

Communication and Team Effectiveness in a Public Sector Organization: Evidence from Tanzania Investment Bank

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ABSTRACT

In today's competitive world, there has been a lot of focus placed on the pride of a team and individual accomplishments, with managers and staff seemingly overlooking the importance of teamwork as a performance tool. This is more so with public institutions where organizational performance is a function of delivering a mandate and service delivery rather than a clear objective of improving the bottom line, market share, shareholder value growth, and business expansion, etc., or else becoming uncompetitive and/or becoming a failure. There could be many reasons attributed to organizational performance; however, this study focused on an internal aspect – teamwork – that is important for organizational effectiveness, specifically, communication within teams in the organization utilizing Belbin's Team Role Theory and the Tuckman Theory of Team Development. The specific objectives of this study were to identify individual and team behaviors for effective communication among employees at Tanzania Investment Bank TIB; to examine the role of leadership within teams in promoting supportive communication among team members; and to identify and assess factors that inhibit effective communication and team performance within teams. This is a case study of a single public sector organization. The study population included managers, human resource personnel, and ordinary employees of TIB. Simple random sampling techniques were applied to select the employees, while purposive sampling techniques were used to select targeted employees, particularly managers and human resource staff from different departments. In total, 58 TIB employees were involved in the study, from a population of 138. The study used a structured questionnaire, open-ended interview questions, and observations for data collection. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics and the adoption of appropriate themes to guide the analysis. The study findings reveal that certain individual and team behaviors support effective communication and teamwork, such as the use of proper channels of communication, transparency in group relationships, and participation in team activities; the study also revealed that leadership and organizational processes support effective communication and teamwork, such as frequent organizational-wide communications on changes and feedback, and interdepartmental communications. Some factors affecting relationships and communication within teams were also identified, including conflict, mistrust, individualism, and irresponsible behavior. It is concluded that the basic tenets of effective communication and team relationships exist, though factors affecting teamwork and communication are to be addressed. It is recommended that public organizations, among others, regularly assess relationships within teams, build staff capacity to effectively communicate, and attract staff with the right aptitude for teamwork.

Keywords: Communication, Organizational Performance, Teamwork, Tanzania Investment Bank

I. INTRODUCTION

In today's fiercely competitive business landscape, organizations worldwide are relentlessly striving to enhance their performance and achieve strategic objectives (Bucăța & Rizescu, 2017; Vitolla et al., 2019). Central to this pursuit is the recognition of teamwork as a fundamental driver of success. As Chapman (2008) asserts, effective teamwork can significantly influence an organization's trajectory towards success, fostering harmonious collaboration among individuals to achieve common goals (Leonard et al., 2004).

The genesis of teamwork's importance can even be traced back to ancient wisdom, as evidenced in the biblical narrative of creation. In Genesis, it is recounted that God, recognizing the solitary struggle of man, created woman to facilitate cooperation and mutual support (Nchimbi, 2024). This profound insight underscores the innate human need for collaboration, the timeless relevance of teamwork in overcoming challenges and realizing collective aspirations (Haas & Mortensen, 2016; Schmutz et al., 2019).

Importantly, communication is acknowledged as a central pillar and medium for engagement in teams and between teams. Obodozie and Nwabufu (2025) argue that an important aspect of successful collaboration is communication that contributes to trust within teams, knowledge sharing, and working on challenges. Communications relevance extends to organizational leadership that aims to create teams and promote team

effectiveness as it facilitates the exchange of information, ideas, and feedback among team members (Mukua-Mar, et al., 2024; Safkaur & Sagrim, 2019). It is further argued that there are significant risks in collaborative environments when communication between and within teams is hampered by poor workplace relationships and personal characteristics that affect open discussions of mistakes and challenges (O'Daniel & Rosenstein, 2008).

In the contemporary landscape, organizations like the Tanzania Investment Bank (TIB) play pivotal roles in driving socio-economic development. As highlighted by Malingumu (2025), Tanzania Investment Bank (TIB)'s mandate on investment fund management on behalf of the Tanzanian government underscores the importance of the organization in achieving national development objectives. However, in the complex milieu of modern organizations, characterized by dynamic challenges and evolving paradigms, the significance of teamwork cannot be overstated (Jayanagara, 2024). Within the organizational context, teamwork entails the concerted effort of employees across diverse departments to pursue shared objectives. Chege (2017) emphasizes that such collaborative endeavors are not merely instrumental but are foundational to enhancing overall efficiency, fostering positive organizational cultures, and engendering employee engagement. Amidst a burgeoning body of research affirming the positive correlation between teamwork and organizational performance, this study seeks to delve deeper into this phenomenon within the specific context of the Tanzania Investment Bank. Drawing upon insights from Afolami (2020), which highlight the manifold benefits of teamwork, including increased productivity, enhanced customer satisfaction, reduced operational costs, and heightened innovation, this research endeavors to unravel the intricate interplay of teamwork dynamics within TIB. Importantly, this study acknowledges that the efficacy of teamwork is contingent upon a multitude of workforce factors, including leadership, communication, employee motivation, and organizational culture. This study focuses on communication-related barriers to effective teamwork at TIB. Thus, by comprehensively understanding these elements and their synergistic effects within TIB, this research aims to provide actionable insights to enhance organizational performance not only within TIB but also for organizations across diverse sectors.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Effective communication is essential for teamwork, enabling information sharing, coordination, trust, and collaboration that contribute to organizational performance. In public sector organizations, teams are expected to communicate effectively to achieve institutional goals and deliver quality services.

