

Diversity in the Workplace and Its Impact on Organizational Productivity: A Study of Federal Polytechnic Offa, Kwara State.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of diversity in the workplace on organizational productivity at Federal Polytechnic Offa, Kwara State. The study aims to determine the extent to which diversity in terms of gender, age, educational background, and religion and ethnicity influences organizational productivity in the institution. The population of the study consists of all the one thousand two hundred and ninety six (1,296) staff of the Polytechnic as at September, year 2024. Using a stratified sampling technique, a sample size of 306 respondents (160 Academic Staff and 146 Non-Academic Staff) was drawn from the study population. Data was collected through a questionnaire administered between July and September, 2024 and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Findings from the study revealed a significant relationship between workplace diversity and organizational efficiency, highlighting the advantages of having a diverse range of perspectives and experiences for collaboration. It has been demonstrated that a diversity of employee values significantly affects corporate performance by fostering employee cooperation and collaboration, which in turn boosts productivity. Additionally, the study discovered that diverse and inclusive work cultures positively affect employee engagement, which raises organizational productivity. Furthermore, it was found at Federal Polytechnic Offa that a more productive and efficient public sector could be achieved by aligning employee values with organizational values, which also enhanced organizational culture. To sum up, this study underscores the importance of workplace diversity in improving organizational effectiveness and fostering a cohesive work environment enhancing

teamwork among coworkers and increasing organizational productivity.

Key words: Diversity, Workplace, Organizational Productivity, Kwara State.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the fast-paced world of contemporary business, encouraging workplace diversity is a crucial strategic need and a resounding cry for justice and equality in enterprises (Mor Barak, 2015). It's not just about ticking boxes; it's the key to unlocking potential. Diversity initiatives, which are motivated by the equal opportunity principle, have the ability to completely transform business by harnessing the creativity that these differences bring rather than wasting it (Rafaqat & Rafaqat, 2022). Because of the growing interconnection of our planet and the blending of cultures, workplace worker diversity is becoming a fascinating phenomenon (Fredette & Bernstein, 2019).

These days, people from all over the world collaborate in boardrooms and offices, bringing a diverse range of viewpoints, experiences, and customs with them. Beyond demographics, workforce diversity refers to the wide range of gender, age, ethnicity, abilities, and other characteristics that exist inside an organization (Vairavan & Zhang, 2020). At the core of this dynamic is organizational performance, which acts as a guide for businesses navigating the competitive challenges of markets. Modern businesses are built on their organizational performance, which serves as both a benchmark and an indicator of success.

Numerous academic studies have extolled the benefits of diversity within an organization. More than simply a checkbox, it's a tool for dedication, innovation, and retention (Luksyte,

Avery, Parker, & Lorina, 2022). But even among the praise, murmurs of caution endure. Studies conducted by Bennouri, Chtioui, Nagati, and Nekhili (2018) have demonstrated that if workforce diversity is not managed skilfully, it can have a detrimental effect on an organization's performance. Scholars have investigated the impact of a diverse workforce on the performance of organizations through a range of lenses, including age, gender, culture, race, and ethnicity (Hassan, Marimuthu, & Johl, 2017).

These days, a diverse spectrum of viewpoints, experiences, and customs are brought to the boardrooms and offices by people from all over the world. The diverse range of gender, age, ethnicity, talents, and more that exist within an organization is known as workforce diversity; it transcends demographics (Vairavan & Zhang, 2020). This dynamism is centered on organizational performance, which acts as a guide for businesses navigating the competitive challenges of markets. Modern businesses are built on organizational performance, which also serves as a success indicator rather than merely an objective.

Workforce diversity, which is defined as an employee's possession of several traits, has become a hot topic for managers and organizational scholars due to the advent of globalization (Cho, Ahraemi, & Mor Barak, 2017). Diversity in an organization refers to the presence of both shared and unique traits among its members in terms of gender, age, race, culture, physical ability, handicap, and other attributes. For academics interested in practically any area of management, organizational performance is the ultimate dependent variable. According to Richard (2016), organizational performance is critical to the survival and profitability of the modern corporation because of the rivalry in the markets for money, consumers, and inputs. On the other hand, if workplace diversity is not managed, it can erode employee cooperation, respect, trust, and understanding, which will lower productivity.

