

# SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE OF BAKERIES IN IDEMILI NORTH LGA OF ANAMBRA STATE

<sup>1</sup>Okoli Chibuokem Helen, <sup>2</sup>Prof. Faith Chidi Onwuchekwa, & <sup>3</sup>Prof. Hope Ngozi Nzewi

<sup>1,2 & 3</sup>Department of Business Administration, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka

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## KEYWORDS

Social, Intelligence, Social Awareness, Employee Performance and Morale.

## ABSTRACT

The study was to determine the relationship between social intelligence and employee performance of Bakeries in Idemili North Anambra state. The specific objective was to ascertain the relationship between social awareness and employee morale of Bakeries in Idemili North Anambra state. The research survey design was used. The primary sources were a personal interview and the administration of a questionnaire to the employees of bakeries in Idemili North. A population of 240 workers was sampled. The sample size of 150 was chosen after applying the Taro Yamane formula to determine an adequate sample size. Content validity and Cronbach's alpha reliability technique were employed for the study. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient with the aid of SPSS version 20 was used to test the research hypotheses at  $p < 0.05$  significance level. The study reveals a statistically significant relationship between social awareness and employee morale in Bakeries in Idemili North Anambra state. Based on the findings of the empirical test, the researcher concludes that there exists a statistically significant relationship between social awareness and employee morale of Bakeries in Idemili North Anambra state and recommends that in order to improve the social skills of workers, it is essential for managers "managers' of bakeries industries not to restrict their employees to only technical skills training but emphasis should also be on management programs related to the development of social skills which will help improve the relationships amongst them and also employee performance.

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## INTRODUCTION

One of the basic human needs is social relationships. This is why human beings are considered as social creatures. By their natures, they cannot live alone or away from each other. Practicing social relationships determines human performance from the personal and professional levels. Many researchers, such as Frankovsky and Birknerová (2014), and Al-Jarrah and Asleh (2016), stressed the need for interaction between each other through having social skills, empathy, social awareness, and other skills which are a part of social intelligence. Furthermore, Subramanian (2016) submits that social intelligence explodes from the ability to be socially aware and handle relationships intelligently. The ability to see the heart of people and know what they are going through; the ability to appreciate other people's views; to understand and appreciate the impact of communication on others; to manage interactions effectively; to engage with others for mutual benefit.

Moreover, the psychologist Edward Thorndike 1920, referred to "The best mechanic in a factory may fail as a foreman for lack of social intelligence." This confirms human beings' need for love, belonging, loyalty, and participation. The bakery organizations are not left out in this; there exist among them the feelings to be loved and to give love in return, the feelings to be socially active and to interact with one another. Maslow, in 1943, went further to present

this idea in his theory, the pyramid of human needs, where he explains that humans generally feel a strong need for belonging, loyalty, and love. This need will provide the emotional support and the confidence.

On the other hand, when people do not meet their needs efficiently, they will be more anxious, depressed, and socially isolated, reflecting on their performances (Karnatovskaia, Gajic, Bienvenu, Stevenson, & Needham, 2015). Social intelligence is the capability to know a person in general. It is the ability to manage human relations. Caroline, Ngonya, and Rashadyzdanifard (2014) say, "These skills assist the managers to attain individual employee needs irrespective of their generation." Uzamaz (2000) describes social intelligence as a pioneer of social skill concepts, including communication, understanding and expressing feelings, coping with aggression, coping with stress, and problem-solving skills. Rahim (2014) sorts out the components of social skill as a concept that underlies the concept of social intelligence to be comfortable among people, have equal skills to handle men, women, and children to interact with various people, be able to negotiate better at reaching an agreement; building positive relationships and the ability to sustain it. Goleman (2006), in his study, divided social intelligence into social awareness and social facility. He defined social awareness as what we sense about others and social facility as what we do with that awareness.

