Emotional Intelligence, Relational Skills and Organisational Culture in Shaping Perceived Training Effectiveness: A Qualitative Inquiry among Employees of Corporate Organisations in Lagos State

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ABSTRACT

Employee training does not automatically translate into perceived workplace value, as employees' responses to learning may be shaped by individual capabilities, interpersonal interactions, and organisational conditions. This qualitative conceptual paper examines how emotional intelligence, relational skills, and organisational culture may shape perceived training effectiveness among employees of corporate organisations in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study adopted a qualitative conceptual literature review and used thematic synthesis to identify and integrate relevant concepts, relationships, and explanatory patterns from scholarly literature on emotional intelligence, relational skills, organisational culture, training effectiveness, and training transfer. The synthesis indicates that emotional intelligence may support employees' readiness to engage with learning, regulate responses to challenging training situations, and respond constructively to feedback. Relational skills may facilitate communication, collaboration, feedback exchange, knowledge sharing, and the interpersonal application of learning. Organisational culture provides a contextual condition that may enable or constrain these capabilities through managerial support, communication openness, learning orientation, reinforcement, and opportunities to apply acquired knowledge and skills. The study therefore develops a multilevel conceptual framework connecting individual emotional capabilities, interpersonal relational skills, and organisational cultural conditions to employees' engagement with learning and their perceptions of training effectiveness. The framework is conceptual rather than causally validated and does not claim to represent empirically measured experiences of employees in Lagos State. The study contributes an integrated perspective for understanding perceived training effectiveness and provides a basis for future empirical investigation within Nigerian corporate organisations.

Keywords: emotional intelligence; relational skills; organisational culture; perceived training effectiveness; employee training; corporate organisations; Lagos State; Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

A common way to achieve organisational learning and development is employee training, which helps organisations to acquire knowledge, skills and capacity through employees. Even with employee training, it does not always occur with positive perceptions of its effectiveness and result in apply skills and knowledge at work. The effectiveness of training is affected by individual differences and work environment (Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Shukla et al., 2024). In this study, perceived training effectiveness refers to the employees' evaluation of the perceived usefulness, relevance, learning and applicability of training.

The individual level aspect focuses on the emotional intelligence of the trainee or learner. This refers to an employee's awareness of, grasp of, and management of and use of emotion (Mayer et al., 2004). There is literature on the connection between emotional intelligence and employee attitudes and performance (Wong & Law, 2002, Doğru, 2022), along with indications that emotional skills can be learned (Durham et al., 2023). Relational skills are a counterpart dimension and encompass communication, teamwork, feedback and sharing of expertise, and interaction with colleagues and managers. Employee involvement in learning and the utilization of knowledge and skills are pertinent to relational abilities (Buhrmester et al., 1988; Tushar & Sooraksa, 2023).

Organisational culture: Organisational culture is the environment in which the trainee experiences and perceives the application of training. A culture that promotes learning and communication, knowledge sharing, development, and application of learning and skills acquired in training might allow application of training, whilst culture that is unconducive may hinder application (Cameron & Quinn, 1999; Burke & Hutchins, 2007). In Nigerian research, Organisation Culture, knowledge sharing, access to learning opportunities, awareness of the importance of training were also suggested as factors influencing training outcomes (Suleiman et al, 2018; Okeke & Elegbede, 2024). Thus, organisational culture is regarded as a context condition of training application and perceived training effectiveness in this study.

In view of this, this qualitative study investigates the interactions between emotional intelligence, interpersonal skills and the organisational culture on perceived training effectiveness in corporate organizations in Lagos State. Informed by thematic synthesis of pertinent literature, this research synthesizes individual, interpersonal and organisational factors to develop a multilevel explanation of how and why employees might exhibit varying training reactions and why organisational factors might mediate training utility.

Background of the Study

The increasing role of training and development in organizations is related to the need for organizations to adapt to technological change, customer and market changes, and competitive pressures. Training can provide training participants with opportunities for the development of knowledge, skills, and capability, but training participants do not necessarily apply their training or perceive their training as useful. Research into the transfer of training suggests individual differences, training conditions, and the work environment can affect the extent to which learning is later applied (Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Shukla et al., 2024). Perceived training effectiveness, therefore, is important because it captures an employee's evaluation of the perceived usefulness, learning value, relevance, and application of training.

Another individual difference that could influence employees' training experiences is emotional intelligence (EI). EI refers to the individual's competence in perceiving, understanding, regulating, and using emotional information (Mayer et al., 2004). Such capabilities may be relevant to workplace learning because employees are exposed to feedback, stresses, individual differences, and collaborative tasks during training and subsequent work conditions. Empirical research has linked EI with employee attitudes and work outcomes, and more recent evidence from training interventions demonstrates that emotional abilities can also be learned (Wong & Law, 2002; Doğru, 2022; Durham et al., 2023). Thus, emotional intelligence may support employees' readiness to learn, responsiveness to feedback, and regulation of the emotional demands associated with training.

