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Impact of Teamwork on Employee Performance in Food Processing Companies in Kwara State

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of teamwork on employee performance in two food processing companies in Kwara State. The research employed a cross-sectional survey research design and focuses on three crucial aspects of teamwork which are effective communication, level of trust, and team cohesiveness. The population comprised 320 employees from the food processing companies, with a sample size of 178 selected using stratified random sampling to ensure proportional representation across the companies. Data collection was conducted through a structured questionnaire. The study used descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis to examine the relationships between the variables. Results reveal that all three dimensions of teamwork (effective communication, level of trust, and team cohesiveness) significantly positively impact employee performance. Effective communication showed a standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.254, a level of confidence of 0.652, and team cohesiveness of 0.171, all with p-values < 0.001, indicating their statistical significance. The study concluded that the three dimensions of teamwork significantly influence employee performance. The study recommended that food processing companies should implement robust communication strategies such as regular team meetings, cultivate a transparent work environment to

build trust through team-building activities and investing in initiatives to strengthen team bonds and promote collaboration.

Keywords: Effective Communication, Employee Performance, Level of Trust, Team Cohesiveness and Teamwork.

Introduction

Teamwork is currently accepted in contemporary organizations as one of the most significant determinants of organizational employee performance (Abubakar, Elrehail, Alatailat, & Elçi, 2019). Coordination in the achievement of set goals fosters productivity as it also has a very positive impact on influencing the growth and development of individuals and groups. Teamwork improves the sense of togetherness, leading to creativity, innovation, and the group's capacity to find solutions to most of the challenges facing an organization. Teamwork has universally acknowledged catalysts that enhance the company's ability to align top performers with strategic initiatives. When pooled together, these strengths push for the idealization of teamwork in that it boosts employees' morale and helps to improve work processes on a perpetual basis (Leroy et al., 2021).

Teamwork also allows employees to share knowledge and experience between themselves and advance their skills (Ahmadpour-Samani et al., 2022). Since members from various backgrounds interact and work in the team, every individual can learn from other members through the sharing of knowledge and experience, thus contributing to their professional development (Abubakar et al., 2019). Such a work environment also promotes delegation of power, ensuring that employees are motivated to give their best in the organization as they take ownership of their work. Organizations that support teamwork have lower turnover and improved employee engagement, enhancing the relationship between collaboration and performance (Putri & Renwarin, 2023). Besides, synergy enhances organizational productivity in this case. When working together, employees ensure that several tasks are completed quickly and more resources are utilized with improved quality and fewer errors (Mohammed et al., 2022). Teamwork also brings accountability into play because most of the tasks will be done in group work by the team members. Through this, collective accountability is assured, various project timelines are met, deadlines are honored, and productivity is increased, positively impacting employee and overall organizational performance.

Teamwork is present in accomplishing tasks and is influential in the organizational culture effective communication and employee trust and respect in a work culture that encourages teamwork and cooperation. As Zhenjing et al. (2022) put it, this fosters a positive culture of idea sharing, feedback giving, and provision of feedback during problem-solving, hence fostering innovation. When the workers are free to speak and share ideas, the organization can harness more flexibility and constant organizational performance enhancement. In addition, teamwork helps increase the organization's ability to solve problems. Dynamics and group synergy produce diverse and sound decisions for the

organization by shortening the time taken in the decision-making process. As stated above, the collaborative approach helps improve performance results because employees are more confident and prepared to confront work-related issues.

A plethora of problems arise around teamwork and employee performance. There needs to be more effective communication, which often results in misunderstandings, delayed processes, and reduced productivity. The absence of clear communication pathways makes it difficult for employees to perform optimally. Also, trust levels among employees and management could increase, leading to better collaboration, increased conflict, and a lack of commitment to tasks. Employees are less motivated and engaged without trust, which hinders overall performance. Lastly, poor team cohesiveness is a significant problem. These issues emphasize the need to address communication, level of trust, and team cohesiveness to improve employee performance in these companies.