The certainty of bakeries in achieving their set goals is dependent upon the ability of

employees to be socially intelligent, and for these organizations to achieve their goals, management must provide a desirable working environment. Unfortunately, bakery employees do not think exhibiting social intelligence and social awareness is essential to

organization's services, causes low customer satisfaction, and causes declines in sales revenue. All this lowers the efficiency of the organization. Against this backdrop, this study intends to ascertain

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## 1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The certainty of bakeries in achieving their set goals is dependent upon the ability of

employees to create binding and uniting behavior that provides communication, empathy, and harmony between other people. For these organizations to achieve their goals, management needs to provide a desirable working environment. Unfortunately, bakery employees do not think exhibiting social intelligence and social awareness is essential to improving their performance; instead, they prefer displaying negative and counter-productive behavior within their workplace. Immoral behaviors, theft, backbiting, fighting, and being uncooperative with others are examples of such counter-productive behaviors. This significantly degrades the quality of organization services and causes low customer satisfaction and declines in sales revenue. All this lowers the efficiency of the organization. Against this backdrop, this study intends to ascertain the relationship between social intelligence and employee performance of Bakeries in Idemili North, Anambra state.

### Objective of the Study:

The general objective of this study is to determine the relationship between social intelligence and employee performance of Bakeries in Idemili North Anambra state. The specific objective is to ascertain the relationship between social awareness and employee morale in Bakeries in Idemili North Anambra state.

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## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### Conceptual Review

#### Concept of Social Intelligence

Social intelligence is one of the organization's most critical issues because it is connected to the ability of individuals to communicate with others within the organization. That is why scholars and researchers give this concept excellent attention. Thorndike (1920) is a renowned psychologist who developed social intelligence. He grouped intelligence into three different categories: abstract intelligence, mechanical intelligence, and social intelligence. The abstract form of intelligence involves managing and understanding abstract ideas. Mechanical intelligence understands and manages concrete targets within personal environments. In contrast, social intelligence is defined as the ability to understand and manage men and women and boys and girls to act wisely in human relations

improving their performance. Instead, they prefer displaying negative and counter-productive behavior within their workplace (Islam, Akter & Lecturer, 2015). Immoral behaviors, theft, backbiting, fighting, taking excessive breaks, misconduct, and being uncooperative with others are examples of such counter-productive behaviors (Romaiha, Maulud, Ismail, Jahya, Fahana, & Harun, 2019). This significantly degrades the quality of the

relationship between social intelligence and employee performance of Bakeries in Idemili North, Anambra state.

(Eketu & Ogbu, 2015; Promsri, 2017). Furthermore, Eshghi, Arofzad, and Hosaini (2013) stress the ability to read nonverbal cues and achieve the relevant objectives of specific social situations. Frankovsky and Birknerova (2014) claim that social intelligence depends on knowledge and awareness, which means that it is not enough to know, be aware, and predict the behavior and experience of others. However, knowing and comprehending our capacities and abilities is also imperative. More still, Rahim, Civelek, and Liang (2016) said that social intelligence is the ability to be aware of related social situations and handle situational challenges effectively by understanding others' concerns and feelings and building and maintaining positive relationships in social settings.

Goleman (2006) divided social intelligence into social awareness and social facility. He defined social awareness as what we sense about others and social facility as what we do with that awareness. He went further to say that social awareness is an individual's internal ability to sense another person's inner state in order to gain a better perspective of social interaction with that person (Goleman, 2006).

### Social Awareness

Social awareness is the ability to perceive and understand the relationships and structures in

which those around operate. It involves understanding how others are feeling and validating those feelings. The three skills comprising these Competencies are empathy, organizational awareness, and service orientation (Khan et al., 2014). Social awareness involves the ability to understand and be compassionate to other people's feelings, views, opinions, and challenges. People feel better when they realize their needs, feelings, and work are accorded the attention they deserve in the organization (Clegg, Mikkelsen, & Sewell, 2015). Every manager who understands the peculiar needs of employees in the organization will enhance social and purposive relationships that could bring out the best in the workforce. According to Goleman (2006), social awareness has to do with understanding employee's feelings and social needs to enable it to build effective relationships and utilize employee skills to improve performance. Knowing the happenings within the employee's psychological state and the environment may influence the methods, structures, and techniques an organization adopts to produce goods and services (Dam, 2017).

