

**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY  
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES  
INSTITUTE OF PSYCHOLOGY**

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION  
SKILLS OF MICRO ENTERPRISE WORKERS LIVING WITH  
HIV/AIDS IN DEBRE BERHAN TOWN**

**BY  
METASEBIYA BOGALE**

**June 2011**

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A Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies of Addis  
Ababa University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Degree of Master of Arts in Social Psychology

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## **Abstract**

*The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of interpersonal communication skills of microenterprise workers who live with HIV/AIDS in Deber Berhan Town. To conduct the study, mixed research method was employed. The participants were selected by using simple random sampling particularly, a lottery method. The data were collected from 80 workers from the four associations namely: Fikir Lenatoch, Endersallen, Tiwild Yidan and Yesetoch Mahiber. The quantitative data were analyzed by using percentage, mean, frequency, one way ANOVA, and Pearson product moment correlation in combination with the qualitative data that was obtained through observation and interview. The findings of the study revealed that majority of the workers did not have adequate interpersonal communication skills to exchange their ideas, information, commodities and services with their customers accurately. Among the factors that affect their communication were lack of adequate education, psychological, social and economic factors were reported. Finally, it was recommended that the concerned bodies particularly, non government organizations that are found in Deber Berhan Town should create opportunities to provide short term training, to enhance workers communication skills and develop different programs such as awareness and teaching the society to change their attitude about the people who live with HIV/AIDS .*

# Chapter 1

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Back Ground of the Study

“Communication” is derived from the Latin word *communis* meaning “common” (Kenzevich, 1966). Kenzevich put that communication is an act by which a person shares the knowledge, feeling, ideas, information etc.

Good (1973) also defined communication as a process of creating mutual understanding or common meanings that brings about reaction between communicator and receiver. This mutual understanding enables members of organization to accomplish a common goal of their association.

Communication is a process in which two or more people interact verbally and nonverbally in order to understand each others feelings, ideas, and attitude (Galvin and Terrell, 2001). So, communication unifies the efforts and behavior of the group which consequently leads them toward achieving a common goal.

In a real sense, the study of human communication is the study of human behavior. A person’s ability to communicate with himself, with others, with in institution or across culture is what makes him/ her human.

Communication is a significant social experience: communication occurs in all of human relationship and through communication one can get to know others and let others to know himself/herself. Communication is a process by which people arrive at shared meaning through the interchange of messages. Communication is a broad and wide field; it includes literature of variety subjects that define the field. So communication is grouped into ten major content categories: groups, heath, instructional, intercultural, interpersonal, language and symbolic code, new communication technology, mass, public and organizational communication (Rubin, Rubin and Piele, 2005).

From these categories of communication, the researcher selected the interpersonal communication which involves the study of people and their interaction or relationship, the use of verbal and non-verbal message in developing and maintaining relationship between people. It also consists interpersonal competence skills, impression formation (persuasion techniques), and interpersonal relationship development.

In the business environment, one of the most important forms of external communication is that which occurs in providing service to customers. Booms as cited in Nelson (2008) defines the customer service encounter as the “moment of interaction between the customer and the firm.” During this moment customer service means being friendly, shaking hands warmly and initiating pleasant conversation with customer. For others customer service means processing customers’ needs effectively and quickly. Still others view customer service as listening intently to identify individual needs and providing sufficient information and or support to meet those needs regardless of how employees understand the concept of customer service the important goal is influencing their customers’ behavior. Human beings exist in a context of communication with one another. All over the world, people need to interact with one another. We found that our day-to- day interpersonal communication consists of a host of encounters with other persons. In the give and take social exchange process and selling product we gain much of our social experience and interaction skills trough interpersonal communication that occurs through out our life.

Moreover, Sereno and Bodaken (1975) pointed out the context of interpersonal communication in which people attempt to share meaning with each other and how individuals engage in face to face conversation.

Communication in the interpersonal context is relatively unstructured and informal in which we engage with another individual face to face. When speaking face to face (as opposed to listening to a speaker on TV or radio) each person in the transaction supplies the other with a rich source of cues or

stimuli not only what each says through words (verbal content) but also what each expresses through the vast range of gesture, body movement and other behavior cues (non verbal content) (Sereno and Bodaken, 1975). Similarly Miller and Steinberg, as cited in Nelson (2008) defined interpersonal communication as a process of using of message to generate meaning between two people in a situation that allows mutual opportunities for both speaking and listening.

This means interpersonal communication would includes our interaction with strangers, with sales people in retail stores, and with waiters in restaurant as well as with other close friends, our lovers and our family members.

In addition, Rubin, Rubin and Piele (2005) stated that interpersonal communication is the study of people and their interaction or relationship, the use of verbal and non-verbal message in developing and maintaining relationship between people. It also consisting interpersonal competence skills, impression formation or persuasion techniques, interpersonal relationship development.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Communication plays a major role in almost every aspect of our life. In addition, effective communication skills can improve the way we see ourselves and learn how to communicate effectively particularly, in the work place with customers and it helps us to develop a sense of self-confidence in public speech, at work, and in social settings.

A good interpersonal communication also helps us to interact with others and share our feelings, emotions, and some personal information to others freely.

In the business environment one of the most important forms of external communication is that which occurs in providing service to customer. Booms as cited in Nelson (2008) defined the customer service relating with inventively communication as “moment of interaction between the customer and the firm”.

During this moment customer service means being friendly, shaking hands warmly, and initiating pleasant conversation listening inventively to identify individual needs and provides sufficient information and/or support to meet their needs with customers by influencing their behavior.

In contrast if there is no effective interpersonal communication between the customers and sellers in the work place, it may noticeably block any relationship, interaction and pleasant conversation between sellers and customers.

Therefore, the presence of effective interpersonal communication at the work place plays important role to exchange goods, services, ideas, attitude, and feelings with customers. Whereas the absence of inter personal communication skills at the work place may block relationship, interaction and exchange of information. But relating to these two broad concepts (the absence and presence of interpersonal communication skills), no research findings that reveal the effectiveness of interpersonal communication of microenterprise workers who live with HIV/AIDS with their customers in the work place. So the researcher tried to check the effectiveness of interpersonal communication skills of the workers by raising the following leading research questions.

1. Do microenterprise workers have interpersonal communication skills to attract their customers?
2. What type of interpersonal communication skills workers usually practice?
3. Is there a significant difference in interpersonal communication skills among the different microenterprise workers?
4. What are the dominant barriers of effective interpersonal communication?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

#### ***General Objective***

The general objective of the study is to investigate whether workers have effective interpersonal communications skill in the work place to attract their customers or not.

#### ***Specific Objectives***

The specific objectives of the study are:-

1. To examine whether workers have the relevant interpersonal communication skills to attract their customers
2. To investigate what type of interpersonal communication skills workers usually practice
3. To check whether there is significance differences in communication skills among the different micro enterprise workers.
4. To find out the dominant barriers to effective interpersonal communication

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This study gives the following information.

- Provides knowledge or ideas about interpersonal communication skills for the workers how to attract their customers during communication.
- It will provide insight and information for the concerned bodies like for government and non-government body for intervention to the problems.
- It will give some hints for further study on interpersonal communication skills.

## **1.5 Delimitation of the Study**

The study is delimited in terms of a real sample and concerning the micro enterprise workers who live with HIV/AIDS in Debre Berhan Town on their interpersonal communication skills in the work place in selling their products.

## **1.6 Limitation of the study**

The framework of this study included only a sample of microenterprise workers who live with HIV/AIDS in Debre Berhan Town, the findings noted here are not generalizable to all HIV/AIDS victims in other geographic areas. The other challenge during data gathering was the fear of workers in which they expected that as if the researcher comes from the project that support them and evaluated their action.

## **1.7 Operational definition of terms**

**Microenterprise:** (small business enterprise )It has no definite definition but it can be looked at as a non-farm activity engaged in a market oriented production and, is controlled by the owner and operated by small labor force with low capital investment depending on the nature of the business.

**Interpersonal communication:** It is a process of using message to generate meaning between at least two people in a situation that allows mutual opportunity.

## **1.8. Organization of the study**

This study was organized in six chapters the first chapter deals with introduction, background, statement, purpose, significance, delimitation and limitation of the study. The second chapter contained review of related literature. Methodology of the study was dealt in chapter three, chapter four deals with analysis and data presentation and data chapter five reveals discussion of the result. Finally summary, conclusion, and recommendation were given in chapter six.

## **Chapter 2**

### **2. Review of related literature**

Under this chapter, basic concepts and the overall nature of interpersonal communication in the work place will be discussed.

#### **2.1 Meaning of interpersonal communication**

Interpersonal communication is a transactional process of exchanging messages and negotiating meaning to convey information to establish and maintain relationship (Wilson, 1992).

This definition makes clear that our focus is not only on the exchange of message but also their joint interpretation and negotiation. Interpersonal communication usually, but not always occurs face- to face. This face to face communication helps individuals to share or transfer ideas, feelings, attitude in the work place.

Further, Nelson (2008) defined that interpersonal communication is an act by which a person shares knowledge, feeling, ideas, information, goods in a way that each person gains a common understanding of the meaning and use of the message.

#### **2.2 Major theories of interpersonal communication**

A theory of interpersonal communication would be one whose primary aim is explaining the process of interpersonal communication. All of the theories we will consider have as their primary aim an understanding of psychological, social or mental process. Theories allow us to understand and explain certain forms of communication behaviors and explain how relationships are initiated and developed, how relationship are maintained over time and to explain why and what to do when people behave in ways that are not expected.

### **The social psychological theory**

For the social psychological theory of communication in the analyses of human codes and networks, Smith (2007) describes that social psychologists observe people interacting in groups. This interaction is communication. It involves some kind of behavior such as speech or gesture in to which any members of the group can encode a message that any other member of the group can then decode. Social interaction also involves some kinds of rules as to who in the group encodes the message and who decodes them. This is the basis for social organization and communication networks. Some social psychologists have given greater emphasize to the social aspects of communication while others have emphasized the psychological aspects of communication. But, for this study, the researcher will give more emphasis to the social aspects of communications because the study deals more about the interpersonal communication between sellers and buyers in the social setting or work place environment.

### **An interpersonal exchange theory**

The interpersonal exchange theory shows how we make decision about sharing ourselves in an interpersonal communication encounter (Wilson, 1992). Wilson, further elaborated that interpersonal exchange theory is fundamental to exchange interpersonal relationship, feeling, emotion with others

Furthermore, Franzoi (2000) revealed that human beings are social creatures; in which without social interaction or the support of other people, it would be difficult to survive independently. Because people need people in every human activity as we simply observed in our social world every one interacts with others in order to survive. On the other hand, this theory explains how we feel relationship and communication with other persons depending on our perception of balance between what we put in to relationship and what we get out of it (Baron and Byrne, 1997).

## **Social comparison theory**

The fundamental assumption underlying social comparison theory is that all of us are uncertain of our opinion and abilities. We care deeply about whether our opinions are considered valid by others and whether we actually have the capacities or abilities we like to think we have at the work place to communicate with our customers.

Further, Sereno and Bodaken (1975) derived an implication from social communication theory to apply to interpersonal communication. Social communication theory attempts to account for why we communicate with one another. We communicate in order to verify our perception of the world and our assumption about ourselves. Thus we seek out others to reduce uncertainty, to confirm our opinion, and to establish our identities.

## **2.3 Process of interpersonal communication**

### **The message**

The message is the outcome of the encoding process which is sent through a channel, either verbally or non-verbally (Pearce, 1989). Pearce also stated that the message is the expressed information that the sender hopes will convey the intended meaning to the receivers. Message is both verbal and non-verbal form of ideas, thought or feeling that one person (the source) wishes to communicate to another person or group of people (the receivers).

In line with the above idea, Wilson (1992) elaborated that message is the content of interaction, which includes words and phrases that are used to communicate our ideas as well as our facial expression, body movement, gesture, touch, tone of voice and other non-verbal codes in selling and buying process in the work place.

## **The channel**

The channel is the carrier of the message. Different means like face to face communication, telephone conversation, group meeting, and written report are used to carry the message (Pearce, 1989).

Pearce (1989) also stated that interpersonal communication includes verbal language, paralanguage and non-verbal communication. In which verbal communication is the semantic content (meaning) of the words we speak or write, paralanguage refers to the intonation, pitch and rhythm of speech and non-verbal communication such as eye contact, facial expression, body movement and visual symbols like pictures, diagrams and graphs.

## **Feedback**

According to Wilson (1992) feedback is the receiver's verbal and non-verbal responses to source message. We respond to another person's message by providing feedback so that the source knows that the message was received as intended. So this feedback helps the sellers to improve their skills and communication in selling their products.

## **2.4 Components of interpersonal communication skills**

### **2.4.1. Interpersonal relationship**

In the interpersonal relationship, our perception influence communication in our relationship from start to finish. Interpersonal relationship shapes the attraction we feel for others, the trait we assign to them, our expectation of them, and the way we understand what they do and say. Interpersonal relationship occurs when two people engage in ongoing interaction, relationship and exchanging nurturing as well as functional messages (Galvin and Terrell, 2001).

According to Galvin and Terrell (2001), most interpersonal relationship in the work place are characterized by functional message that deals with managing

day-to-day necessities such as preparing work schedule and ask questions about markets and it is also characterizes by nurturing message that indicates supportiveness and that the relationship is valued. Comments such as “I am glad we’re friends,” “are you feeling ok to day?” are typical nurturing messages that indicates the relationship is valued.

Wilson (1992) also stated that a good interpersonal relationship consists of terms like sensitivity, self-disclosure, verbal and non verbal communication and trust that are central to the process of developing relationship.

**Sensitivity:** It is a person’s skill and ability to take in information that another person provides and to interpret that information with empathy. This enhances positive relationship with friends or customers.

**Self- disclosure:** It is the process of revealing information about oneself, including thoughts, desire, needs and goals that would not normally be known by the other persons. This implies that the more our partners understand about how we see ourselves, the better their prediction will become and the more relationship will grow.

**Trust:** In the interpersonal relationship, trust is a confidence in other person’s behavior. This means when we trust that the other person will receive the information we share in a relatively accepting, confirming, and positive way. The concept of interpersonal relationship is often concerned with how our self-disclosure will be received (Wilson, 1992).

Here we are relying on the other person to be accepting, confirming and positive as we share a part of who we are. This implies that when a person is open, honest, and discreet and behaves consistently, he/she develops a good interpersonal relationship and confidence and this enhances exchange of information, materials and ideas openly in the work place.

While the absence of openness, honest, trust and sensitivity in the interpersonal relationship in the work place, reduces the effectiveness of communication and the free flow of information.

### **Stages of relationship**

Interpersonal relationship may vary from superficial, involving many functional messages, to very personal, involving many more nurturing messages. But most work place messages fall on the first and second stages of relationship (Galvin and Terrell, 2001).

#### **First meeting:**

On the first meeting, we usually discuss non controversial topics and we may spend time talking about the occasion, a current events, sports or films. Here we may share general information about ourselves. Such as, where we are from, and what we like or dislike, our hobbies and interest (Sereno and Bodaken, 1975). The first stage illustrates the OAR process: Observe, Ask and Reveal. If we observe, ask questions and reveal some information about ourselves, we stand the best chance of making a connection or relationship with other persons or our customers.

First meeting is important in the work place because people form first impression based on first meeting with another person. In line with the above idea there is a saying, “we never get a second chance to make a first impression so it is better to do our best to make our first impression in a positive way.” But, if we appear sloppy, lazy or rude in the first day of our meeting with our customers, our success, income and relationship could be negatively affected for a long time (Galvin and Terrell, 2001).

#### **Friendly relationship**

In the friendly relation stage, we are more willing to talk about opinion and feeling by opening discussion on some personal subjects and may begin sharing some superficial evaluation of each other’s behavior (Galvin and

Terrell, 2001). This friendly relationship is pleasant but not very deep and involves a greater range of verbal and non-verbal message and using some comfortable jokes, teasing or touching a person to get his/her ideas across.

**Verbal interaction:** verbal interaction or cues are the words we use, whether spoken or written (Sereno and Bodaken, 1975). In addition to the above idea, Wilson (1992) also defined the verbal communication as words that we use to represent our ideas and to talk about the events in our lives. This implies that language, our word system enables us to establish and maintain connection with others. Understanding the way language works is essential to improve our relational communication. This understanding implies knowing that events, ideas, information, goods, our thought about these, and the words we choose to describe these, relate to one another very directly. Communication and relationship is difficult when our use of language is unskilled, inefficient, or inappropriate (Wilson, 1992).

In line with the above idea, Wilson (1992) also defined language as a system of symbols governed by rules. It is our primary means of expressing ourselves to others and means of telling others who we are and how we feel about them. We use language in the work place to exchange, send, and receive goods and information.

### **Language and relationship**

The use of language is essential to our relationship because much of the work of relationship gets accomplished through language. Through language relational communication takes place and relationships grow and change (Wilson, 1992).

Wilson also states that we must carefully choose the language we use to talk in and about relationship and we use language to summarize our views of ourselves, other people, and even our relationship in ways that fit our frames of reference.

The above idea indicates that, every time we communicate about a relationship, exchange of commodities, we find ourselves faced with language to use. As we communicate our intention, feeling, demand and selling our product in the work place to friends or customers, we may feel more comfortable with a different word like “serious,” “comfortable,” or even “compatible.”

### **Non- verbal communication**

Non-verbal communication refers to sending and receiving messages without the use of words. It involves appearance, gesture, posture, eye contact, facial expression. In line with the above idea, Galvin and Terrell (2001) have estimated that between 65 and 93 percent of messages are non-verbal, especially message that convey feeling that we heavily depend on sending and receiving wordless messages in order to communicate effectively.

Nelson (2008) also defined non-verbal communication as non-verbal a code that consists of symbols that are not words, including non-word vocalization. According to Nelson, non verbal communication consists of the following elements. Bodily movement, facial expression, bodily appearance, the use of space, the use of time, touching clothing and other artifacts, which are important to facilitate effective communication.

**Appearance:** Appearance may indicate mood, occupation, culture, status or group membership (Nelson, 2008). Many companies expect employees to convey certain image, and they provide uniform to ensure this image at the work place to make communication effective.

If you are working at a selling store, retail, clothing store, milk selling, and at other market areas, you may be expected to wear certain styles or brands. Some companies also have regulations for hair, nail make up, and jewelry, which are expected to match the image created through clothing that make good communication and relationship. Nelson (2008) also stated that the absence of good appearance at the work place may have influence for

successful communication. Because people make judgments about others based on their appearance that convey certain images to customers or clients.

**Gesture:** it refers to the way we use our hands, fingers, and arms that adds to our nonverbal images and our effectiveness in conveying message. To elaborate the above idea, Nelson (2008) expressed gesture as movement of hands and arms to help sellers to communicate with their customers to make their communication successful. This indicates that most good speakers use gesture to visually underline something important in their message.

**Eye contact:** it is a visual connection between people or looking someone in the eye. Looking someone in the eye implies paying attention, taking the other person seriously, and being trustworthy that enhances communication effectiveness in the work place. If we constantly avoid eye contact with another for example looking down at the floor or staring out a window, we are at risk and being perceived as bored, shifty, or rude. This indicates that, if we do not make eye contact, our communication may fail to attain its goals (Nelson, 2008).

#### **2.4.2 Persuasive techniques in communication**

Persuasion is the skill of crafting verbal message to influence the attitude or behavior of others using ethical means. It is an ethical means of influence because it relies on verbal argument rather than force and allow others freedom to resist the influence attempt (Trenholm, as cited in Verderber et al, 2007).

Furthermore, Baron and Byrne (1997) elaborated persuasion as the way for changing people's attitude, belief, and opinion when a source deliberately uses communication. Baron and Byrne also mentioned that if we think for a moment we see that each day we are influenced with many efforts of persuasion by many individuals, organizations, news papers, magazines, advertisements, radio and TV commercial, religious preaching etc. in fact,

people use various persuasive techniques depending on various situation and context throughout their daily circumstances.

### **2.4.2.1 Types of Persuasion**

**Personal credibility:** Good and well supported reasons alone may be persuasive, but they are even more powerful when presented by a credible source. Credibility is the extent to which the target believes in the speaker's expertise, trustworthiness, and likability (Verderber et al, 2007).

#### **Characteristics of Credibility**

- **Competence:** when people seem to know what they are talking about, have good information, and are perceived as clear thinkers, we say that they are competent. This implies that as the more people perceive you as knowledgeable on a particular area or subject, the more likely they will pay attention to their views.
- **Honest:** when people seem to be dependable and honest, keep the promises they have made, and are perceived to be acting for the good of others than for self. This makes communication effective at the work place.
- **Likeability:** it refers to the combination of congeniality, attractiveness, warmth and friend-ness. This indicates that when a person is likable by his/her customers at the work place, enhances effective interpersonal communication between the seller and buyers.