Relational skills is a dimension involves communication, cooperating, listening, providing or receiving feedback, sharing knowledge, dealing with others and resolving conflicts, among other skills that facilitate effective relationships between colleagues and superordinates. While EI may be relevant to a degree in facilitating such interpersonal skills, these concepts are not interchangeable. Relational skills in the context of work relate to the way workers interact with their work colleagues and superiors in the workplace; EI relates to the emotional skills that may underpin that interaction. The literature on interpersonal competencies and workplace employability skills highlights communication, interaction, sharing information, flexibility and similar workplace competencies as being essential in the contemporary workplace (Buhrmester et al., 1988; Tushar & Sooraksa, 2023). These skills may be required to support participation in training, the interaction with facilitators and colleagues, giving and receiving feedback, sharing knowledge and applying training.

Organisational level training experiences Training does not take place in isolation. Organisational culture is made up of the shared values, beliefs, assumptions, rules, norms, and behaviours within an organisation that influences members' perception of, and responses to, their work (Cameron & Quinn, 1999). Culture supporting learning, communication, knowledge sharing, growth and development of employees, and opportunities to utilise newly acquired knowledge or skill may support training transfer; whereas, those that are not supportive may impede transfer. There is much evidence for the influence of organisational and work environment factors to support transfer of training (Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Yaqub et al., 2021). For these reasons, organisational culture as an internal contextual factor in this study is not elaborated as both a mediator and as a moderator in the models.

Therefore, the relationship between these three constructs offers a proposed multilevel perspective of perceived training effectiveness. That is, EI as an individual level, relational skills as the relational level, and organisational culture as the organizational level. While the three levels are conceptually different, relational skills may usefully interact with one's emotional capacity and organizational culture to facilitate perceived learning, transfer, and exchange. For instance, one who has developed emotional capability would be better able to engage in the learning process and interact with others, relational skills would be better able to exchange knowledge, and organizational culture would better able to provide the environment that facilitates the transfer of the knowledge learned. The important point here is not whether training takes place but, rather, the extent to which individual learning capability, interpersonal interaction, and organizational context would interoperate to influence perceived training value.

Implication for corporate organisations Corporate organisations in Lagos State provide the setting for which this study has implications. Lagos State being a commercial and professional hub in Nigeria provides an ideal environment to investigate the issues. Workers in the banking, telecommunications, manufacturing, and other service sectors function in workplaces characterized by rapidly changing technology, competition pressures, customer expectations, and changing skill requirements (Nigerian evidence of trainees' characteristics and organisational factors has shown that training transfer is affected by these factors while research in Lagos workplaces has also seen the relevance of employees' development and organisational support in the workplace outcomes (Suleiman et al., 2018; Okeke & Elegbede, 2024). However, none of these studies have attempted to identify the interaction of EI, relational skills, and organisational culture to predict perceived training effectiveness among corporate organisations in Lagos State.

It therefore aimed to build a qualitative conceptual model of the contributions of emotional intelligence, relational competencies and organisational culture on perceived training effectiveness. Instead of a hypotheses testing design, this research uses thematic synthesis of the body of literature on the three variables, to demonstrate the interplay of the individual, the interpersonal, and the organisational. The conceptual model helps to conceptualize perceived training effectiveness as a multilevel phenomenon and suggests locus for empiric test of the model in corporate organizations in Lagos State.

Research Questions

i. How does the literature explain the relationship between emotional intelligence and perceived training effectiveness?

ii. How does the literature explain the relationship between relational skills and perceived training effectiveness?

iii. How does organisational culture function as a contextual condition for perceived training effectiveness?

iv. How does the literature explain the interaction among emotional intelligence, relational skills, and organisational culture in shaping perceived training effectiveness?

Research Objectives

General Objective

The general objective of this qualitative conceptual paper is to develop, through a thematic synthesis of existing literature, an integrated understanding of how emotional intelligence, relational skills, and organisational culture relate to perceived training effectiveness in corporate organisations in Lagos State, Nigeria.

Specific Objectives

The study specifically seeks to:

i. Examine how emotional intelligence relates to perceived training effectiveness.

ii. Examine how relational skills relate to perceived training effectiveness.

iii. Examine how organisational culture may enable or constrain perceived training effectiveness.

iv. Integrate the relationships among emotional intelligence, relational skills, and organisational culture into a multilevel conceptual understanding of perceived training effectiveness.

Conceptual Review

Emotional intelligence, relational skills, organisational culture, and perceived training effectiveness represent distinct but interconnected dimensions of employee development. Emotional intelligence refers to the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and use emotional information effectively (Mayer et al., 2004). Relational skills, by contrast, concern the interpersonal behaviours through which employees communicate, collaborate, exchange feedback, manage conflict, share knowledge, and maintain constructive workplace relationships (Buhrmester et al., 1988; Tushar & Sooraksa, 2023). Although the two constructs may reinforce one another, they should not be treated as synonymous. Emotional intelligence represents an individual emotional capability, whereas relational skills describe observable interpersonal competencies through which employees interact with others.

Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence is relevant to workplace learning because employees encounter feedback, interpersonal demands, uncertainty, and emotional responses throughout the training process. The ability to recognise and regulate emotions may support employees' engagement with learning activities, responsiveness to feedback, and adaptation to new knowledge and expectations. Research has established the conceptual and measurement foundations of emotional intelligence and has linked it with various employee outcomes (Mayer et al., 2004; Wong & Law, 2002; Doğru, 2022). A systematic review also demonstrates the breadth of approaches used to conceptualise and measure emotional intelligence, while intervention research indicates that emotional capabilities can be developed through structured training (Bru-Luna et al., 2021; Durham et al., 2023).

Within the present conceptualisation, emotional intelligence is therefore viewed as an **individual-level capability** that may shape how employees engage with training and interpret its value and applicability. This does not mean that emotional intelligence independently determines training effectiveness. Rather, employees with stronger emotional capabilities may be better positioned to manage the emotional and interpersonal demands associated with learning, feedback, and subsequent workplace application. The literature consequently provides a basis for examining emotional intelligence as one component of a broader multilevel explanation of perceived training effectiveness.

Relational Skills

Relational skills provide the interpersonal dimension of the training process. Workplace learning frequently involves communication with facilitators and colleagues, collaborative activities, discussion, feedback, peer support, and the exchange of knowledge. Competence in these areas may facilitate employees' participation in learning activities and their ability to communicate and share newly acquired knowledge in the workplace. Interpersonal competence literature identifies communication, cooperation, and relationship-management capabilities as important dimensions of effective interaction, while contemporary employability research continues to emphasise communication, collaboration, adaptability, and related interpersonal capabilities in the workplace (Buhrmester et al., 1988; Tushar & Sooraksa, 2023).

Communication skills are particularly relevant because training outcomes may depend partly on employees' capacity to ask questions, receive clarification, provide and respond to feedback, and interact constructively with others. Evidence from communication-skills research further indicates that such competencies can be developed through structured learning interventions (Reith-Hall & Montgomery, 2023). Relational skills can therefore be conceptualised as an **interpersonal mechanism** through which individual capabilities are expressed in interactions with colleagues, supervisors, and training facilitators. Their relevance to perceived training effectiveness lies not simply in interpersonal competence itself, but in how communication, collaboration, feedback, and knowledge exchange may support learning engagement and the application of acquired capabilities.

Organisational Culture

Organisational culture provides the wider context within which individual capabilities and interpersonal behaviours operate. It encompasses shared values, assumptions, norms, and expectations that influence how employees interpret organisational practices and respond to workplace activities (Cameron & Quinn, 1999). From a training perspective, culture may shape whether employees perceive learning as valued, whether knowledge sharing is encouraged, whether managers support development, and whether employees have opportunities to apply newly acquired skills.

A supportive organisational environment can therefore provide conditions that enable learning application, whereas unsupportive conditions may constrain it. Research on organisational culture demonstrates that cultural patterns can shape organisational behaviour and responses to workplace challenges (Hald et al., 2021; Mikušová et al., 2023). Similarly, research on training transfer identifies work-environment and organisational conditions as important considerations in whether acquired knowledge and skills are subsequently applied (Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Yaqub et al., 2021). Evidence concerning organisational culture and training effectiveness also suggests that cultural conditions can be relevant to how training is translated into workplace practice (Yaqoot & Mat, 2021).

In this study, organisational culture is therefore treated as a contextual condition that may enable or constrain perceived training effectiveness. It is not simultaneously presented as both a mediator and a moderator. Instead, cultural features such as managerial support, communication openness, learning orientation, knowledge sharing, and reinforcement of learned skills provide the organisational conditions within which emotional intelligence and relational skills can contribute to training engagement and application.

Perceived Training Effectiveness

Perceived training effectiveness refers to employees' assessment of the usefulness, relevance, learning value, capability development, and practical applicability of training. This conceptualisation distinguishes perceived training effectiveness from independently measured organisational performance or objectively verified behavioural outcomes. Training transfer research demonstrates that completing training does not automatically result in the application of acquired knowledge and skills, as transfer can depend on individual and organisational conditions (Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Shukla et al., 2024). Perceived training effectiveness therefore focuses specifically on how employees evaluate the value and applicability of training rather than assuming that training participation itself represents effectiveness.

This distinction is important because training effectiveness can be considered from different perspectives, including learning outcomes, behavioural transfer, and organisational results. The present study concentrates on the employee-perceived dimension: whether employees regard training as useful, relevant, valuable for developing their capabilities, and applicable to their work. This provides a conceptually consistent outcome for examining how individual, interpersonal, and organisational dimensions may converge around the training experience.