Despite its importance, communication challenges such as poor information sharing, ineffective leadership communication, interpersonal conflicts, and limited feedback continue to hinder teamwork and team performance in many organizations. While previous studies have established the positive relationship between communication and team effectiveness (Leonard et al., 2004; Haas & Mortensen, 2016; Obodozie & Nwabufo, 2025), most have focused on general organizational settings, with limited attention to communication barriers within public financial institutions in Tanzania.

Consequently, there is limited empirical evidence on the communication factors that influence teamwork at the Tanzania Investment Bank (TIB). This study therefore sought to identify individual and team communication behaviours, examine the role of leadership in promoting supportive communication, and assess the factors that inhibit effective communication and team performance at TIB.

1.2 Research Objectives

- i. To identify individual and team behaviors for effective communication among employees at TIB.
- ii. To examine the role of leadership within teams in promoting supportive communication among team members.
- iii. To identify and assess factors that inhibits effective communication and team performance within teams.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 The Tuckman Theory of Team Development

The theory was developed by Bruce Tuckman in 1965. It describes five stages of team formation in a workplace (Chris et al., 2021). In which each team passes through the formation stage, as a first stage for team formation, whereby every individual comes from different perspectives and is characterized by much uncertainty (Vitolla et al., 2019). In this stage, members join the team and start to define the purpose for formulating such a group, structure, and leadership. After being aware of the aim of formulating a team and even leadership, the team comes up on the second stage, known as the storming stage, in which, during this stage, a team is associated with misunderstandings that arise as a result of leadership resistance because team members actually do not know each other in advance (Afolami, 2020). After familiarization between members, the team moves to the third stage which is the norming stage of team building that is characterized by close relationships and coherence among team members (Khawam et al., 2017). Team members begin to become close to each other as the bond between them molds. Individual features, traits, and even uniqueness of each member in supporting the team goal become visible to

members (Phina et al., 2018). Also, within this stage, the group starts to develop internal team norms that result in strengthening of the sense of trust and cooperation between them; fostering stability and cohesion among team members that encourage efficient operations unencumbered with dysfunctional conflict of interest whilst determining acceptable behaviors among them (Jayanagara, 2024). The fourth stage is the performing stage; this is the stage where the group is fully functional, and the group starts to focus on the operational tasks. It is also associated with the close interaction between team members influenced by effective communication through sharing ideas, feedback, and even solving problems cooperatively. Team members support each other to foster a positive and productive work environment. And the final stage of Tuckman team development theory is known as the Adjourning Stage: is considered a stage when the targeted aim of forming a team is actually accomplished, and a closure process is set in motion (Chege 2017; Chris et al., 2021).

We can see that communication is a significant feature in the team-building stages. This is how communication may underpin the different stages of team building, according to Tuckman's theory, see Table 1 below.

Table 1

Communication presence in teambuilding stages

Team building Stage	Communication presence
Forming: involves clarification of purpose, roles and leadership, etc.	Through initial exchanges that are polite, information sharing, and expectation seeking, etc.
Storming: involves misunderstandings including on team processes, trust issues and leadership, etc.	Through exchanges of differing opinions and ideas supported by different viewpoints on expectations, and norms in team dynamics.
Norming: involves supportive relationships in teams, trust, and shared norms, etc.	Through open communication, exchange of ideas and constructive challenges, etc. directed at team purpose and mutual gain.
Adjourning: involves closure and team disbandment	Through sharing information and feedback on successes, acknowledging contributions and future relationships are decided.

2.1.2 The Belbin Team Role Theory

The theory was developed by the psychologist Meredith Belbin in 1981. He sought to achieve a coherent and accurate system that explains individual behavior and its influence on team achievement. The theory identifies the characteristics of the specific team member whose uniqueness provides most potential for group performance, a potential that could not be easily offered by someone else (Khawam et al., 2017). Belbin also argues that individuals in a team tend to embrace special behaviors, which can sometimes affect organizational performance (Phina et al., 2018). Belbin identified nine roles of the team under three categories: action-oriented, people-oriented, and thought-oriented, and each team is characterized by typical behaviors as well as interpersonal potential (Vitolla et al., 2019).