Organizations always aim to enhance worker productivity through acknowledging and compensating the diverse ways in which their staff members contribute to the achievement of corporate goals. Diversity among employees involves recognizing, appreciating, comprehending, accepting, and embracing their differences (Leslie, 2017). Part of workplace diversity includes identifying the similarities and differences amongst employees that align with the organization's fundamental values, including age, gender, work

environment, perceptions, ethnicity, marital status, area, job experience, sexual orientation, income, and nationality (Fredette et. al., 2019).

Any particular organization's workforce performance is impacted by diversity in both positive and bad ways. Expanded perspectives and other advantages of diversity in the workplace are endorsed by Szatmari (2021). With the foregoing background in mind, the study focuses on how workplace diversity affects organizational efficiency using Federal Polytechnic Offa as a case study. Based on this premise, the specific objectives of this study are to:

- i. Examine the effect of workplace diversity on organizational productivity in Federal Polytechnic Offa, Kwara State.
- ii. Ascertain the effect of employees' values diversity on organization performance in Federal Polytechnic Offa, Kwara State.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The section examines all related extant literature.

2.1 Conceptual Framework

2.2.1 Workplace Diversity

These days, a lot of scholars and managers who research human capital management agree that having a diverse human resource pool is a big advantage for companies. Verma (2020) defines diversity as "otherness," or the qualities that distinguish human beings from one another and the groups we are a part of. Every individual has certain qualities that make them unique from one another. It is believed that diversity stimulates creativity. Szatmari (2021) distinguishes between three categories of diversity: social, skill, and value. Differences in age, gender, ethnicity, and country of origin are examples of social variety. Diversity in skills encompasses variations in knowledge, training, work history, tenure, and functional background. Diverse values encompass a range of personality traits and attitudes. These days, it seems like a lot of companies are encouraging a more diverse staff in terms of race, ethnicity, and gender—not because they have to or are required to, but rather because they have a progressive perspective on economic self-interest.

2.1.2 The Role of Diversity Management in Organizational Performance

A competitive advantage is derived from the effective management of workforce diversity. Competitive advantage is one aspect of strategy that gives an organization a special ability. This capacity and advantage come from the way

managing diversity improves the behavior and effectiveness of organizations (Njideet al., 2018). Effective workforce diversity management necessitates doing things properly, according to Mothe & Nguyen-Thi (2021). This is an element in organizational performance that will help to save costs and improve employee attitudes. Luksyte et al. (2022) report that there are three ways to cut expenses. It first reduces medical expenses. Additionally, it reduces the absence rate. Thirdly, hiring and training new staff can be done at a lower cost by effectively managing workforce diversity. Well-managed labor diversity boosts sales, market share, and corporate profits. This is the case since the workforce only represents a small portion of the diverse consumer base. These lead to higher sales, a bigger market share, and higher profitability for the business.

2.1.3 Diversity Management's Importance for Organizational Performance

Many organizations throughout Nigeria are unsure of what it takes to effectively manage diversity. This is partly due to the fact that top management only recently became aware of the combined need and importance of this issue. At this point, it is necessary to provide a framework for categorizing organizational initiatives. Researchers and practitioners have developed relevant frameworks. One was developed by Roosevelt and Low (2016), who is a diversity expert. He identified eight generic action options that can be used to address any type of diversity issue. A second was proposed by another diversity expert, Morrison (2017). She empirically identified the specific diversity initiatives used by 16 organizations that successfully managed diversity in developed countries.

2.1.4 Ethnic Diversity and Organizational Performance

Ethnic diversity is one of the oldest diversity issues the world has ever encountered. Racial or ethnic discrimination at work has long been a problem for many organizations around the world. Nonetheless, because of the efforts of civil rights advocates and the passing of specific laws, the threat has been contained to some extent. Over the previous three decades, there has been an increase in ethnic variety, and this trend is only becoming stronger (Syakhroza et. al. (2021). Because they recognize that the participation and synergy of employees from different backgrounds may improve and promote both corporate performance and employee happiness, modern

firms are hiring a more diverse staff. The growing globalization of the workforce and the need for skills to meet the high standards of international clients has made ethnically diverse workforces increasingly important. Kyalo (2015) found a positive and significant relationship between employee performance and ethnic diversity in Kenya.