## Employees Performance

According to Nmadu (2013), employee performance is accomplishing a task that makes up an employee's job. This definition was in line with the definition given by the business

dictionary (2010) that employee performance is the accomplishment of a given task measured

against preset standards of accuracy, completeness, cost, and speed. Managers at a workplace must ensure that employee's activities and output contribute to the organization's goals. This process requires knowing what activities and outputs are designed, observing whether they occur, and providing feedback to help improve employee morale and meet expectations (Nmadu, 2013). However, employee performance is associated with productivity, which translates to quantity of output, quality of output, timeliness of output, presence or attendance on the job, morale at work, efficiency of the work completed, and effectiveness of work completed (Mathis, Fredrick & Kenneth 2009).

## Employee Morale

Employee morale is one of the most essential components of business operations. Bowles and Cooper (2009) defined *employee morale* as, the state of individual psychological well-being based upon a sense of confidence, usefulness, and purpose. The employees can keep their faith in their organization and its goals. Haddock (2010) mentions that employee morale refers to employees' positive and supportive feelings toward their organization. Morale is considered as the mental state of an employee that encourages him to perform his job efficiently and effectively. Employee morale is a personal phenomenon that leads to job satisfaction. It is a group concept, as it describes the general attitudes of employees working in an organization. Fard, GhataryandHasiri (2010) states that employee morale is vital to a healthy workplace. He further mentioned in his research that a high level of employee morale is associated with creativity and innovation, job satisfaction, and employee commitment to the organization, thus increasing organizational performance. Employee morale can be defined by a person's job satisfaction and the degree to which the individual receives satisfaction from the job situation (Bhasin, 2018). Motivated job-engagement (Verma & Kesari, 2017). Feelings of well-being toward the company (Muskita&Kazimoto, 2017) and the emotional connection employees have during their time within a workplace environment based on the risk, policies, and management (Webster, 2018).

## Theoretical Framework

The baseline theory for this study is the social network theory. Social network theory is a baseline theory for explaining social awareness, described as competencies that place one on a scale of balanced feeling towards others and utilizing peoples' skills to achieve innovativeness initiatives. These competencies direct one's ability to organize and direct his skills and that of others in a social context to innovate and be productive (Atuma, 2010). The Social network is a theoretical construct used in management to study relationships between individuals, groups, and organizations. It is also a social structure made up of a set of social actors, sets of dyadic ties, and

other social interactions between actors. According to Ahiauzu and Asawo (2016), the underlying assumption of social network theory is the concept of social man. This concept holds that man exists within a web of relationships, and this view gave rise to the human relations movement in organizational studies. Social networks and their analysis are inherent interdisciplinary academic fields that emerged from psychology, sociology, Anthropology, statistics, etc. According to Malinowski (2000), social network theory came into being due to the research carried out in sociology, anthropology, psychology, organizational management, and political science to explain the importance of interactions and human relationships in achieving organizational goals. This theory explains that employees work better in a network of productive and purposeful relationships to achieve the organization's goals. Human organisms cannot function optimally except in conjunction with other human organisms (Sapru, 2013). Working in an organization requires social interactions to learn from others, exchange ideas, and share views that will help keep the organization afloat and innovative (Jaja, 2012).

## Empirical Studies

Eketu and Ogbu (2015) studied the role of social intelligence on the worker's extra-role behavior of independent Road Transport Companies in Port Harcourt, Nigeria. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design, and data was collected from a sample of 175 employees drawn from a target population of 10 Rivers State Ministry of Transport independent road transport companies in Port Harcourt. The research hypotheses were tested using Spearman's Rank Oder Correlation Coefficient. The results revealed that workers' extra-role behavior measured in terms of self-development, individual initiative, and enterprise compliance among workers in road transport is strongly dependent on the social intelligence of the supervisors and managers of the transport companies operating in Port Harcourt. Based on these findings, the study concluded that social intelligence improves workers' extra-role behavior in the transport sector. Sepahvand and Mousavi (2016) critically examined the impact of social intelligence on organizational citizenship behavior. Two hundred and twenty (220) individuals were drawn as sample size for the study using the Cochran Formula. The data were analyzed using LISREL and SPSS software. Findings show that organizational intelligence and its dimensions significantly impact organizational citizenship behavior at the physical education offices in Kermanshah province, Iran.