In Belbin's team role theory, the action-oriented category includes members who are primarily focused on attaining team results while driving the team through proactive engagement (Khawam et al., 2017). This category includes the Shaper, who challenges the team to advance and achieve progress. They also can tolerate hard work, even thriving under pressure (Afolami, 2020). The action-oriented category also includes the Implementer. Implementers transform team ideas into realistic, practical actions and ensure that duties and responsibilities are executed effectively (Phina et al., 2018). And the last category in action-oriented behavior is the completer. The completer emphasizes attention to deadlines and strives for results and perfection (Jayanagara, 2024). Each member in this category plays a crucial role in promoting team sustainability and ensuring the predetermined team goals and objectives are met accordingly (Chege, 2017).

People-oriented behavior includes members who encourage interpersonal relationships and team dynamics, fostering cooperation and friendly communication among team members (Chris et al., 2021). Some members portraying people-oriented behaviors are also coordinators who guide the team towards team goals; among them are those who are good listeners and compliant (Jayanagara, 2024). They can also motivate others towards the goals and objectives of the organization (Afolami, 2020). Among the people-oriented behaviors, there is the team worker. A team worker promotes a harmonious environment within the team, resolving misunderstandings while building strong interpersonal bonds (Phina et al., 2018). The resource investigators also portray people-oriented behavior. They cooperate with external stakeholders to bring in new ideas and resources, while strengthening team creativity (Khawam et al., 2017). It is these members, who show people-oriented behaviors under their different roles, as mentioned, promote empathy and a positive team working environment, thus foster participation and strengthen cooperation among team members and ultimately contribute to the overall performance of the teams (Bucăța & Rizescu, 2017).

The third category under Belbin team role theory is thought-oriented behavior; members in this category are strategic thinkers and foster creativity while focusing on evaluation and analysis of ideas (Chris et al., 2021). Included in the category are the plants that can innovate and develop new ideas, with potential for development. Evaluators determine the advantages and disadvantages of all decisions before a decision is made. They are also proactive in analyzing decisions that could impact the team before they are executed (Bucăța & Rizescu, 2017). Lastly, thought-oriented behavior comprises those termed specialists. Specialists bring in-depth knowledge and expertise in related fields, contributing valuable insights and enhancing standard outcomes (Afolami, 2020). Thought-oriented behavior members can encourage thoughtful discussions in teams and ensure that goals are internalized by members, that they are strategically appropriate, and that they facilitate the implementation of the accepted decisions and solutions (Phina et al., 2018).

Communication is thus a significant feature in the designated team roles and the attributed behaviors. This is how communication is an essential central element in the different team roles by Meredith Belbin, see Table 2 below.

Table 2

The Team Role Theory and the Centrality of Communication

Role category	Communication feature
Action oriented behaviors	(i) Communicate desired goals and attitudes to achieve proactive involvement of members. (ii) Provides catalytic challenges and instructions to encourage purpose. (iii) Communicate deadlines and undertake follow-ups.
People-oriented behaviors	(i) Communicate to create friendly and cooperative working context and promote interpersonal relationships. (ii) Communicate to motivate others; show good listening to support empathetic behavior. (iii) Communicate to resolve conflict and foster team bonds (iv) Communicate to foster a participative environment.
Thought oriented behaviors	(i) Communicate ideas to share knowledge, expertise and useful insights. (ii) Communicate to counteract decisions not well analyzed due to group think phenomenon or inertia. (iii) Communicate views, perceptions on progress to team members. (iv) Communicate to encourage open discussions and thus foster participative team environment.

III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study adopted a case study research design employing a mixed-methods approach to examine communication and team effectiveness at the Tanzania Investment Bank (TIB). The case study design enabled an in-depth investigation of teamwork within its organizational context using both quantitative and qualitative data.

3.2 Study Area

The study was conducted at the Tanzania Investment Bank (TIB) Head Office located at Mlimani City, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. The institution was selected because of its strategic role as a public financial institution and its reliance on teamwork to achieve organizational objectives.

3.3 Target Population

The target population comprised 138 employees of the Tanzania Investment Bank, including ordinary staff, managers, and Human Resource personnel.

3.4 Sampling and Sample Size

Sample size was determined using Yamane (1967) formula with a 10% margin of error:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N}$$

Whereby

n = sample size

N = target population

Population size (N) = 138

Probability error (e) = 0.1

Whereby:

$$\text{Sample size} = 138 / (1 + (138 * (0.1)^2))$$

Therefore, the sample size was 58 respondents. The 50 staff were randomly selected through a container draw and included all non-leadership and HR staff, who were purposively selected.

Table 3

Sample Size Distribution

Population	Sample size in frequency	Percentage of the total sample
Ordinary Staff at TIB	50	86.2%
Leadership, HR and managers at TIB	8	13.8%
Total	58	100%

3.5 Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

During the study, primary data were collected from the respondents who were the employees and managers of TIB. Methods employed were structured interviews, questionnaires, and observations. Much of the information was derived through the interviews and the questionnaires while document analysis supported the authors in exploring relevant details about teamwork in organizations.