2.1.5 Benefits of Managing Workforce Diversity

Managing diversity can provide you a competitive advantage. Some potential benefits of this diversity include improved decision-making, greater inventiveness and originality, success in marketing to local and global ethnic minority communities, and a more equitable distribution of economic opportunities (Lee, 2019). Culturally diverse groups outperform homogeneous groups in both the interaction process and job performance; these benefits accrue after a diverse group has been together for some time. Additionally, a Conference Board of Canada study indicates that a number of significant Canadian businesses, such as Petro Canada, Warner Lambert, Bank of Montreal, and the Movement des Caisses Desjardins, have recognized the competitive advantage in diversity (Fredette & Bernstein, 2019).

2.2 Theoretical Frameworks

2.2.1 Information-Processing and Decision-Making Theory

Information Processing and Decision-Making Theory (IPDMT) is a fundamental theoretical framework that examines how individuals obtain, process, interpret, and apply information to make decisions in a range of situations (Simon, 1978). The idea emphasizes how information availability, processing speed, and decision-making strategies influence the efficacy and outcomes of decisions, as well as the cognitive processes involved in making them. Founder and Nobel laureate Herbert Simon was a prominent economist who had a significant impact on IPDMT, which provides important insights into decision-making processes and restricted rationality (Simon, 1978). This dynamic framework has been improved by contributions from specialists in psychology, economics, management, and allied fields. In the context of workplace diversity at Federal Polytechnic Offa, IPDMT provides significant insights into decision-making processes for managing a diverse workforce and its implications for organizational efficiency. It can be applied to various tasks, such as hiring decisions and team creation. IPDMT aids in understanding how

Federal Polytechnic Offa makes hiring selections by considering traits like abilities, experience, and cultural background in order to maximize team performance (Simon, 1978). The idea sheds light on how information on diversity and inclusion is processed during training programs at Federal Polytechnic Offa, which aids in the development and delivery of effective training materials (Simon, 1978). Recognizing the cognitive limitations associated with decision-making, IPDMT places a strong emphasis on strategies to lessen bias and promote fair treatment in diverse teams, fostering a friendly environment (Simon, 1978). By leading conflict resolution strategies within diverse teams and comprehending shared decision heuristics using IPDMT, Federal Polytechnic Offa may guarantee equitable results (Simon, 1978).

2.3 Review of Empirical Studies

Syakhroza, Diyanty, and Dewo (2021) conducted an empirical investigation to explore the relationship between age diversity within the top management team (TMT) and firm performance, with a specific focus on how the effectiveness of TMT meetings moderates this relationship. The methodology involved both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The findings indicated a significant positive correlation between age diversity in the TMT and firm performance, and the effectiveness of TMT meetings was found to moderate this relationship. Effective TMT meetings enhanced the positive impact of age diversity on firm performance. In conclusion, the study highlighted the importance of considering TMT meeting effectiveness in maximizing the benefits of age diversity within the TMT.

In the study conducted by Cho, Kim, You, Moon, and Sung (2020), the overarching purpose was to investigate the application of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) measures in promoting gender diversity and equality within organizations in the Korean context. Grounded in organizational theory and gender equality frameworks, the study utilized a mixed-methods methodology. The findings underscored a positive association between ESG adherence and enhanced gender diversity, demonstrating that organizations actively incorporating ESG measures tend to exhibit better gender equality practices. The study also highlighted specific ESG factors such as board diversity, workforce development, and inclusion policies as critical drivers for achieving gender balance within Korean organizations. In conclusion, the research significantly advocates for the strategic integration of ESG measures to

advance gender diversity and equality within the Korean corporate landscape.

