organization with more goal oriented workforce tends to enjoy more interpersonal relationship because the teams are driven by the goals and project deliveries before them rather than what divides them [3]. Building a strong interpersonal relationship is one of the core strategic management practices adopted by several organization across the globe [3]. Interpersonal relationship improves organization performance through increasing institutional participation, provides an environment where innovation and creativity thrive which ultimately improves organization performance (productivity) and reduces employee turnover in the organization [1]. This is consistent with the argument by of Adiele and Omunakwe who argued that interpersonal relationship within the organization promotes healthy relationship in the organization, gives all employee a sense of belonging and ultimately leading to their motivation, and improved performance [4].

No business can thrive in the twenty first century if the organization lacks professional and qualified individuals who can work cooperatively as a team in different projects of the organization which further reemphasizes the importance of interpersonal relationship within the organization. A healthy interpersonal relationship for effective work delivery importance is further exemplified by Parray [5] when the author further argued that resentment among team members or workers can derail the achievement of organization objectives.

The dynamic nature of today business implies that employee and team members must be well coordinated and trained to ensure that they have the ability to motivate team members to work as team member to improve work quality and their productivity [6]. Organization performance also depends on the ability of the team members or the subordinate to effectively interact with their superior or manager, co-workers, managers ability to coordinate and communicate effectively with the subordinate and in general how the organization workforce relates and treat the external stakeholders – the public, customers, and the shareholders. As argued by Szostek [7] most organization problem is people problem rather than business problem. Organization needs to learn how to maintain a healthy relationship not just between workers but between workers and the management and the major stakeholders and this what is called the Toyota way [8].

Thus, an organization that want to gain competitive edge over its competitors must build an organization devoid of rancor, disunity, grievances, where healthy communication thrives between and among workers, between workers and managers (supervisor), an atmosphere where there is an understanding between employee differences. Banking business in Nigeria started in “1892 by African Banking Corporation later acquired/merged and to be known as standard bank and later changed to First Bank in 1894 till present as when writing the article. These two expatriate banks dominated the banking scene until 1933. However, many indigenous banks were established in the early 1900 but most of them failed due to probably, lack of interpersonal relationship between the management and workforce that was in existence in the expatriate bank. Only three indigenous banks and the two foreign banks survived the period, by 1952, the first bank ordinance was introduced which stipulated the minimum capital based and licensing for banks” [1]. Between the periods of 1959 to 1986, the banking industry was highly regulated following the establishment of Central Bank of Nigeria in 1959 with the aim to promote financial and monetary stability in the country. Therefore, the present study will examine the importance of interpersonal relationship and employee performance using Guaranty Trust Bank as a case study.

## 2. Review of Related Literature

### 2.1. Conceptual Clarification

#### 2.1.1. Interpersonal Relationship

Like most phenomenon of life, relationship is born, fed,

nurtured, and experience growth over time. “It is born at the level of acquaintance relationship; it is fed at associate relationship and is nurtured at friendship. One who must be involved in interpersonal relationship must have a goal to attain at each level to achieve its purpose” [9]. Interpersonal relationship is the social link that exist between more than two people, it is built on emotion, love, and liking within the organization. Man is “naturally attracted to companionship with fellow man either same sex or opposite sex”.

Interpersonal relationship usually involves some level of interdependence. “People in relationship tend to influence each other, share their thoughts and feelings, and engage in activities together. Because of this interdependence, most things that change or impact one member of the relationship will have some level of impact on the other member [10]. Human relation broadly implies the interactions and cooperation of people in groups which operate in different fields such as business, schools, clubs, homes and the government. However, in industrial and business settings the term ‘Human Relation’ has a different connotation altogether for persons in managerial positions”.

In this context, it means the integration of people into a work situation which motivates them to work together effectively, providing them social, psychological and economic satisfaction. Bodika et al, noted that “Human Relations are motivating people in organizational settings to develop teamwork which accomplishes individual as well as organizational goals effectively.

According to Wheatley [11], a healthy relationship is requisite for effective functioning of organization and its through healthy relationship that organization maintain profitable trajectory within the organization. Wheatley argued that organization and academician should pay more attention to how organization organizes its relationship not just focusing of the tasks, roles, hierarchies within the organization. The author further argued that while this is important, a healthy relationship that cut across supervisor-subordinate relationship, peer -worker relationship, workplace -friendships romantic relationship and customer relationships [12].