3.6 Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies and percentages, and presented in tables. Qualitative data obtained from interviews and document review were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify key themes related to communication and leadership styles within teams.

3.2 Ethical Consideration

It is confirmed that all research was performed in accordance with relevant guidelines/regulations applicable when human participants are involved (e.g., Declaration of Helsinki, or similar). Informed consent was obtained from all participants for their participation in the study.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

4.1 The characteristics of the respondents

The study involved 58 staff at TIB Headquarters. The basic characteristics of the respondents are analyzed. The age data collected depicted in Table 2 shows that 6.4% of respondents were in the age range of 18-27, while 53.4% of respondents were in the age range of 28-37 years, 27.6% of the respondents were within the age range of 38-47, and 12.1% were among employees of Tanzania Investment Bank who their age ranges from 48 years and above. The data on education shows that most TIB staff involved in the study is well-educated, as graduates. The marital status also indicates that two-thirds are married; there are more married respondents than the unmarried. Importantly, most respondents are very experienced staff and can be relied on in terms of organizational knowledge.

Table 4

Respondents' Characteristics

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	18-27	4	6.9%
	28-37	31	53.4%
	38-47	16	27.6%
	48 <	7	12.1%
Gender	Male	27	46.6%
	Female	31	53.4%
Marital Status	Single	8	13.8%
	Married	44	75.9%
	Divorced	6	10.3%
	Widowed	-	0.00%
Education Background	Certificate	0	0.00%
	Diploma	4	6.9%
	Degree	42	72.4%
	Masters	12	20.7%

Working Experience	0-5 years	12	20.7%
	5-10 years	21	36.2%
	10-15 years	18	31.0%
	15< years	7	12.1%

4.1.1 The Role of Communication in Teams

The data presented and analyzed in Table 5 on issues studied provides an understanding of positive teamwork factors present at TIB and links the findings with relevant theories.

Table 5

Role of Communication within Teams

Variables	Responses									
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Individual and Team Issues										
Team members ensure proper channels of communication	-	-	9	15.5	-	-	17	29.3	32	55.2
Team participants are given opportunity to contribute ideas	-	-	2	3.4	-	-	49	84.5	7	12.1
Openness in team interactions	14	24.1	2	3.4	-	-	35	60.3	7	12.1
Frequent interdepartmental communications	-	-	2	3.4	-	-	41	70.7	15	25.9
Organizational support issues										
Team members are given feedback by the top executive	22	37.9	1	1.7	-	-	34	58.6	1	1.7
Always the organization provides adequate details about critical changes	3	5.2	31	53.4	5	8.6	19	32.8	-	-
The organization provides adequate information about its policies and its goals	9	15.5	7	12.0	12	20.6	13	24.4	16	27.5
Awareness on influence of teamwork to attain company goals and objective	-	-	-	-	4	6.9	32	55.2	22	37.9

4.1.2 Team Members' Use of Proper Channels of Communication

Based on the study findings, 47 respondents, or 74.5% of the total number of respondents, agree that team members follow proper communication channels. This validates the argument that respecting and adhering to the proper channels of communication is a sign of teamwork, and such a tendency allows team members to provide feedback easily in support of performance in an organization. The Director for HR also made the following observation as to the importance of following proper channels of communication:

"We unanimously acknowledge the significance of following established communication channels. This consensus highlights our collective commitment to maintaining effective communication practices."
(Interviewee, TIB 24th April 2024)

Belbin's Team Role Theory suggests that effective communication and feedback provision are essential components facilitated by various roles within a team. For instance, the "Monitor Evaluator" role, known for its analytical approach, ensures that feedback is based on objective assessment and critical analysis, thereby guiding the team towards optimal decisions and actions. Similarly, the "Coordinator" role plays a crucial part in facilitating feedback sessions by harmonizing different viewpoints and ensuring that each team member's input is considered, fostering a collaborative environment where feedback is constructive and insightful. Moreover, roles like the "Team worker" encourage open communication and provide support to team members, making it easier for individuals to share feedback without fear of repercussion. This inclusive approach to feedback aligns with our study's findings that robust communication channels are pivotal in enhancing teamwork and organizational performance. By applying Belbin's framework, organizations can harness these diverse roles to cultivate a culture where feedback flows freely, thereby enhancing team cohesion and overall effectiveness. This perspective is further supported by Msomi (2024) research, affirming the significant impact of communication channels on organizational performance.