Al-Jarrah and Asleh (2016) studied social intelligence and conflict management strategies among high-intact students and those with problematic behavior in the secondary stage. It also investigated social intelligence and conflict management strategies among high-intact students and those with problematic behavior in the secondary stage. The data was collected from the answers of 439 male and female students of secondary-stage students of the Al-Galilee district in Palestine who were randomly selected. The results showed that the level of social intelligence among intact students and those with problematic behavior was high,

Where the integrating strategy was mainly used among them, and the avoiding strategy

Was less used. In addition, the results revealed statistically significant differences between males and females in integrating, emotional expressions, and avoiding strategies, as well as between intact students and those with problems in dominating and avoiding strategies.

Series (2017) investigated the Impact of Social Intelligence on Organizational Conflict Management Strategies: A Field Study on Jordanian Telecommunication Companies, Middle East University. Data were collected by answering questionnaires using simple random for a sample of 350 employees working at Jordanian telecommunication companies (Orange and Umniah). In addition, the researcher used the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version (21) for descriptive and analytical statistics. Findings show a strong impact among social intelligence variables (organizational awareness, social skills, empathy, situational awareness, and situational response) on organizational conflict management strategies (integrating, obliging, dominating, avoiding, and compromising).

Promsri (2017) examined the influence of social intelligence on the change in leadership behaviors of Managers in Thai-listed Firms. Seventy-six managers of five listed firms in Thailand were gathered for data collection through the modified version of Troms' social intelligence scale and a newly developed scale of change leadership. Using stepwise regression analysis. The results revealed that social information processing has a significant positive relationship with change in leadership behaviors.

Chujor and Amadi (2017) justified their study by investigating emotional and social

intelligence as predictors of occupational stress of civil servants in Rivers State. The study adopted a correlation design. Six hundred civil servants were drawn through a proportionate stratified sampling technique. Relevant data gathered were analyzed using multiple regression analysis as a statistical tool. Findings show that the relationship management dimension of emotional intelligence is a significant predictor of civil servants' occupational stress, while emotional self-awareness, self-management, and social awareness dimensions are not. Furthermore, the components of social intelligence, such as social skills and social awareness, are significant predictors of the occupational stress of civil servants. In contrast, social information processing is not a significant predictor.

Vashisht (2018) established the relationship between social intelligence (SI), organization citizenship behavior (OCB), and counterwork behavior (CWB). The study was conducted on the population of employees working in public sector organizations in the National Capital Region of Delhi. A sample of 120 middle-level managers, both male and female, was taken for the study from the specified population, and a survey was conducted using the questionnaire method to collect the data for research. Findings reveal a higher tendency for SI and OCB among the stated sample and a moderately significant presence of CWB among the employees. SI shares a positive significant relationship with OCB and a negative significant relationship with CWB. On the other hand, OCB and CWB also share a negative significant relationship.

Mirsafian (2018) aimed to measure social intelligence's effect on organizational citizenship behavior and entrepreneurial behaviors among staff members in a sports organization in Iran. Two hundred and five staff members were selected using stratified random sampling. The data was analyzed by employing SPSS and AMOS Graphics software. Findings show that the staff's social intelligence had a direct effect on improving the social capital of the organization. Hence, trying to increase the staff's social intelligence in sports organizations in Iran will lead to improving the staff's extra-role behaviors as well as entrepreneurial behaviors at the organization,

Promsri (2019) examined the Effects of Social Intelligence on Workplace Spirituality at Rajamangala University of Technology Phra Nakhon Bangkok, Thailand. Data were collected from 71 graduate students in the MBA program at a selected public university in Thailand through the Tromsø Social Intelligence Scale (TSIS) and the Workplace Spirituality Scale. Multiple regression analysis was computed to examine the impacts of three social intelligence components on each dimension of workplace spirituality. Results show that there is no statistically significant influence of social intelligence on conditions for the community. On the other hand, findings revealed statistically significant effects of social skills and social awareness.