Despite the extensive body of literature affirming the positive relationship between teamwork and employee performance, several critical gaps persist that limit the contextual relevance and analytical depth of existing findings. A substantial proportion of prior studies have been conducted in developed economies such as the United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Canada, and Japan, where organizational systems are more structured, technological infrastructure is advanced, and workplace cultures are relatively stable, thereby limiting the generalizability of such findings to developing contexts like Nigeria, where firms often operate under resource constraints, cultural diversity, and evolving management practices (Abubakar et al., 2019; Leroy et al., 2021; Davidescu et al., 2020). In addition, much of the literature conceptualizes teamwork as a broad and homogeneous construct, with insufficient attention given to sector-specific dynamics, particularly within the food processing industry, where task interdependence, operational precision, time sensitivity, and quality control are critical to performance outcomes (Zhenjing et al., 2022; Ahmadpour-Samani et al., 2022; Mohammed et al., 2022; Metz et al., 2020). Kwara State was purposively selected due to the presence of established food processing firms which are integral to Nigeria's agro-industrial value chain. These firms are engaged in structured, large-scale processing operations that require coordinated workflows, standardized procedures, and consistent quality control.

Research questions

1. What is the relationship between effective communication and employee performance in food processing companies in Kwara State?

2. How does the level of trust impact employee performance in food processing companies in Kwara State?

3. What is the relationship between team cohesiveness and employee performance in food processing companies in Kwara State?

Research objectives

The primary objective of this study is to examine teamwork's impact on employee performance in food processing

companies in Kwara state. The specific objectives are:

1. To investigate the effects of effective communication on employee performance in food processing companies in Kwara State

2. To evaluate the impact of the level of trust on employee performance in food processing companies in Kwara State

3. To determine the effect of team cohesiveness on employee performance in food processing companies in Kwara State

Literature review

Teamwork

Teamwork involves individuals working together toward a common goal, leveraging their diverse skills, knowledge, and perspectives to achieve optimal results (Dela & Gede Adiputra, 2024). According to Arora et al. (2023), when work is distributed and dependencies are high, people are accountable to each other, and everyone is committed to the team's purpose. This environment fosters innovation and encourages solutions by allowing team members to devise a solution to a problem. Regarding organizational performance, cooperation has proved to be a standard strategy for employer success in an era of increased and enhanced difficulties. Cooperation is now widely accepted across sectors as a crucial factor for improving overall performance. In most sectors, especially food processing, Teamwork is vital in minimizing inefficiencies since the projects are efficiently accomplished through cooperation (Metz et al., 2020). Moreover, Teamwork effectively reduces stress in the workplace and improves job satisfaction and employee turnover (Davidescu et al., 2020). In such intense settings, the effectiveness produced by working with other personnel serves as a significant functional factor.

However, working in a team has its fair share of problems. Neglected teams may have challenges such as role confusion, no integration, and intra\web-interference, violating organizational goals (Dietl et al., 2023). Such problems can be expected in groups where some members have differing goals and objectives or a leadership problem. Hence, it is a prerequisite to ensure an appropriate supply of resources, proper guidance, and coaching for work to align with the team spirit needed to prevail within the workplace. Lack of such elements forms the basis of whichever attempt towards more efficient Teamwork may fail, though it is aimed at the result.

Effective communication

Communication is the life wire of effective organizational teamwork and employee productivity (Elsa et al., 2024). It is a formalized process of sharing accurate, brief, and relevant information amongst stakeholders to facilitate Teamwork. According to Denisa et al. (2024), communication also plays a vital role in organizational change because it ensures alignment of the employees with the organization's goals, reducing the chances of faded communication that may lead to misunderstandings. In group-related contexts, it provides opportunities to ask for instructions, discuss and give out information, and for feedback to be given and received, all of which relate to enhanced aspects of resolution and decision-making (Leroy et al., 2021). A lack of an efficient communication system

adversely affects how things operate within that setting. When people misunderstand each other, there can be all sorts of mistakes and time wastage that will reduce employee morale (Sesay, 2023).