The alignment of the study's findings with Belbin's Team Role Theory underscores several implications for both current and future research: The study supports the relevance of Belbin's roles in promoting effective communication and feedback. Future research can further validate these roles by exploring how they influence various

aspects of team performance and decision-making in different organizational contexts. Understanding how specific team roles contribute to communication channels can provide deeper insights into how to optimize team dynamics. Research could investigate the interplay between different roles and communication practices to identify best practices for enhancing team performance. The significant impact of communication channels on organizational performance, as indicated by both the study and Samwel (2019), suggests that future research should focus on how to implement and sustain effective communication practices. Investigating how different organizations adapt communication channels based on team roles and organizational culture could provide valuable guidance for improving organizational effectiveness. Research can explore practical applications of Belbin's framework in training and development programs. By integrating team role principles into communication strategies and feedback processes, organizations can enhance overall performance and employee satisfaction.

4.1.3 Opportunity to Contribute Ideas between Team Participants

Again, 56 respondents, representing 96.6% of the total, agree that team participants were given opportunities to contribute ideas on issues. There is, therefore, room within TIB to share viewpoints on knowledge and opinions, thereby contributing to solutions to the problems at hand that affect organizational performance. Facilitating opportunities for team participants to contribute ideas aligns closely with key roles identified in Belbin Team Role Theory.

Four interviewees at the junior level concurred with remarks made by one of them that:

"We all agree that we are often given the chance to voice our ideas within the team environment, examples being budget development for a new year that happens between November and January every year, performance assessment planning every June and July, and training plan development every year."
(Interviewee, TIB 28th March 2024)

Providing staff with avenues of idea sharing facilitates opportunities for team participants to contribute ideas, which aligns closely with key roles identified in Belbin Team Role Theory. For example, the 'Plant's role, renowned for its creativity and proficiency in generating innovative solutions, underscores the importance of encouraging open idea-sharing among team members. Similarly, roles such as the 'Resource Investigator' are identified for the task of sourcing external ideas and insights that enrich team discussions and decision-making processes with diverse perspectives. This capability ensures the team remains adaptable and responsive to environmental changes, thereby bolstering overall performance. Furthermore, the 'Implementer' role plays a pivotal role in translating ideas into actionable plans, promoting efficiency and alignment with organizational objectives. Integrating Belbin's Team Role Theory enables organizations to foster a dynamic environment where varied viewpoints are valued, fostering innovation and driving continuous improvement in organizational outcomes. This strategic approach is substantiated by research indicating that when team members are empowered to contribute ideas, their engagement and commitment to addressing organizational challenges are heightened, thereby directly contributing to improved performance.

The alignment of these roles with the study's findings underscores the importance of creating an environment where all team members have opportunities to contribute their ideas. This approach fosters a collaborative culture where diverse viewpoints are valued and integrated into the decision-making process, leading to improved organizational performance.

The study's findings support Belbin's framework by demonstrating how various team roles contribute to effective idea-sharing and decision-making. Future research could explore how different roles interact in real-world settings to further validate and refine the application of Belbin's theory. Research could investigate the impact of structured idea-sharing opportunities on team dynamics and performance. Understanding how specific roles influence the effectiveness of idea-sharing can provide insights into optimizing team composition and processes. The practical implications of fostering a culture of idea contribution can be explored further. Research could focus on how organizations can design and implement structures that maximize the benefits of diverse role contributions to enhance innovation and performance. Future studies could examine the long-term effects of idea-sharing practices on organizational outcomes, including employee engagement, innovation, and overall performance. This can provide a comprehensive understanding of the enduring impact of promoting diverse viewpoints within teams.

The study's results, when viewed through the lens of Belbin's Team Role Theory, highlight the importance of facilitating opportunities for team members to contribute ideas. This approach not only fosters a collaborative environment but also drives innovation and enhances organizational performance, offering valuable insights for both current and future research.

4.1.4 Openness in Team Interactions

The study revealed that 35 respondents, comprising 60.2% of the sample, expressed a sense of openness within their teams, highlighting a desire to achieve organizational goals collaboratively. This openness is crucial as it fosters employee cooperation and contributes to improved organizational performance. According to Tuckman's Team Development Model, which delineates stages of forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning, openness

plays a pivotal role across these stages. In the forming stage, team members exhibiting openness establish initial connections and begin to build trust, laying the groundwork for effective collaboration towards shared objectives. As teams progress through storming and norming, open communication enhances problem-solving abilities and facilitates the establishment of norms and roles. This mutual openness is essential for resolving conflicts constructively and aligning efforts towards achieving organizational outcomes during the performing stage. Leonard et al. (2004) argue that openness is predicated on trust, emphasizing that individuals are more likely to be open with those they trust. A sense of openness seems visible within TIB. Revealed when a senior manager in the directorate of human resources and administration opined the following:

“Honestly, I am proud to express my opinion on the level of openness that is there between us as core workers and even with our bosses. We are often informed about whatever aspect is related to our organization. We always feel part and parcel of TIB, and we are likely to contribute our professional effort to ensure the sustainability of our organization while promoting our competitive advantage.”
(Interviewee, TIB 14th March 2024)

In organizational contexts, fostering a culture of openness among employees accelerates overall performance, as it promotes transparency, mutual respect, and the sharing of diverse perspectives. By integrating mechanisms to cultivate openness aligned with Tuckman's model, organizations can nurture a supportive environment where trust and collaboration thrive, ultimately enhancing team effectiveness and driving sustained organizational success. Ali and Reuben (2021) underscore that openness is critical in the Forming stage of team development, aligning with Tuckman's model. They argue that in this initial phase, team members are establishing relationships and building trust. Openness facilitates these early interactions by allowing team members to share information, express their expectations, and start forming bonds. This foundational openness helps in creating a positive environment for collaboration and lays the groundwork for effective teamwork as the team progresses.