Ahmed (2020) investigated the impact of social intelligence and employees' collective self-efficacy on service providers' performance in Egyptian governmental hospitals in Tanta, Egypt. The study also examined the direct impact of social intelligence and collective self-efficacy on two components of service providers' performance: extra-role performance and intra-role one. Furthermore, it investigated the indirect effect of social intelligence on service providers' performance and its components via the mediating role of collective self-efficacy. Data collected was based on a cross-sectional design from 220 physicians in Egyptian governmental hospitals. Confirmatory factor analysis explored the latent structure of the research constructs. The study used structural equation modeling to test the research model hypotheses. Findings revealed that social intelligence was positively associated with service providers' performance.

Oshi, Akaibe, and Chikwe (2021) investigated the relationship between social intelligence and organizational citizenship behavior in Government Parastatals at the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State, Nigeria. Social Skill (SS) and Social Information Processing (SP) were used as dimensions of social intelligence against the measures of organizational citizenship behavior, which are altruism, sportsmanship, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue. Two hypotheses were developed and tested within a population size of hundred (100) senior-level employees conveniently selected from twenty (20) Government Parastatals in Rivers state. The Spearman rank correlation coefficient was used to test the hypotheses using the SPSS v20.0. Findings from the analysis showed that social skills have a moderate and positive relationship between social skills and the measures of organizational citizenship behavior. In contrast, social information processing showed a low but positive relationship with the measures of organizational citizenship behavior.

## Summary of Literature Review / Gap in Knowledge

Considering the result of previous studies conducted by different scholars, a research gap has been identified: Firstly, more geographical locations need to be. Most studies were done in other countries, such as Promsri (2019), Thailand, Ahmed (2020), Tanta, and Egypt. Only two studies, by Oshi, Akaibe, and Chikwe (2021), University of Port Harcourt and Eketu and Ogbu (2015) Port Harcourt, were done in Nigeria. None was done in Anambra state, and none was done using bakery organizations.

## METHODOLOGY

The study adopted the survey research design. The study population comprises 240 workers working in bakeries in Idemili North LGA, Anambra state, Nigeria. The decision to select seven (7) bakeries was guided by using Judgment sampling. The selected bakeries are Our Lady's Bakery Nkpor (40 employees), Queens Bakery Nkpor (30 employees), Christyca Bakery Nkpor (35 employees), St Louis Bakery Nkpor junction (40 employees), Confidence Bakery Nkpor (25 employees), Good Luck Bakery Nkpor (30 employees), Iruka bakery Nkpor (40 employees). A sample size of 150 employees was determined using the Taro Yamane formula, while the non-probability sampling method (judgment) was used to distribute the questionnaire to the

employees. The proportion of the questionnaire administered to each Bakery was determined using Bowley's proportional allocation formula. The numbers questionnaire administered to each of the Bakery are Our Lady's Bakery Nkpor (25), Queens's Bakery (19), Christyca Bakery (22), St Louis Bakery (25), Confidence Bakery (15), Good Luck Bakery (19), Iruka bakery (25). Content validity was employed for the study. The study adopted Cronbach's alpha reliability technique, and the result was 0.860, above the 0.696 benchmark for the acceptance of an instrument as reliable. The research question was answered using the aggregate scores. In contrast, the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient with the aid of SPSS version 20 was used to test the research hypotheses at  $p < 0.05$  level of significance.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Out of the 150 copies of a questionnaire distributed, only 120 were used because 30 copies were unusable due to mutilations and incomplete responses.

### Analysis of Data Based on Research

#### Researched question one

What relationship exists between social awareness and employee morale at Bakeries in Idemili North Anambra State?