**Appeal to Emotion:** Messages that give good reasons from a credible source are likely to be persuasive. But when you are trying to influence others to act, you can increase the persuasiveness of your message by appealing to people's emotion (Verderber et al, 2007). Furthermore, Verderber and colleagues states that the effectiveness of emotional appeal depends on the mood and attitude of the persons who are persuading and the language itself.

**Reciprocity** : Reciprocity was defined by Baron and Byrne (1997) as a mutual benefit that include synonyms as react with, reply with, give and take response, give back and return, etc, when social behavior is concerned. As Baron and Byrne (1997) in most social interaction, people guided and act according to reciprocity norm or principles. For instance, in the process of human interaction, people cooperate with others who cooperate; they help others who help them, they like others who like them and similarly, they disclose themselves to those who disclose with them. On the other hand, Rook (1987) pointed out that reciprocity is an important determinate of social satisfaction during social relationship. According to Rook (1987) the expectation of trust and reciprocity provide assurance that the transfer will be used to the mutual benefit of both parties (sellers and buyers) in promoting unique value creation in the relationship.

**Compliance gaining strategies:** This strategy helps the sellers to attract and influence their customers at the work place by practicing the following sub-strategies of compliance.

#### **Logical appeal**

In this strategy, Verderber and colleagues (2007) states that this strategy is focusing primary on reasoning, a person seeks, compliance by presenting reason and/or evidence. This implies that when the seller presents good reason for the goods that he/she sells at the work place, enhances the customers behavior to buy the product.

#### **Bargaining strategies**

In the bargaining strategy, sellers seek compliance by offering trade-offs. This indicates that there should be negotiation between the customers and sellers. For instance: if this material is not comfortable for you, you will turn back and the like.

#### **Direct request strategy**

In this strategy, a seller seeks compliance by asking customers to behave in a particular way without reason. This means the sellers are primary based on

credibility. In effect they are saying, “You know me you know I am trust worthy and cooperative.” These may make a good relationship between customers and sellers.

**Empathy- Based strategy:** In this strategy, a person seeks compliance by appealing to him/her customers’ love, affection, or sympathy. A seller may say “If you really believe me and respect my feeling, you will buy my product” or “you know I can’t get along without you.” and if you don’t go in for treatment, I will not be profitable.

**The door in the face technique:** it is a procedure for gaining compliance in which requesters begin with a large request and then when this is refused they will retreat to a smaller one. This technique is commonly observed in many boutiques sales persons request others to pay high costs for many items.

**Playing hard to get:** it refers to efforts to increase compliance by suggesting that an object or material is scarce and hard to obtain and convince customers by saying this item is available only in our super market and the like.

**Deadline technique:** it is a technique in which target persons are told that they have only limited time to take advantage of obtaining some items.

### **2.4.3. Communication Competence skills at the work place**

Communication serves to maintain ongoing work place relationship and keep people connected. In addition to the basic verbal and non verbal and listening skills, there are additional communication skills that help to build a positive work place climate in the market. These are called relational skills and include, sharing personal information, active listening and constructive criticism (Galvin and Terrell, 2001).

It is possible to say that interpersonal skills are interpersonal communication skills used to build or maintain a good relationship between sellers and buyers at the market.

Effective communication is also termed as communication competence. Supporting the idea, Nelson (2008) defined communication competences as the ability to effectively exchange meaning and materials through a common system of symbol, sign, or behavior. Further, Nelson (2008) explained communication competence in terms of two basic ideas: achievement of a goal and maintenance of relationship. Here communication competence is communication that achieves what we want from other person while maintain the relationship in a way that is acceptable to both parties. So success in most position depends on effective communication, which means they are capable or skilled at speaking and listening.

In the competence communication, communicators have wide range communication skills and know which ones to use in specific situation in order to reach their goals (Galvin and Terrell, 2001).

According to Galvin and Terrell (2001), competent communicators develop sets of verbal and listening skills for managing predictable situation and communication in the work place.

#### **2.4.3.1 Verbal skills**

In the verbal skills, there are four basic skills that are used in all areas of everyday life, including the work place.

***Managing personal introduction:*** It is the skill when a person makes introduction he/she will be effective if he/she remembers to speak clearly, pronounce the names carefully and include any additional interesting information about the person he/she is introducing. This will give both parties something with which help to start conversation.

Many introductions include handshakes between the people who are being introduced. This implies that in business setting both parties (seller and buyer) tend to shake hands in order to facilitate effective communication at work place

(Galvin and Terrell, 2001). If the two parties do not tend to shake hands and introduce information with each other at the beginning of conversation, it may make communication weak.

**Sharing information:** An important communication competence skill is giving and getting information. Here, exchanging information involves giving information, giving direction and asking questions to get information, or checking out what someone said (Galvin and Terrell 2001). This implies that unless we receive and send message accurately, we cannot get our point across, and we cannot truly understand our customers' ideas.

**Giving description:** in the verbal skills, giving a description is a very important and often taken for granted skills. This implies that giving description about how our service or product works and telling our customers to enhance the value they get from our product or service. So in order to achieve this goal, we have to have a personal experience to describe, illustrate unique features and benefits of our products and services (Galvin and Terrell, 2001).

**Asking questions:** the ability to ask intelligent and effective questions is an important verbal skill. It is the means of asking opinion and feeling of our customers' reaction to our products or services. If the sellers do not have asking ability of opinion and feeling of their customer reaction towards their products or services, their products or services are not exchanged as they want.

#### **2.4.3.2. Listening skills**

Listening skill is an active process that includes receiving, interpreting, evaluating and responding to a message (Galvin and Terrell, 2001).

In this case active listening refers to the ability to recognize another person's feeling and to reflect those feeling to the speaker listening is a very important

tool for selling materials or goods and how to act appropriately in a particular setting or situation.

**The importance of effective listening:** In families, friendship, and at work place, a good listening ability helps to build relationship and a sense of connection (Galvin and Terrell, 2001). In the work place, effective listening leads to success, a positive work place, and climate. This indicates that good listeners create a climate of support and can attract their customers in the workplace. Here good work place is one that allows us to raise question and offer ideas freely. According to Galvin and Terrell (2001), creativity is fostered by good listening that means when employees pay attention to each other's ideas and feedback from customers, exciting things happened and new ideas are created. In the listening skill there is critical listening which means analyzing a message containing opinion, points of view of customers and attempt to persuade and then making decision based on the analysis. After examining the message, we need to respond actively and we need to ask questions to obtain further information from others. Critical listening involves separating facts from opinion and evaluating the sources of a message. A fact is a statement that can be proved true or false. An opinion is a statement that is based on a belief or feeling of individuals. Supporting the above idea, Galvin and Terrell (2001), stated that critical listeners hear the other person ideas first; look facts, opinion, disagreement, confusion; and then figures out how to respond effectively.

## **2.5 Social interaction as an interpersonal communication**

The behavior and feeling through which people influence and react to each other in the interpersonal communication process is social interaction. (Giddene, 1992).

On the other hand, Goffman (1955), who is the prominent analyst of day to day social activities, defined social interaction as the process that takes place in circumstances through face to face social involvement and individuals present

in a single physical setting. In this point of view, human communication is a form of mutual communication which occurs when people simply meet each other in the same setting to exchange their goods, ideas, attitude and feeling.

All the social process that coming, going and happening through communication among people have great deal to do with how people think, feel and behave in a particular setting (Wallace, 1971). Similarly, Hogg and Vaughan (2005) pointed out that the social work place is in which people come and can interact through their activities, and influence over the ways in which they think, behave and act. It may be possible to say that the social environment or work place in which one can do a lot of things with other people in his/her social context.

In addition to the above idea, Clark and Robbey (1988) pointed out that people choose to interact with one another because they expect that the interaction to serve to accomplish their goals. In this sense, it is possible to say that social interaction through communication has purpose and guided by the interest of participants who are involved in selling and buying activities.

In the process of human interaction during communication, Clark and Robbey (1988) stated that various needs are fulfilled, beliefs and opinions are confirmed, and commodities are exchanged. This implies that social interaction that takes place in market setting also has its own purpose. For example as Ford (1995) pointed out that people interact to sell their basic products to do their work and gain profit through trading and to get information they must interact with others. So that the social interaction that occurs during commodity exchange, involves the use of language skills and interpersonal contact which greatly influence the social behavior in general and how customer-sellers behave, feel and act in a particular way.

## **2.6 Education and communication**

The effectiveness of interpersonal communication can be improved by education and training in which education provides the most crucial point of interface between customers and service providers in their environment (Carnegie, 2000). Effective communication often allow people to use and shape the information through training and education

Therefore, education makes people to have the skills or abilities to use their cognitive skills properly. Education, particularly, concentrated on the psychological life skills such as decision making, problem solving, critical thinking and creative thinking, communication skills, interpersonal relationship skills, empathy, self awareness, and coping with stress and emotions are essentials to have good communication (Carnegie, 2000).

Furthermore, Carnegie (2000) states that to have good skills in interpersonal communication, it requires education and training particularly to acquire new skills about preparation of service, politeness, to take others feedback positively, to have good attitude and perception towards their job.

## **2.7. Barriers of effective interpersonal communication**

When a person has troubled receiving the message that is being sent, it is often because of interference, or noise. Interference refers to something that blocks a listener's ability to receive a message. Galvin and Terrell (2001), further elaborated communication barriers as external and internal destructions. The external destructions such as loud music, a big screen TV, or car traffic may interfere with receiving the oral message and the internal destructions consists personal Worries, day dreaming, sadness, frustration, Fear, self cognitive thinking and physical illness causes interferences. Even though, both internal and external destructors are factors for communication block, this study more focuses on the internal barriers of communication.

Interpersonal communication is the communication that takes place between people. The need for thought full, effective communication in the work place is paramount. Effective interpersonal communication skills are essential to social interaction, and the building and maintenance of all relationship. But the absence of effective communication skills in the work place can cause irrevocable damage to relationship; affecting productivity, satisfaction, performance, morale, trust, respect, self-confidence (Karimi, 2010).

Any factor that impedes the exchange of information between a sender and a receiver is a barrier to effective communication (Stones and Freeman, as cited in Nelson, 2008). Here barriers are elements that interfere with the receivers understanding of the intended meaning of the senders' message. Because of these barriers, some part of the message is lost on the way creating and some sort of misunderstanding between the sender and receiver.

Incorrect word usage, poor delivery of message, poor listening skills, lack of confidence make communication difficult for the receiver to understand the message of the sender.

There are several communication barriers attributable to factors other than the sender and the receiver. For instance, according to Karimi (2010) poor communication often results from information over load and communication is reduced when senders may not have sufficient times to provide adequate response to the receivers. The personal traits of the senders also influence effective interpersonal relationship in the work place. For example, a person with low degree of trust, first meeting skills and openness, may reduce communication effectiveness. Furthermore, Haihambo (2004) described that effective communication skills can be blocked by psychological and socio economic factors as well.

## **The psychological factor**

According to Hyde and Delamater (1997) many patients experience the typical reaction for situation like denial of the reality which is followed by anger, fear, depression, stress and anxiety which in turn can make the patients psychologically sick and they are unlikely to be able to hold a job and financial worries become an additional strain.

According to Hyde and Delamater (1997) the psychological or internal challenges of persons with HIV/AIDS faces depression anxiety stress, fear low self esteem which affects the thought, feeling, emotion, relationship and well being of the infected persons.

According to Haihambo (2004), anxiety is a common symptoms in HIV/AIDS infected patients in which they experience fear, worry, insomnia, impaired concentration and memory, diminished appetite, rumination, compulsive rituals which interfere with patients daily function like unable to work, attend to medical care, and communicate with other and interfere with personal relationship of patients.

Furthermore, Cambel, as cited in Verderber and colleagues (2007) demonstrates that we communicate our self- concept, self- image and self- esteem when we interact with others. The self is socially constructed through communication; that is yourself is the result of how others speak to you and how you see yourself. But, in contrast when we feel poor about ourselves, have unfavorable and low self- concept that when we have low perception of ourselves, we have been said to have low self- esteem which leads us to have low confidence to have public conversation and talking accurately in the interpersonal communication process.

Hyde and Delamater (1997) also described the following psychological symptoms of depression for HIV/AIDS patients:

### **Behavioral theories of depression**

According to this theory, depression often arises as a reaction to a stress full negative events such as a breakup of relationship, lose of energy, sleep disturbance, a job lose or serious medical illness. The theory also suggests that life with stress such as fear of death leads to depression because it creates a reduction in positive reinforce in person's life (Nolen-Hoeksemas, 2004). According to Nolen- Hoeksema, a person begins to withdraw which only results in a further reduction in reinforces, which leads more withdrawal. This withdrawal makes the person to have difficulty in his/ her relationship and interactive with others.

### **Cognitive theory of depression**

According to this theory, people, who are depressed in their life, have negative views of themselves, of others and of the future. They also have cognitive disturbance, poor concentration and attention, sense of worthlessness, poor self- esteem and hopeless. This negative expectation towards the negative events lead them to experience long term learned hopelessness plus self- esteem loss in many area of their lives.

### **Interpersonal theories of depression**

This theory is concerned with people's close relationship and their roles in those relationships. Disturbance in those roles of the relationship are thought to be the main source of depression. The theory also supported by several studies like in studies of Nolen- Hoeksemas (2004) which found that those with stress and insecure attachment style had more dysfunctional negative beliefs and subsequently developed lower self-esteem and more stress symptoms which significantly influence communication and relationship.

### **Economic factor**

The other problem related to HIV/AIDS patients is economic constraints. According to Haihambo (2004) patients may suffer from economic constraints as their health become sick, physically weak, they can't work and lose their

job. So they are often so hungry become malnourished and become unable to concentrate. This physical weakness and health problems may prevent the persons from thinking clearly, listening carefully, or speaking well, interacting and communicating with others (UKeje, 1992).

Furthermore, Haihambo (2004) states that many HIV/AIDS patients are not granted to gain access of working in the community, this made them to be frustrated and demoralized which leads them to be economically poor in which they are more vulnerable to economic and social hardship such as malnutrition, poverty, homelessness and in abled to have access to education and health care.

### **Social factors**

AIDS is a socially stigmatized disease that makes the patient become socially isolated and discriminated in which society has traditionally considered immoral, so this infected persons can be caused to see themselves as undesirable by others who view them as contagious (Haihambo, 2004). According to Haihambo, this in itself is an emotional situation that can infect people to withdraw, not disclose their feeling, needs ideas and affection and socially become isolated. Inevitably this may lead to an emotional breakdown because these feelings continue to be suppressed, so the most destructive stressor is that of feeling isolated. This isolation can have many causes including the loss of support by lovers, family, society, friends, communication and interaction with others (Haihambo, 2004).

Ukeje (1992) also states that when people experience feeling of isolation, their interaction and communication with others become low and this reduces individuals' sense of belongingness and confidence to specify them to the intended group.

People with HIV/AIDS are also stigmatized to several social consequences related to their right, health care service, and social isolation and this social isolation and discrimination can lead behavioral disturbances, fatalism, self-

stigmatization and lead patients to be vulnerable to becoming infected and less able to cope with the burdens of HIV/AIDS (Haihambo, 2004). These all social problems continuously affect the patient not to be engaged in the communal life and activities in the community.

Furthermore, Levy as cited in Nelson (2008) also states that people who usually stigmatized and discriminated from the main stream of the society, experienced low self- concept that inhibit them to have conversation, relationship and discussion in the business and social settings.

**Poor listening ability:-** an impatient listener who listens only for words, may miss the feeling, emotion and a lot of vital communication with his/her customers or clients in the work place (UKeje, 1992).

## **Chapter 3**

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Design of the study**

With the goal of getting general pictures of the effectiveness of interpersonal communication skills of micro enterprise workers, who live with HIV/AIDS “Mixed research design” was employed. This design assumes that using both quantitative and qualitative approach in combination provides better understanding of research problems than either approach alone.

Among the major types of mixed method design, “concurrent Triangulation” was employed. This design help to collect data and analyses two types of data (quantitative and qualitative) in which one type of data used to compare results, or validate with other type of data.

#### **3.2 Source of data**

To collect information, only primary source was used primary sources were workers and coordinators of the association.

#### **3.3 Target population**

The target population of the study was micro enterprise workers who live with HIV/AIDS in Deber Berhan Town.

#### **3.4 Sample of the study**

From the total of 120 members of the four associations namely: Fikir Lenatoch, Endersalen, Tiwliid Yidan and Yesetoch Mahiber, in which each association has 30 members and from each association 20 members were selected and totally 80 members were selected by simple random sampling. From this 80 total sample size of the study, 60 were females and 20 were males.

The sampling technique the researcher used to conduct this study were probability and non-probability sampling. The non-probability sampling

particularly, purposive sampling was used for interview to obtain detail information about the barriers of effective interpersonal communication. Probability sampling, particularly, simple random sampling was used to distribute questionnaire to obtain information about interaction, persuasion, and competence skills of the workers.

### **3.5 Data gathering instruments**

In order to triangulate the information for the study, the researcher used the following data gathering instruments.

#### **Questionnaire**

The questionnaire which consists of four sections with close ended questions was used. The first section of the questionnaire was to collect background information. The second section deals with interpersonal relationship and communication, the third section related with the persuasion techniques and the last section designed to get information about interpersonal competence skills.

The questionnaire first prepared in English then it was translated to Amharic to minimize and overcome language difficulty and promote better understanding of the items of the questionnaire. 80 questionnaires were distributed and filled.

#### **Interview guide**

Semi and open ended interview guides were prepared by the researcher and 12 individuals were interviewed to acquire qualitative data about barriers of interpersonal communication that hinder them to communicate freely with their customers.

#### **Observation**

Observation was also used to collect information. Each market observation was observed three times to obtain first hand and a wider range of information in order to cross check with questionnaires on the interpersonal communication skills of the workers.

### **3.6 Procedures**

The interview and market observation were conducted with informed consent of the participants. The interview was conducted in a face-to-face way of interviewing and the respondents were informed that the information obtained will be kept confidential. The interview was conducted in a place where the participants felt comfortable.

All items in the questionnaire, interview and observation check list were developed by the researcher on the basis of the literature reviewed.

The questionnaire items were commented by the advisor. Based on the advisor's comment and suggestion, the questionnaires were revised accordingly and then pilot tested on 20 members of non- sample respondents in Debre Berhan. Then reliability of the items was computed using cronbach alpha. Thus, the reliability of scaled item was found to be 0.75. The questionnaires were distributed with physical presence of the researcher and one assistant was involved in distributing and collecting the questionnaire.

The qualitative data obtained from the interview and observation was coded. While data were coded, I used simple format of data coding with a combination of numbers and characters for instance, data code I. WA.A1, 02-01-2011 indicated that the data were drawn from the interview (I) in which worker "A" (A) being interviewed in association 1(A1) on January 02,2011. Similarly, market observation was coded as MO. A2, 10.01.2011 and reads as market observation in association 2 on January 10, 2011. The same ways of coding were also used for all workers and coordinators of the associations.

### **3.7 Methods of data analysis**

Both qualitative and quantitative method of data analysis and interpretation were employed. Qualitative data gathered through interview and observation was qualitatively analyzed. Whenever necessary, direct quotes from interviewees were put to show their originality.

Data obtained by close ended questions were analyzed by using descriptive statistics, particularly, frequency percentages, mean and grand mean in combination with qualitative data collected through interview and observation.

One way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was also used to know whether there were significant mean differences in interpersonal communication among the associations. Pearson product moment correlation was also used to see the relationship between education and communication skills.

## Chapter 4

### 4. Data analysis and presentation

This part of the study deals with analysis of the data that were collected through questionnaire, interview and observation. An attempt was made to answer the basic research questions raised.

#### 4.1. Demographic information of participants

**Table1. Characteristics of Participants**

Participants	Demographic information	No	%
Microenterprise workers	1. Educational status		
	➤ Primary school	52	65
	➤ Secondary school	28	35
	2. Sex		
	➤ Female	60	75
	➤ Male	20	25

As can be seen from table 1, 52 (65%) and 28 (35%) of the workers are at primary and secondary school level respectively. This indicates that most of the workers are at the primary school level.

The table also shows that 60 (75%) and 20 (25%) of the workers were females and males respectively. This might indicate that females were economically dependent and they did not have other choice compared with males in that specific area of the study.