4.1.5 Frequent Interdepartmental Communications

The study findings also underscore the significance of frequent interdepartmental communication within the organization, as reported by 56 respondents, comprising 96.6% of participants. This communication practice signifies effective teamwork, facilitating seamless information flow and bolstering the performance of the team in an integrated manner at TIB. Belbin Team Role Theory provides insights into how interdependent roles contribute to this collaborative environment. For instance, the 'Coordinator' role ensures that communication channels remain open and efficient, enabling departments to align their goals and activities effectively. Concurrently, the 'Team worker' role fosters a supportive atmosphere conducive to interdepartmental cooperation, thereby enhancing coordination and synergy across organizational functions within the TIB framework. Such collaborative efforts are crucial in TIBs, where interdisciplinary collaboration drives innovation and problem-solving. The fluid exchange of information among departments not only enhances operational efficiency but also supports agile decision-making and adaptive responses to organizational challenges. By leveraging Belbin's framework to cultivate interdependent roles that promote effective communication and collaboration, organizations can optimize performance.

A senior manager reveals the following about the frequent and smooth interdepartmental communications:

“I accept that all departments are cooperative with each other. The cooperation is there because we normally know that we are interdependent with each other for attaining the objectives of our organization. The success we have to date could not be achieved if each department worked alone without having good and frequent communication between us.” (Interviewee, TIB 12th February 2024)

Belbin's Team Role Theory offers a robust framework for analyzing the impact of interdepartmental communication on organizational performance. By leveraging this framework, both existing and future research can provide deeper insights into how effective communication and role dynamics contribute to operational efficiency, innovation, and adaptability. Even Husarek et al., (2024) highlighted that frequent communication between departments facilitates the smooth flow of information. When departments regularly exchange updates and insights, they ensure that all team members are aligned with organizational goals and have the necessary information to perform their tasks effectively. This reduces misunderstandings and ensures that everyone is working towards the same objectives, which in turn enhances overall productivity.

4.1.6 Feedback Provision to Team Members from Top Executives

The study examining the executives' role to feedback discovered the following: those 42 respondents, constituting 72.4% of the sample, agreed that team members received timely feedback from top executives. This practice of providing feedback from leadership holds significant implications for team dynamics and organizational performance.

A middle-level officer in the investment department opined the following on feedback from superiors:

"I accept that we always get feedback from our bosses and such tendency is essential because continuous feedback to us encourages promoting improvement, increasing communication, and accomplishing our professional objectives." (Interviewee, TIB 16th April 2024)

Actually, the findings align with Tuckman's Team Development Model, which outlines the basic significance of providing feedback as a means of strengthening communication within a team. All team formation stages of that theory- forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning stage, and feedback play crucial role in enhancing team cohesion and performance. During the forming stage, feedback from executives helps establish clear roles and expectations, laying the foundation for effective teamwork. As teams progress through the storming and norming stages, constructive feedback fosters open communication and trust among team members, facilitating the resolution of conflicts and the alignment of goals towards achieving organizational objectives.

Moreover, in the performing stage, ongoing feedback supports continuous improvement and adaptation, ensuring that teams remain agile and responsive to challenges. This aligns with Ma Malingumu (2025) assertion that feedback engenders a sense of engagement among team members, motivating them to contribute actively and willingly towards organizational success. By integrating feedback mechanisms aligned with Tuckman's model, organizations can nurture a supportive environment where team members feel valued and empowered, ultimately driving enhanced performance and sustained success. Even Chris et al. (2021) feedback from the boss throughout the stages of the Tuckman theory of team development is crucial for addressing issues, reinforcing positive behavior, and enhancing overall productivity while helping guide the team through each stage of development, ensuring that they remain focused and effective. Also, Schimutz et al. (2019) support Tuckman's theory by emphasizing that the provision of feedback to team members significantly enhances productivity, as their study shows that regular and constructive feedback helps individuals to understand their performance and align with team goals, which is crucial during the Tuckman stage of team development. Feedback fosters a clear understanding of roles and expectations, thereby advancing cooperation and efficiency within the team.