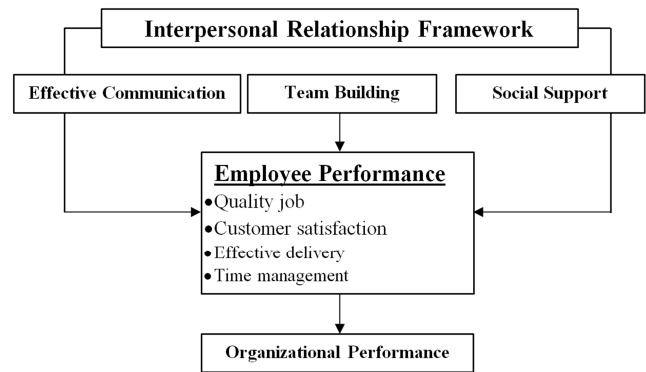
To further elaborate the importance of building a healthy and thriving bidirectional relationship within the organization, Deutsch [13] proposed a bidirectional assumption to explain what two-way interpersonal relationships entails. The author argued that a bidirectional relationship consists of psychological -orientation and interdependence Psychological -orientation. motivational and moral backgrounds involved in any situation that serves to guide an individual’s behavior and responses in that situation. A further assumption was that “individuals differ in their ability and readiness to engage with different orientations, and that their engagements might affect their results (outcomes)”. The author thus described the interdependence in relationship as the view and perception of the relationship strength. For instance, it emphasizes whether a relationship is cold, distant, superficial, shallow, strong among others.

### 2.1.2. Employee Performance

The determinant of employee performance has been studied over the years by different scholars. This is built on the assumption that improved employee performance will be translated into organization performance. For instance, Hoboken and Wiley [14] identified two categories of employee behaviour within the organization: task and contextual performance. The author argued that task performance includes those behaviour displayed by the employee in the process of producing goods and services. Specifically, it is those activities that provide the organization indirect support for the achievement of its core mandate. Similarly, contextual performance includes those function or activities engaged by the employee that does not relates to their core task within the organization. However, these activities are important to the organization as it improves their social, psychological, and work behaviour which is also critical for the achievement of the organization core mandate [15].

The behavioral aspect refers to “what people do while at work, the action itself. Performance encompasses specific behavior (e.g., sales conversations with customers, teaching statistics to undergraduate students, programming computer software, assembling parts of a product). This conceptualization implies that only actions that can be scaled (i.e., counted) are regarded as performance. Moreover, this performance concept explicitly only describes behavior which is goal-oriented, i.e. behavior which the organization hires the employee to do well as performance [16]. The outcome aspect in turn refers to the result of the individual's behavior. The actions described above might result in contracts or selling numbers, students' knowledge in statistical procedures, a software product, or numbers of products assembled. Empirically, the behavioral and outcome aspect are related. However, there is no complete overlap, as the outcome aspect is affected by other determinants than the behavioral aspect. Imagine a car retailer who communicates the preferences of a product (behavioral aspect) excellently, but who nevertheless achieves low sales figures (outcome aspect) due to low demand of this specific type of cars. Similarly, a teacher who provides an excellent statistics lesson which fulfills all learning requirements (behavioral aspect) might not provide students with knowledge (outcome aspect) if students' lack motivation or cognitive abilities”. Sante el al [17] has argued that employee performance needs to be distinguished from employee effectiveness, productivity, and efficiency. The author argued that “effectiveness refers to the evaluations of the results of performance” (i.e., financial value of sales). In contrast, employee productivity could be viewed as a ratio between employee effectiveness and the cost of attaining the outcome. For instance, employee productivity measures the ratio of work hours to the products. On the other hands, employee performance relates to all sphere of employee activities in terms of quality of job done, volume of activities executed. And evidence has revealed as tong positive correlation between employee job performance and organization performance or competitive advantages. Campbell [18] noted

that quality, time, quantity, and cost management are variables that defines employee performance. In summary, high quality interpersonal relationship improves the employee performance through improved communication, motivation, teamwork, assisting each other's and improvement in the performance of the employee translate into improvement in the performance of the organization. As such, the conceptual framework guiding the article is as presented in figure 1.



Source: Researcher Abstraction

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework.

### 2.2. Theoretical Literature

In discussing interpersonal relationship and employee work behaviour and performance, there are some theories that provides us insight on the existing relationship. One of such theory is Peplau theory which explain the behaviour of people in relation to other attitude towards them. Peplau was primarily concerned about the condition and behaviour of some patient, particularly some psychiatric patients in asylums during the 1940s and Peplau 1950s.