#### 4.2 Workers interpersonal relationship skills with their customers in the work place

Interpersonal relationship is an association between two people who are interdependent, who use some consistent patterns of interaction, and who have

interacted for an extended period of time. The interdependent nature of interpersonal relationship suggest that people mutually satisfy their need; need for inclusion, or becoming involved with others, the need for affection or holding fond or tender feeling toward another person and the need for control, or the ability to influence others or environment.

But, in contrast to this, if workers do not have good interpersonal relationship with their customers in the work place will reduce the effectiveness of interpersonal communication skills. The table below shows the workers' interpersonal relationship with their customers.

As indicated in the above table, twenty statements were presented to workers with the intention of assessing their interpersonal relationship with their customers.

In responding to items 1 and 2 (appendix 1), 64 (80%) and 13(16%) of the workers rated “disagree” and “agree” respectively concerning to the feedback statement. The mean score was 2.35. This means majority of the workers did not have the skills of asking feedback from their customers.

In the same appendix, items 3 and 4 which were stated as workers' confidence and trust with their customers, 55 (65.8%) and 58 (72.5%) of the workers rated “disagree” and 19 (23.8%), and 14 (17.5%) of workers rated agree respectively. This implies that most of the workers have low confidence and trust with their customers.

Furthermore, in the market observation (MO, A2,10-01-2011) most workers were observed with low self-confidence in a face-to-face communication with their customers. Even they were not approaching customers to ask what they want and simply they asked them just in a distance conversation. In the informal discussion with the worker after the observation, she was asked why she was not communicating confidently with customers. She replied that:

*Confidence is the feeling you have when you believe in yourself and believe that you have control over specific situation and*

*relationship. But lack of confidence leads to social phobia which involve fear of being evaluated and observed in our face by others because there is a belief that HIV patients are known by watching in their face, that is why we are afraid of looking at our customers in their face and we were ashamed (I.WA.A1,02-01-2011).*

In rating items 5 and 6 (appendix 1), which were intended to assess self-disclosure and personal skills of workers, 58 (72.5%) and 60 (75%) of the workers rated “disagree” while 10 (12.5%) and 12 (15%) of the workers rated “agree” for item 5 and 6 respectively. The mean score of the result (2.4) indicates that most of the workers have low personal skills and do not self-disclose with their customers.

In item 7 (appendix 1) workers were requested to reflect their consistency behavior. In response to this, 27 (33.8%) and 40 (50%) of the workers rated “disagree” and “agree” respectively. The average point is 2.7 which imply that almost half of the workers did not show consistent behavior.

In rating item 8 (appendix 1) which was intended to assess the workers’ managing abilities of activities, 49 (61.3%) and 21(26.3%) of the workers rated “disagree” and “agree” respectively, the average score was 2.6 this indicates that large proportion of workers did not have the relational skills in the communication process.

Item 10 (appendix 1), assesses the friendly relationship of workers with their customers. In response to this, 57 (71.3%) and 13 (16.3%) of the workers rated “disagree” and “agree” respectively, the mean score was 2.5 and above half of the workers gave their response disagree. This indicates that, they did not have friendly relationship skills to communicate with their customers.

Workers were also asked to express their ability to share information with their customers during communication by item 11 (appendix 1). Accordingly, 56 (70%) and 15 (18.8%) of the workers responded “disagree” and “agree”

respectively. This indicates that majority of the workers did low ability of sharing information.

In rating items 12 and 13 (appendix 1), that indicate about the workers first meeting skills and use of jokes in the communication process, 55 (68.8%) and 60 (75%) of the workers for both items rated “disagree” respectively, while 13 (16.3%) and 14 (17.5%) for the same items workers rated “agree.” The mean scores were 2.35 and 2.4 for both items respectively. This indicates that, majority of the workers did not use conformable jokes and first meeting skills to enhance their friendly relationship with their customers.

In line to the above result, one of the interviewed worker said the following:

*“To speak truly, whenever I communicate with my customers in the work place, me and my partners did not practice first meeting skill and jokes in the communication process to establish good relationship because we did not have the concept of these skills. So I directly proceed to ask what my customers want without trying to impress customers by using this first meeting skill and comfortable jokes. (I.WA,A2, 06.01.2011).*

The market observation also supported what the worker said, in those some observations attempts were used to observe the impression and joking skills of the workers, and majority of them seemed to be not motivated to practice these skills in the communication process to enhance their relationship with their customers. Even they feel discomfort and some of them were not happy to communicate freely (MO.A1.11.01.2011).

In item 14 (appendix 1), workers were requested to rate their openness to express their ideas with their customers, most of them or 54 (67.5%), replied “disagree” while 8 (10%) of them replied “strongly disagree” and 13 (16.3%) of them rated “agree.” The result reveals large proportions of the workers were not open to express their ideas.

Supporting the above result, during the interview, one of the workers said the following:

*I do not openly express my ideas to my customers that I am living with HIV/AIDS because the negative attitude of the society towards HIV/AIDS has not been changed. So I am afraid to disclose this secrete. If I do this, my customers may reject me and my goal will not be attained. Concerning this, I can tell you my personal experience I faced due to my openness. For example, I have thrown away tomato and other related products many times. Customers were not willing to buy these products because they assumed as if I put my blood in the products through syringe (I.WA.A3.19-01-2011).*

In rating items 15,17,18 and 19, which were related items intended to assess workers' use of sign language in the communication process, 41 (51.3%), 50 (62.5%), 60 (75%) and 50 (62.5%), of the workers responded "disagree" to the above items respectively and 23 (26.8%), 12 (15.1%), 13 (16.3%) and 11 (13.8%) of the workers for the same items responded "agree", this shows that most of them did not practice sign language in the interpersonal communication.

In addition, market observation supported the finding that revealed in the above analysis, as observation result reveals that most of the workers did not consider the importance of intimated distance, did not demonstrate appropriate bodily responsiveness like shaking heads up and down, angle themselves away from their customer that means, workers were not directly facing with their customers, they sit by crossing their arms and hands and they did not use positive and responsive facial expression such as smiling and head movement (MO.A3,21.01.2011).

In rating item 16(appendix 1), which was intended to assess the feeling of workers in using different words like "serious, and "sure", 49 (61.3%) and 21 (26.3%) of the workers rated "disagree" and "agree" respectively this indicates that more than half of the workers did not use words like serious and sure in the communication process in the work place.

Item 20 (appendix 1), assessed the smooth exchange of workers conversation in the work place. In response to this, 55 (68%) and 15 (18.3%) of the workers rated “agree” and “disagree” respectively. The mean score was 3.5. This indicates that works exchange of conversation was smooth and positive with their customers.

To sum up, the rating of most workers for most items showed low results with grand mean 2.5. Both observation and interview results also reflected this result.

Generally, from the rating of 20 items, interview and observation it was possible to deduce that most of the workers did not practice the interpersonal relationship skills effectively in the interpersonal communication process with their customers in the work place.

### **4.3 Persuasion techniques workers used in the work place**

Persuasion is the process of influencing or changing attitude, belief and opinion or behavior. In the face-to-face communication in the work place which involves the ability to convince audience, to sell products and exchange ideas with the audience, persuasion plays a great role to have good communication and interaction with others (Nelson, 2008).

**Table 2. Types of Persuasion Techniques Workers used During Communication in the Work Place**

Techniques	No	Mean	Standard deviation
Reciprocity	80	3.5	1.0
Logical appeal	80	3.8	0.8
Bargaining	80	3.0	0.6
Honesty	80	3.0	0.8
Credibility	80	3.3	1.0
Direct request technique	80	3.3	1.1
Empathy	80	3.0	1.0
Face in the door technique	80	2.8	0.8
Deadline technique	80	2.3	0.8
Playing hard to get	80	2.3	0.9
Grand mean	80	3.1	0.9

As shown in Table 3 above, workers employed various persuasion techniques to convince audience and to build harmonious social interaction.

Workers used different persuasion techniques for gaining their customers compliance such as reciprocity as a mutual benefit, logical appeal that focusing primary on reasoning, bargains in which workers negotiate with their customers, honesty when workers keep their promise they have made and are perceived to be acting for the good of others, credibility, the likability of workers by their customers, direct request technique in which sellers seek compliance by asking their customers to behave in a particular way without reason, face in the door technique in which sellers call reasonably high price at first and then tell the real price. Sellers also employed techniques such as dead line and hard to get techniques by suggesting that items offered for sale were scarce and hard to obtain in other places and even in the future.

As shown in Table 3 workers usually use logical appeal technique ( $M=3.78$ ,  $SD= 0.826$ ) to sell their products in the work place than other techniques.

#### **4.4 Communication competence skills of workers in the work place**

Work place competent communication intended to create perception of psychological closeness with others in which workers enacting by immediacy by smiling, reducing physical distance and calling people by their first name in order to develop positive relationship with others. However, if there is low competence skills like incapability of individuals to exchange ideas and goods, lack of personal qualification and confidence to speak freely with others lead to reduce the effectiveness of communication (Nelson, 2008).

In rating item 1 (appendix 1) which was intended to assess the hand shaking skills of workers, 52 (65%) and 17 (21%) of workers responded “disagree” and “agree” respectively. The mean score was 2.6 and above half of the workers gave their response “disagree”. This indicates workers had low hand shaking skills to communicate with their customers in the work place.

To confirm the above result, market observation was conducted to see the hand shaking skills of workers and most of them were observed with low hand shaking skills practice in their communication and workers simply received the message from their customers and delivered what they were ordered without any further conversation (MO.A4,12-02-2011).

Item 2 (appendix 1) assessed the attention of sellers to call their customers by their names. In response to this, 44 (55.0%) and 23 (28.8%) of workers rated “disagree” and “agree” respectively. The mean score was 2.6. This indicates that majority of workers did not call their customers in their name during communication. Even, workers were not attempting to introduce themselves to their customers. To assure the above result, market observation was conducted during their communication. The observation result indicates that workers were passive communicators even they were not attempting to start conversation and not introducing themselves to their customers properly (MO.A1, 08-02-2011).

Workers were also asked to express their ability of asking question to their customers in items 3, 4 and 6, which are related items of “asking questions.” Accordingly, 66 (82.5), 52 (65%), 66 (81%) and 10 (12.5%), 20 (25%) and 10 (12.5) of workers responded “disagree” and “agree” respectively. The mean score of the three items was 2.25. This indicates that majority of the workers did not have ability of rising questions to their customers.

To support the above result, observation was conducted, and as the observation result revealed that majority of the workers had low ability of asking questions about the reaction of their customers towards their service/product. Even they did not ask any opinion and feeling of their customers towards their service (MO.A2,10-02-2011).

In item 5 (appendix 1) workers were asked to rate their personal experience to explain the unique feature and benefit of their product. 72 (90%) and 4 (5%) of workers responded “disagree” and “agree”. The mean score was 2.05. This indicates that most of the workers did have low personal experience and skills to explain the unique feature and benefit of their service.

The result of market observation also supported the above result, in the observation, almost all workers did not explain the function and unique features of their products and even they did not have any written lists that show the function of products in their shop. Lists like milk and milk products and its function was totally absent in the work place (MO.A3.18.02.2011).

In item 7 (appendix 1), workers were asked to show their disagreement and agreement towards taking their own friends ideas. Accordingly, 47 (58.8%) and 25 (31.5%) of the workers responded “disagree” and “agree” respectively. The mean score was 2.63; this indicates that more than half of the works did not take their won friends’ ideas positively.

In line with the above result, one of the workers interviewed was asked why they did not take their friends ideas positively with each other in the work place during communication. She reported that:

*Since there is no respect with each other and there is no sense of friendly relationship among us because the relationship is as boss and employee between team leader and workers. There was unfair distribution of profit among the workers and only few individuals are getting advantage in the association. These and other factors made workers to withdraw from their association and the number of members are decreasing from time to time in the association and those who withdrew themselves from the association are in severe problems of lack of finance and social support (I.WA.A4,16.02.2011).*

In rating item 8 (appendix 1), which was intended to check the attention of workers to get feedback from their customers in the work place during communication, 58 (72%) and 14 (17.5%) of the workers responded “disagree” and “agree” respectively. The mean score was 2.5; this implies that most of them did not give attention to take feedback from their customers.

In addition to this result, market observation confirmed the fact. In the observation, workers did not take time to look at their audience, they were not reacting to what their customers said and they did not give attention to take their customers feedback like satisfaction critiques and needs. These and other feed backs were not considered during communication in the work place (MO.A4, 20-02-2011).

In items 9 and 10 (appendix 1), which were related items intended to check the critical analysis skills of workers towards the message that contains needs and opinion of their customers. In responding to this, 54 (67%) and 16 (21%) of the workers replied “disagree” and “agree” respectively. The mean score was 2.42; this indicates that more than half of the workers did not have the critical analysis skills to fulfill the need and opinion of their customers.

Concerning the problems that hinder their communication, questions are raised for workers as following:

The first question raised to the worker was “Is there any problem that hinders your interpersonal communication with your customers?” all interviewed workers replied that there are problems.

They mentioned that the main factors were psychological, social and economic problems. Then workers were asked to identify the serious problem among the problems they have mentioned above. Accordingly, they identified psychological problems such as; anxiety, depression, low self- esteem and stress are the most serious problems that hinder their communication. They also reported that social and economic problems are also hindering them to have good communication in the work place. Finally, workers were asked to express how these problems hinder them not to have effective interpersonal communication with their customers.

### **Psychological problems of workers in their communication**

Concerning the psychological problems, the worker of the association reported were the following:

*HIV/AIDS disease by itself does not aggravate our death rather psychological influence such as stress, depression and anxiety are key problems which aggravate our death. This thought of death-waiting the day when we die is our daily activity in our life which made us to think about ourselves rather than our communication and interaction with our customers in the work place (II.WB.A1, 22-02-2011).*

According to the informant report, one of the most serious problems among the psychological influence in their communication is stress; it is the central problem in the association in which living in a daily fear of death, particularly when something happened i.e. (related disease like headache and fatal accidents). So the existence of stress in individual mind can determine and influence the communication.

Furthermore, dealing with the problem of stress, one of the workers of the association reported the following:

*I express my feeling about the main source of stress that hinder our communication and interaction with others in the work place is our powerlessness to avoid health problems i.e. there was nothing that did to treat my life very deeply, instead of really feel that I was suffering with my health i. e. I feel that my life will not last for much longer and most of my life that I have spent in the association has not been so fruitful and I do not see myself having a long life(II WB.A2,24,02-2011).*

Then she concluded that (our thinking about how much longer we live is our daily activity that made us to be further stressed in our life and worked about our lives than giving attention to our working activities).

*In addition, as the worker of the association reported, anxiety is a common problem of every members in the association and its symptoms such as worry, nervousness, fear, and tension are commonly experienced with the members that interfere with workers daily function like unable to communicate, work, listen properly during communication and interfere with personal relationship. The other problems are the inability to sleep, diminished appetite, diurnal variation in mood, loss of pleasure or interest, feeling of guilt, fatigue and attention and concentration problems. So these problems interfere with our communication not to have good relationship with our customers in the work place (II. WB, A3, 26-02-2011).*

Regarding the depression problem, one of the workers reported her ideas about depression as follows:

*Depression is not only affecting the longevity of our lives but also unable us to interact and communicate consistently with others. My thought become more negative and show chronic illness like feeling of unhappiness and hopeless in my life. So I myself was depressed and tried to hide my depression by presenting as though things were fine in my life, but my feeling*

*is unhappy and finally, I unconsciously took myself off from communication (II. WB.A4, 27-02-2011).*

Finally, she reported that “It is a common problem for our members of the association that blocks our communication and interaction in the work place.”

### **Economic problem**

Regarding to the economic problem, the coordinator of the association pointed out her belief as follows:

*The financial support that we obtain from different sectors is too low which is not sufficient to improve our health and living condition and now we are living with feeling about frightening working and poor living condition with little ability to bring improvements. This is remarkably affecting activities in the work place because we are losing our health through infection, inadequate nutrition and poor health care. HIV/AIDS causes vulnerability and poverty through sickness, loss of economic productivity, need for care and that is why we are enforced to seek financial support. The coordinator also pointed out that water, and sanitation problems in our living conditions are serious problems which do not allow us to be economically active. So, this economic problem has an influence on our interpersonal communication in the work place because we are physically and mentally incapable to communicate with others. (II.C.A2, 28-02-2011).*

In addition, concerning to the economic problem, the coordinator of the association replied the following:

*Economically we are poor and we cannot get basic needs like food, medication and shelter to keep our health properly. So we are physically weak and in addition to this the tablet that we take daily aggravates our weakness. As a result we are tired and unable to communicate effectively. The coordinator also reported thinking about economic issue is our daily activity in which we have sometime quarrel with the project coordinator because we hear there is large budget allocation and release from governmental and non-governmental organizations in order to improve our living and working condition. But we didn't get the real budget and this made us to be disturbed and then our CD4 become leveled down because*

*of disturbance and in addition we always feel headache problems in our daily life. Because of these problems, our relationship and communication is low. This problem is also the main cause for the withdrawal of many members from the association and most of them are in bed and waiting their death (II C.A1, 01.03.2011).*

## **Social problems**

The other factor that hinders to have effective communication, as the coordinator reported was stigma from the society. Elaborating this coordinator said the following:

*Social withdrawal problem of being HIV/AIDS positive is a common problem of the society. The coordinator also pointed out that people with HIV/AIDS are often subjected to stigmatization, discrimination and even hostility in the community and our right, such as the right to non-discrimination, equal protection, the right to privacy, to work, equal access to education, housing, health care, often violated. This made us to be more vulnerable to becoming infected and less able to cope with the burden of HIV/AIDS. We were highly stigmatized, discriminated, and ignored in participating in the communal activities. So this misconception of the community towards HIV/AIDS disease strongly affects our communication and relationship in the work place (II. C.A3, 02-03-2011).*

*Due to this discrimination in the community, we lost our relationship, face difficulty of involving in other income generating activities, difficulty in making friends and feel lonely and finally we experienced alienation, isolation, and demoralization in which we were pushed away to the margin of the community. We are socially marginalized and excluded from network access, i.e. sharing emotional feeling with others in the large community. This AIDS related stigma and discrimination increases our vulnerability, social isolation, deprive our basic human right worsen our infection. This is the most severe problem that hinder us to communicate and interact freely with others (III. C. A4, 03-03-2011).*

#### **4.5 Descriptive statistics to compare the means of workers interpersonal communication skills by association**

**Table 3. Result of Descriptive Statistics for Interpersonal Communication Skills among the associations' workers**

Association	N	Mean	SD
Fikir Lenatoch	20	2.6	0.3
Endersalen	20	2.7	0.4
Tiwlid Yidan	20	2.7	0.4
Yesetoch Mahiber	20	2.7	0.4
Total	80	2.7	0.4

As it is illustrated in Table 5, the descriptive statistics shows there were no significant means differences of workers interpersonal communications skills among the four associations.

#### **4.6 Grand mean of interpersonal communication skills**

**Table 4. Grand Mean Results for the Three Interpersonal Communication Skills**

Interpersonal communication skills	Grand mean
1. Relationship skills	2.5
2. Persuasion techniques	3.0
3. Competence skills	2.4

As the above table indicates, the grand means for persuasion technique is greater than the two types of interpersonal communication skills. This means, the micro enterprise workers usually practice persuasion technique relatively better than the other skills.

#### 4.7 Analysis of variance for interpersonal communication skills among the associations' workers

**Table 5. Result of ANOVA for Interpersonal Communication Skills Among the Associations Workers**

Interpersonal communication skills		Sum of squares	DF	Mean square	F	Sig
Relationship skill	Between group	0.027	3	0.09	0.3	0.65
	Within group	24	76	0.3		
	Total	24.02	79			
Persuasion	Between group	0.63	3	0.21	0.7	0.64
	Within group	23	76	0.3		
	Total	23.63	79			
Communication competence	Between group	1.44	3	0.48	0.8	0.57
	Within group	45	76	0.6		
	Total	46.44	79			

The result in Table 6 portrayed that, there is no significant difference in interpersonal communication skills among workers of the associations. Relationship skill ( $f(3,76)=0.3$ ,  $p>0.05$ ), persuasion skill ( $f(3,76)=0.7$ ,  $P>0.05$ ) and competence skills ( $f(3,76)=0.8$ ,  $p>0.05$ ). It indicates that these three interpersonal communication skills among all associations' workers were similar.

#### 4.8. Pearson product moment correlation and education

**Table 6. The Result of Correlation between Education and Communication Skills**

Variables	Education level
Relationship skill	0.4**
Persuasion skill	0.2*
Competence skills	0.2*

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

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

As it is illustrated in Table 7, the correlation analysis, which was done through Pearson product correlation, indicates that communication skills are positively associated to education. Relationship skill ( $r=0.405$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), persuasion skills ( $r=0.292$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and competence skills ( $r=0.246$ ,  $p<0.05$ ).