4.1.7 Adequate Information to Team Members about Goals and Policies Governing the Organization

In examining awareness to goals and policies at TIB, 28 respondents, representing 51.9% of participants, emphasized the importance of providing adequate information about policies and goals to employees. This provision ensures that all team members are aligned and guided by the same standards and objectives, fostering a cohesive team environment focused on achieving organizational goals. According to Belbin Team Role Theory, roles such as the 'Coordinator' and the 'Implementer' play crucial roles in ensuring that information is effectively communicated and understood across the team. A senior officer made the following comment on efforts by the organization to inform its staff:

"I can confirm that, in terms of important topics, I have felt sufficiently informed and updated by management. This proactive approach not only helps to build a culture of trust and responsibility, but it also gives us employees the ability to make informed decisions and effectively support the objectives of the company." (Interviewee, TIB 7th April 2024)

The coordinator facilitates discussions to ensure clarity and consensus on policies and goals, promoting cohesion and shared understanding among team members. Meanwhile, the Implementer ensures that these policies are translated into actionable plans, promoting efficiency and goal attainment within the team. Chris et al. (2021) observe that team objectives that align with organizational policies cultivate a sense of teamwork, leading to a common framework for decision-making and action. Phina et al. (2018) opine that if team members are well informed about policies and other regulations governing them, it can raise awareness and understanding of expectations, roles, and responsibilities to facilitate increased productivity and commitment while minimizing errors within the team. By integrating Belbin's framework in efforts to build effective teams, organizations can optimize team performance by leveraging roles that facilitate effective communication and alignment with organizational goals, thereby enhancing productivity and achieving sustained success. Leonard et al. (2024) provide that aligning team members with comprehensive information about organizational goals and policies enhances productivity. When team members are well informed, their roles and contributions become more synchronized with the organization's objectives, resulting in increased efficiency. This aligns with Belbin's theory of teams, which emphasizes the importance of clear communication and role understanding within the team, ultimately fostering better collaboration and higher productivity.

4.1.8 Negative Behaviors Inhibiting Effective Teams

The study also sought to assess those factors that affect team effectiveness within TIB. As a public sector organization with the mandate to promote investment and to generate revenue, increased efficiency and effectiveness are necessary goals. The identification of relevant issues that limit team effectiveness needs to be undertaken and analyzed in the context of a developing country.

Table 6*Negative Behaviors Inhibiting Effective Team Performance*

Variables	Responses									
	Strongly Disagree		Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly Agree	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Team member mistrust each other	25	43.1	14	24.1	3	5.2	16	27.6	-	-
Conflict exists between team members	27	46.6	11	18.9	-	-	13	22.4	7	12.1
Team members dictate individualism traits	23	39.7	19	32.8	4	6.9	12	20.7	-	-
Irresponsibility affects team performance	27	46.6	10	17.2	-	-	13	22.4	8	13.8

The study reveals several critical issues impacting team dynamics, notably concerns about trust, prevalent conflict, individualistic traits, and irresponsibility. These findings shed light on how these factors influence team performance and cohesion, and how they can be understood through the lens of Tuckman's theory of teamwork.

4.1.9 Trust between Team Members

The study indicates that a significant proportion of respondents see trust as a concern within their teams. Trust is crucial for effective teamwork and organizational success, as highlighted by various scholars. Arius santo (2019) emphasizes that trust is fundamental for both individual and organizational effectiveness. Aydmtn and Abdulle (2019) argue that trust enhances knowledge sharing and fosters innovation, while Husarek et al., (2024) and Chris et al. (2020) discuss its role in aligning self and group interests. In the context of Tuckman's theory, which outlines the stages of team development Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing, and Adjourning trust is particularly relevant during the Norming stage. Teams that have not yet established trust may struggle to transition effectively from the Storming phase, where conflict and uncertainty are prominent, to the Norming phase, where collaboration and trust are critical.

4.1.10 Conflict between Team Members

The study also identifies conflict as a prevalent issue among team members. While conflict is often viewed negatively, Salas et al. (2015) suggest that it is a natural component of team dynamics and can be constructive if managed properly. Luiz et al. (2024) support this by noting that while conflicts are inevitable, they require high levels of conflict management to prevent them from undermining team cohesion. On one hand unresolved and even poorly managed can rise tension, reduce working desire and hinder communication, thereby impeding cooperation and productivity (Husarek et al., 2024). In Tuckman's model, conflict typically arises during the Storming phase, where differences in opinions and approaches can lead to tensions. Effective conflict resolution is essential for progressing to the Norming and Performing stages, where teams can work more harmoniously and efficiently. Aydintan and Abdulle (2019) reinforce the idea that conflict is a natural and inevitable part of the team development process, particularly during the Storming phase. They emphasize that this phase is characterized by the emergence of different opinions, disagreements, and clashes as team members begin to assert their individual perspectives and roles (Phina et al., 2018). This aligns with Tuckman's model, which identifies the Storming phase as a period where conflicts are likely to arise as teams navigate their differences. So, provide insights into various conflict management techniques that can be employed during the Storming phase. These techniques include open communication, active listening, and mediation. By implementing these strategies, teams can manage conflicts in a way that supports team development and fosters a more collaborative environment. Their findings emphasize the importance of these techniques in facilitating a smoother transition from the Storming phase to the Norming and Performing stages.