The theory originated from the needs to achieve a better work life and improved condition for patients. Peplau techniques and theory are still in practice till date. Peden cited in Andersen and Chen [18] said that, “Peplau’s work introduced a woman ahead of her time, and today her theory keeps in pace with postmodern nursing influences that have reinforced nurses’ awareness of the knowledge-rich context of practice, at the level of the patient”. Peplau’s theory can be classified as a middle-range theory. She defined nursing as the therapeutic relationship between both individuals; therefore, it necessitated that the nurse interacts with the patient purposefully. Peplau believed that: “through the devise of the therapeutic nurse-patient relationship, the nurse could be most beneficial to human beings [19]. Peplau admitted that her theory focused on psychological and interpersonal phenomena and did not include most aspects of the physiological phenomenon [19]. Peplau’s theory is not applicable to “patients with severely altered mental states or for infants and young children. Despite this, the nurse can collect pertinent data and facilitate a plan of care by establishing relationships with parents of infants and children and through the relationships with the families of mentally compromised patients”.

Peplau's theory is abstract with a one-dimensional concept, unlike some other nursing theories. The dimension of nursing here is achieved through the nurse-patient relationship. The theorist emphasized that the terms relations and relationships should not be used as one in the same. This implies that the study of what goes on between two people or their relations can be quite elusive. The nurse-patient relationship can be expressed as a process with overlapping phases. The three identifiable phases in this process are:

- a) the orientation phase,
- b) the working phase, and
- c) the termination phase.

According to Peplau [20], process of communication was a means to promote favorable changes in patient behaviors. Her model defined health in a broad sense, as the forward movement of the personality and human processes.

### 2.3. Empirical Literature

Myung-Hee [21] investigated effects of organizational and interpersonal relations on job satisfaction of social workers. The study employed descriptive survey using questionnaire and job satisfaction was measured by the Minnesota Job Satisfaction (MSQ) questionnaire. Their findings revealed that group culture, hierarchical culture, and rational culture had significant positive effects on job satisfaction. Developmental culture had no effect on the job satisfaction levels. The study therefore conclude that it is important to maintain the hierarchy to improve the efficiency of social welfare organizations, but social welfare organizations must accept external opinions and actively listen to the opinions of the employees in the organization.

Asongo, Aguji, Utile [22] examined the effect of interpersonal relations practices on productivity in Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund (NSITF), Abuja. The study employed a survey research design using a population of 197 staff of Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund (NSITF) Abuja from top management cadre, middle, and low cadre officers. It was discovered that there is a significant relationship between interpersonal relations and achievement of Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund (NSITF), Abuja, and there is a significant relationship between interpersonal relations and workers performance in Nigeria Social Insurance Trust Fund (NSITF), Abuja. In conclusion, the study recommended that the management staff and other senior staff in the organization should create a conducive atmosphere to facilitate good human relations and subsequently teamwork for greater or higher productivity.

Nwinyokpugi and Omunakwe [23] examined the relationship between workplace interpersonal relationship and organizational productivity in deposit money banks in Port -Harcourt. Using a descriptive survey where questionnaire was distributed to 210 employees of the banks. The study found that workplace interpersonal relationship significantly influenced organizational productivity in deposit money banks in Port -Harcourt. The study therefore concluded that Workplace Interpersonal Relationship significantly influence Organizational Productivity and

therefore recommended that the management of deposit money banks in Port-Harcourt should adopt the dimensions of Workplace Interpersonal Relationship used for the study as strategies for improving their level of productivity.

Parry [5] examined the impact of organisational level factors (management support, dynamic environment and organisational culture), personal level factors (personal effectiveness, locus of control) and interpersonal level factors (transactional styles and conflict management styles) on employee performance. Using descriptive survey and questionnaire to collect the data, it was discovered that management support and personal effectiveness have the strongest impacts (direct and indirect) on employee performance, while locus of control and transactional styles directly affect job performance. Overall, 29% (first-level analysis) and 38% (second-level analysis) of employee performance (EP) variance can be explained. The findings of this study have implications for practitioners, academicians and policy makers for effective decision making as organisations are facing intense competition for survival and sustenance in the turbulent business environments. The employee performance is considered one of the important factors and there is a need to identify the factors affecting the performance of employees.