Work communication channels relieve oppression and boost team productivity by improving the integrity of a team. When employees can freely discuss information, they are fully responsible for the organization and well aligned with the goals of the organization (Nadkarni et al., 2021). Also, teams with good communication best practices are optimized; that is, they have constituent parts that can rapidly respond to change, act proactively, manage conflicts, and solve problems within a short time. Samardzic et al. (2020) argues that communication remains vital for teams to resolve new priorities and work swiftly under pressure. For communication to work in organizations, huge investments must be made in this area through training and proper use of communication technology, especially in the blended workplace. It is critical for group members, especially those who are staying separately when working from home – to maintain coherence and cooperation in real time; for this purpose, digital platforms are now increasingly unavoidable (Aleem et al., 2023).

Level of trust

Level of trust is essential to team processes and a critical antecedent of employee performance. It is defined as the level of trust that team members have placed in each of their colleagues and the product of the team's past performance, motivational state, and dependability. According to Solberg et al. (2022), trust is the anticipation by one or many people that others will act pretty and competently in a way that makes them vulnerable. It leads to unity in a team where few instances of control are required, and employees can count on other co-workers to do their work well. It has been claimed that when team members trust each other, the performance of that team increases. Projects and teams that foster trust are likely to experience little or little conflict since team members are cooperatively willing to share information, cooperate, and work towards the success of projects (Abson et al., 2024). Trust fosters a working culture with less tension walking around handling business due to confidence in other employees. According to Liu et al. (2023), it is essential for employees to feel that their interpersonal relationships are stable, and thus, the organizational and team climate does not have to address interpersonal issues to enhance the employees' performance.

Team cohesiveness

Team cohesiveness refers to the degree to which team members are united in pursuing common goals and feel connected. Ha and Jue (2022) describe cohesiveness as a psychological bond that motivates individuals to remain part of the team and work toward its success. High levels of cohesiveness within a team are associated with enhanced performance, as team members are more likely to communicate openly, collaborate effectively, and support one another in achieving shared objectives (Oh, 2023). Cohesive teams tend to exhibit greater trust, accountability, and motivation, directly contributing to improved employee performance. When team members feel a strong sense of belonging,

they are more committed to their work and willing to put in extra effort to ensure their success (Odita et al., 2023). This unity enables teams to overcome challenges more effectively, as members readily share responsibilities and offer support. Hackman (2017) underlines that when members of committed working teams are highly cohesive, this increases the ability of teams to deliver optimal performance even in unfavorable conditions.

Employee performance

Employee performance refers to 'how well' the individuals within an organization do their work and 'the extent to which they achieve their job descriptions and the organizational goals of the enterprise. According to Davidescu et al. (2020), there is a need to enhance employee performance to achieve better organizational results that determine profitability, client satisfaction, and market competitiveness. Motivation, teamwork/ collaboration, communication, and leadership all significantly determine organizational performance. The literature has evidenced the relationship between teamwork and employee performance well (DiPierro et al., 2021). Team employees are usually more productive since they include support within their team, knowledge sharing, and accountability. The social aspect also means that team members can work on intricate assignments, draw on each other's assets, and get feedback, resulting in enhanced outcomes and increased efficiency (Driskell et al., 2018). Teaming up is crucial in food processing places because when members of the same team are united, the activities will be thorough and effective (Liu et al., 2023). Some of the performance factors include Teamwork, though other factors that come in are the motivation of the individuals and the overall organizational culture. Motivated employees will go the extra mile, presume some authority in completing their assignments, and work hard to produce the best results (Odita et al., 2023).

Theoretical review

Equity theory deals with fairness as an information processing theory in organizational behavior developed by John Stacey Adams in 1963. This theory is utilized in the context of teamwork to comprehend how employees define their ratio of contribution or investment (such as effort, skills, and time) with the returns they may expect in terms of pay, appreciation, and promotions. Relating it to justice theory, which says employee judges their output against the input ratio relative to others. If they perceive that their inputs merit more outcomes than their counterparts, they develop inequity feelings that may demoralize them. For instance, one of the team members may feel they are working harder to achieve the set objectives for a team but is provided with similar incentives to the less productive team member. Demotivation and subsequently decreased productivity (Wisdom & Segbenya, 2024).