4.1.11 Individualism Traits between Team Members

The study reveals that 20.7% of respondents exhibit observable individualism traits. While individualism can foster autonomy and innovation (Kwawam et al., 2017; Prajogo, 2022), it can also challenge team cohesion if not managed appropriately. Tuckman's theory suggests that high levels of individualism can disrupt the Storming phase and impede progress to the Norming phase if team members prioritize personal goals over collective objectives. Balancing individual contributions with team needs is crucial for achieving a stable and productive team environment. Even, Afolami (2020) supports the discussion on individualism and its impact on team dynamics through Tuckman's theory by highlighting how individualism can influence the Storming and Norming phases of team development. The research emphasizes the importance of balancing individual contributions with team needs and provides strategies for managing individualism to foster a productive and cohesive team environment.

Moreover, Phina et al. (2018) opine that prioritizing of personal or individual attainments can affect the overall performance of a team within an organization. This is because, if each team member focuses on personal gains, it can be difficult to work for the team's goal.

4.1.12 Irresponsibility within a team affects performance

Lastly, the study highlights that more than a third of respondents perceive irresponsibility as affecting team performance. Irresponsibility can manifest itself as unethical behaviors that can severely impact both individual and organizational outcomes (Benlahcene, 2023; Phina et al., 2018; Samwel, 2019). In Tuckman's framework, irresponsibility may disrupt the Norming and Performing stages, where team norms and effective functioning are established. Addressing irresponsible behaviors is essential for maintaining team cohesion and ensuring that team members adhere to agreed-upon standards and expectations. The study's findings, when analyzed through Tuckman's model, highlight the need for a deeper understanding of how trust, conflict, individualism, and irresponsibility influence each stage of team development. Future research should explore how these factors impact the transition between stages and the overall effectiveness of teams. Given the role of conflict in team dynamics, future studies should investigate effective conflict management strategies that facilitate progression from the Storming phase to the Norming and Performing stages. Research could focus on training programs and interventions that help teams navigate conflicts constructively. Research could also explore strategies for managing individualism within teams to harness its benefits while maintaining cohesion. These include examining how to balance personal autonomy with team goals and fostering a collaborative culture. In addition, investigating how to cultivate a culture of responsibility and to address unethical behaviors can provide insights into improving team performance and integrity.

Likewise, Ariussanto (2019) argues that team members' failure to meet their predetermined responsibilities can severely affect organizational performance. As a result, among others, missed deadlines and undesired quality standards. Such behaviors can create frustration between responsible team members, resulting in a decline in work morale and motivation.

V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

This study aimed to examine communication in a team-working context within a public sector organization in reference to the two theoretical perspectives: Belbin's Team Role Theory and the Tuckman Theory of Team Development, where communication is found to be central to their postulations. Based on the research findings, desired communication is prevalent and might have implications for organizational performance. Particularly, related to intra-organizational communication. TIB is a public sector organization and thus is an example of some kind of a team-nurturing context within a constrained bureaucratic system. The study findings reveal that certain individual and team behaviors support effective communication and teamwork, such as the use of proper channels of communication, transparency in group relationships, and participation in team activities; the study also revealed that leadership and organizational processes also support effective communication and teamwork, such as frequent organizational-wide communications on changes and feedback, and interdepartmental communications. Nonetheless, there are highly significant aspects of behavior that affect teamwork and the expected outcomes of team effectiveness. These include trust issues, conflict, and less responsible behaviors that can lead to unethical behaviors. Several recommendations are also put forward, including assessing for organizational team effectiveness, providing regular team-building interventions, and taking appropriate steps to recruit and select staff with appropriate aptitudes that can support the achievement of organizational goals.

5.2 Recommendations

The study offers several recommendations as follows: Public sector organizations, especially in resource-constrained countries, have to regularly assess relationships within teams and take appropriate planned measures to improve team performance. Within organizations, effective communication is an essential element for creating and nurturing cohesive teams; therefore, communication skills are to be imparted to individuals and teams as part of the institutional capacity-building initiatives. Public sector organizations also need to investigate and identify factors affecting relationships within and between teams that may negatively impact communication within teams and team effectiveness.

Leadership has to play a key role at the lower and middle levels in the hierarchy to make sure that all organizational participants are adequately familiar with and knowledgeable about organizational, departmental, and individual goals and objectives, including the organizational policies. There should be a deliberate effort to identify and reward individual efforts to promote effective communication within teams. It is therefore necessary to ensure that

the recruitment process is robust enough to attract staff with the right behavioral characteristics, such as conscientiousness and responsible work behaviors.

Declaration of Interest

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