Integrated Conceptual Relationship

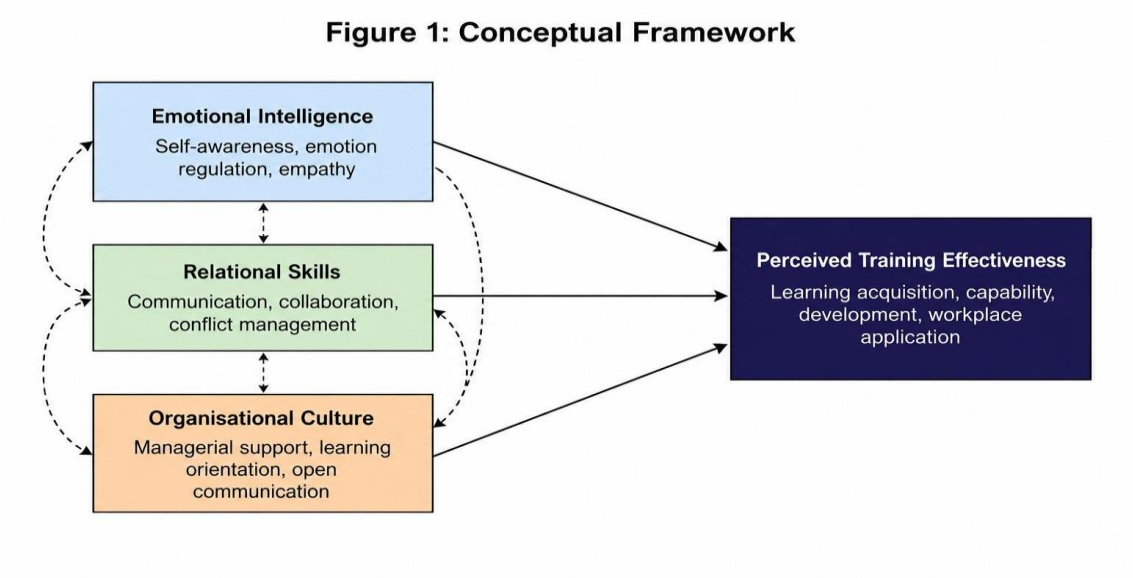
The four concepts can be understood as components of a multilevel relationship rather than as isolated determinants. Emotional intelligence operates at the individual level, providing emotional capabilities that may support engagement with learning, feedback, and adaptation. Relational skills operate at the interpersonal level, facilitating communication, collaboration, feedback, knowledge exchange, and interaction during and after training. Organisational culture operates at the organisational level, creating conditions that may enable or constrain the use of these capabilities and the application of learning. Perceived training effectiveness represents the resulting employee-level assessment of the usefulness, relevance, learning value, and applicability of training.

The conceptual relationship can therefore be expressed as follows: individual emotional capability and interpersonal competence operate within an organisational cultural context to shape employees' engagement with learning and the application of acquired knowledge and skills, which may in turn inform their perceptions

of training effectiveness. This relationship does not imply a tested causal sequence. Rather, it represents an interpretive framework derived from the literature for understanding how individual, interpersonal, and organisational dimensions may work together.

The Nigerian context provides additional relevance to this framework. Evidence from Nigeria indicates that trainee characteristics and transfer-related factors are associated with the application of training, while research involving employees in Lagos highlights the importance of employee development and organisational support in workplace outcomes (Suleiman et al., 2018; Okeke & Elegbede, 2024). However, these studies do not establish the integrated relationship among emotional intelligence, relational skills, organisational culture, and perceived training effectiveness in corporate organisations in Lagos State. The present conceptualisation consequently brings these dimensions together to provide a multilevel basis for further empirical investigation.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



LITERATURE REVIEW

Emotional Intelligence and Relational Skills in Employee Training

Training at the Employee Level Training is not just about acquiring technical competence. It can also be valued in terms of employee reactions to learning requirements, other people's influence on the person, feedback, and the transfer of knowledge and skills to the job. As a result, emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills are directly relevant to the employee-level and interpersonal theories of training. These variables are however two different constructs.

Emotional intelligence is the ability to accurately perceive, appraise, and express emotion, to access and generate feelings when they facilitate thought, to understand emotion and emotional knowledge, and to regulate emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Mayer et al., 2004). It reflects a possible person-level capability that may be relevant to learning contexts as it relates to feedback, interpersonal interactions, dealing with change and emotional labor. There is evidence suggesting that emotional intelligence is associated with employee attitudes and workplace outcomes and meta-analyses indicating that emotional intelligence has relationships with a number of employee-related outcomes (Wong & Law, 2002; Doğru, 2022). A systematic review further demonstrates the multidimensional nature of emotional intelligence and the heterogeneity of operationalizations.

The practical significance of emotional intelligence to training is likely most evident in circumstances where employees are expected to respond to feedback, experience frustration, update their knowledge with new information, and stay positive throughout the training experience. These skills may be indicative of employees' openness to training and their capacity to cope with the emotion-related challenges of the learning process. Crucially, emotional intelligence should not be thought of as a static employee trait. Data from intervention studies indicate that emotional-intelligence capabilities can be cultivated through training programmes (Durham

et al., 2023), thereby offering a conceptual basis for conceptualising the capacity as something beyond a given employee trait that may be relevant for training.

Relational skills are a sibling, yet separate factor. They include interpersonal skills (communication, co-operation, listening, giving/receiving feedback, collaboration, working well with others; Buhrmester et al., 1988). In fact, modern-day workplace skills research describes communication, working with others and of course collaborating, as well as adaptability, as key employability skills (Tushar & Sooraksa, 2023). In the context of learning, these are skills that apply because learning involves discussion, sharing, interaction with peers, feedback, collaborative problem solving and the dissemination of knowledge.