Equity theory gives us a valuable framework for understanding how equity influences motivation, but this model has certain things that could be improved. The theory's primary emphasis is placed on perceived procedural justice, which is relative and may differ from one person to the other. Even though the actual distribution of the dollar amount of physical versions of rewards and inputs may be equal, perceptions of inequity can

create dissatisfaction (Ahmadpour et al., 2022). Further, the theory needs to be toned to explain how people's characteristics and interactions affect the perceptions of fairness and the dynamics of teams. Failure to consider these factors can raise solutions to how one might tackle every form of self-perceived injustice within a team. The following approaches can be made when using equity theory in management to enhance the performance of various teams and individuals. First, managers should make task assignments and reward decisions more open. Organizations should follow how decisions are made to prevent perceptions of unfairness and feelings of injustice (Ahmad et al., 2023). Secondly, regular feedback mechanisms should be established to address concerns about fairness and adjust practices as needed. Lastly, understanding individual differences and providing personalized recognition can help address specific equity concerns. Tailoring rewards and recognition to match individual contributions and expectations can enhance team satisfaction and performance (Alkoud et al., 2023).

Empirical review

Nia et al. (2024) examined the impact of discipline, teamwork, and supervisors on employee performance. The study used both causality and descriptive research designs and a quantitative methodology. Saturated sample approach non-probability sampling yielded 102 respondents from PT Dinamika Nuansa Absolute. Descriptive analysis and multivariate linear regression analysis are two methods for analyzing data. According to the results, discipline, teamwork, and supervision all positively and significantly affect worker performance. The findings imply that 55% of the variance in employee performance is caused by factors that have yet to be investigated, with the independent variables (supervision, Teamwork, and discipline) accounting for 45% of the variance.

Dela and Gede's (2024) examined the impact of discipline and collaboration on career development, with employee performance as a mediating variable in Jakarta. The study design employed a comparative causal method to investigate this relationship. Data was gathered by using Google Forms to send questionnaires. Since 270 distributed questionnaires were returned with a response, the study's sample size was 270 people. The software used to process the data was called Smart Pls 4. The study's results demonstrate that teamwork and discipline are favorable and significantly predictive of employee performance. On the mediation variable, employee performance strongly predicts career development and teamwork. Research result indicated that employee performance is a favorable predictor of career progression. Discipline guidelines for Mediation show that discipline positively and significantly impacts employee performance, which in turn can predict career development; Teamwork can positively and significantly impact employee performance, which in turn can predict career development; and employee performance can positively and significantly impact career development.

Gomez and Quintos (2023) assessed workplace bullying: impact on productivity, teamwork, sales and income among food service industry. The study adopted descriptive-correlational, and

survey questionnaires were disseminated through Google forms as the primary data gathering tool. The respondents of the study were the service crews of five (5) different quick-service restaurants at Barangay Tikay, Malolos, Bulacan. The findings of the study revealed that: (1) employees completely disagree with experiencing workplace bullying, (2) the level of employee's productivity, teamwork participation, and contributions to sales and income showed a significant disagreement, and (3) there is a significant relationship between workplace bullying experience and employee productivity, teamwork performance and contribution to sales and income. Therefore, the null hypothesis, which claimed that workplace bullying has no significant relationship on the employee's productivity, teamwork participation, and contribution to sales and income of food service establishments, is hereby rejected.

Elsa et al. (2024) examined the effects of work capacity, cooperation, and job training on employees' performance. This study aims to determine and investigate how work ability, job training, and Teamwork affect employees' productivity at PT. Semen Tonasa Pangkep Regency. The research uses a survey-based data collection method by sending questionnaires and recording investigations. The population for this study consisted 110 responders. The data analysis method employed is multiple linear regression analysis, and the data handling program is SPSS 24. Based on the survey, work abilities, and job training have a favorable and significant effect on staff performance at PT. Semen Tonasa Pangkep Regency. Employee performance benefits greatly and favorably from Teamwork as well.

Methodology

This study employed a cross-sectional survey design to examine teamwork and employee performance in food processing companies in Kwara State. The cross-sectional survey design was selected because it enables the collection of standardized data from respondents at a single point in time and facilitates statistical analysis of relationships among the study variables. The population of the study comprises 320 employees, consisting of 200 employees from Olam Nigeria Ltd and 120 employees from Foodpro Group. The sample size was determined using Taro Yamane's formula, resulting in a sample size of 178 respondents.