## **Chapter 5**

### **5. Discussion**

The main objective of this study was to investigate the effectiveness and practice of interpersonal communication skill of micro enterprise workers who live with HIV/AIDS. This chapter mainly deals with the discussion of the major findings that were obtained from the data analyzed and interpreted in chapter four. Accordingly, the major findings are discussed below.

#### **5.1 Workers interpersonal relationship skills**

To have effective interpersonal communication skills in the work place, paying attention to the feedback of the audience is essential for adjustment purpose. But the finding of this study shows that workers did not have the skills of asking feedback from their customers. Supporting this finding, Carnegie (2000) states that if workers do not pay due attention to the feedback of their audience, their communication effectiveness significantly reduces.

The result also shows low self- confidence and trust that workers did have in their communication which negatively affects communication in the work place. Supporting the result, Bandura as cited in Carnegie (2000), states that lack of confidence in a social relationship reduces interaction and inhibits individuals from having good skills in communication.

In the interpersonal relationship skills in the work place functional messages like managing day-to-day activities, personal skills to take information and interpret in a positive way and self- disclosure are central to the process of developing good relationship with others. But, the result of this study shows that workers did not have personal, managing skills and were not open in their communication, so they are not effective in their interpersonal communication. Supporting the result, Wilson (1992) states that the absence of such basic

skills in the interpersonal relationship can reduce the effectiveness of communication and interaction with others.

Interpersonal relationship skills also consists relational skills such as friendly relationship, expressing personal hobbies, interest, sharing information freely with others and using some comfortable jokes are important in communication to develop the first impression in a positive way. However, the findings of this study indicates workers' relational and their first impression skills were not adequate. This unable them to enhance friendly relationship with their customers

In line with the above result, Galvin and Terrell (2001) stated that if we appear sloppy, lazy or rude in our relational skills and in the first day of our meeting with our customers, our success, income and relationship could be negatively affected for a long time.

The other component of interpersonal relationship skill is sign language such as smile, eye contact, use of hands and fingers and wearing uniform in the work place to develop good relationship. Handling customers' attention during communication play important role to have effective and successful interpersonal communication with others. But, the result of this study reveals that most of the workers did not practice body language adequately in their communication so they might not influence their customers.

Supporting the above results, Galvin and Terrell (2001) stated that between 65 and 93 percent of messages are non-verbal in the work place in order to communicate effectively. But, the absence of such sign language during communication leads to ineffective communication.

## **5.2 Persuasion techniques that workers used**

Persuasion technique is the other important component of interpersonal communication in which the day-to-day market communication; people use different strategies to influence their customers during communication. The

finding of this study reveals that workers relatively practice the persuasion technique in their work place than the other components of interpersonal communication. In terms of this technique some types of persuasion techniques that workers usually practice were discussed as follow.

If we look at Table 3 in the result part, we find the mean score of logical appeal technique of worker was 3.78, which is greater than that of other techniques. The result of this study is supported by research of Ford (1995) that compliance gaining strategy more widely used in the market. In addition, Verderber (2007) also states that this strategy is primarily focusing on reasoning in which a person seeks compliance by presenting reason and/or evidence. This implies that when the sellers present good reasons for goods that she/he sells in the work place, enhances the customers' behavior to buy the product. That is why most of the time in market environment, logical appeal strategy is widely used by sellers.

### **5.3 Communication competence skills of workers**

The other component of interpersonal communication is competence skills which is the process of understanding the various networks such as creating connection, exchange information, ideas, interact with others, verbal and listening skills are the essential parts of competence communication skills that enhance communication effectiveness in the work place.

Communication competence has verbal skills which consist of managing personal introduction skills (i.e. hand shaking, calling customers by their names), sharing information, giving description about the product and asking question about the customers' reaction and opinion towards the service, play important role to have good, effective communication and relationship with others.

But, the result of this study shows that workers did not have such verbal skills in their communication which made them to have poor communication in the

work place. In line with this, Nelson (2008) states that if workers do not have verbal skills, their product or services are not exchanged as they want.

In addition, supporting this result, Galvan and Terrell (2001) stated that the absence of hand shaking and introducing personal information during conversation makes communication poor and the flow of information tends to be weak.

Interpersonal competence skills also consists listening skills which is an active process that includes paying attention to each other's ideas, to their customers' feedback, critical analysis of messages and anticipating customers needs helps to build relationship and a sense of connection with others. However, the finding of this study reveals that workers did have low listening skills in their communication that creates inappropriate situations to have good communication.

Supporting this result, Nelson (2008) states that low attention to the customers' feedback and excessive self talk are the common problems that in able workers to have good listening skills and these problems are directly affecting the communication process in the work place.

The result of ANOVA and descriptive statistics indicate there was no mean significant differences of interpersonal communication skills among the workers. This might be the majority of the workers educational status was at the primary level and their communication skills were low.

The finding of correlation analysis indicates that communication skills are positively associated with education. Supporting the above result, Spitzberg as cited in Verderber et al. (2007), states that as sellers knowledge and skills increase, communication skill increase and people need knowledge about communication to be effective.

## **5.4 Psychological problem of workers in their communication**

As the interview report indicates, the first and the serious problems in the work place is psychological influence which consists stress, depression and anxiety that hinder workers communication with their customers.

According to the result of the interview, stress is the central cause to their poor communication in their association living in a daily fear of death, particularly when something happens like head ache and fatal disease that can highly increase their stress and influence the communication process.

Supporting this result, Carnegie (2000) states that those patients who live with HIV/AIDS experience, traumatic stress and fear because of thinking about health related problems in their lives. So, according to Carnegie, this problem significantly challenges patient's relationship and communication.

Concerning to the anxiety problem, the informant reported that it is a common problem of every member in the association which has symptom of worry and tension that influence workers' daily function. This means anxiety has been linked that can produce additional problems like inability to sleep and diurnal variation in mood. These unable workers to have good interaction and relationship with others

In line with the above finding, Verderber et al. (2007) stated that when we are anxious, we have trouble listening and communication, so this decrease the quality of conversation and relationship during communication.

In terms of depression, the finding of the interview shows that depression arises from a serious medical illness and hopeless in their lives which is not only affecting the longevity of their lives, but also unable them to interact and communicate consistently with others. Confirming the result, Nolen-Hoeksemas (2004) states that if people are depressed they might have sense of unhappiness and hopeless in their lives, have negative view of themselves, of the others, and of the future.

This negative expectation towards the negative event would lead them to experience low self esteem in their lives which can inhibit them to have conversation and relationship in the social setting.

### **5.5 Economic problems of workers**

Regarding to the economic problem of workers in their communication, the interview result shows that they did not get basic needs like food, medication, so the tablet that they take daily aggravates their weakness. Furthermore, they are living in a poor condition with little ability to bring improvement in their lives. There were also problems of having health condition, adequate nutrition, and health care which prevents workers to be economically active. So, this economic problem has an influence on workers' day to day interpersonal communication in their work place because they are physically weak. Supporting the result, Nolen-Hoeksemas (2004) states that people who are economically poor in their social setting, are more likely to be less motivated to take action to improve their living condition and lack control over their health and well-being. So, this worsens their communication and interaction.

### **5.6 Social problems in workers communication**

Regarding the social problem of workers in their communication, the interview result reveals that workers who are living with HIV/AIDS are often subjected to stigmatization, discrimination and even hostility in their community. They also face difficulty to involve in every income generating activities, feel lonely and experience alienation in which they were pushed away to the margin of the community. So, this misconception of the society towards HIV/AIDS patients strongly affects their communication and relationship in their work place.

In confirming this result, Ukeje (1992) states that when people experience feeling of isolation, their interaction and communication with their friends and families and their sense of belongingness become low in which they develop poor confidence to specify themselves to the given group.

## **Chapter 6**

### **6. Summary, conclusions and recommendations**

#### **6.1 Summary**

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of interpersonal communications skill of microenterprise workers who live with HIV/AIDS in Debre Berhan Town. To this end the researcher raised the following research questions

- Do microenterprise workers have effective interpersonal communication skills to attract their customers?
- What type of interpersonal communication skills do workers usually practice?
- Is there a significant difference in communication skills among the microenterprise workers?
- What are the dominant barriers to effective interpersonal communication?

In order to answer these basic research questions, workers and coordinators of the four associations namely; Fikir Lenatoch, Endersalen, Tiwliid Yidan and Yesetoch Mahiber were targeted as population of the study. Representative sample of workers and coordinators were selected by simple random and purposive sampling. Questionnaires, market observation and interview were used to gather the necessary information. Both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis were employed.

Based on the analysis of the data, the following findings were drawn:

- The research findings showed that workers interpersonal communication skills in terms of relationship skills like personal, verbal and non-verbal skills of communication and competence skills such as listening and first impression skills of the workers were low.

- As the descriptive statistics result revealed, workers relatively practiced persuasion techniques, to influence their customers in their communication, particularly they use logical appeal techniques, than other types of interpersonal communication skills. Though they practiced this logical appeal technique, the result indicates that it was not significant and sufficient to influence their customers' behavior.
- Concerning the relationship of education and communication skills, the correlation result shows that there was a positive relationship between communication skills and education, particularly education was significantly related to interpersonal relationship.
- Interm of interpersonal communication skills of the different associations' workers, the one way variance analysis indicated there were no significant differences of communication skills among workers in the four associations.
- Majority of the workers' education level were at the primary level which would imply that they did not adequately use their skills to interact and influence their customers properly.
- Regarding barriers of practicing effective interpersonal communication skills, the findings of the study revealed, inadequate skills, psychological influences such as anxiety, depression and stress, social problem like discrimination and stigmatization and economic problems such as poor living and working condition were the main barriers that hinder them from having effective interpersonal communication skills in their work place.

## **6.2. Conclusions**

Based on the above findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

- The workers did not have basic communication skill to exchange their ideas, messages, commodities, service with their customers effectively.

- Majority of the workers' education level was primary which hindered them to use their skills to interact with their customers properly.
- Among the interpersonal communication skill types, workers usually practice persuasion techniques particularly, logical appeal techniques.
- There is a positive relationship between education and communication skills.
- There is no significant difference in interpersonal communication skills among workers in the four associations.
- The practice of effective interpersonal communication skills of micro enterprise workers that live with HIV/AIDS was constrained by factors like economic, social and psychosocial problems.

In general, there was no sufficient practice of effective interpersonal communication skill in the associations.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusion so far made, the following recommendations are forwarded:

1. The finding of this study indicated that majority of the workers did not have adequate interpersonal communication skills. Because of this, it is recommendable that both governmental and non-governmental organization should give training and facilitate opportunities to train workers by concentrating on the psychological life skills such as problem solving, decision making, creative thinking, critical thinking, empathy, self awareness and relationship.
2. It was found that majority of workers' education status was at primary level. So it would be advisable for the concerned bodies to equip the workers with good skills by providing education, short term training, like participatory and workshop training concerning the interpersonal communication skills.

3. The result of this study showed that, workers were hindered to practice communication skills because of barriers of communication such as economic, social and psychological problems. So, it would be recommendable that permanent and consistent counseling services particularly for the psychological problems like anxiety, depression and stress of the workers should be given in order to minimize these problems. In terms of the social problems in which patients were highly discriminated and stigmatized, programs such as awareness and teaching about HIV/AIDS should be needed for the encouragement of positive attitude for the community towards those HIV/ AIDS patients.
4. The findings revealed that economically workers were poor and there were problems of fair distribution of income among the members. So, it is advisable to establish further income generating activities such as wood work and supermarket to improve their living and working conditions. In addition, it is highly recommendable to assign supervisors who daily control their day to day activities and income.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1

### Addis Ababa University School of graduate studies Institute of psychology

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information about interpersonal communication skills and its effectiveness of micro enterprise workers during exchange of information, materials and ideas with their customers. Therefore, you are requested to give your genuine information. Your cooperation is highly valuable to complete the study. Thank you in advance. No need of writing your name.

#### Part I. General information

Direction:- please mark with a tick ( ✓ ) to indicate your response on the space provided and write your response when necessary

1. Your association \_\_\_\_\_
2. Sex, Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_
3. Educational level:

Primary school \_\_\_\_\_ secondary school) \_\_\_\_\_

TVET 10+2 \_\_\_\_\_ TVET12+1 \_\_\_\_\_

#### Part II.

**Direction:** - Give your response with respect to each statement about the interpersonal communication skills and its effectiveness in the work place by using “✓” mark under only one of the five alternatives.

5= strongly agree 4= Agree 3= Undecided 2= Disagree 1= strongly disagree

No	Statements related to interpersonal relationship.	Alternatives				
		5	4	3	2	1
1	I have a willingness to accept feedback from my customers					
2	When my customers come to the work place to buy my products or to get services, I am patient to listen them.					
3	I have degree of confidence to communicate with my customers					
4	I'm highly trusted in my customer					
5	I have a willingness to reveal information about myself					
6	I have personal skills to take in information and interpret that information in a positive way					
7	I act and behave consistently with my customers					
8	I have ability to manage day-to-day necessities					
9	I have high degree of relational skills to influence my customers to make them permanent clients					
10	I have high degree of friendly relationship with my customers					
11	I have high ability to share new information to my customers					
12	I express my hobby, interest, and what I dislike to my customers at the first meeting					
13	I use some comfortable jokes with my customers during communication					
14	I'm open to express my ideas to my customers					
15	I use non verbal signals such as simile to develop good relationship with my customers					
16	I feel more comfortable when I use different words like "serious" and "sure" with my customers					
17	I believe that wearing uniform in the work place is important to attract my customers attention during communication					
18	To make my communication successful, I use my hands and fingers in addition to language					
19	I have the ability to look my customers in their eye during communication to handle their attention					
20	I use smooth exchange of conversation with my customer					

### Workers Interpersonal Relationship Skills in the Work Place

Item number	Workers Response										Mean	Standard deviation
	SA		A		U		D		SD			
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%		
1	2	2.5	13	16	-	-	64	80	1	1.3	2.3	1.612
2	-	-	23	28.5	1	1.3	56	70	-	-	2.36	0.477
3	4	5	19	23.8	-	-	55	68.8	2	2.5	2.6	1.038
4	6	7.5	14	17.5	1	1.3	58	72.5	1	1.3	2.58	1.04
5	6	7.5	10	12.5	-	-	58	72.5	6	7.5	2.4	1.051
6	4	5	12	15	-	-	60	75	4	5	2.4	0.976
7	5	6.3	27	33.8	2	2.5	40	50	6	7.5	2.7	1.177
8	6	7.5	21	26.3	4	5	49	61.3	-	-	2.5	0.968
9	6	7.5	18	22.5	2	2.5	51	36.8	3	3.8	2.6	1.102
10	7	8.8	13	16.3	-	-	57	71.3	3	3.8	2.55	1.09
11	6	7.5	15	18.8	2	2.5	56	70	1	1.3	2.61	1.049
12	3	3.8	13	16.3	1	1.3	55	68.8	8	10	2.35	0.995
13	-	-	14	17.5	5	6.3	60	75	1	1.3	2.4	0.789
14	1	1.3	13	16.3	4	5.0	54	67.5	8	10	2.31	0.908
15	10	12.5	23	28.3	6	7.5	41	51.8	-	-	2.48	1.043
16	6	7.5	21	26.3	4	5	49	61.3	-	-	2.4	1.351
17	9	11.3	12	15	4	5	50	62.5	5	6.3	2.63	0.97
18	3	3.8	13	16	3	3.8	60	75	1	1.3	2.6	1.03
19	5	6.3	11	13.8	7	8.8	50	62.5	7	8.8	2.46	1.043
20	11	13.8	55	68	3	3.8	15	18	-	-	3.5	1.14
Grand mean											2.5	

	<b>Statements related to persuasion techniques in the work place</b>					
1	I will talk freely with other who talk freely with me					
2	I tend to give good reasons to my product in order to enhance my customers behavior					
3	If the material or products are not comfortable to my customers, I tend to negotiate with them to turn back the materials					
4	I am honest and keep my promise for the good of my customers than my self					
5	My credibility makes me more likable in the eye of my customers in the work place					
6	I use a direct request strategy by saying your know me and I am trustworthy to you					
7	I used an empathy based strategy to influence my customers' behavior?					
8	I usually call reasonable high price and then reduce to the real price					
9	I use techniques in which buyers are told that they have only limited time to take advantage to obtain some items.					
10	I use techniques in which efforts increase compliance by telling my customers that those items are scarce and hard to obtain in other places					

	<b>Statement related to interpersonal competence skills</b>					
1	I tend to have hand shake with my customers in the work place during communication					
2	I pay great attention to call my customers in their name					
3	If my customers are unclear about direction, I tend to ask questions to be sure they have got the direction right.					
4	When giving direction, I check to see if my customers really understand what I say					
5	I have personal experience to explain the unique feature and benefit of my product /service to my customer					
6	I have good ability of asking questions about my customers reaction					
7	I give high attention to take my own friends ideas during communications					
8	I give high attention to get feed back from my customer					
9	I critically analyze the message that contain opinion of my customer before making decision to respond					
10	When I am dealing with my customers, I try to anticipate what my customers need or want					

### **Communication Competence Skills of Workers**

Item number	Workers' response										Mean	Standard deviation
	SA		A		U		D		SD			
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%		
1	3	3.8	17	21	1	1.3	52	65	7	8.8	2.6	1.1
2	7	8.8	23	28.8	2	2.5	44	55	4	5.0	2.6	1.1
3	1	1.3	10	12.5	-	-	66	82.5	3	3.5	2.3	0.8
4	4	5.0	20	25	1	1.3	52	65	3	3.8	2.6	1.1
5	-	-	4	5	-	-	72	90	4	5	2.1	0.5
6	1	1.3	10	12.5	-	-	66	81	3	3.8	2.3	0.8
7	1	1.3	25	31.5	2	2.5	47	58.8	3	3.8	2.6	1.0
8	4	5	14	17.5	2	2.5	58	72.5	2	2.5	2.3	1.0
9	8	10	13	16.3	-	-	58	72	1	1.3	2.5	0.9
10	7	8.8	10	12.5	-	-	50	62.5	13	16.3	2.4	1.6
Grand mean											2.43	1.0

## **Appendix 2**

**Addis Ababa University  
School of graduate studies  
Institute of psychology**

### **Interview guide for workers and coordinators**

**Time Starting** \_\_\_\_\_ **Ending** \_\_\_\_\_

#### **I. Background information**

**Recent positions:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Work experience in years:** \_\_\_\_\_

These interview questions were prepared for both workers and coordinators of the associations to obtain information about factors that hinder effective interpersonal communication.

1. Are there any problem that hinders you to have good communication with your customers?  
A. Yes                      B. No
2. If your answer for number 1 is yes, what are the main problems that you face in your communication?
3. Among the problems that you mentioned above, which one is the most severe problem in your communication?
4. Can you express how these problems hinder you to have effective interpersonal communication, in your work place?
5. Is there good interaction like taking friends ideas positively within the association members? If your answer no explain why?
6. Do you practice first meeting skills in your communication? If your answer is no why ?reason out
7. If you are usually open to share your personal secrete information to your customers ,do you think this has a problems in your communication?

### Appendix 3

**Addis Ababa University  
School of graduate studies  
Institute of psychology**

**Market observation checklist**

**Name of the association** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**I. check list**

No	Items	Yes	No	Remark
1	The workers have confidence to communicate freely with their customers			
2	The workers use some comfortable jokes			
3	The workers have ability of first impression skill			
4	Workers give attention to take feedback from their customers			
5	The workers have handshaking skill during communication			
6	Workers pay attention to call their customers by their name			
7	Workers have ability to ask questions about customers' reaction to their services.			
8	The workers practice non-verbal sign in their communication			
9	Workers have ability of giving good reasons to their product			
10	Workers have personal experience to explain the unique feature and benefit of their product			



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## **Abstract**

*The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of interpersonal communication skills of microenterprise workers who live with HIV/AIDS in Deber Berhan Town. To conduct the study, mixed research method was employed. The participants were selected by using simple random sampling particularly, a lottery method. The data were collected from 80 workers from the four associations namely: Fikir Lenatoch, Endersallen, Tiwild Yidan and Yesetoch Mahiber. The quantitative data were analyzed by using percentage, mean, frequency, one way ANOVA, and Pearson product moment correlation in combination with the qualitative data that was obtained through observation and interview. The findings of the study revealed that majority of the workers did not have adequate interpersonal communication skills to exchange their ideas, information, commodities and services with their customers accurately. Among the factors that affect their communication were lack of adequate education, psychological, social and economic factors were reported. Finally, it was recommended that the concerned bodies particularly, non government organizations that are found in Deber Berhan Town should create opportunities to provide short term training, to enhance workers communication skills and develop different programs such as awareness and teaching the society to change their attitude about the people who live with HIV/AIDS .*



# **Chapter one**

## **1. Introduction**

### **1.1 Back Ground of the Study**

“Communication” is derived from the Latin word *communis* meaning “common” (Kenzevich, 1966). Kenzevich put that communication is an act by which a person shares the knowledge, feeling, ideas, information etc.