The separation of emotional intelligence from relational skills is particularly relevant for this study. Emotional intelligence relates to the ability of the individual to acquire and process emotional knowledge, while relational skills refer to the behaviours by which workers connect and work with each other. In this sense, a person's emotional intelligence can be invoked to describe the ability of the individual to control or modify emotional states when in interaction with another person, whilst relational skills refer to the actual behaviours that manage communication, cooperation, feedback and knowledge sharing. Such consideration is important in enabling the literature to incorporate the inner, emotional capabilities of individuals with the interpersonal interaction through which learning is experienced.

Empirical evidence for the development of communication and interpersonal-skills adds additional weight to the evidence on the importance of relational competence for workplace learning. Research consistently shows that communication skills can be acquired through structured training. The interpersonal competence may therefore be relevant to worker development (Reith-Hall & Montgomery, 2023). Relational competence may then be related to the interactional activities, in which an employee exchanges information and knowledge, requests feedback, and communicates the use of learned skills.

In combination, the literature indicates that individual and interpersonal capabilities might provide two distinct yet interconnected dimensions of perceived training effectiveness. Emotional intelligence might help foster employees' emotional support, emotional management, change readiness, and motivation for learning, while relational skills might foster social support, information sharing, collaboration, and feedback to drive employees' learning evaluation. These relationships should not be mistaken as being confirmed causality of the present study. Instead, these hold promise for theoretical construct and operationalization of individual and interpersonal capabilities that might influence employees' training effectiveness perceptions.

Organisational Culture, Training Transfer and Perceived Training Effectiveness

Individual and interpersonal capabilities do not exist in a vacuum. Organisational culture offers the umbrella under which employees are exposed to training and in which they judge the feasability of applying their newly learned knowledge and skills. The term organisational culture refers to organisational members' shared assumptions, expectations, values and norms, as well as the routines of behaviours adopted to make sense of their organisational roles and conduct their organisational activities (Cameron & Quinn, 1999; Hald et al., 2021).

Training transfer is the aspect of the training process which clearly forms the link between the training process and its use in the workplace. Literature on training transfer reveals that the benefits of training are not confined to the training experience because how the knowledge and skills gained are used may be influenced by individual, relationship, and job-related variables (Burke & Hutchins, 2007). Even recent findings suggest that organisational and contextual factors influence transfer of learning (Yaqub et al., 2021; Shukla et al., 2024). The concepts of transfer of training and perceived training effectiveness are therefore related, but they should not be considered as synonymous, because transfer is about using and sustaining learning, whereas perceived training effectiveness in this study refers to employees' view of usefulness, relevance, value of learning, effectiveness, and job-relevance.

Organisational culture may influence the opportunities under which the application occurs. A culture that supports learning, sharing of knowledge, communication, development and feedback may provide opportunities for the employee to practise and consolidate the new skills. A culture of weak learning support, lack of

communication and inadequate chance to apply new skills may limit the extent to which this practice can occur (Hald et al., 2021; Mikušová et al., 2023; Yaqoot & Mat, 2021). These examples demonstrate that, similar to the potential influences of training design, organisational culture can influence organisational practice and response, as well as being a relevant factor in the training environment (Hald et al., 2021; Mikušová et al., 2023; Yaqoot & Mat, 2021).

Organisational support is paramount as employees do not transfer learning in a vacuum. Managerial support, opportunities to use training, openness to change, reinforcement, and collegial support create conditions that can support or impede the transfer of learning. Training transfer research has consistently highlighted the importance of work environmental factors in supporting the transfer of training (Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Yaqub et al., 2021).

Furthermore, peer support research suggest that interpersonal, co-worker environmental factors are pertinent to the transfer of training (Salamon et al., 2023). This suggests the need for viewing organisational culture as embedded in the larger context for learning evaluation.

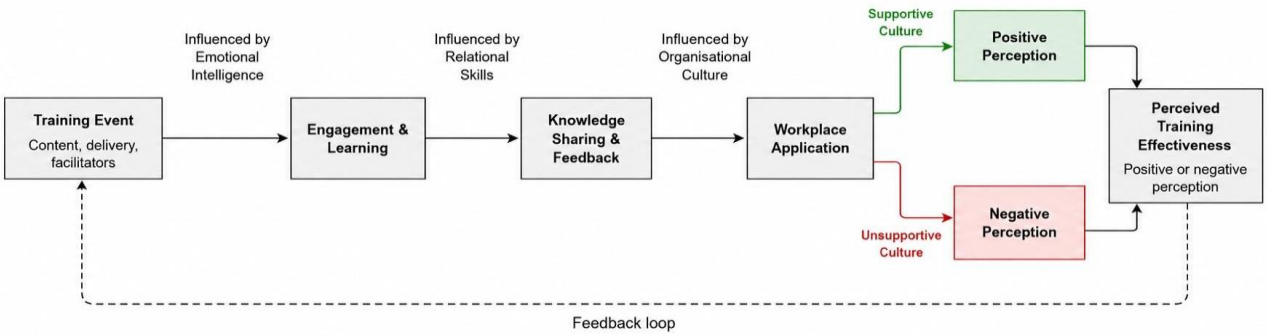
Organisational culture is thus defined for this study not as a variable that can be seen as a mediator and moderator simultaneously. Organisational culture is relevant in this study as it can affect the levels of support or inhibitions available to employees in their ability to benefit from training and to implement learning and development outcomes. In this regard, this position assists to differentiate organisational culture from emotion intelligence and relational skills - emotional intelligence in this study serves as individual capacity; relational skills refer to the interpersonal skills of the individual; and organisational culture defines the overall organisational context.