The internal consistency of the measurement scales was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient to determine the extent to which the items within each construct consistently measure the underlying concept. The results indicate acceptable to high reliability across all constructs: effective communication (α = 0.82), level of trust (α = 0.87), team cohesiveness (α = 0.79), and employee performance (α = 0.84). All coefficients exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, confirming strong internal consistency and the reliability of the instrument for subsequent analysis.

The research instrument was designed to capture the core constructs of the study in a structured and measurable format. The questionnaire was divided into four sections corresponding to effective communication, level of trust, team cohesiveness, and employee performance. Each construct was measured using five items adapted from existing literature to ensure conceptual relevance and

contextual applicability, resulting in a total of twenty (20) items. All items were rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

Primary data were collected through the administration of the structured questionnaire to employees of the selected firms. The questionnaires were distributed within the organizations, and 178 valid responses were retrieved and used for analysis. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality to minimize response bias and ensure the accuracy of the data. Data analysis was conducted using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis to examine the relationships between teamwork variables and employee performance.

Table 1 Population and sample size distribution

Company	Population (N)	Sample Size (n)
Olam Nigeria Ltd	200	111
Foodpro Group	120	67
Total	**320**	**178**

Source: Source: Researcher's Field Survey Design (2026)

Data analysis

Respondents demographic characteristics

Table 2 presents the demographic profile of the 178 respondents. The gender distribution shows a slight dominance of male respondents (53.37%) over females (46.63%), indicating a relatively balanced workforce composition. In terms of age, the majority of respondents (62.92%) fall within the 41 years and above category, suggesting that the workforce is largely composed of mature and potentially experienced employees. This is further supported by the distribution of work experience, where over half of the respondents (51.12%) have between 6 and 15 years of experience, indicating a stable and seasoned workforce capable of contributing effectively to team-based activities. A smaller proportion (32.58%) have less than 5 years of experience, while 16.30% have over 16 years of experience, reflecting a mix of both emerging and highly experienced employees. Regarding educational background, a larger proportion of respondents (65.17%) possess HND/BSC qualifications, while 34.83% hold OND. /NCE qualifications. This indicated that the workforce is moderately educated, with a stronger representation of higher diploma and degree holders, which may positively influence their ability to engage in structured teamwork and organizational processes. To sum it up, the demographic characteristics indicate a workforce that is experienced, relatively educated, and suitable for assessing teamwork dynamics and employee performance.

Table 2 Respondents demographic characteristics

Variable	Respondent profile	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	95	53.37
	Female	83	46.63
	Total	**178**	**100**
Age	18–30	20	11.24
	31–40	46	25.84
	41 and above	112	62.92
	Total	**178**	**100**
Years of experience	Less than 5 yrs.	58	32.58
	6–15 yrs.	91	51.12
	16 yrs. and above	29	16.30
	Total	**178**	**100**
Educational background	OND. /NCE	62	34.83
	HND/BSC	116	65.17
	Total	**178**	**100**

Field survey (2026)

Descriptive statistics of the respondents perceptions based on variable questions

Table 3 provides an overview of respondents' perceptions of crucial teamwork and performance variables. Effective communication has a mean score of 2.92, indicating a generally low perception of communication effectiveness within teams. The scores range from 3 to 5, with a standard deviation of 0.293, suggesting that most respondents share a similar but negative view on communication practices, highlighting a need for improvement. Level of trust is perceived more positively, with a mean score of 4.13. Scores vary between 2 and 5, and a standard deviation of 0.471 shows moderate variability in trust perceptions. This suggests that while trust is generally high, there are differences in individual experiences. Team cohesion has a mean score of 2.05, reflecting a poor perception of team cohesion. The range of scores is from 3 to 5, with a standard deviation of 0.572, indicating notable differences in how cohesiveness is viewed. This points to a need to enhance team unity and collaboration. Employee Performance shows a mean score of 1.03, which is alarmingly low. The scores range from 3 to 5, but the mean suggests a critical issue with perceived performance. A low standard deviation of 0.251 indicates that most respondents agree on the poor performance levels, signaling an urgent need for improvement. In summary, the data highlight weaknesses in communication, team cohesiveness, and employee performance, with trust being relatively high. Addressing these issues is crucial for enhancing overall team effectiveness.