Good (1973) also defined communication as a process of creating mutual understanding or common meanings that brings about reaction between communicator and receiver. This mutual understanding enables members of organization to accomplish a common goal of their association.

Communication is a process in which two or more people interact verbally and nonverbally in order to understand each others feelings, ideas, and attitude (Galvin and Terrell, 2001). So, communication unifies the efforts and behavior of the group which consequently leads them toward achieving a common goal.

In a real sense, the study of human communication is the study of human behavior. A person’s ability to communicate with himself, with others, with in institution or across culture is what makes him/ her human.

Communication is a significant social experience: communication occurs in all of human relationship and through communication one can get to know others and let others to know him/her. Communication as a process by which people arrive at shared meaning through the interchange of messages. Communication is a broad and wide field; it includes literature of variety subjects that define the field. So communication is grouped in to ten major content categories: groups, heath, instructional, intercultural, interpersonal, language and symbolic code, new communication technology, mass, public and organizational communication (Rubin, Rubin and Piele, 2005).

From these categories of communication, the researcher selected the interpersonal communication which involves the study of people and their interaction or relationship, the use of verbal and non-verbal message in developing and maintaining relationship between people. It also consists interpersonal competence skills, impression formation (persuasion techniques), and interpersonal relationship development.

In the business environment, one of the most important forms of external communication is that which occurs in providing service to customers. Booms as cited in Nelson (2008) defines the customer service encounter as the “moment of interaction between the customer and the firm.” During this moment customer service means being friendly, shaking hands warmly and initiating pleasant conversation with customer. For others customer service means processing customers’ needs effectively and quickly. Still others view customer service as listening intently to identify individual needs and providing sufficient information and or support to meet those needs regardless of how employees understand the concept of customer service the important goal is influencing their customers’ behavior. Human beings exist in a context of communication with one another. All over the world, people need to interact with one another. We found that our day to day interpersonal communication consists of a host of encounters with other persons. In the give and take social exchange process and selling product we gain much of our social experience and interaction skills through interpersonal communication that occurs throughout our life.

Moreover, Sereno and Bodaken (1975) pointed out the context of interpersonal communication in which people attempt to share meaning with each other and how individuals engage in face to face conversation.

Communication in the interpersonal context is relatively unstructured and informal in which we engage with another individual face to face. When speaking face to face (as opposed to listening to a speaker on TV or radio) each

person in the transaction supplies the other with a rich source of cues or stimuli not only what each says through words (verbal content) but also what each expresses through the vast range of gesture, body movement and other behavior cues (non verbal content) (Sereno and Bodaken, 1975). Similarly Miller and Steinberg, as cited in Nelson (2008) defined interpersonal communication as a process of using of message to generate meaning between two people in a situation that allows mutual opportunities for both speaking and listening.

This means interpersonal communication would includes our interaction with strangers, with sales people in retail stores, and with waiters in restaurant as well as with other close friends, our lovers and our family members.

In addition, Rubin, Rubin and Piele (2005) stated that interpersonal communication is the study of people and their interaction or relationship, the use of verbal and non-verbal message in developing and maintaining relationship between people. It also consisting interpersonal competence skills, impression formation or persuasion techniques, interpersonal relationship development.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Communication plays a major role in almost every aspect of our life. In addition, effective communication skills can improve the way we see ourselves and learn how to communicate effectively particularly, in the work place with customers and it helps us to develop a sense of self confidence in public speech, at work, and in social settings.

A good interpersonal communication also helps us to interact with others and share our feelings, emotions, and some personal information to others freely.

In the business environment one of the most important forms of external communication is that which occurs in providing service to customer. Booms as cited in Nelson (2008) defined the customer service relating with inventively

communication as “moment of interaction between the customer and the firm”. During this moment customer service means being friendly, shaking hands warmly, and initiating pleasant conversation listening inventively to identify individual needs and provides sufficient information and/or support to meet their needs with customers by influencing their behavior.

In contrast if there is no effective interpersonal communication between the customers and sellers in the work place, it may noticeably block any relationship, interaction and pleasant conversation between sellers and customers.

Therefore, the presence of effective interpersonal communication at the work place plays important role to exchange goods, services, ideas, attitude, and feelings with customers. Whereas the absence of inter personal communication skills at the work place may block relationship, interaction and exchange of information. But relating to these two broad concepts (the absence and presence of interpersonal communication skills), no research findings that reveal the effectiveness of interpersonal communication of micro enterprise workers who live with HIV/AIDS with their customers in the work place. So the researcher tried to check the effectiveness of interpersonal communication skills of the workers by raising the following leading research questions.

1. Do micro enterprise workers have interpersonal communication skills to attract their customers?
2. What type of interpersonal communication skills workers usually practice?
3. Is there a significant difference in interpersonal communication skills among the different micro enterprise workers?
4. What are the dominant barriers of effective interpersonal communication?

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study:**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective:**

The general objective of the study is to investigate whether workers have effective interpersonal communications skill in the work place to attract their customers or not.

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives:**

The specific objectives of the study are:-

1. To examine whether workers have the relevant interpersonal communication skills to attract their customers
2. To investigate what type of interpersonal communication skills workers usually practice
3. To check whether there is significance differences in communication skills among the different micro enterprise workers.
4. To find out the dominant barriers to effective interpersonal communication

### **1.4 Significance of the Study:-**

This study gives the following information.

- Provides knowledge or ideas about interpersonal communication skills for the workers how to attract their customers during communication.
- It will provide insight and information for the concerned bodies like for government and non-government body for intervention to the problems.
- It will give some hints for further study on interpersonal communication skills.

### **1.5 Delimitation of the Study**

The study is delimited interms of a real samples and concerning the micro enterprise workers who live with HIV/AIDS in Debre Berhan Town on their interpersonal communication skills in the work place in selling their products.

## **1.6 Limitation of the study**

The frame work of this study included only a sample of micro enterprise workers who live with HIV/ADS in Debre Berhan Town, the findings noted here are not generalizable to all HIV/AIDS victims in other geographic areas. The other challenge was the fear of workers in which they expected that as if the researcher comes from the project that support them and evaluated their action.

## **1.7 Operational definition of terms**

**Micro enterprise:-** (small business enterprise ):-It has no definite definition but it can be looked at as a non-farm activity engaged in a market oriented production and, is controlled by the owner and operated by small labor force with low capital investment depending on the nature of the business.

**Interpersonal communication:-** It is a process of using message to generate meaning between at least two people in a situation that allows mutual opportunity.

## **1.8. Organization of the study**

This study was organized in six chapters the first chapter deals with introduction, background, statement, purpose, significance, delimitation and limitation of the study. The second chapter contained review of related literature. Methodology of the study was dealt in chapter three, chapter four deals with analysis and data presentation and data chapter five reveals discussion of the result. Finally summary, conclusion, and recommendation were given in chapter six.

## **Chapter two**

### **2. Review of related literature**

Under this chapter, basic concepts and the overall nature of interpersonal communication in the work place will be discussed.

#### **2.1 Meaning of interpersonal communication**

Interpersonal communication is a transactional process of exchanging messages and negotiating meaning to convey information to establish and maintain relationship (Wilson, 1992).

This definition makes clear that our focus is not only on the exchange of message but also their joint interpretation and negotiation. Interpersonal communication usually, but not always occurs face- to face. This face to face communication helps individuals to share or transfer ideas, feelings, attitude in the work place.

Further, Nelson (2008) defined that interpersonal communication is an act by which a person shares knowledge, feeling, ideas, information, goods in a way that each person gains a common understanding of the meaning and use of the message.

#### **2.2 Major theories of interpersonal communication**

A theory of interpersonal communication would be one whose primary aim is explaining the process of interpersonal communication. All of the theories we will consider have as their primary aim an understanding of psychological, social or mental process. Theories allow us to understand and explain certain forms of communication behaviors and explain how relationships are initiated and developed, how relationship are maintained over time and to explain why and what to do when people behave in ways that are not expected.

##### **2.2.1. The social psychological theory**

For the social psychological theory of communication in the analyses of human codes and networks, Smith (2007) describes that social psychologists observe

people interacting in groups. This interaction is communication. It involves some kind of behavior such as speech or gesture in to which any members of the group can encode a message that any other member of the group can then decode. Social interaction also involves some kinds of rules as to who in the group encodes the message and who decodes them. This is the basis for social organization and communication networks. Some social psychologists have given greater emphasize to the social aspects of communication while others have emphasized the psychological aspects of communication. But, for this study, the researcher will give more emphasis to the social aspects of communications because the study deals more about the interpersonal communication between sellers and buyers in the social setting or work place environment.

### **2.2.2. An interpersonal exchange theory**

The interpersonal exchange theory shows how we make decision about sharing ourselves in an interpersonal communication encounter (Wilson, 1992). Wilson, further elaborated that interpersonal exchange theory is fundamental to exchange interpersonal relationship, feeling, emotion with others

Further more, Franzoi (2000) revealed that human beings are social creatures; in which without social interaction or the support of other people, it would be difficult to survive independently. Because people need people in every human activity as we simply observed in our social world every one interacts with others in order to survive. On the other hand, this theory explains how we feel relationship and communication with other persons depending on our perception of balance between what we put in to relationship and what we get out of it (Baron and Byrne, 1997).

### **2.2.3. Social comparison theory**

The fundamental assumption underlying social comparison theory is that all of us are uncertain of our opinion and abilities. We care deeply about whether our opinions are considered valid by others and whether we actually have the

capacities or abilities we like to think we have at the work place to communicate with our customers.

Further, Sereno and Bodaken (1975) derived an implication from social communication theory to apply to interpersonal communication. Social communication theory attempts to account for why we communicate with one another. We communicate in order to verify our perception of the world and our assumption about ourselves. Thus we seek out others to reduce uncertainty, to confirm our opinion, and to establish our identities.

## **2.3 Process of interpersonal communication**

### **2.3.1 The message**

The message is the outcome of the encoding process which is sent through a channel, either verbally or non-verbally (Pearce II, 1989). Pearce also stated that the message is the expressed information that the sender hopes will convey the intended meaning to the receivers. Message is both verbal and non-verbal form of ideas, thought or feeling that one person (the source) wishes to communicate to another person or group of people (the receivers).

In line with the above idea, Wilson (1992) elaborated that message is the content of interaction, which includes words and phrases that are used to communicate our ideas as well as our facial expression, body movement, gesture, touch, tone of voice and other non-verbal codes in selling and buying process in the work place.

### **2.3.2 The channel**

The channel is the carrier of the message. Different means like face to face communication, telephone conversation, group meeting, and written report are used to carry the message (Pearce, 1989).

Pearce (1989) also stated that interpersonal communication includes verbal language, paralanguage and non-verbal communication. In which verbal communication is the semantic content (meaning) of the words we speak or

write, paralanguage refers to the intonation, pitch and rhythm of speech and non-verbal communication such as eye contact, facial expression, body movement and visual symbols like pictures, diagrams and graphs.

### **2.3.3 Feedback**

According to Wilson (1992) feedback is the receiver's verbal and non-verbal responses to source message. We respond to another person's message by providing feedback so that the source knows that the message was received as intended. So this feedback helps the sellers to improve their skills and communication in selling their products.

## **2.4 Components of interpersonal communication skills**

### **2.4.1. Interpersonal relationship**

In the interpersonal relationship, our perception influence communication in our relationship from start to finish. Interpersonal relationship shapes the attraction we feel for others, the trait we assign to them, our expectation of them, and the way we understand what they do and say. Interpersonal relationship occurs when two people engage in ongoing interaction, relationship and exchanging nurturing as well as functional messages (Galvin and Terrell, 2001).

According to Galvin and Terrell (2001), most interpersonal relationship in the work place are characterized by functional message that deals with managing day-to-day necessities such as preparing work schedule and ask questions about markets and it is also characterizes by nurturing message that indicates supportiveness and that the relationship is valued. Comments such as "I am glad we're friends," "are you feeling ok to day?" are typical nurturing messages that indicates the relationship is valued.

Wilson (1992) also stated that a good interpersonal relationship consists of terms like sensitivity, self-disclosure, verbal and non verbal communication and trust that are central to the process of developing relationship.

**2.4.1.1 Sensitivity:** - It is a person's skill and ability to take in information that another person provides and to interpret that information with empathy. This enhances positive relationship with friends or customers.

**2.4.1.2 Self- disclosure:** - It is the process of revealing information about oneself, including thoughts, desire, needs and goals that would not normally be known by the other persons. This implies that the more our partners understand about how we see ourselves, the better their prediction will become and the more relationship will grow.

**2.4.1.3 Trust:** - In the interpersonal relationship, trust is a confidence in other person's behavior. This means when we trust that the other person will receive the information we share in a relatively accepting, confirming, and positive way. The concept of interpersonal relationship is often concerned with how our self-disclosure will be received (Wilson, 1992).

Here we are relying on the other person to be accepting, confirming and positive as we share a part of who we are. This implies that when a person is open, honest, and discreet and behaves consistently, he/she develops a good interpersonal relationship and confidence and this enhances exchange of information, materials and ideas openly in the work place.

While the absence of openness, honest, trust and sensitivity in the interpersonal relationship in the work place, reduces the effectiveness of communication and the free flow of information.

#### **2.4.1.4 Stages of relationship**

Interpersonal relationship may vary from superficial, involving many functional messages, to very personal, involving-many more nurturing messages. But most work place messages fall on the first and second stages of relationship (Galvin and Terrell, 2001.)

#### **2.4.1.4.1 First meeting:-**

On the first meeting: - we usually discuss non controversial topics and we may spend time talking about the occasion, a current events, sports or films. Here we may share general information about ourselves. Such as, where we are from, and what we like or dislike, our hobbies and interest (Sereno and Bodaken, 1975). The first stage illustrates the OAR process: Observe, Ask and Reveal. If we observe, ask questions and reveal some information about ourselves, we stand the best chance of making a connection or relationship with other persons or our customers.

First meeting is important in the work place because people form first impression based on first meeting with another person. In line with the above idea there is a saying, “we never get a second chance to make a first impression so it is better to do our best to make our first impression in a positive way.” But, if we appear sloppy, lazy or rude in the first day of our meeting with our customers, our success, income and relationship could be negatively affected for a long time (Terrell and Galvin, 2001).

#### **2.4.1.4.2 Friendly relationship**

In the friendly relation stage, we are more willing to talk about opinion and feeling by opening discussion on some personal subjects and may begin sharing some superficial evaluation of each other’s behavior (Galvin and Terrell, 2001). This friendly relationship is pleasant but not very deep and involves a greater range of verbal and non-verbal message and using some comfortable jokes, teasing or touching a person to get his/her ideas across.

**2.4.1.5 Verbal interaction:** - verbal interaction or cues are the words we use, whether spoken or written (Sereno and Bodaken, 1975). In addition to the above idea, Wilson (1992) also defined the verbal communication as words that we use to represent our ideas and to talk about the events in our lives. This implies that language, our word system enables us to establish and maintain connection with others. Understanding the way language works is essential to

improve our relational communication. This understanding implies knowing that events, ideas, information, goods, our thought about these, and the words we choose to describe these, relate to one another very directly. Communication and relationship is difficult when our use of language is unskilled, inefficient, or inappropriate (Wilson, 1992).

In line with the above idea, Wilson (1992) also defined language as a system of symbols governed by rules. It is our primary means of expressing ourselves to others and means of telling others who we are and how we feel about them. We use language in the work place to exchange, send, and receive goods and information.

#### **2.4.1.6 Language and relationship**

The use of language is essential to our relationship because much of the work of relationship gets accomplished through language. Through language relational communication takes place and relationships grow and change (Wilson, 1992).

Wilson also states that we must carefully choose the language we use to talk in and about relationship and we use language to summarize our views of ourselves, other people, and even our relationship in ways that fit our frames of reference.

The above idea indicates that, every time we communicate about a relationship, exchange of commodities, we find ourselves faced with language to use. As we communicate our intention, feeling, demand and selling our product in the work place to friends or customers, we may feel more comfortable with a different word like “serious,” “comfortable,” or even “compatible.”

#### **2.4.1.7. Non- verbal communication**

Non-verbal communication refers to sending and receiving messages without the use of words. It involves appearance, gesture, posture, eye contact, facial expression. In line with the above idea, Galvin and Terrell (2001) have estimated that between 65 and 93 percent of messages are non-verbal, especially message that convey feeling that we heavily depend on sending and receiving wordless messages in order to communicate effectively.

Nelson (2008) also defined non-verbal communication as non-verbal a code that consists of symbols that are not words, including non-word vocalization. According to Nelson, non verbal communication consists of the following elements. Bodily movement, facial expression, bodily appearance, the use of space, the use of time, touching clothing and other artifacts, which are important to facilitate effective communication.

**2.4.1.7.1 Appearance:** - Appearance may indicate mood, occupation, culture, status or group membership (Nelson, 2008). Many companies expect employees to convey certain image, and they provide uniform to ensure this image at the work place to make communication effective.

If you are working at a selling store, retail, clothing store, milk selling, and at other market areas, you may be expected to wear certain styles or brands. Some companies also have regulations for hair, nail make up, and jewelry, which are expected to match the image created through clothing that make good communication and relationship. Nelson (2008) also stated that the absence of good appearance at the work place may have influence for successful communication. Because people make judgments about others based on their appearance that convey certain images to customers or clients.

**2.4.1.7.2. Gesture:** - it refers to the way we use our hands, fingers, and arms that adds to our nonverbal images and our effectiveness in conveying message. To elaborate the above idea, Nelson (2008) expressed gesture as movement of hands and arms to help sellers to communicate with their customers to make

their communication successful. This indicates that most good speakers use gesture to visually underline something important in their message.

**2.4.1.7.3. Eye contact:** - it is a visual connection between people or looking someone in the eye. Looking someone in the eye implies paying attention, taking the other person seriously, and being trustworthy that enhances communication effectiveness in the work place. If we constantly avoid eye contact with another for example looking down at the floor or staring out a window, we are at risk and being perceived as bored, shifty, or rude. This indicates that, if we do not make eye contact, our communication may fail to attain its goals (Nelson, 2008).

## **2.4.2 Major persuasive techniques in communication**

Persuasion is the skill of crafting verbal message to influence the attitude or behavior of others using ethical means. It is an ethical means of influence because it relies on verbal argument rather than force and allow others freedom to resist the influence attempt (Trenholm, as cited in Verderber et al, 2007).

Furthermore, Baron and Byrne (1997) elaborated persuasion as the way for changing people's attitude, belief, and opinion when a source deliberately uses communication. Baron and Byrne also mentioned that if we think for a moment we see that each day we are influenced with many efforts of persuasion by many individuals, organizations, news papers, magazines, advertisements, radio and TV commercial, religious preaching etc. in fact, people use various persuasive techniques depending on various situation and context throughout their daily circumstances.

### **2.4.2.1 Types of Persuasion**

**2.4.2.1.1 Personal credibility:** - Good and well supported reasons alone may be persuasive, but they are even more powerful when presented by a credible source. Credibility is the extent to which the target believes in the speaker's expertise, trustworthiness, and likability (Verderber et al, 2007).

#### **2.4.2.1.1.1 Characteristics of Credibility**

- **Competence:** when people seem to know what they are talking about, have good information, and are perceived as clear thinkers, we say that they are competent. This implies that as the more people perceive you as knowledgeable on a particular area or subject, the more likely they will pay attention to their views.
- **Honest:** when people seem to be dependable and honest, keep the promises they have made, and are perceived to be acting for the good of others than for self. This makes communication effective at the work place.
- **Likeability:** it refers to the combination of congeniality, attractiveness, warmth and friend-ness. This indicates that when a person is likable by his/her customers at the work place, enhances effective interpersonal communication between the seller and buyers.

**2.4.2.1.2. Appeal to Emotion:** Messages that give good reasons from a credible source are likely to be persuasive. But when you are trying to influence others to act, you can increase the persuasiveness of your message by appealing to people's emotion (Verderber et al, 2007). Furthermore, Verderber and colleagues states that the effectiveness of emotional appeal depends on the mood and attitude of the persons who are persuading and the language itself.