The interaction of these elements can offer a multilevel perspective of perceived training effectiveness. For example, a learner may have emotional skills that allow him or her to engage in training and interpersonal skills that enable sharing ideas and information, but the ability of a learner to carry on these skills after the training may partly be affected by the organisational context. A learning support environment may offer many opportunities for learners to practice and consolidate new skills, while a less supportive organisational environment may lead to a discrepancy between what training promotes and what the job practices can support. The synthesis therefore suggests that perceived training effectiveness may be understood through the interaction of individual, interpersonal, and organisational conditions rather than through training content alone.

This view applies to corporate organisations in Lagos State where employees work in various organisational settings and under dynamic demands. Nigerian evidence suggests that the features of trainees and factors related to transfer are relevant to the use of training while evidence of employees in Lagos shows the relevance of employee development and organisational support to workplace outcomes (Suleiman et al., 2018; Okeke & Elegbede, 2024). The evidence available does not give an integrated explanation of how emotional intelligence, interpersonal skills, and organisational culture relate to perceived training effectiveness of employees of corporate organisations in Lagos State.

The literature thus advocates the need for an integrative conceptual perspective in which the three dimensions should be investigated at various, but interrelated, levels of analysis. Emotional intelligence is an individual trait; relational skills constitute the interactional mechanisms whereby members of staff interact and share information; and organisational culture is the context of motivation, meaning and constraint that shapes the supportiveness of the learning context. It is this integration which grounds perceived training effectiveness as an employees' perception of the utility, relevance, learning value, competence enhancement and transfer utility of training. Instead of postulating causal effects, this study adopts this multilayered perspective to consolidate how the three dimensions interact at various levels to directly or indirectly influence perceived training effectiveness and to explore further empirical relationships.

Figure 2: Training Transfer Pathway



METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a qualitative conceptual literature review to examine how emotional intelligence, relational skills, and organisational culture may shape perceived training effectiveness. The approach was appropriate because the study sought to integrate concepts, relationships, and explanatory patterns from existing scholarship rather than collect and statistically analyse primary employee data. The study therefore constitutes a qualitative conceptual inquiry grounded in literature synthesis rather than an interview- or survey-based investigation of employees. The literature search focused on scholarship addressing emotional intelligence, interpersonal and relational skills, organisational culture, employee training, training transfer, and perceived training effectiveness. Priority was given to peer-reviewed academic literature, particularly studies published from 2020 onward, while earlier foundational publications were retained where they provided important conceptual foundations for the constructs examined.

Relevant literature was identified through web-based academic literature searches, including Google Scholar-discoverable scholarly sources and publisher platforms associated with established academic journals. Searches focused on combinations of terms relating to *emotional intelligence*, *relational skills*, *interpersonal skills*, *organisational culture*, *employee training*, *training effectiveness*, *training transfer*, and *workplace learning*. Sources were considered for inclusion where they were directly relevant to at least one research question, provided a clear conceptual or empirical treatment of one or more focal constructs, appeared in a scholarly or established academic outlet, and contributed evidence relevant to the relationships among individual capabilities, interpersonal processes, organisational conditions, and training-related outcomes. Foundational sources were retained where their conceptual contribution remained important. The search and selection process was an evidence-identification exercise rather than a formal systematic review; therefore, the study did not follow a PRISMA protocol or claim to provide an exhaustive census of the available literature. Its purpose was to identify sufficiently relevant and credible evidence from which an integrated conceptual account could be developed.

The selected literature was analysed through thematic synthesis. The analysis involved identifying recurring concepts, findings, and relationships across the selected studies and grouping related observations into broader themes. Thematic analysis provides a basis for identifying patterns across diverse sources and developing higher-order interpretations from multiple studies (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The synthesis was organised around the four research questions and the three analytical levels represented in the conceptual framework. At the individual level, emotional intelligence was examined in relation to emotional awareness, regulation, adaptability, feedback, and engagement with learning. At the interpersonal level, relational skills were examined through communication, collaboration, feedback, knowledge exchange, and workplace interaction. At the organisational level, organisational culture was examined through learning orientation, managerial support, communication openness, knowledge sharing, reinforcement, and opportunities to apply learning. These dimensions were then considered in relation to perceived training effectiveness, defined in this study as employees' assessment of the usefulness, relevance, learning value, capability development, and practical applicability of training.