Delgado-Piña et al. (2020) undertook a study examining gender diversity in Spanish banks, with a specific focus on exploring the trickle-down effects of gender diversity and its impact on productivity within these financial institutions. The researchers utilized a quantitative research methodology, collecting data from a wide range of Spanish banks and conducting statistical analyses to ascertain the relationship between gender diversity and productivity. The findings of the study demonstrated a positive relationship between gender diversity in senior management and productivity, suggesting that a more gender-diverse leadership positively influences productivity throughout the organization. The study's conclusion emphasized the importance of gender diversity in enhancing productivity in Spanish banks, advocating for concerted efforts to achieve gender balance at the leadership level.

In their survey, Fredette and Bernstein (2019) aimed to investigate the impact of ethno-racial diversity on nonprofit boards, employing a critical mass perspective to comprehend how diverse representation within these boards influences organizational dynamics and outcomes. The researchers adopted a mixed-methods methodology, combining both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The findings of the study revealed that a critical mass of ethno-racial diversity on non-profit boards positively influences organizational processes, enhances board performance, and leads to a more inclusive decision-making environment. The study's conclusion emphasized the pivotal role of achieving a critical mass of diversity on nonprofit boards, asserting that it is instrumental in driving organizational change and effectiveness.

In their investigation, Del Carmen Triana, Richard, and Su (2019) delved into the intricate dynamics of gender diversity within senior management, strategic change initiatives, and their collective influence on firm performance, focusing on the unique context of high-tech firms. The researchers adopted a quantitative approach, collecting data from a diverse set of high-tech firms and employing statistical analysis to examine the relationships between gender diversity, strategic change, and firm performance. The findings revealed that gender diversity within senior management was positively associated with strategic change, which, in turn, significantly impacted firm performance. The conclusion highlighted the vital role of strategic change as a

mediating factor, linking gender diversity to firm performance, reinforcing the belief that gender diversity can be a strategic advantage for high-tech firms.

Lee (2019) conducted a comprehensive empirical study to explore whether increasing racial minority representation within an organization contributes to its overall performance, considering the mediating roles of organizational mission and diversity climate. Grounded in theories of organizational diversity, social identity, and organizational performance, the study postulated that a more racially diverse workforce, supported by an inclusive organizational mission and a positive diversity climate, could significantly impact overall organizational performance positively. The methodology employed a mixed-methods approach, involving quantitative analysis of organizational data and surveys measuring diversity climate and organizational mission. The findings revealed that racial minority representation positively correlates with organizational performance, and this relationship is mediated by both organizational mission and diversity climate. The study's conclusion highlighted the significant role that racial minority representation plays in enhancing organizational performance, stressing the importance of an inclusive organizational mission and a positive diversity climate to facilitate this relationship.

Similarly, Hassan, Marimuthu, and Johl (2017) aimed to delve into the intricate relationship between gender diversity within organizations and its influence on organizational performance, specifically focusing on the mechanisms of bridging and bonding social capital. Survey data were collected from a diverse set of organizations, and statistical analyses were performed to identify relationships between gender diversity, social capital, and organizational performance. Additionally, qualitative interviews were conducted to gain deeper insights into the mechanisms at play. The findings indicated a positive relationship between gender diversity and social capital, highlighting that a diverse workforce fosters the accumulation of bridging and bonding social capital. Moreover, the study established a direct association between social capital and organizational performance. The conclusion emphasized the critical role of gender diversity in enhancing organizational social capital and, subsequently, organizational performance.

Research Gaps

As related to other existing literatures on workplace diversity influence on organisational productivity, while there's a growing body of knowledge regarding how diverse teams influence business success, the research in this domain is still limited and lacks a systematic approach when defining diversity, selecting units of analysis, and determining the dependent variables. Much of the existing diversity research in management literature hones in on interpersonal and intergroup dynamics. Studies empirically investigating the impact of employee diversity at the organizational level are few and far between. Additionally, a majority of diversity research stems from controlled experiments rather than real-world organizational contexts. This study aims to systematically explore how workplace diversity affects organizational productivity, taking Federal Polytechnic Offa, as a focal point. By leveraging contextual data and real-world insights, the researcher strive to derive more precise and applicable conclusions.