Szostek [7] examined the impact of the quality of interpersonal relationships between employees on counterproductive work behaviour in Poland. The study used a descriptive survey conducted in 2018 among 1488 professionally active people in Poland using Structural equation modelling (SEM). It was discovered that relationship quality has an inverse relationship with counterproductive behaviour of employees (the higher the quality, the lower the propensity for CWB), but there are also many paradoxes that I discuss in detail. Moreover, this impact is significantly moderated by employees' demographic features (mainly education, type of work, length of service and sex). I also discuss the theoretical contributions, practical implications and limitations of this study, and directions for future research.

Agba [24] examined interpersonal relationships and organizational performance: the Nigerian public sector in perspective. The study employed an explorative approach in achieving the study objectives. The study demonstrated that positive interpersonal relationships though fundamental in influencing organizational and workers' performance, it is not a sufficient means of guaranteeing holistic performance in the Nigerian public sector. Thus, to stimulate high organizational and workers' performances, cordial interpersonal relationships in the workplace should be encouraged but this should be combined with proven performance drivers (PPDs) emphasised by the EFQM model of Excellence and the balanced score and model. This means performance is a multidisciplinary concept involving highly interrelated processes, activities and management actions.

Mohammad, Toryila and Saanyol [25]. The study investigated the role of interpersonal relationship on job performance among employees of Gboko Local Government

Area of Benue State, Nigeria. The study employed a cross sectional survey method where 138 employees (98 = 71.0% males and 40 = 29.0% females) were drawn from Gboko Local Government Area. The study findings revealed that there was a significant relationship between interpersonal relationship and job performance among employees of Gboko Local Government Area. There was also a significant difference between male and female employees on the role of interpersonal relationship on employee job performance.

### 3. Methodology

This section focused on research design, population of the study, sample size, sampling methods, instruments for data collection, description of the research instrument, validation of the research instrument, reliability of the instrument, method of data collection and method of data analysis.

#### 3.1. Population, Sample and Sampling Technique

The population of this study is made up of Employee in Banking sector. A total number of one hundred and eighty (180) respondents comprising managers and staffs out of four hundred and fifty (450) were selected randomly for this study. The study location is Guaranty Trust Bank in Ibadan, Oyo State. The sampling technique was based on the recommendation of Gall and Borg [26] which advised that if the population is between 2 -1000 use 20% as minimum sample size, and if it is up to 5,000 uses 10% as minimum sample size [27]. Gall, and Borg further said that such sample size will enable the researcher to get a meaningful sample of the population.

Therefore, the sample size for this study was one hundred and eighty (180); that is 40% of the total population of Guaranty Trust Bank, Ibadan which is 450. A simple random sampling technique was used to select staff from different top management cadre (40), middle management staff (80), and (60) lower cadre officers respectively. A sample random sampling technique was used to select the respondents to give them an equal chance of being included in the study. The selected 180 respondents out of four hundred and fifty (450) comprising top management cadre, middle management staff and lower cadre officers of Guaranty Trust Bank in Ibadan, Oyo.

#### 3.2. Research Instrument

The study employed questionnaire with a 5-point Likert-type where respondents were to select answers out of 5 options i.e. Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, Always, with weighted points of 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, respectively [28]. The researcher administered and retrieved the questionnaire personally and also assisted by some members of staff in the bank.

### 4. Result and Discussion

This section presents and discusses the data gathered through the questionnaire. Of 180 questionnaires distributed

only 168 of the questionnaires were correctly filled and returned which is about 93.3 percent response rate. A 93 percent response rate is considered adequate for conducting analysis in any management and social science related field.

#### 4.1. Respondents Demographic Information

The data as presented in Table 1 and Figure 2 revealed that of the 168 sampled respondents, 54.7 percent of them were male while the remaining 45.3 percent are female.

Table 1. Gender Distribution.

Gender	Freq	Percentage
Male	92	54.7%
Female	76	45.3%
Total	168	100

Source: Survey 2022

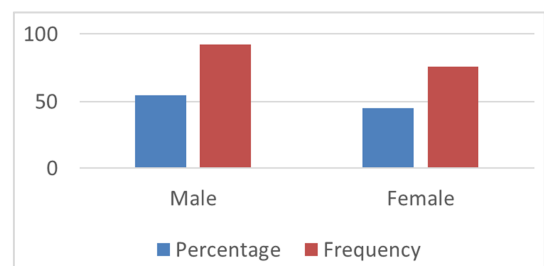


Figure 2. Gender Distribution.

The data also revealed that of the 168 respondents who were sampled, 18.5 percent (31) have been working in the bank between 0-5 years, 32.1 percent has been working between 6-10 years, 40.5 percent has been working between 11-15 years, and 9 percent has been working in the last 16 years and above.