The synthesis also distinguished perceived training effectiveness from training transfer. Training transfer literature was examined to understand the conditions under which acquired knowledge and skills may be applied in the workplace (Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Yaqub et al., 2021; Shukla et al., 2024). Transfer was not treated as synonymous with perceived training effectiveness; rather, it was considered a relevant process through which training may acquire practical value, while perceived training effectiveness remained the principal outcome of interest. The analysis further distinguished emotional intelligence from relational skills. Emotional intelligence was interpreted as an individual emotional capability, whereas relational skills were treated as interpersonal competencies expressed through communication, collaboration, feedback, and knowledge exchange. Organisational culture was interpreted as a contextual condition that may enable or constrain the expression of these capabilities and the application of learning, rather than being inconsistently presented as both a mediator and a moderator.

Attention was also given to the Nigerian and Lagos context because much of the established literature on employee development, emotional intelligence, and training transfer has emerged from other organisational and national settings. Nigerian evidence provides contextual grounding for the relevance of trainee characteristics and training-transfer processes, while research involving employees in Lagos provides evidence concerning employee development and organisational support (Suleiman et al., 2018; Okeke & Elegbede, 2024). These studies were not treated as evidence of the experiences of all employees in Lagos State but were used to contextualise the conceptual discussion and demonstrate the relevance of the proposed relationships to the Nigerian corporate environment.

The final stage involved integrating the identified themes into a multilevel conceptual framework. Conceptual framework development involves identifying relevant concepts, examining their relationships, and organising them into a coherent structure for explaining the phenomenon under investigation (Jabareen, 2009). Accordingly, the framework positions emotional intelligence at the individual level, relational skills at the interpersonal level, and organisational culture at the organisational level. These dimensions are conceptually connected to employees' engagement with learning and application of acquired knowledge and skills, culminating in perceived training effectiveness. The framework is interpretive rather than causal: the relationships represented in it are derived from the synthesised literature and do not constitute statistically tested causal effects.

The study is necessarily limited by the availability, quality, and contextual diversity of existing literature. Because no primary interviews, questionnaires, observations, or other employee-generated data were collected, the study does not claim to establish the actual experiences or perceptions of employees in corporate organisations in Lagos State. Its contribution lies instead in integrating existing evidence into a coherent conceptual explanation that can guide subsequent empirical research. The methodology is therefore best understood as an evidence-informed qualitative conceptual synthesis rather than a systematic review or primary qualitative field study. This positioning ensures that the study's claims remain consistent with the evidence examined while providing a transparent basis for understanding how emotional intelligence, relational skills, and organisational culture may jointly shape perceived training effectiveness.

CONCLUSIONS DRAWN FROM THE LITERATURE

In the reviewed literature, perceived effectiveness of training can not be defined solely by training content, method, and programme design. The evaluations made by employees about usefulness and meaningfulness of training, perceived learning outcome, acquired capabilities, and transfer of training may be influenced by the employees' individual differences, interpersonal mechanisms, and organisational characteristics. In this holistic view, emotional intelligence, relationship skills, and organisational climate are discrete, yet related components of the training environment.

That said, on an individual level, emotional intelligence offers individuals within the organisation capabilities which may assist in managing employees' attitudes and behaviours at work such as their approach to learning, the handling of feedback and their emotional regulation. The literature suggests that these capabilities are relevant for attitudes and behaviours at work, and may be of particular importance in contexts where employees are required to manage feedback, uncertainty and interpersonal demands. Nonetheless, emotional intelligence should not be used as a lone explanation of perceived training effectiveness.

At the interpersonal level, relational skills are the behavioural tools through which employees engage with colleagues through co-operation and team work; provide and receive feedback; exchange information; work through issues; seek help; and manage their interpersonal interactions. They may also facilitate the use of learned knowledge and skills. Although interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence are conceptually distinct constructs, the two may have common areas of overlap, as emotion management, emotional understanding and social skills may be necessary to perform effective interpersonal behaviour.

At the organisational level, organisational culture refers to the contextual factors under which learning occurs and is used. Organisational culture factors such as managerial support, open communication, learning orientation, knowledge sharing, reinforcement and access to being able to utilise new skills gained through training are likely to help employees transfer learning to work performance. On the other hand, lack of organisational culture factors in the workplace that are conducive to learning, or lack of opportunity to use skills learned in the workplace, may hinder the perceived effectiveness of training.

The general conceptual framework supported by the synthesis is that of a multilevel framework in which: emotional intelligence can be placed at the individual level, relational skills at the interpersonal level, and organisational culture at the organisational level. These dimensions could interplay with each other around employees' interaction with learning and application of gained knowledge and skills, which could then feed into their perceptions of training effectiveness. The interaction is conceptual rather than causal and the literature does not give a substantial foundation to argue any of these dimensions are causative of training effectiveness.

Lagos Corporate is a corporate organization, the synthesis demonstrates that training for corporate employees in Lagos State cannot be seen in isolation but it should be seen in relation to individual, interpersonal and organisationalm context. For example, investment in training of employees may have to be related to the development of their affective and interpersonal skills and the development of conditions within the organisation that would encourage the use of training. The integrated framework has been developed to understand the relationships and serve as foundations for the empirical research which will investigate the ways in which the dimensions that has been proposed work within the Nigerian corporate organisation.