#### **2.4.2.1.3. Reciprocity**

Reciprocity was defined by Baron and Byrne (1997) as a mutual benefit that include synonyms as react with, reply with, give and take response, give back and return, etc, when social behavior is concerned.

As Baron and Byrne (1997) in most social interaction, people guided and act according to reciprocity norm or principles. For instance, in the process of human interaction, people cooperate with others who cooperate; they help others who help them, they like others who like them and similarly, they disclose themselves to those who disclose with them. On the other hand, Rook

(1987) pointed out that reciprocity is an important determinate of social satisfaction during social relationship. According to Rook (1987) the expectation of trust and reciprocity provide assurance that the transfer will be used to the mutual benefit of both parties (sellers and buyers) in promoting unique value creation in the relationship.

#### **2.4.2.1.4. Compliance gaining strategies:-**

This strategy helps the sellers to attract and influence their customers at the work place by practicing the following sub-strategies of compliance.

##### **2.4.2.1.4.1 Logical appeal:-**

In this strategy, Verderber and colleagues (2007) states that this strategy is focusing primary on reasoning, a person seeks, compliance by presenting reason and/or evidence. This implies that when the seller presents good reason for the goods that he/she sells at the work place, enhances the customers behavior to buy the product.

##### **2.4.2.1.4.2. Bargaining strategies**

In the bargaining strategy, sellers seek compliance by offering trade-offs. This indicates that there should be negotiation between the customers and sellers. For instance: if this material is not comfortable for you, you will turn back and the like.

##### **2.4.2.1.4.3. Direct request strategy**

In this strategy, a seller seeks compliance by asking customers to behave in a particular way without reason. This means the sellers are primary based on credibility. In effect they are saying, “You know me you know I am trust worthy and cooperative.” These may make a good relationship between customers and sellers.

##### **2.4.2.1.4.4. Empathy- Based strategy**

In this strategy, a person seeks compliance by appealing to him/her customers’ love, affection, or sympathy. A seller may say “If you really believe me and

respect my feeling, you will buy my product” or “you know I can’t get along without you.” and if you don’t go in for treatment, I will not be profitable.

**2.4.2.1.5. The door in the face technique:** it is a procedure for gaining compliance in which requesters begin with a large request and then when this is refused they will retreat to a smaller one. This technique is commonly observed in many boutiques sales persons request others to pay high costs for many items.

**2.4.2.1.6. Playing hard to get:** it refers to efforts to increase compliance by suggesting that an object or material is scarce and hard to obtain and convince customers by saying this item is available only in our super market and the like.

**2.4.2.1.7. Deadline technique:** it is a technique in which target persons are told that they have only limited time to take advantage of obtaining some items.

### **2.4.3. Communication Competence skills at the work place:-**

Communication serves to maintain ongoing work place relationship and keep people connected. In addition to the basic verbal and non verbal and listening skills, there are additional communication skills that help to build a positive work place climate in the market. These are called relational skills and include, sharing personal information, active listening and constructive criticism (Galvin and Terrell, 2001).

It is possible to say that interpersonal skills are interpersonal communication skills used to build or maintain a good relationship between sellers and buyers at the market.

Effective communication is also termed as communication competence. Supporting the idea, Nelson (2008) defined communication competences as the ability to effectively exchange meaning and materials through a common system of symbol, sign, or behavior. Further, Nelson (2008) explained

communication competence in terms of two basic ideas: achievement of a goal and maintenance of relationship. Here communication competence is communication that achieves what we want from other person while maintain the relationship in a way that is acceptable to both parties. So success in most position depends on effective communication, which means they are capable or skilled at speaking and listening.

In the competence communication, communicators have wide range communication skills and know which ones to use in specific situation in order to reach their goals (Galvin and Terrell, 2001).

According to Galvin and Terrell (2001), competent communicators develop sets of verbal and listening skills for managing predictable situation and communication in the work place.

**2.4.3.1 Verbal skills:** - in the verbal skills, there are four basic skills that are used in all areas of everyday life, including the work place.

**2.4.3.1.1 Managing personal introduction:-** It is the skill when a person makes introduction he/she will be effective if he/she remembers to speak clearly, pronounce the names carefully and include any additional interesting information about the person he/she is introducing. This will give both parties something with which help to start conversation.

Many introductions include handshakes between the people who are being introduced. This implies that in business setting both parties (seller and buyer) tend to shake hands in order to facilitate effective communication at work place (Galvin and Terrell, 2001). If the two parties do not tend to shake hands and introduce information with each other at the beginning of conversation, it may make communication weak.

**2.4.3.1.2 Sharing information:** - An important communication competence skill is giving and getting information. Here, exchanging information involves giving information, giving direction and asking questions to get information, or checking out what someone said (Terrell and Galvin, 2001). This implies that unless we receive and send message accurately, we cannot get our point across, and we cannot truly understand our customers' ideas.

**2.4.3.1.3 Giving description:** - in the verbal skills, giving a description is a very important and often taken for granted skills. This implies that giving description about how our service or product works and telling our customers to enhance the value they get from our product or service. So in order to achieve this goal, we have to have a personal experience to describe, illustrate unique features and benefits of our products and services (Galvin and Terrell, 2001).

**2.4.3.1.4. Asking questions:** - the ability to ask intelligent and effective questions is an important verbal skill. It is the means of asking opinion and feeling of our customers' reaction to our products or services. If the sellers do not have asking ability of opinion and feeling of their customer reaction towards their products or services, their products or services are not exchanged as they want.

**2.4.3.2. Listening skills:** - Listening skill is an active process that includes receiving, interpreting, evaluating and responding to a message (Galvin and Terrell, 2001).

In this case active listening refers to the ability to recognize another person's feeling and to reflect those feeling to the speaker listening is a very important tool for selling materials or goods and how to act appropriately in a particular setting or situation.

#### **2.4.3.2.1. The importance of effective listening**

In families, friendship, and at work place, a good listening ability helps to build relationship and a sense of connection (Galvin and Terrell, 2001). In the work place, effective listening leads to success, a positive work place, and climate. This indicates that good listeners create a climate of support and can attract their customers in the workplace. Here good work place is one that allows us to raise question and offer ideas freely. According to Galvin and Terrell (2001), creativity is fostered by good listening that means when employees pay attention to each other's ideas and feedback from customers, exciting things happened and new ideas are created. In the listening skill there is critical listening which means analyzing a message containing opinion, points of view of customers and attempt to persuade and then making decision based on the analysis. After examining the message, we need to respond actively and we need to ask questions to obtain further information from others. Critical listening involves separating facts from opinion and evaluating the sources of a message. A fact is a statement that can be proved true or false. An opinion is a statement that is based on a belief or feeling of individuals. Supporting the above idea, Galvin and Terrell (2001), stated that critical listeners hear the other person ideas first; look facts, opinion, disagreement, confusion; and then figures out how to respond effectively.

#### **2.5 Social interaction as an interpersonal communication**

The behavior and feeling through which people influence and react to each other in the interpersonal communication process is social interaction. (Giddene, 1992).

On the other hand, Goffman (1955), who is the prominent analyst of day to day social activities, defined social interaction as the process that takes place in circumstances through face to face social involvement and individuals present in a single physical setting. In this point of view, human communication is a

form of mutual communication which occurs when people simply meet each other in the same setting to exchange their goods, ideas, attitude and feeling.

All the social process that coming, going and happening through communication among people have great deal to do with how people think, feel and behave in a particular setting (Wallace, 1971). Similarly, Hogg and Vaughan (2005) pointed out that the social work place is in which people come and can interact through their activities, and influence over the ways in which they think, behave and act. It may be possible to say that the social environment or work place in which one can do a lot of things with other people in his/her social context.

In addition to the above idea, Clark and Robbey (1988) pointed out that people choose to interact with one another because they expect that the interaction to serve to accomplish their goals. In this sense, it is possible to say that social interaction through communication has purpose and guided by the interest of participants who are involved in selling and buying activities.

In the process of human interaction during communication, Clark and Robbey (1988) stated that various needs are fulfilled, beliefs and opinions are confirmed, and commodities are exchanged. This implies that social interaction that takes place in market setting also has its own purpose. For example as Ford (1995) pointed out that people interact to sell their basic products to do their work and gain profit through trading and to get information they must interact with others. So that the social interaction that occurs during commodity exchange, involves the use of language skills and interpersonal contact which greatly influence the social behavior in general and how customer-sellers behave, feel and act in a particular way.

## **2.6 Education and communication**

The effectiveness of interpersonal communication can be improved by education and training in which education provides the most crucial point of interface between customers and service providers in their environment

(Carnegie, 2000). Effective communication often allow people to use and shape the information through training and education

Therefore, education makes people to have the skills or abilities to use their cognitive skills properly. Education, particularly, concentrated on the psychological life skills such as decision making, problem solving, critical thinking and creative thinking, communication skills, interpersonal relationship skills, empathy, self awareness, and coping with stress and emotions are essentials to have good communication (Carnegie, 2000).

Furthermore, Carnegie (2000) states that to have good skills in interpersonal communication, it requires education and training particularly to acquire new skills about preparation of service, politeness, to take others feedback positively, to have good attitude and perception towards their job.

### **2.7. Barriers of effective interpersonal communication:-**

When a person has troubled receiving the message that is being sent, it is often because of interference, or noise. Interference refers to something that blocks a listener's ability to receive a message. Galvin and Terrell (2001), further elaborated communication barriers as external and internal destructions. The external destructions such as loud music, a big screen TV, or car traffic may interfere with receiving the oral message and the internal destructions consists personal Worries, day dreaming, sadness, frustration, Fear, self cognitive thinking and physical illness causes interferences. Even though, both internal and external destructors are factors for communication block, this study more focuses on the internal barriers of communication.

Interpersonal communication is the communication that takes place between people. The need for thought full, effective communication in the work place is paramount. Effective interpersonal communication skills are essential to social interaction, and the building and maintenance of all relationship. But the absence of effective communication skills in the work place can cause

irrevocable damage to relationship; affecting productivity, satisfaction, performance, morale, trust, respect, self-confidence (Karimi, 2010).

Any factor that impedes the exchange of information between a sender and a receiver is a barrier to effective communication (Stones and Freeman, as cited in Nelson, 2008). Here barriers are elements that interfere with the receivers understanding of the intended meaning of the senders' message. Because of these barriers, some part of the message is lost on the way creating and some sort of misunderstanding between the sender and receiver.

Incorrect word usage, poor delivery of message, poor listening skills, lack of confidence make communication difficult for the receiver to understand the message of the sender.

There are several communication barriers attributable to factors other than the sender and the receiver. For instance, according to Parry (1970) poor communication often results from information over load and communication is reduced when senders may not have sufficient times to provide adequate response to the receivers. The personal traits of the senders also influence effective interpersonal relationship in the work place. For example, a person with low degree of trust, first meeting skills and openness, may reduce communication effectiveness.

Furthermore, Haihambo (2004) described that effective communication skills can be blocked by psychological and socio economic factors as well.

### **2.7.1 The psychological factor**

According to Hyde and Delamater (1997) many patients experience the typical reaction for situation like denial of the reality which is followed by anger, fear, depression, stress and anxiety which in turn can make the patients psychologically sick and they are unlikely to be able to hold a job and financial worries become an additional strain.

According to Hyde and Delamater (1997) the psychological or internal challenges of persons with HIV/AIDS faces depression anxiety stress, fear low self esteem which affects the thought, feeling, emotion, relationship and well being of the infected persons.

According to Haihambo (2004), anxiety is a common symptoms in HIV/AIDS infected patients in which they experience fear, worry, insomnia, impaired concentration and memory, diminished appetite, rumination, compulsive rituals which interfere with patients daily function like unable to work, attend to medical care, and communicate with other and interfere with personal relationship of patients.

Furthermore, Cambel, as cited in Verderber and colleagues (2007) demonstrates that we communicate our self- concept, self- image and self- esteem when we interact with others. The self is socially constructed through communication; that is yourself is the result of how others speak to you and how you see yourself. But, in contrast when we feel poor about ourselves, have unfavorable and low self- concept that when we have low perception of ourselves, we have been said to have low self- esteem which leads us to have low confidence to have public conversation and talking accurately in the interpersonal communication process.

Hyde and Delamater (1997) also described the following psychological symptoms of depression for HIV/AIDS patients

#### **2.7.1.1 Behavioral theories of depression**

According to this theory, depression often arises as a reaction to a stress full negative events such as a breakup of relationship, lose of energy, sleep disturbance, a job lose or serious medical illness. The theory also suggests that life with stress such as fear of death leads to depression because it creates a reduction in positive reinforce in person's life (Nolen-Hoesema, 2004). According to Nolen- Hoeksema, a person begins to withdraw which only results in a further reduction in reinforces, which leads more withdrawal. This

withdrawal makes the person to have difficulty in his/ her relationship and interactive with others.

#### **2.7.1.2. Cognitive theory of depression**

According to this theory, people, who are depressed in their life, have negative views of themselves, of others and of the future. They also have cognitive disturbance, poor concentration and attention, sense of worthlessness, poor self- esteem and hopeless. This negative expectation towards the negative events lead them to experience long term learned hopelessness plus self-esteem loss in many area of their lives.

#### **2.7.1.3. Interpersonal theories of depression**

This theory is concerned with people's close relationship and their roles in those relationships. Disturbance in those roles of the relationship are thought to be the main source of depression. The theory also supported by several studies like in studies of Nolen-Hoeskema (2004) which found that those with stress and insecure attachment style had more dysfunctional negative beliefs and subsequently developed lower self-esteem and more stress symptoms which significantly influence communication and relationship.

#### **2.7.2 Economic factor**

The other problem related to HIV/AIDS patients is economic constraints. According to Haihambo (2004) patients may suffer from economic constraints as their health become sick, physically weak, they can't work and lose their job. So they are often so hungry become malnourished and become unable to concentrate. This physical weakness and health problems may prevent the persons from thinking clearly, listening carefully, or speaking well, interacting and communicating with others (UKeje, 1992).

Furthermore, Haihambo (2004) states that many HIV/AIDS patients are not granted to gain access of working in the community, this made them to be frustrated and demoralized which leads them to be economically poor in which they are more vulnerable to economic and social hardship such as

malnutrition, poverty, homelessness and in able to have access to education and health care.

### **2.7.3 Social Factors**

AIDS is a socially stigmatized disease that makes the patient become socially isolated and discriminated in which society has traditionally considered immoral, so this infected persons can be caused to see themselves as undesirable by others who view them as contagious (Haihambo, 2004). According to Haihambo, this in itself is an emotional situation that can infect people to withdraw, not disclose their feeling, needs ideas and affection and socially become isolated. Inevitably this may lead to an emotional breakdown because these feelings continue to be suppressed, so the most destructive stressor is that of feeling isolated. This isolation can have many causes including the loss of support by lovers, family, society, friends, communication and interaction with others (Haihambo, 2004).

Ukeje (1992) also states that when people experience feeling of isolation, their interaction and communication with others become low and this reduces individuals' sense of belongingness and confidence to specify them to the intended group.

People with HIV/AIDS are also stigmatized to several social consequences related to their right, health care service, and social isolation and this social isolation and discrimination can lead behavioral disturbances, fatalism, self-stigmatization and lead patients to be vulnerable to becoming infected and less able to cope with the burdens of HIV/AIDS (Haihambo, 2004). These all social problems continuously affect the patient not to be engaged in the communal life and activities in the community.

Furthermore, Levy as cited in Nelson (2008) also states that people who usually stigmatized and discriminated from the main stream of the society, experienced low self- concept that inhibit them to have conversation, relationship and discussion in the business and social settings.

**2.7.4 Poor listening ability:-** an impatient listener who listens only for words, may miss the feeling, emotion and a lot of vital communication with his/her customers or clients in the work place (UKeje, 1992).

## **Chapter three**

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1 Design of the study**

With the goal of getting general pictures of the effectiveness of interpersonal communication skills of micro enterprise workers, who live with HIV/AIDS “Mixed research design” was employed. This design assumes that using both quantitative and qualitative approach in combination provides better understanding of research problems than either approach alone.

Among the major types of mixed method design, “concurrent Triangulation” was employed. This design help to collect data and analyses two types of data (quantitative and qualitative) in which one type of data used to compare results, or validate with other type of data.

#### **3.2 Source of data**

To collect information, only primary source was used primary sources were workers and coordinators of the association.

#### **3.3 Target population**

The target population of the study was micro enterprise workers who live with HIV/AIDS in Deber Berhan Town.

#### **3.4 Sample of the study**

From the total of 120 members of the four associations namely: Fikir Lenatoch, Endersalen, Tiwliid Yidan and Yesetoch Mahiber, in which each association has 30 members and from each association 20 members were selected and totally 80 members were selected by simple random sampling. From this 80 total sample size of the study, 60 were females and 20 were males.

### **3.5 Sampling Technique.**

The sampling technique the researcher used to conduct this study were probability and non-probability sampling. The non-probability sampling particularly, purposive sampling was used for interview to obtain detail information about the barriers of effective interpersonal communication. Probability sampling, particularly, simple random sampling was used to distribute questionnaire to obtain information about interaction, persuasion, and competence skills of the workers.

### **3.6 Data gathering instruments**

In order to triangulate the information for the study, the researcher used the following data gathering instruments.

#### **3.6.1 Questionnaire**

The questionnaire which consists of four sections with close ended questions was used. The first section of the questionnaire was to collect background information. The second section deals with interpersonal relationship and communication, the third section related with the persuasion techniques and the last section designed to get information about interpersonal competence skills.

The questionnaire first prepared in English then it was translated to Amharic to minimize and overcome language difficulty and promote better understanding of the items of the questionnaire. 80 questionnaires were distributed and filled.

#### **3.6.2 Interview guide**

Semi and open ended interview guides were prepared by the researcher and 12 individuals were interviewed to acquire qualitative data about barriers of interpersonal communication that hinder them to communicate freely with their customers.

### **3.6.3 Observation**

Observation was also used to collect information. Each market observation was observed three times to obtain first hand and a wider range of information in order to cross check with questionnaires on the interpersonal communication skills of the workers.

### **3.7 Procedures**

The interview and market observation were conducted with informed consent of the participants. The interview was conducted in a face-to-face way of interviewing and the respondents were informed that the information obtained will be kept confidential. The interview was conducted in a place where the participants felt comfortable.

All items in the questionnaire, interview and observation check list were developed by the researcher on the basis of the literature reviewed.

The questionnaire items were commented by the advisor. Based on the advisor's comment and suggestion, the questionnaires were revised accordingly and then pilot tested on 20 members of non- sample respondents in Debre Berhan. Then reliability of the items was computed using cronbach alpha. Thus, the reliability of scaled item was found to be 0.75. The questionnaires were distributed with physical presence of the researcher and one assistant was involved in distributing and collecting the questionnaire.

### **3.8 Methods of data analysis**

Both qualitative and quantitative method of data analysis and interpretation were employed. Qualitative data gathered through interview and observation was qualitatively analyzed. Whenever necessary, direct quotes from interviewees were put to show their originality.

Data obtained by close ended questions were analyzed by using descriptive statistics, particularly, frequency percentages, mean and grand mean in combination with qualitative data collected through interview and observation.

One way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was also used to know whether there were significant mean differences in interpersonal communication among the associations. Pearson correlation coefficient was also used to see the relationship between education and communication skills.

### **3.9 Data Coding**

The qualitative data obtained from the interview and observation was coded. While data were coded, I used simple format of data coding with a combination of numbers and characters for instance, data code I. WA.A1, 02-01-2011 indicated that the data were drawn from the interview (I) in which worker “A” (A) being interviewed in association 1(A1) on January 02,2011. Similarly, market observation was coded as MO. A2, 10.01.2011 and reads as market observation in association 2 on January 10, 2011. The same ways of coding were also used for all workers and coordinators of the associations.

## Chapter four

### 4. Data analysis and presentation

This part of the study deals with analysis of the data that were collected through questionnaire, interview and observation. An attempt was made to answer the basic research questions raised.

#### 4.1. Background information of participants

**Table1. Characteristics of Participants**

Participants		No	%
micro enterprise workers	1. Educational status		
	➤ Primary school	52	65
	➤ Secondary school	28	35
	2. Sex		
	- female	60	75
	- male	20	25

As can be seen from the above table, 52(65%) and 28 (35%) of the workers are at primary and secondary school level respectively. This indicates that most of the workers are at the primary school level.

The table also shows that 60(75%) and 20(25%) of the workers were females and males respectively. This might indicate that females were economically dependent and they did not have other choice compared with males in that specific area of the study.