Table 2. Work Experience.

Work Exp.	Freq	Percentage
0-5 years	31	18.5%
6-10 years	54	32.1%
11-15 years	68	40.5%
16 years above	15	0.09
Total	168	100

Source: Survey 2022.

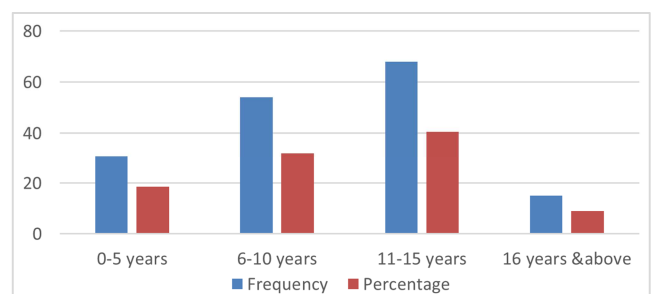


Figure 3. Work Experience.

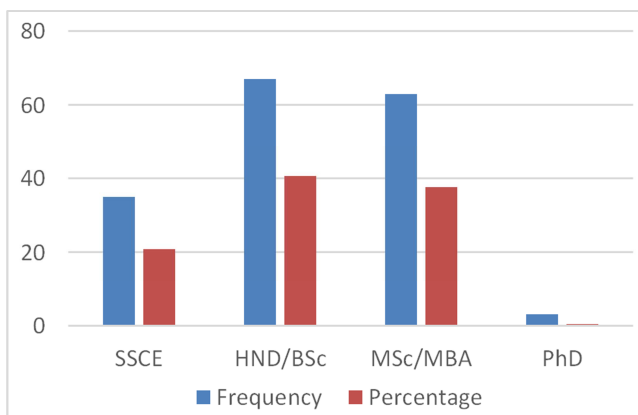
The data also revealed that of the 168 respondents who were sampled, 20.8 percent (35) of the respondents have only SSCE as their highest certificate, 40.5 percent (that is 67

respondents) has HND/BSc as their highest level of certificate. Similarly, 37.5 percent representing 63 respondents has MSc or MBA as their highest level of certificate, lastly, only 0.2 percent that is, 3 individuals have PhD. One clear revelation from the survey is that the respondents are made-up of learned people and are assumed adequate to provide the needed information.

**Table 3. Education Qualification.**

Education	Freq	Percentage
SSCE	35	20.8%
HND/BSc	67	40.5%
MSc/MBA	63	37.5%
PhD	3	0.02
Total	168	100

Source: Survey 2022.



**Figure 4. Education Qualification.**

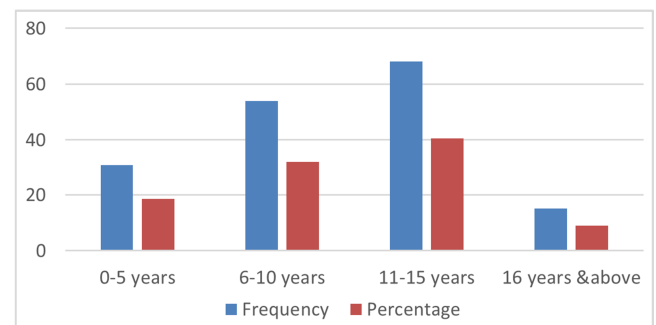
The data also revealed that of the 168 respondents who were sampled, 12.5 percent (21) are aged between 18-25

years, 32.1 percent (54 respondents) are aged between 26-35 years, 34.5 percent (58) are aged between 36-45 years representing most of the respondents. 32 of the respondents representing 19 percent of the whole sample are between the age of 46-55 years and above while only three respondents are of age 55 years and above.

**Table 4. Age Distribution.**

Age	Freq	Percentage
18-25 years	21	12.5%
26-35 years	54	32.1%
36-45 years	58	34.5%
46-55 years above	32	19.0%
55 years above	3	0.02%
Total	168	100

Source: Survey 2022.



**Figure 5. Age Distribution.**

#### 4.2. Interpersonal Relationship and Employee Performance

The data in Table 5 revealed that there are three distinct factors interpersonal relationship (effective communication, team building, and social support) impacting employee job performance in the organization sampled.