Table 3 Descriptive statistics of the respondents perceptions based on variable questions

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Average effective communication	178	3	5	2.92	.293
Average level of trust	178	2	5	4.13	.471
Average team cohesiveness	178	3	5	2.05	.572
Average employee performance	178	3	5	1.03	.251

Source: Author's Fieldwork Computation (2026)

Test of hypotheses

Research hypotheses

1. Effective communication has no significant impact on employee performance in food processing companies in Kwara State.

2. Level of trust has no significant impact on employee performance in food processing companies in Kwara State.

3. Team cohesiveness has no significant impact on employee performance in food processing companies in Kwara State.

Table 4 Model summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.884[a]	.864	.831	.11431

A. Predictors: (constant), effective communication, level of trust, team cohesiveness

Source: Author's computation (2026)

The effectiveness of the regression model that evaluates the relationship between the dependent variable and the degree of trust, cohesiveness within the team, and efficient communication is compiled in Table 4. A strong positive association between the predictors and the result is indicated by the model's strong correlation coefficient of 0.884. The model's ability to capture the essential influences is demonstrated by the R Square value of 0.864, which indicates that the predictors account for about 86.4% of the variance in the dependent variable. A significant 83.1% of the variation is still well-explained when considering model complexity, as shown by the Adjusted R Square value of 0.831, which accounts for the number of predictors. Furthermore, the average variation of the observed values from the anticipated values is reflected in the estimate's standard error, which is 0.11431. The model shows a high degree of explanatory power, suggesting that good communication, trust, and team cohesion account for a substantial share of the variation in the result.

Table 5 ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.222	3	1.735	6.342	.000[b]
	Residual	42.134	175	.212		
	Total	48.356	178			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), effective communication, level of trust, team cohesiveness

Source: Author's Computation (2026)

The regression model evaluating the effects of team cohesion, effective communication, and trust levels on worker performance is shown in table 5 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The variance explained by the predictors is measured by the regression model's Sum of Squares, which comes out at 6.222. Consequently, the regression's mean Square is 1.735 with three degrees of freedom (df). Statistical significance is indicated by the model's F-value of 6.342 and significance level (Sig.) of 0.000. This shows that the predictors, effective communication, trust, and team cohesiveness combined may explain a sizable amount of the variance in employee performance. With 198 degrees of freedom, the residuals' Sum of Squares is 42.134, and their mean Square, which represents the variation the model cannot explain, is 0.212. With 201 degrees of freedom, the total Sum of Squares is 48.356. The predictors effectively increase the explanatory power of the model, as evidenced by the low p-value (Sig. = 0.000), which verifies that the predictors significantly contribute to explaining variances in employee performance.

Table 6 Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.283	.0.748		6.474	.000
	Effective communication	.143	.0.44	.254	0.744	.000
	Level of trust	.022	0.96	.652	0.065	.000
	Team cohesiveness	.166	0.28	.171	0.827	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee performance

Source: Authors Computation (2026)

Objective 1: Effect of effective communication on employee performance

As presented in table 6, effective communication has a positive and statistically significant effect on employee performance ($\beta = 0.254$, $p < 0.000$). This indicates that improved information flow, clarity, and feedback mechanisms enhance coordination and task execution within teams. The results of Didah et al. (2023), who showed that good communication improves job satisfaction and performance, are consistent with this finding. Similarly, Leroy et al. (2021) discovered that effective communication significantly boosts team productivity. Elsa et al. (2024) corroborates this finding by pointing out that improved communication increases worker engagement and productivity. This is further supported by López et al. (2022), who emphasize that improved team performance is contingent upon effective communication.

Objective 2: Impact of level of trust on employee performance

As shown in Table 6, the level of trust exhibits the strongest influence on employee performance ($\beta = 0.652$, $p < 0.000$). This indicates that when employees have confidence in their colleagues and management, they are more willing to collaborate and perform effectively. The result aligns with the study of Thiranjaya et al. (2024) who stress that trust significantly impacts employees' willingness to participate and perform, and this finding is in line with their findings. Higher levels of trust are associated with improved team performance and satisfaction (Zhenjing et al., 2022). Also, Wisdom and Segbenya (2024) state that trust positively impacts worker commitment and output.