## 4.2 Workers interpersonal relationship skills with their customers in the work place

Interpersonal relationship is an association between two people who are interdependent, who use some consistent patterns of interaction, and who have interacted for an extended period of time. The interdependent nature of interpersonal relationship suggest that people mutually satisfy their need; need for inclusion, or becoming involved with others, the need for affection or holding fond or tender feeling toward another person and the need for control, or the ability to influence others or environment.

But, in contrast to this, if workers do not have good interpersonal relationship with their customers in the work place will reduce the effectiveness of interpersonal communication skills. The table below shows the workers' interpersonal relationship with their customers.

**Table 2. Workers Interpersonal Relationship Skills in the Work Place**

Item number	Workers Response										Mean	Standard deviation
	SA		A		U		D		SD			
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%		
1	2	2.5	13	16	-	-	64	80	1	1.3	2.3	1.612
2	-	-	23	28.5	1	1.3	56	70	-	-	2.36	0.477
3	4	5	19	23.8	-	-	55	68.8	2	2.5	2.6	1.038
4	6	7.5	14	17.5	1	1.3	58	72.5	1	1.3	2.58	1.04
5	6	7.5	10	12.5	-	-	58	72.5	6	7.5	2.4	1.051
6	4	5	12	15	-	-	60	75	4	5	2.4	0.976
7	5	6.3	27	33.8	2	2.5	40	50	6	7.5	2.7	1.177
8	6	7.5	21	26.3	4	5	49	61.3	-	-	2.5	0.968
9	6	7.5	18	22.5	2	2.5	51	36.8	3	3.8	2.6	1.102
10	7	8.8	13	16.3	-	-	57	71.3	3	3.8	2.55	1.09
11	6	7.5	15	18.8	2	2.5	56	70	1	1.3	2.61	1.049
12	3	3.8	13	16.3	1	1.3	55	68.8	8	10	2.35	0.995
13	-	-	14	17.5	5	6.3	60	75	1	1.3	2.4	0.789
14	1	1.3	13	16.3	4	5.0	54	67.5	8	10	2.31	0.908
15	10	12.5	23	28.3	6	7.5	41	51.8	-	-	2.48	1.043
16	6	7.5	21	26.3	4	5	49	61.3	-	-	2.4	1.351
17	9	11.3	12	15	4	5	50	62.5	5	6.3	2.63	0.97
18	3	3.8	13	16	3	3.8	60	75	1	1.3	2.6	1.03
19	5	6.3	11	13.8	7	8.8	50	62.5	7	8.8	2.46	1.043
20	11	13.8	55	68	3	3.8	15	18	-	-	3.5	1.14
Grand mean											2.5	

As indicated in the above table, twenty statements were presented to workers with the intention of assessing their interpersonal relationship with their customers.

In responding to items 1 and 2 (Table2), 64 (80%) and 13(16%) of the workers rated “disagree” and “agree” respectively concerning to the feedback statement. The mean score was 2.35. This means majority of the workers did not have the skills of asking feedback from their customers.

In the same Table, items 3 and 4 which were stated as workers’ confidence and trust with their customers, 55(65.8%) and 58(72.5%) of the workers rated “disagree” and 19(23.8%), and 14(17.5%) of workers rated agree respectively. This implies that most of the workers have low confidence and trust with their customers.

Furthermore, in the market observation (MO, A2,10-01-2011) most workers were observed with low self-confidence in a face-to-face communication with their customers. Even they were not approaching customers to ask what they want and simply they asked them just in a distance conversation. In the informal discussion with the worker after the observation, she was asked why she was not communicating confidently with customers. She replied that:

*Confidence is the feeling you have when you believe in yourself and believe that you have control over specific situation and relationship. But lack of confidence leads to social phobia which involve fear of being evaluated and observed in our face by others because there is a belief that HIV patients are known by watching in their face, that is why we are afraid of looking at our customers in their face and we were ashamed (I.WA.A1,02-01-2011).*

In rating items 5 and 6 (Table 2), which were intended to assess self- disclosure and personal skills of workers, 58(72.5%) and 60 (75%) of the workers rated “disagree” while 10(12.5%) and 12(15%) of the workers rated “agree” for item 5

and 6 respectively. The mean score of the result (2.4) indicates that most of the workers have low personal skills and do not self-disclose with their customers.

In item 7 (Table 2) workers were requested to reflect their consistency behavior. In response to this, 27(33.8%) and 40(50%) of the workers rated “disagree” and “agree” respectively. The average point is 2.7 which imply that almost half of the workers did not show consistent behavior.

In rating item 8 (Table-2) which was intended to assess the workers’ managing abilities of activities, 49(61.3%) and 21(26.3%) of the workers rated “disagree” and “agree” respectively, the average score was 2.6 this indicates that large proportion of workers did not have the relational skills in the communication process.

Item 10 (Table 2), assesses the friendly relationship of workers with their customers. In response to this, 57(71.3%) and 13(16.3%) of the workers rated “disagree” and “agree” respectively, the mean score was 2.5 and above half of the workers gave their response disagree. This indicates that, they did not have friendly relationship skills to communicate with their customers.

Workers were also asked to express their ability to share information with their customers during communication by item 11 (Table 2). Accordingly, 56(70%) and 15(18.8%) of the workers responded “disagree” and “agree” respectively. This indicates that majority of the workers did low ability of sharing information.

In rating items 12 and 13 (Table 2), that indicate about the workers first meeting skills and use of jokes in the communication process, 55(68.8%) and 60 (75%) of the workers for both items rated “disagree” respectively, while 13(16.3%) and 14 (17.5%) for the same items workers rated “agree.” The mean scores were 2.35 and 2.4 for both items respectively. This indicates that, majority of the workers did not use conformable jokes and first meeting skills to enhance their friendly relationship with their customers.

In line to the above result, one of the interviewed worker said the following:

*“To speak truly, whenever I communicate with my customers in the work place, me and my partners did not practice first meeting skill and jokes in the communication process to establish good relationship because we did not have the concept of these skills. So I directly proceed to ask what my customers want without trying to impress customers by using this first meeting skill and comfortable jokes. (I.WA,A2, 06.01.2011).*

The market observation also supported what the worker said, in those some observations attempts were used to observe the impression and joking skills of the workers, and majority of them seemed to be not motivated to practice these skills in the communication process to enhance their relationship with their customers. Even they feel discomfort and some of them were not happy to communicate freely (MO.A1.11.01.2011).

In item 14 (Table 2), workers were requested to rate their openness to express their ideas with their customers, most of them or 54(67.5%), replied “disagree” while 8(10%) of them replied “strongly disagree” and 13(16.3%) of them rated “agree.” The result reveals large proportions of the workers were not open to express their ideas.

Supporting the above result, during the interview, one of the workers said the following:

*I do not openly express my ideas to my customers that I am living with HIV/AIDS because the negative attitude of the society towards HIV/AIDS has not been changed. So I am afraid to disclose this secrete. If I do this, my customers may reject me and my goal will not be attained. Concerning this, I can tell you my personal experience I faced due to my openness. For example, I have thrown away tomato and other related products many times. Customers were not willing to buy these products because they assumed as if I put my blood in the products through syringe (I.WA.A3.19-01-2011).*

In rating items 15,17,18 and 19, which were related items intended to assess workers' use of sign language in the communication process, 41(51.3%), 50(62.5%), 60(75%) and 50(62.5%), of the workers responded "disagree" to the above items respectively and 23(26.8%), 12(15.1%), 13(16.3%) and 11(13.8%) of the workers for the same items responded "agree", this shows that most of them did not practice sign language in the interpersonal communication.

In addition, market observation supported the finding that revealed in the above analysis, as observation result reveals that most of the workers did not consider the importance of intimated distance, did not demonstrate appropriate bodily responsiveness like shaking heads ups and down, angle themselves away from their customer that means, workers were not directly facing with their customers, they sit by crossing their arms and hands and they did not use positive and responsive facial expression such as smiling and head movement (MO.A3,21.01.2011).

In rating item 16(Table 2), which was intended to assess the feeling of workers in using different words like "serious, and "sure", 49(61.3%) and 21(26.3%) of the workers rated "disagree" and "agree" respectively this indicates that more than half of the workers did not use words like serious and sure in the communication process in the work place.

Item 20 (Table 2), assessed the smooth exchange of workers conversation in the work place. In response to this, 55(68%) and 15(18.3%) of the workers rated "agree" and "disagree" respectively. The mean score was 3.5. This indicates that works exchange of conversation was smooth and positive with their customers.

To sum up, the rating of most workers for most items showed low results with grand mean 2.5. Both observation and interview results also reflected this result.

Generally, from the rating of 20 items, interview and observation it was possible to deduce that most of the workers did not practice the interpersonal

relationship skills effectively in the interpersonal communication process with their customers in the work place.

### 4.3 Persuasion techniques workers used in the work place

Persuasion is the process of influencing or changing attitude, belief and opinion or behavior. In the face-to-face communication in the work place which involves the ability to convince audience, to sell products and exchange ideas with the audience, persuasion plays a great role to have good communication and interaction with others (Nelson, 2008).

**Table3. Types of Persuasion Techniques Workers used During Communication in the Work Place**

Techniques	No	Mean	Standard deviation
Reciprocity	80	3.5	0.986
Logical appeal	80	3.78	0.826
Bargaining	80	3.00	0.638
Honesty	80	3.00	0.818
Credibility	80	3.3	1.072
Direct request technique	80	3.3	1.15
Empathy	80	3.00	10.02
Face in the door technique	80	2.8	0.823
Deadline technique	80	2.3	0.776
Playing hard to get	80	2.29	0.981
Grand mean	80	2.9	

As shown in Table 3 above, workers employed various persuasion techniques to convince audience and to build harmonious social interaction.

Workers used different persuasion techniques for gaining their customers compliance such as reciprocity as a mutual benefit, logical appeal that focusing

primary on reasoning, bargains in which workers negotiate with their customers, honesty when workers keep their promise they have made and are perceived to be acting for the good of others, credibility, the likability of workers by their customers, direct request technique in which sellers seek compliance by asking their customers to behave in a particular way without reason, face in the door technique in which sellers call reasonably high price at first and then tell the real price. Sellers also employed techniques such as dead line and hard to get techniques by suggesting that items offered for sale were scarce and hard to obtain in other places and even in the future.

As shown in Table 3 workers usually use logical appeal technique ( $M=3.78$ ,  $SD= 0.862$ ) to sell their products in the work place than other techniques.

#### **4.4 Communication competence skills of workers in the work place**

Work place competent communication intended to create perception of psychological closeness with others in which workers enacting by immediacy by smiling, reducing physical distance and calling people by their first name in order to develop positive relationship with others. However, if there is low competence skills like incapability of individuals to exchange ideas and goods, lack of personal qualification and confidence to speak freely with others lead to reduce the effectiveness of communication (Nelson, 2008).

**Table 4. Communication Competence Skills of Workers**

Item number	Workers' response										Mean	Standard deviation
	SA		A		U		D		SD			
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%		
1	3	3.8	17	21	1	1.3	52	65	7	8.8	2.6	1.14
2	7	8.8	23	28.8	2	2.5	44	55	4	5.0	2.64	1.13
3	1	1.3	10	12.5	-	-	66	82.5	3	3.5	2.25	0.77
4	4	5.0	20	25	1	1.3	52	65	3	3.8	2.63	1.06
5	-	-	4	5	-	-	72	90	4	5	2.05	0.50
6	1	1.3	10	12.5	-	-	66	81	3	3.8	2.3	0.76
7	1	1.3	25	31.5	2	2.5	47	58.8	3	3.8	2.63	1.03
8	4	5	14	17.5	2	2.5	58	72.5	2	2.5	2.34	0.922
9	8	10	13	16.3	-	-	58	72	1	1.3	2.54	0.896
10	7	8.8	10	12.5	-	-	50	62.5	13	16.3	2.35	1.15
Grand mean											2.43	

In rating item 1 (Table 4) which was intended to assess the hand shaking skills of workers, 52(65%) and 17(21%) of workers responded “disagree” and “agree” respectively. The mean score was 2.6 and above half of the workers gave their response “disagree”. This indicates workers had low hand shaking skills to communicate with their customers in the work place.

To confirm the above result, market observation was conducted to see the hand shaking skills of workers and most of them were observed with low hand shaking skills practice in their communication and workers simply received the message from their customers and delivered what they were ordered without any further conversation (MO.A4,12-02-2011).

Item 2 (Table 4) assessed the attention of sellers to call their customers by their names. In response to this, 44(55.0%) and 23(28.8%) of workers rated “disagree” and “agree” respectively. The mean score was 2.6. This indicates that majority of workers did not call their customers in their name during communication. Even, workers were not attempting to introduce themselves to their customers. To assure the above result, market observation was conducted

during their communication. The observation result indicates that workers were passive communicators even they were not attempting to start conversation and not introducing themselves to their customers properly (MO.A1,08-02-2011).

Workers were also asked to express their ability of asking question to their customers in items 3, 4 and 6, which are related items of “asking questions.” Accordingly, 66(82.5), 52 (65%), 66 (81%) and 10(12.5%), 20(25%) and 10(12.5) of workers responded “disagree” and “agree” respectively. The mean score of the three items was 2.25. This indicates that majority of the workers did not have ability of rising questions to their customers.

To support the above result, observation was conducted, and as the observation result revealed that majority of the workers had low ability of asking questions about the reaction of their customers towards their service/product. Even they did not ask any opinion and feeling of their customers towards their service (MO.A2,10-02-2011).

In item 5 (Table 4) workers were asked to rate their personal experience to explain the unique feature and benefit of their product. 72(90%) and 4(5%) of workers responded “disagree” and “agree”. The mean score was 2.05. This indicates that most of the workers did have low personal experience and skills to explain the unique feature and benefit of their service.

The result of market observation also supported the above result, in the observation, almost all workers did not explain the function and unique features of their products and even they did not have any written lists that show the function of products in their shop. Lists like milk and milk products and its function was totally absent in the work place (MO.A3.18.02.2011).

In item 7 (Table 4), workers were asked to show their disagreement and agreement towards taking their own friends ideas. Accordingly, 47(58.8%) and 25(31.5%) of the workers responded “disagree” and “agree” respectively. The

mean score was 2.63; this indicates that more than half of the works did not take their won friends' ideas positively.

In line with the above result, one of the workers interviewed was asked why they did not take their friends ideas positively with each other in the work place during communication. She reported that:

*Since there is no respect with each other and there is no sense of friendly relationship among us because the relationship is as boss and employee between team leader and workers. There was unfair distribution of profit among the workers and only few individuals are getting advantage in the association. These and other factors made workers to withdraw from their association and the number of members are decreasing from time to time in the association and those who withdrew themselves from the association are in severe problems of lack of finance and social support (I.WA.A4,16.02.2011).*

In rating item 8 (Table 4), which was intended to check the attention of workers to get feedback from their customers in the work place during communication, 58(72%) and 14(17.5%) of the workers responded “disagree” and “agree” respectively. The mean score was 2.5; this implies that most of them did not give attention to take feedback from their customers.

In addition to this result, market observation confirmed the fact. In the observation, workers did not take time to look at their audience, they were not reacting to what their customers said and they did not give attention to take their customers feedback like satisfaction critiques and needs. These and other feed backs were not considered during communication in the work place (MO.A4,20-02-2011).

In items 9 and 10 (Table 4), which were related items intended to check the critical analysis skills of workers towards the message that contains needs and opinion of their customers. In responding to this, 54(67%) and 16(21%) of the

workers replied “disagree” and “agree” respectively. The mean score was 2.42, this indicates that more than half of the workers did not have the critical analysis skills to fulfill the need and opinion of their customers.

#### **4.5 Descriptive statistics to compare the means of workers interpersonal communication skills by association**

**Table 5. Result of Descriptive Statistics for Interpersonal Communication Skills of Respondents**

Association	N	Mean	SD
Fikir Lenatoch	20	2.6	0.31
Endersalen	20	2.66	00.35
Tiwlid Yidan	20	2.7	0.43
Yesetoch Mahiber	20	2.65	0.4
Total	80	2.65	0.266

As it is illustrated in Table 5, the descriptive statistics shoes there was no significant means differences of workers interpersonal communications skills among the four associations.

#### **4.6 Analysis of variance for interpersonal communication skills among the associations’ workers**

**Table 6. Result of ANOVA for Interpersonal Communication Skills Among the Associations Workers**

Interpersonal communication skills		DF	F	Sig
Relationship skill	Between group	3	1.03	0.65
	Within group	76		
	Total	79		
Persuasion	Between group	3	0.9	0.64
	Within group	76		
	Total	79		
Communication competence	Between group	3	0.7	0.57
	Within group	76		
	Total	79		

The result in Table 6 portrayed that, there is no significant difference in interpersonal communication skills among workers of the associations. Relationship skill ( $f(3,76)=0.65$ ,  $p>0.05$ ), persuasion skill ( $f(3,76)=0.64$ ,  $P>0.05$ ) and competence skills ( $f(3,76)=0.57$ ). It indicates that these three interpersonal communication skills among all associations' workers were similar.

#### 4.7. Person correlation coefficient and education

**Table7. The Result of Correlation Between Education and Communication Skills**

Variables	Education level
Relationship skill	0.405**
Persuasion skill	0.239*
Competence skills	0.246*

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

\*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

As it is illustrated in Table 7, the correlation analysis, which was done through Pearson product correlation, indicates that communication skills are positively associated to education. Relationship skill ( $r=0.405$ ,  $p<0.01$ ), persuasion skills ( $r=0.292$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and competence skills ( $r=0.246$ ,  $p<0.05$ ).

#### 4.8. Grand mean of interpersonal communication skills

**Table8. Descriptive Grand Mean Results for the Three Interpersonal Communication Skills**

Interpersonal communication skills	Grand mean
1. Relationship skills	2.5
2. Persuasion techniques	2.9
3. competence skills	2.45

As the above table indicates, the grand means for persuasion technique is greater than the two types of interpersonal communication skills. This means,

the micro enterprise workers usually practice persuasion technique relatively better than the other skills.

#### **4.9. Analysis of interview with coordinators and workers**

Concerning the problems that hinder their communication, questions are raised for workers as following:

The first question raised to the worker was “Is there any problem that hinders your interpersonal communication with your customers?” all interviewed workers replied that there are problems.

They mentioned that the main factors were psychological, social and economic problems. Then workers were asked to identify the serious problem among the problems they have mentioned above. Accordingly, they identified psychological problems such as; anxiety, depression, low self- esteem and stress are the most serious problems that hinder their communication. They also reported that social and economic problems are also hindering them to have good communication in the work place. Finally, workers were asked to express how these problems hinder them not to have effective interpersonal communication with their customers.

##### **4.9.1. Psychological problems of workers in their communication**

Concerning the psychological problems, the worker of the association reported were the following:

*HIV/AIDS disease by itself does not aggravate our death rather psychological influence such as stress, depression and anxiety are key problems which aggravate our death. This thought of death-waiting the day when we die is our daily activity in our life which made us to think about ourselves rather than our communication and interaction with our customers in the work place (II.WB.A1,22-02-2011).*

According to the informant report, one of the most serious problems among the psychological influence in their communication is stress; it is the central problem in the association in which living in a daily fear of death, particularly when something happened i.e. (related disease like headache and fatal accidents). So the existence of stress in individual mind can determine and influence the communication.

Furthermore, dealing with the problem of stress, one of the workers of the association reported the following:

*I express my feeling about the main source of stress that hinder our communication and interaction with others in the work place is our powerlessness to avoid health problems i.e. there was nothing that did to treat my life very deeply, instead of really feel that I was suffering with my health i. e. I feel that my life will not last for much longer and most of my life that I have spent in the association has not been so fruitful and I do not see myself having a long life(II WB.A2,24,02-2011).*

Then she concluded that (our thinking about how much longer we live is our daily activity that made us to be further stressed in our life and worked about our lives than giving attention to our working activities).

*In addition, as the worker of the association reported, anxiety is a common problem of every members in the association and its symptoms such as worry, nervousness, fear, and tension are commonly experienced with the members that interfere with workers daily function like unable to communicate, work, listen properly during communication and interfere with personal relationship. The other problems are the inability to sleep, diminished appetite, diurnal variation in mood, loss of pleasure or interest, feeling of guilt, fatigue and attention and concentration problems. So these problems interfere with our communication not to have good relationship with our customers in the work place (II. WB, A3,26-02-2011).*

Regarding the depression problem, one of the association workers reported her ideas about depression as follows:

*Depression is not only affecting the longevity of our lives but also in-able us to interact and communicate consistently with others. My thought become more negative and show chronic illness like feeling of unhappiness and hopeless in my life. So I myself was depressed and tried to hide my depression by presenting as though things were fine in my life, but my feeling is unhappy and finally, I unconsciously took myself off from communication (II. WB.A4, 27-02-2011).*

Finally, she reported that “It is a common problem for our members of the association that blocks our communication and interaction in the work place.”