Contribution to Knowledge

This is a qualitative conceptual paper that adds to the literature by integrating emotional intelligence, relational skills, and organisational culture into a multilevel conceptualisation of perceived training effectiveness. Instead of considering all of the dimensions as independent variables affecting perceived training effectiveness, this paper synthesises individual, interpersonal, and organisational levels to understand the training experience of employees. The contribution is largely conceptual in nature, thus provides an integrated conceptualisation of perceived training effectiveness outside the technical aspects of training programmes.
First, the paper advances by conceptualising emotional intelligence as a capability at the individual-level during the training process. The synthesis discusses capabilities such as emotional awareness, regulation, adaptability, being responsive to feedback, and engaging in learning as potentially influencing employee experiences of training. The literature has established the usefulness of emotional intelligence to attitudes and behaviours in the workplace and also showed how emotional intelligence components can be developed through capabilities such as training interventions (Mayer et al., 2004; Doğru, 2022; Durham et al., 2023). The current framework advances this literature conceptually by linking these capabilities to how employees may experience training and determine its usefulness and applicability, without statistically confirming a cause-effect link.

Second, the paper adds by preserving a distinction between emotional intelligence and relational skills in concept, while highlighting the possibility for their complementarity. While emotional intelligence is about the individual skill to perceive, understand, regulate and mobilise emotional information, relational skills are about the interpersonal types of behaviour (e.g. Exchanging/ sharing feedback, sharing knowledge, communicating, collaborating and conflict management) that individuals use to express their emotional intelligence during and post training. The distinction avoids categorising all interpersonal skills as part of emotional intelligence, and affirms the presence of an interpersonal dimension known as relational skills.

Third, this article offers a multilevel perspective integrating the individual, interpersonal, and organisational levels of perceived training effectiveness. Emotional intelligence resides at the individual level, the individual's relational competencies at the interpersonal level, and organisational culture at the organisational level. These levels are conceptually linked by the employee's experience of learning and applying what has been learned, which may influence perceptions of the training's effectiveness. The multilevel structure supports a more comprehensive explanation than an approach that focuses solely on either employee characteristics or organisational conditions.

Fourth, the paper helps develop the conceptualisation of organisational culture as a contextual variable that influences training effectiveness. Instead of leaving the impression of muddling between culture as a moderator and mediator of training outcomes, the conceptual framework posits that organisational culture can either foster or hamper the unfolding of individual and interpersonal competencies and the application of learning. Aspects like managerial support, communication culture, learning-orientation, knowledge-sharing, reinforcement and practice opportunities are thus a part of the organisational setting in which the training takes place. The paper offers a contextual contribution of the use of this conceptual synthesis to corporate organisations in Lagos State, Nigeria. Nigerian research has offered some support on training transfer, employee development and organisational support, but the review of literature did not offer an integrated account of emotional intelligence, relational competencies, organisational culture and perceived training effectiveness in this context (Suleiman et al., 2018; Okeke & Elegbede, 2024). The conceptualization in the paper offers a contextually relevant synthesis that could inform future empirical investigation of this phenomenon in Nigerian corporate employees. The contribution, discussed above, is a synthesis of evidence-informed and practice-informed constructs, rather than empirical evidence about the nature of the proposed relationships. The synthesis suggests certain relationships and mechanisms, which could be used in primary research for either quantitative or qualitative understanding.

Research Limitations

This research has certain limitations that should be taken into consideration before accepting its conceptual findings. To begin with, this paper is based on existing academic literature instead of data gathered firsthand from employees of corporate organisations within Lagos State. As a result, this literature was used for the purpose of indicating constructs and their linkages but has no bearing on the first-hand experiences and perceptions of training among employees of Lagos State. Thus, the relationships identified are merely conceptual findings derived from the available evidence.

Second, the synthesis draws upon more research from organisational settings outside Nigeria and Africa in general than from organisational settings within Nigeria and Africa in particular. Variations in organisational structures, workplace relationships, organisational cultures, management styles and employee development systems may influence and shape the experiences of organisational culture and training effectiveness, emotional intelligence and relational skills, and issues of organisational culture, and training effectiveness in Nigerian corporate organisations. The findings of the other contextual studies in the synthesis cannot be generalised to Lagos State without caution.

Third, there is some conceptual overlap between emotional intelligence and relational skills. Despite differentiating emotional intelligence (an intra-personal ability involving the perception, understanding, regulation, and utilization of emotional information) from relational skills (as expressed through communication, collaboration, feedback, knowledge sharing, and interaction), this differentiation is not absolute. Dimensions such as empathy, social awareness, and relationship management may add to both constructs. Such a potential grey area may pose difficulties for operationalising them empirically and warrant further clarification of measurement boundaries to account for their potential complementarity.

Fourth, the present research exclusively examines perceived training effectiveness, that is, employees' evaluations of training in terms of its perceived utility, relevance, value of learning, skill development, and work practicality. The present research does not collect data independently on actual training outcomes, such as behavioural change, productivity, performance, or organisational returns on training. As such, perceived effectiveness should not be equated with objective training outcomes. Empirical studies, in which employees'

perceptions are combined with behavioural, performance, or organisational outcomes, could provide further support to the present findings.

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