III. METHODOLOGY

For this study, a descriptive survey research design was adopted, as it is well-suited for collecting and analyzing public opinion data. The population comprised all 1,296 staff members of the Polytechnic as of September 2024. To ensure adequate representation, a stratified sampling technique was employed, resulting in a sample size of 306 respondents, consisting of 160 Academic Staff and 146 Non-Academic Staff. The choice of stratified sampling was justified by the organizational structure of Federal Polytechnic Offa, which comprises distinct groups of academic and non-academic staff. These groups likely hold differing perspectives on diversity and its impact on productivity, and their unequal proportions necessitated stratification to ensure that both groups were adequately represented. This approach also enhances the generalizability of the findings by ensuring the sample accurately reflects the composition of the workforce. The data collected from respondents were analyzed based on the research questions and hypotheses. Chi-Square analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0 to test the null hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Demographic Distribution of Respondents

The demographic distributions of the respondents' variables—gender, age, highest level

of educational qualification attained and ethnicity are shown below:

Socio-Economic Distribution of the Respondents

Characteristics	Academic Staff	Non-Academic Staff	Total
Gender			
Male	115	73	
Female	45	73	
Sub-Total	160	146	306
Age			
20-30	9	11	
31-40	53	31	
41-50	54	44	
51-60	31	46	
60+	13	14	
Sub-Total	160	146	306
Educational Qualification			
OND/NCE	11	21	
HND/Bachelor's Degree	73	111	
Master's Degree	61	12	
PhD	15	2	
Sub-Total	160	146	306
Ethnicity			
Yoruba	132	135	
Hausa	13	2	
Igbo	15	9	
Sub-Total	160	146	306

Source: Field Survey, 2024

- **Gender Distribution:** Males dominate the workforce (61.44%), with a higher proportion among academic staff (71.88%) compared to non-academic staff (50%). This indicates a gender imbalance, particularly in academic roles.
- **Age Distribution:** The majority of respondents are in the 41-50 age groups (32.03%), with a significant representation in the 31-40 (27.45%) and 51-60 (25.16%) age groups. Younger (20-30) and older (60+) age groups are less represented.
- **Educational Qualification:** Most respondents have an HND/Bachelor's degree (60.13%). Academic staff tends to have higher

qualifications, with 38.13% holding Master's degrees and 9.38% with PhDs, while non-academic staff mostly holds HND/Bachelor's degrees (76.03%).

- **Ethnicity:** The workforce is predominantly Yoruba (87.25%), reflecting the regional demographic, with minority ethnic groups (Igbo and Hausa) making up smaller portions.

4.2 Test of Hypotheses

The under listed hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance.

H₁: There is no significant relationship between workplace diversity and organizational productivity in Federal Polytechnic Offa.

Table 2: Chi-Square Analysis of relationship between workplace diversity and organizational productivity in Federal Polytechnic Offa.

Variable	N	Chi-square	Df	P.value	Decision
workplace diversity	306	19.331 ^a	3	0.000	Rejected
organizational productivity	306				

At Federal Polytechnic Offa, there is a considerable correlation between workplace diversity and organizational efficiency, as per hypothesis (H₀). To test this hypothesis, a Chi-Square analysis was carried out using the information from 306 respondents. The results showed a three-degree-of-freedom Chi-square value of 19.331. Most importantly, it was found that this study's p-value was 0.000, which is less

than the usual significance level of 0.05. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected by the statistical analysis. This shows a strong correlation between workplace diversity and organizational effectiveness at Federal Polytechnic Offa.

H₀₂: Employees' values diversity does not have an effect on organization performance in Federal Polytechnic Offa.

Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis of Employees' values diversity effect on organization performance of Federal Polytechnic Offa.

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	P-value
Regression	5,090.628	6	848.438		
Residual	43,369.616	300	83.563	42.288	.000
Total	48,460.244	306	932.001		

Standard Error of Estimates (SEE) = 6.3989

R = .792 R-square = .627

Adjusted R Square = .609

Dependent variable: **Employees' values diversity**

Predictors: (Constant), **organization performance**.