**Table 5. Interpersonal relationship and employee performance.**

S/N	Statements	Mean	Standard Deviation	Ranks
A	Effective Communication	(4.07)		
A1	Employees are informed of important information within the organization before implementing?	4.12	0.67	4 <sup>th</sup>
A2	Employees contribute to the organization decision makings.	4.05	0.98	8 <sup>th</sup>
A3	Employee opinions are valued and appreciated within the organization.	4.34	0.86	1 <sup>st</sup>
A4	Organization conducts regular consultations/meetings with employee's opinion surveys.	3.95	0.67	9 <sup>th</sup>
A5	Information on organizational change is visible to all employees	3.89	0.91	10 <sup>th</sup>
B	Team Building	(4.02)		
B1	We work as a team in the organization.	4.15	0.68	5 <sup>th</sup>
B2	Team effort is more recognized and emphasized than individual effort.	3.89	1.04	11 <sup>th</sup>
B3	In the team, manager communicate all information (both good and bad) to subordinate.	3.78	0.85	13 <sup>th</sup>
B4	The organization reward or discipline team rather than individuals.	4.17	0.58	3 <sup>rd</sup>
B5	Team members are friendly and responsive	4.23	0.94	2 <sup>nd</sup>
C	Social Support	(4.04)		
C1	Your colleagues are always available to listen to you when you need to talk.	4.12	0.86	4 <sup>th</sup>
C2	You can really count on your colleagues when in need them even if it means going out of the way.	4.10	0.73	6 <sup>th</sup>
C3	I do not feel agitated or worried when am with my colleagues.	4.06	0.81	7 <sup>th</sup>
C4	I trust and belief that my personal life issues are safe with my colleagues.	3.87	1.24	12 <sup>th</sup>

Source: Survey 2022.

From the result, it was clearly revealed that the three measure of interpersonal relationship are commonly rated high by the respondents with average mean of 4.07 for

effective communication, 4.02 for team building, and social support has 4.04 mean. As revealed above, factors such the level at which employee opinion are valued are important for

most respondents and is rated first among the constructs. Similarly, the safety of respondent's personal information with other colleagues is rated last though, the mean value is above the benchmark mean and is considered a significant factor in employee performance.

The data from the regression statistics as presented in Table 6 revealed that all the three measures of interpersonal relationship within the organization are statistically significant. For instance, it was revealed that rise in effective communication within the organization improves the performance of the employee within the threshold of 68 percent, team building increases same by 63 percent while social support increases employee performance by 86 percent. Social support appears to be the most important variables for the employee in terms of coefficient magnitude.

**Table 6.** Regression result.

	Beta	Stand. Error	t- Stat	Sig.
Effective communication.	0.68	.210	3.23	.011
Team building.	0.63	.185	3.40	.002
Social Support.	0.86	.280	3.07	.015

Source: Survey 2022.

The finding is consistent with literature on interpersonal relationship on employee performance. For instance, Adiele and Omunakwe [4] and Isaac and Roger [29] both found enough evidence to conclude that the three-dimension identified in this literature has significant impact on employee performance. However, it important to note that Adiele and Omunakwe [4] who carried their study in Nigeria found that effective communication is the most important factor on employee performance contrary to our findings. However, Isaac and Roger reported that team building is the major inducer of improved employee performance, and this was confirmed by our finding. As revealed in the data presented in Table 6, the most significant of the three dimension is team building which is consistent with the findings of Isaac and Roger [29].

Szostek [7] also argued in line with our findings that interpersonal relationship reduces the destructive attitude of the employees which reduces the employee performance. But interpersonal relationship like effective communication and team work is effective in boosting employee performance within the organization.

## 5. Conclusion and Recommendation

The study has investigated the relationship between personal relationship and employee performance in selected commercial bank in Ibadan, Nigeria. The study employed quantitative approach using questionnaire to sample 168 employees. It was discovered that interpersonal relationship within the organization provides the employee with the right atmosphere to communicate and contribute to their own quota to the development of the organization. It was revealed that factors such effective communication like employee opinions are valued and appreciated within the organization,

team building like organization work as a team. Others include team, and social support.

The study conclude that high quality interpersonal relationship improves the performance of the employee through improved communication, motivation, teamwork, assisting each other's and improvement in the performance of the employee translate into improvement in the performance of the organization while destructive relationship within the organization creates friction and unhealthy rivalry within the organization and tends to dampen the performance of the employee instead of improving it. The recommendation is that organizations especially those in service industry like Guaranty Trust Bank should adopt the dimensions of interpersonal relationship used for the study (effective communication, team building and social support) as strategies for improving their level of performance.

## Authors Declaration

All authors contributed equally and responsible for the publication.

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