#### **4.9.2. Economic problem**

Regarding to the economic problem, the coordinator of the association pointed out her belief as follows:

*The financial support that we obtain from different sectors is too low which is not sufficient to improve our health and living condition and now we are living with feeling about frightening working and poor living condition with little ability to bring improvements. This is remarkably affecting our day to day activities in the work place because we are losing our health through infection, inadequate nutrition and poor health care. HIV/AIDS causes vulnerability and poverty through sickness, loss of economic productivity, need for care and that is why we are enforced to seek financial support. The coordinator also pointed out that water, and sanitation problems in our living conditions are serious problems which do not allow us to be economically active. So, this economic problem has an influence on our day to day interpersonal communication in the work place because we are physically and mentally incapable to communicate with others. (II.C.A2,28-02-2011).*

In addition, concerning to the economic problem, the coordinator of the association replied the following:

*Economically we are poor and we cannot get basic needs like food, medication and shelter to keep our health properly. So we are physically weak and in addition to this the tablet that we take daily aggravates our weakness. As a result we are tired and in-able to communicate effectively. The coordinator also reported thinking about economic issue is our daily activity in which we have sometime quarrel with the project coordinator because we hear there is large budget allocation and release from governmental and non-governmental organizations in order to improve our living and working condition. But we didn't get the real budget and this made us to be disturbed and then our CD4 become leveled down because of disturbance and in addition we always feel headache problems in our daily life. Because of these problems, our relationship and communication is low. This problem is also the main cause for the withdrawal of many members from the association and most of them are in bed and waiting their death (II C.A1, 01.03.2011).*

#### **4.9.3 Social problems**

The other factor that hinders to have effective communication, as the coordinator reported was stigma from the society. Elaborating this coordinator said the following:

*Social withdrawal problem of being HIV/AIDS positive is a common problem of the society. The coordinator also pointed out that people with HIV/AIDS are often subjected to stigmatization, discrimination and even hostility in the community and our right, such as the right to non-discrimination, equal protection, the right to privacy, to work, equal access to education, housing, health care, often violated. This made us be more vulnerable to becoming infected and less able to cope with the burden of HIV/AIDS. We were highly stigmatized, discriminated, and ignored in participating in the communal activities. So this misconception of the community towards HIV/AIDS disease strongly affects our communication and relationship in the work place (II. C.A3, 02-03-2011).*

*Due to this discrimination in the community, we lost our relationship, face difficulty of involving in other income generating activities, difficulty in making friends and feel lonely*

*and finally we experienced alienation, isolation, and demoralization in which we were pushed away to the margin of the community. We are socially marginalized and excluded from network access, i.e. sharing emotional feeling with others in the large community. This AIDS related stigma and discrimination increases our vulnerability, social isolation, deprive our basic human right worsen our infection. This is the most sever problem that hinder us to communicate and interact freely with others (III. C. A4, 03-03-2011).*

## **Chapter five**

### **5. Discussion**

The main objective of this study was to investigate the effectiveness and practice of interpersonal communication skill of micro enterprise workers who live with HIV/AIDS. This chapter mainly deals with the discussion of the major findings that were obtained from the data analyzed and interpreted in chapter four. Accordingly, the major findings are discussed below.

#### **5.1 Workers interpersonal relationship skills**

To have effective interpersonal communication skills in the work place, paying attention to the feedback of the audience is essential for adjustment purpose. But the finding of this study shows that workers did not have the skills of asking feedback from their customers. Supporting this finding, Carnegie (2000) states that if workers do not pay due attention to the feedback of their audience, their communication effectiveness significantly reduces.

The result also shows low self- confidence and trust that workers did have in their communication which negatively affects communication in the work place. Supporting the result, Bandura as cited in Carnegie (2000), states that lack of confidence in a social relationship reduces interaction and inhibits individuals from having good skills in communication.

In the interpersonal relationship skills in the work place functional messages like managing day-to-day activities, personal skills to take information and interpret in a positive way and self- disclosure are central to the process of developing good relationship with others. But, the result of this study shows that workers did not have personal, managing skills and have low self- disclosure in their communication, so they are not effective in their interpersonal communication. Supporting the result, Wilson (1992) states that

the absence of such basic skills in the interpersonal relationship can reduce the effectiveness of communication and interaction with others.

Interpersonal relationship skills also consists relational skills such as friendly relationship, expressing personal hobbies, interest, sharing information freely with others and using some comfortable jokes are important in communication to develop the first impression in a positive way. However, the findings of this study indicates workers' relational and their first impression skills were low. This in-able them to enhance friendly relationship with their customers

In line with the above result, Terrell and Galvin (2001) stated that if we appear sloppy, lazy or rude in our relational skills and in the first day of our meeting with our customers, our success, income and relationship could be negatively affected for a long time.

The other component of interpersonal relationship skill is sign language such as smile, eye contact, use of hands and fingers and wearing uniform in the work place to develop good relationship. Handling customers' attention during communication play important role to have effective and successful interpersonal communication with others. But, the result of this study reveals that most of the workers did not practice sign language in their communication so they might not influence their customers.

In line with this result, Galvin and Terrell (2001) stated that between 65 and 93 percent of messages are non-verbal in the work place in order to communicate effectively. But, the absence of such sign language during communication leads to ineffective communication.

## **5.2 Persuasion techniques that workers used**

Persuasion technique is the other important component of interpersonal communication in which the day-to-day market communication; people use different strategies to influence their customers during communication. The

finding of this study reveals that workers relatively practice the persuasion technique in their work place than the other components of interpersonal communication. In terms of this technique some types of persuasion techniques that workers usually practice were discussed as follow.

If we look at Table 3 in the result part, we find the mean score of logical appeal technique of worker was 3.78, which is greater than that of other techniques. The result of this study is supported by research of Ford (1995) that compliance gaining strategy more widely used the market. In addition, Verderber (2007) also states that this strategy is primarily focusing on reasoning in which a person seeks compliance by presenting reason and/or evidence. This implies that when the sellers present good reasons for goods that she/he sells in the work place, enhances the customers' behavior to buy the product. That is why most of the time in market environment, logical appeal strategy is widely used by sellers.

### **5.3 Communication competence skills of workers**

The other component of interpersonal communication is competence skills which is the process of understanding the various networks such as creating connection, exchange information, ideas, interact with others, verbal and listening skills are the essential parts of competence communication skills that enhance communication effectiveness in the work place.

Communication competence has verbal skills which consist of managing personal introduction skills (i.e. hand shaking, calling customers by their names), sharing information, giving description about the product and asking question about the customers' reaction and opinion towards the service, play important role to have good, effective communication and relationship with others.

But, the result of this study shows that workers did not have such verbal skills in their communication which made them to have poor communication in the work place. In line with this, Nelson (2008) states that if workers do not have verbal skills, their product or services are not exchanged as they want.

In addition, supporting this result, Galvan and Terrell (2001) stated that the absence of hand shaking and introducing personal information during conversation makes communication poor and the flow of information tends to be weak.

Interpersonal competence skills also consists listening skills which is an active process that includes paying attention to each other's ideas, to their customers' feedback, critical analysis of messages and anticipating customers needs helps to build relationship and a sense of connection with others. However, the finding of this study reveals that workers did have low listening skills in their communication that creates inappropriate situations to have good communication.

Supporting this result, Nelson (2008) states that low attention to the customers' feedback and excessive self talk are the common problems that in able workers to have good listening skills and these problems are directly affecting the communication process in the work place.

The result of ANOVA and descriptive statistics indicate there was no mean significant differences of interpersonal communication skills among the workers. This might be the majority of the workers educational status was at the primary level and their communication skills were low.

The finding of correlation analysis indicates that communication skills are positively associated with education. Supporting the above result, Spitzberg as cited in Verderber and colleagues (2007), states that as sellers knowledge and skills increase, communication skill increase and people need knowledge about communication to be effective.

## **5.4 Psychological problem of workers in their communication**

As the interview report indicates, the first and the serious problems in the work place is psychological influence which consists stress, depression and anxiety that hinder workers communication with their customers.

According to the result of the interview, stress is the central cause to their poor communication in their association living in a daily fear of death, particularly when something happens like head ache and fatal disease that can highly increase their stress and influence the communication process.

Supporting this result, Carnegie (2000) states that those patients who live with HIV/AIDS experience, traumatic stress and fear because of thinking about health related problems in their lives. So, according to Carnegie, this problem significantly challenges patient's relationship and communication.

Concerning to the anxiety problem, the informant reported that it is a common problem of every member in the association which has symptom of worry and tension that influence workers' daily function. This means anxiety has been linked that can produce additional problems like inability to sleep and diurnal variation in mood. These in-able workers to have good interaction and relationship with others

In line with the above finding, Verderber et al. (2007) stated that when we are anxious, we have trouble listening and communication, so this decrease the quality of conversation and relationship during communication.

In terms of depression, the finding of the interview shows that depression arises from a serious medical illness and hopeless in their lives which is not only affecting the longevity of their lives, but also in able them to interact and communicate consistently with others. Confirming the result, Nolen-Houseman (2004) states that if people are depressed they might have sense of unhappiness and hopeless in their lives, have negative view of themselves, of the others, and of the future.

This negative expectation towards the negative event would lead them to experience low self esteem in their lives which can inhibit them to have conversation and relationship in the social setting.

### **5.5 Economic problems of workers**

Regarding to the economic problem of workers in their communication, the interview result shows that they did not get basic needs like food, medication, so the tablet that they take daily aggravates their weakness. Furthermore, they are living in a poor condition with little ability to bring improvement in their lives. There were also problems of having health condition, adequate nutrition, and health care which prevents workers to be economically active. So, this economic problem has an influence on workers' day to day interpersonal communication in their work place because they are physically weak. Supporting the result, Nolen-Hoeksema (2004) states that people who are economically poor in their social setting, are more likely to be less motivated to take action to improve their living condition and lack control over their health and well-being. So, this worsens their communication and interaction.

### **5.6 Social problems in workers communication**

Regarding the social problem of workers in their communication, the interview result reveals that workers who are living with HIV/AIDS are often subjected to stigmatization, discrimination and even hostility in their community. They also face difficulty to involve in every income generating activities, feel lonely and experience alienation in which they were pushed away to the margin of the community. So, this misconception of the society towards HIV/AIDS patients strongly affects their communication and relationship in their work place.

In confirming this result, Ukeje (1992) states that when people experience feeling of isolation, their interaction and communication with their friends and families and their sense of belongingness become low in which they develop poor confidence to specify themselves to the given group.

## **Chapter six**

### **Summary, conclusions and recommendations**

#### **6.1 Summary**

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of interpersonal communications skill of micro enterprise workers who live with HIV/AIDS in Debre Berhan Town. To this end the researcher raised the following research questions

- Do micro enterprise workers have effective interpersonal communication skills to attract their customers?
- What type of interpersonal communication skills do workers usually practice?
- Is there a significant difference in communication skills among the micro enterprise workers?
- What are the dominant barriers to effective interpersonal communication?

In order to answer these basic research questions, workers and coordinators of the four associations namely; Fikir Lenatoch, Endersalen, Tiwliid Yidan and Yesetoch Mahiber were targeted as population of the study. Representative sample of workers and coordinators were selected by simple random and purposive sampling. Questionnaires, market observation and interview were used to gather the necessary information. Both qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis were employed.

Based on the analysis of the data, the following findings were drawn;

- The research findings showed that workers interpersonal communication skills in terms of relationship skills like personal,

verbal and non-verbal skills of communication and competence skills such as listening and first impression skills of the workers were low.

- As the descriptive statistics result revealed, workers relatively practiced persuasion techniques, to influence their customers in their communication, particularly they use logical appeal techniques, than other types of interpersonal communication skills. Though they practiced this logical appeal technique, the result indicates that it was not significant and sufficient to influence their customers' behavior.
- Concerning the relationship of education and communication skills, the correlation result shows that there was a positive relationship between communication skills and education, particularly education was significantly related to interpersonal relationship.
- Interm of interpersonal communication skills of the different associations' workers, the one way variance analysis indicated there were no significant differences of communication skills among workers in the four associations.
- Majority of the workers' education level were at the primary level which would imply that they did not use skills to interact and influence their customers properly.
- Regarding barriers of practicing effective interpersonal communication skills, the findings of the study revealed, inadequate skills, psychological influences such as anxiety, depression and stress, social problem like discrimination and stigmatization and economic problems such as poor living and working condition were the main barriers that hinder them from having effective interpersonal communication skills in their work place.

## **6.2. Conclusions**

Based on the above findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The workers did not have basic communication skill to exchange their ideas, messages, commodities, service with their customers effectively.
2. Majority of the workers' education level was primary which hindered them to use their skills to interact with their customers properly.
3. Among the interpersonal communication skill types, workers usually practice persuasion techniques particularly, logical appeal techniques.
4. There is a positive relationship between education and communication skills.
5. There is no significant difference in interpersonal communication skills among workers in the four associations.
6. The practice of effective interpersonal communication skills of micro enterprise works that live with HIV/AIDS was constrained by factors like economic, social and psychosocial problems.

In general, there was no practice of effective interpersonal communication skill in the associations.

## **6.3 Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusion so far made, the following recommendations are forwarded:

1. The finding of this study indicated that majority of the workers did not have interpersonal communication skills. Because of this, it is recommendable that both governmental and non-governmental organization should give training and facilitate opportunities to train workers by concentrating on the psychological life skills such as problem solving, decision making, creative thinking; critical thinking, empathy, self awareness and relationship.

2. It was found that workers' education status was at primary level. So it would be advisable for the concerned bodies to equip the workers with good skills by providing education, short term training, like participatory and workshop training concerning the interpersonal communication skills.
3. The result of this study showed that, workers were hindered to practice communication skills because of barriers of communication such as economic, social and psychological problems. So, it would be recommendable that permanent and consistent counseling services particularly for the psychological problems like anxiety, depression and stress of the workers should be given in order to minimize these problems. In terms of the social problems in which patients were highly discriminated and stigmatized, programs should need for the encouragement of positive altitude for the community towards those HIV/ AIDS patients.
4. The findings revealed that economically workers were poor and there were problems of fair distribution of income among the members. So, it is advisable to establish further income generating activities to improve their living and working conditions. In addition, it is highly recommendable to assign supervisors who daily control their day to day activities and income.

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## Appendices

### Appendix 1 Addis Ababa University School of graduate studies Institute of psychology

The purpose of this questionnaire is to collect information about interpersonal communication skills and its effectiveness of micro enterprise workers during exchange of information, materials and ideas with their customers. Therefore, you are requested to give your genuine information. Your cooperation is highly valuable to complete the study. Thank you in advance. No need of writing your name.

#### Part I. General information

Direction:- please mark with a tick ( ✓ ) to indicate your response on the space provided and write your response when necessary

1. Your association \_\_\_\_\_
2. Sex, Male \_\_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_\_
3. Educational level:

Primary school \_\_\_\_\_ secondary school) \_\_\_\_\_

TVET 10+2 \_\_\_\_\_ TVET12+1 \_\_\_\_\_

#### Part II.

**Direction:** - Give your response with respect to each statement about the interpersonal communication skills and its effectiveness in the work place by using “✓” mark under only one of the five alternatives

5= strongly agree 4= Agree 3= Undecided 2= Disagree 1= strongly disagree

No	Statements related to interpersonal relationship.	Alternatives				
		5	4	3	2	1
1	I have a willingness to accept feedback from my customers					
2	When my customers come to the work place to buy my products or to get services, I am patient to listen them.					
3	I have degree of confidence to communicate with my customers					
4	I'm highly trusted in my customer					
5	I have a willingness to reveal information about myself					
6	I have personal skills to take in information and interpret that information in a positive way					
7	I act and behave consistently with my customers					
8	I have ability to manage day-to-day necessities					
9	I have high degree of relational skills to influence my customers to make them permanent clients					
10	I have high degree of friendly relationship with my customers					
11	I have high ability to share new information to my customers					
12	I express my hobby, interest, and what I dislike to my customers at the first meeting					
13	I use some comfortable jokes with my customers during communication					
14	I'm open to express my ideas to my customers					
15	I use non verbal signals such as simile to develop good relationship with my customers					
16	I feel more comfortable when I use different words like "serious" and "sure" with my customers					
17	I believe that wearing uniform in the work place is important to attract my customers attention during communication					
18	To make my communication successful, I use my hands and fingers in addition to language					
19	I have the ability to look my customers in their eye during communication to handle their attention					
20	I use smooth exchange of conversation with my customer					

	<b>Statements related to persuasion techniques in the work place</b>					
1	I will talk freely with other who talk freely with me					
2	I tend to give good reasons to my product in order to enhance my customers behavior					
3	If the material or products are not comfortable to my customers, I tend to negotiate with them to turn back the materials					
4	I am honest and keep my promise for the good of my customers than my self					
5	My credibility makes me more likable in the eye of my customers in the work place					
6	I use a direct request strategy by saying your know me and I am trustworthy to you					
7	I used an empathy based strategy to influence my customers' behavior?					
8	I usually call reasonable high price and then reduce to the real price					
9	I use techniques in which buyers are told that they have only limited time to take advantage to obtain some items.					
10	I use techniques in which efforts increase compliance by telling my customers that those items are scarce and hard to obtain in other places					

	<b>Statement related to interpersonal competence skills</b>					
1	I tend to have hand shake with my customers in the work place during communication					
2	I pay great attention to call my customers in their name					
3	If my customers are unclear about direction, I tend to ask questions to be sure they have got the direction right.					
4	When giving direction, I check to see if my customers really understand what I say					
5	I have personal experience to explain the unique feature and benefit of my product /service to my customer					
6	I have good ability of asking questions about my customers reaction					
7	I give high attention to take my own friends ideas during communications					
8	I give high attention to get feed back from my customer					
9	I critically analyze the message that contain opinion of my customer before making decision to respond					
10	When I am dealing with my customers, I try to anticipate what my customers need or want					

**Appendix 2**  
**Addis Ababa University**  
**Institute of psychology**  
**Interview guide for workers and coordinators**

**Time Starting** \_\_\_\_\_ **Ending** \_\_\_\_\_

**I. Background information**

**Recent positions**

**Work experience in years**

These interview questions were prepared for both workers and coordinators of the associations to obtain information about factors that hinder effective interpersonal communication.

1. Is there any problem that hinders you to have good communication with your customers?  
A. Yes                      B. No
2. If your answer for number 1 is yes, what are the main problems that you face in your communication?
3. Among the problems that you mentioned above, which one is the most severe problem in your communication?
4. Can you express how these problems hinder you to have effective interpersonal communication, in your work place?
5. Is there good interaction like taking friends ideas positively within the association members? If your answer no explain why?
6. Do you practice first meeting skills in your communication? If your answer is no why ?reason out
7. If you are usually open to share your personal secrete information to your customers ,do you think this has a problems in your communication?

### Appendix 3

**Addis Ababa University**

**Institute of psychology**

#### Market observation checklist

**Name of the association** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

#### I. check list

No	Items	Yes	No	Remark
1	The workers have confidence to communicate freely with their customers			
2	The workers use some comfortable jokes			
3	The workers have ability of first impression skill			
4	Workers give attention to take feedback from their customers			
5	The workers have handshaking skill during communication			
6	Workers pay attention to call their customers by their name			
7	Workers have ability to ask questions about customers' reaction to their services.			
8	The workers practice non-verbal sign in their communication			
9	Workers have ability of giving good reasons to their product			
10	Workers have personal experience to explain the unique feature and benefit of their product			



.....  
 .. "✓" ..

• . •	.....	..... .....	.....	.....	.....	..... .....
1	.....					
2	...../.....					
3	.....					
4	.....					
5	.....					
6	.....					
7	.....					
8	.....					
9	..... .....					
10	.....					
11	.....					
12	..... .....					
13	.....					
14	.....					
15	..... .....					
16	..... "....." "....." .. .....					
17	..... .....					
18	..... .....					
19	..... .....					
20	.....					





2. .... ?
3. .... ?
4. .... ?
5. .... ?  
..... ?
6. .... ?  
.....  
..... ?
7. ....  
..... ?

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Approved by Board of Examination

Chair person, Department's

Graduate Committee

Signature

Date

1. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Advisor

2. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Internal examiner

3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

External examiner