**Table 4.1** Distribution of responses on Ascertain social awareness and employee morale of Bakeries in Idemili North Anambra state

S/N		A	SA	UN	D	SD
<b>SOCIAL AWARENESS</b>						
1	I often feel that it is difficult to understand other people's choices.	40	33	-	10	37
2	I find people unpredictable.	55	44	-	21	-
3	I have often hurt others without realizing it.	39	29	15	19	18
4	Other people get angry with me without my being able to explain why.	29	43	-	27	21
5	I am often surprised by other people's reactions to what I do.	16	29	3	40	32
<b>EMPLOYEE MORALE</b>						
6	I am happy to come to work every day.	23	20	-	39	38
7	I can do my work without fear.	34	30	5	18	33
8	I feel supported, valued and appreciated.	14	35	10	19	42
9	My work gives me feelings of accomplishment and pride.	10	30	3	47	30
10	I know what is expected of me in my job.	30	29	-	29	32

Sources: Field Survey, 2023

Table 4.1 shows respondents' responses on social awareness and employee morale of Bakeries in Idemili North Anambra State. The mean of the individual questionnaire items is used for analysis here, with the decision to accept any item with a mean of 3 and above and to reject any with a mean less than 3. Going by this, questionnaire items 1, 2, 3, 4, and 7 are accepted, meaning that workers of the bakery can do their job without fear. They often hurt others without realizing it, and other people get angry with them without being able to explain why. While questionnaire items 5, 6, 8, 9, and 10 are rejected, bakery employees do not know what is expected of them,

and their jobs do not give them any accomplishment. They do not feel supported, valued, and appreciated.

### Data Analysis

#### Test of Hypothesis

HO: There is no significant relationship between social awareness and employee morale of Bakeries in Idemili North Anambra state.

The Table shows the correlation analysis for social awareness and employee morale of Bakeries in Idemili North Anambra state. The

result reveals a correlation coefficient of .964 and a p-value of .000. Going by the decision rule, the alternate hypothesis will be accepted because the p-value is lesser than the significance level. Hence, it is stated that there is a statistically significant relationship between social awareness and employee morale of Bakeries in Idemili North Anambra state.

## Data Analysis Test of Hypothesis

HO: There is no significant relationship between social awareness and employee morale of Bakeries in Idemili North Anambra state.

**Table 4.2.1** *Test of Hypothesis There is no significant relationship between social awareness and employee morale of Bakeries in Idemili North Anambra state.*

Correlations		Social Awareness	Employee Morale
<b>Social Awareness</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	.964**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	120	120
<b>Employee Morale</b>	Pearson Correlation	.964**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	120	120

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Field Work 2023

The Table shows the correlation analysis for social awareness and employee morale of Bakeries in Idemili North Anambra state. The result reveals a correlation coefficient of .964 and a p-value of .000. Going by the decision rule, the alternate hypothesis will be accepted because the p-value is lesser than the level of significance. Hence, it is stated that there is a statistically significant relationship between social awareness and employee morale of Bakeries in Idemili North Anambra state.

## Discussion of Findings

The result of the analysis showed that there is a statistically significant relationship between social awareness and employee morale. This implies that social awareness significantly affects the employee morale of Bakeries in Idemili North Anambra state. The result of this study is consistent with various outcomes of research studies related to this study. Vashisht (2018) in his study stated that social intelligence shares a positive significant relationship with OCB. Eketu and Ogbu (2015) further agreed with this outcome with their findings that extra-role behavior is dependent upon social intelligence. Sepahvand and Mousavi (2016) stated that organizational intelligence and its dimensions significantly impact organizational citizenship behavior at physical education offices in Kermanshah Province, Iran.

## Summary of Findings

A statistically significant relationship exists between social awareness and employee morale in Bakeries in Idemili North Anambra state. ( $r = 0.964$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$ ).

## Conclusions

Based on the findings of the empirical test conducted, the researcher concludes that a statistically significant relationship exists between social awareness and employee morale of Bakeries in Idemili North Anambra state. This means that when employees in the bakery industry understand and are compassionate to the feelings, views, opinions, and challenges of other people they are working with, this will boost their Morale and mental state, encouraging them to perform their job efficiently and effectively. Employees feel better when they realize that their needs, feelings, and work are accorded the attention they deserve in the organization, so every manager who understands these peculiar needs of employees in the organization will enhance the building of social and purposive relationships that could bring out the best from the workforce.

## Recommendations

The study makes the following recommendations based on the study's findings.

In order to improve workers' social skills, it is important for managers of bakeries industries not to restrict their employees to only technical skills training. Emphasis should also be placed on management programs related to the development of social skills, which will help improve their relationships and employee performance.

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