Table 3 presents the results of a multiple regression analysis that examined the impact of employee diversity in values on Federal Polytechnic Offa, organizational performance. The regression model's statistical significance (F = 42.288, p <.001) is displayed in the table, suggesting a statistically significant correlation between the predictors and the dependent variable (employee values diversity) (organization performance). The employees' values have a reasonably significant impact on the business's success, as indicated by the regression model's R-square of 0.627, which explained 62.7 percent of the variance in the employee values. The revised R-squared value of 0.609 indicates that the model fits the data sufficiently.

The anticipated value of employee engagement is displayed in the constant term in the event that the predictor (organization performance) has a value of zero, however the coefficients for the predictors are not included in this table. The standard error of estimates (SEE) of 6.3989 represents the average variation between the

organization's actual and expected performance. In summary, the second null hypothesis was rejected, stating that the organizational performance of Federal Polytechnic Offa, was unaffected by the diversity of values held by its personnel. Therefore, the results suggest that Federal Polytechnic Offa, organizational success is influenced by the diversity of values held by its personnel.

4.4 Discussion of Findings

The analysis of the data gathered from the respondents at Federal Polytechnic Offa, Ilorin, reveals a number of interesting results regarding the impact of workplace diversity on organizational productivity and the impact of employees' various values on organizational performance. In response to the first research question about the effect of workplace diversity on organizational productivity, the study found that respondents strongly agreed that diversity in the workplace positively affects overall productivity. The employees saw an enhancement in team performance as a result of the diversity of their backgrounds and perspectives.

This finding aligns with previous research by Szatmari (2021), which emphasized the positive effects of workplace diversity on productivity, team dynamics, creativity, and problem-solving abilities in organizations.

A moderate number of respondents believed that there is a direct correlation between workplace diversity and Federal Polytechnic Offa's overall productivity. This study question focused on the significant relationship between workplace diversity and organizational productivity. They added that increased employee cooperation and collaboration, which results in higher productivity, are fostered by a more diverse workforce. Previous studies by reputable authors, such as Vairava and Zhang (2020), have emphasized the advantages of teamwork and a diversity of perspectives. They have also emphasized the positive correlation between workplace diversity and organizational effectiveness.

The analysis carried out for the third research question regarding the effect of employees' values diversity on organization performance of selected state corporations shows a significant correlation between increased productivity and efficiency and employee satisfaction with organizational values and a strong alignment of employee values with the core values of the state corporations at Federal Polytechnic Offa. This is supported by the findings of a study conducted in 2019 by Fredette and Bernstein, who emphasized the importance of aligning employee values with organizational values for enhanced performance and organizational culture.

The findings unambiguously support the strong positive relationship between workplace diversity and organizational productivity at Federal Polytechnic Offa. Diversity in employee values promotes a more dedicated and cohesive work environment and has a substantial impact on the firm's performance. Employee values that are in line with the company's strengthen organizational culture at Federal Polytechnic Offa, which enhances the performance of state businesses. These findings are consistent with past research on diversity and organizational success.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined the effect of workplace diversity on organizational efficiency using Federal Polytechnic Offa, as a case study. The research study aims to evaluate the effect of workplace diversity on organizational productivity using Federal Polytechnic Offa, as a case study.

The particular objectives are to ascertain how employee diversity affects the performance of the organizations of particular state corporations, analyze the noteworthy correlation between workplace diversity and organizational productivity, and research the impact of workplace diversity on productivity. Based on the research findings, the study concludes that there is a substantial correlation between organizational efficiency and workplace diversity at Federal Polytechnic Offa. Diversity in employee values promotes a more dedicated and cohesive work environment and has a substantial impact on the firm's performance. Employee values that are in line with the company's strengthen organizational culture at Federal Polytechnic Offa, which enhances the performance of state businesses. In line with the findings and the conclusions of this study, the following recommendations were made. The study recommends that Federal Polytechnic Offa, make investments to promote a more diverse and inclusive workplace. The benefits of workplace diversity on productivity should be maximized by supporting initiatives that value diversity of thought and collaboration. Moreover, matching company values to employee values can improve worker engagement and productivity as a whole.

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