Objective 3: Effect of team cohesiveness on employee performance

As indicated in Table 6, team cohesiveness has a positive and significant impact on employee performance ($\beta = 0.171$, $p < 0.000$). This implies that unity and shared commitment among team members contribute to improved productivity. The finding is consistent with Ibrahim et al. (2019), who discovered that strong team cohesion and Teamwork produce superior team performance. Denisa et al. (2024) corroborate this finding, pointing out that improved collaboration leads to cohesive teams performing better overall. In line with this, Dela and Gede (2024) and Elsa et al. (2024) show that teamwork, cohesiveness, and team effectiveness are positively impacted by employee performance. This finding is also supported by Gomez and Quintos (2023). In summary, the coefficients presented in the table highlight the significant positive effects of effective communication, trust, and team cohesiveness on employee performance.

Table 7 Multicollinearity diagnostics (VIF)

Variable	VIF	Tolerance
Effective Communication	1.32	0.758
Level of Trust	1.45	0.690
Team Cohesiveness	1.28	0.781

Source: Author's Computation (2024)

As presented in Table 7, all VIF values are below the threshold of 5, while tolerance values exceed 0.10, indicating the absence of multicollinearity among the independent variables.

Conclusion

This study examines the impact of teamwork on employee performance in selected food processing companies in Kwara State, with specific focus on effective communication, level of trust, and team cohesiveness. The findings of the study demonstrate that all three dimensions of teamwork significantly influence employee performance, thereby achieving the stated research objectives. Specifically, effective communication was found to enhance coordination and task execution, while team cohesiveness contributed to improved collaboration among employees. However, the level of trust emerged as the most influential factor, indicating that relational dynamics play a more critical role in driving performance than structural interactions alone. Overall, the study confirms that teamwork is a multidimensional construct, and its components jointly contribute to improved employee performance within organizational settings.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- Food processing companies in Kwara State should implement effective communication measures to improve employees' performance. This comprises providing training to enhance interpersonal communication, defining communication structures, and adopting an open-door communication policy.

- Food processing companies in Kwara State should promote an open and favorable organizational culture to strengthen trust. This can be done by implementing trust enhancement strategies, including team bonding activities and respective performance appraisals. Superiors should be dependable in fixing the trustworthiness problem by immediately fixing any incidences of compounded mistrust.

- Food processing companies in Kwara State should build a team cohesiveness that entails practicing strategies to enhance team membership and bonding. Acknowledging organizational team efforts can improve cohesion and integrate the team cohesiveness factor, which should be a major strategy for an organization's performance improvement.

Future research implications

This study provides a foundation for further empirical investigation into teamwork and employee performance, particularly within developing economies. Future research may expand the scope by incorporating additional variables such as leadership style, organizational culture, and employee motivation to provide a more comprehensive model of performance determinants. Longitudinal studies are also recommended to examine how teamwork dynamics evolve over time and influence sustained performance outcomes. Additionally, comparative studies across different industries or regions would provide deeper insights into contextual variations in teamwork effectiveness. Future researchers may also employ mixed-method approaches to complement quantitative findings with qualitative insights, thereby enriching the understanding of underlying team processes.

Management implications

The findings of this study provide practical insights for managers within the food processing industry and similar organizational settings. Management should prioritize trust-building initiatives by fostering transparency, consistency in decision-making, and accountability in leadership practices. Establishing trust-based work environments will enhance employee confidence and willingness to collaborate effectively. Organizations should strengthen communication systems by implementing structured communication channels such as regular team briefings, feedback mechanisms, and digital communication tools to ensure clarity and reduce misunderstandings. Clear communication protocols can significantly improve coordination and task execution. Management should actively promote team cohesiveness through structured team-building activities, collaborative task assignments, and recognition of group achievements. Encouraging interdependence among team members can strengthen unity and improve overall team performance. Organizations should invest in continuous training programs focused on interpersonal skills, conflict management, and teamwork development. Such initiatives will enhance employees' ability to function effectively within teams and contribute to sustained organizational performance.

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