



Workforce diversity and performance of employees of universities in Anambra State

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Abstract

The demographic under-representation in tertiary institutions is the key issue in universities in Anambra state and this seems to have affected the university staff performance. The broad objective of this study is to assess the influence of workforce diversity on performance of employees. A survey research method was adopted for the study. The instrument used to gather relevant data for the study was the questionnaire. The study centered on the Universities in Anambra State using workforce diversity variables of gender and age on employee engagement, and employee creativity respectively as employee performance variables. A total of 386 copies of questionnaire were disseminated to the respondents but only 378 copies were filled and returned. In order to achieve the research objectives, two hypotheses were created. The data were collated and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Percentages and frequencies tables were used for the descriptive aspects. To test the hypotheses, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Analysis was adopted. The research findings show that all variables of workforce diversity used in the study has a significant positive relationship with the performance of employees of Universities in Anambra State. Hence, based on findings, it is recommended that University management need to maintain a supportive behavior with employees that is more likely to enhance creative performance and implement diversity management policies to reduce harmful personal and organizational consequences of employment discrimination. This study will add to the already existing body of literature on workforce diversity and it will help tertiary institutions, other organizations, employees, government and the society as a whole to fully understand diversity issues, how to manage it and how to reap the benefits.

Keywords: performance, universities, employees, demographic

Introduction

The world today is unique in that it is made up of diverse nations, each of which is made up of diverse individuals who differ in race, age, religion, gender, socioeconomic class, ethnic heritage, and so on. Individual traits are brought into business organization (small, medium, and large), educational institutions, and other entities to produce the workforce. Differences between people can also cause a broader scale of experience, creative thinking and innovative solutions to problems. Despite the positive benefit of having a diverse workforce some organization leaders are still struggling to manage the differences in their workers. In order to cope with diversity issues, some organizations expressly state in their employment requirements the age, religion, gender and language needed for their jobs. Employers and employee attitude towards diversity will definitely influence employees as well as the organizational performance. Therefore, working with pre-existing stereotype about a certain social class, discrimination, prejudice, and stigmatization can unconsciously create an unfavorable working environment. Some managers do not tolerate a closer interaction between opposite gender as they believe it may stir up emotions that will negatively affect the employee's performance. In the same vein, some employees prefer to work with the same gender as themselves because of their pre-existing stereotype about the other gender.

For instance, it is believed that having a large number of women at work helps as they have a sobering effect on the environment since they are considered to be emotionally stronger than men (Vashanti, 2012) ^[53]. More so, stereotype about age may affect the relationship between older and younger employees as employees may prefer to relate more closely with colleagues of similar age group seeing the other as out group which may in turn influence their performance in the organization.

Employee performance refers to how employees meet organizational goals and how they link interpersonal behaviors to organizational norms. It refers to an employee completing mutually agreed-upon task in a timely, effective, and efficient manner as ordered by the employer (Tinofirei, 2011) ^[51]. Employee engagement and creative ability are the two drivers of employee performance (Azeem, Dos-Santos, Moalla, and Kaleem, 2019 and Revanth, 2020) ^[5,41]. Engaged employees are said to have a positive attitude towards their work and go above and above the call of duty. They are more committed to their work, have more enthusiasm, and are happily involved in carrying out their responsibilities. Gulzar and Teli (2018) ^[16] penned that men and women have a variety of variances in terms of how engagement in one role is related to engagement in another role. Some organizational managers might prefer to assign certain roles to male because they believe that the male gender can perform the task better than the female gender. But employee performance does not depend on gender according to the researchers of this work rather employee creativity is seen as a fundamental foundation of competitive strength for every academic institution, and it is highly valued across a wide range of professions (Shalley and Gilson, 2004) ^[47]. Furthermore, universities dedicated to innovation and adaptation regard creative employees as a valuable resource to the organization. As a result, management should be particularly interested in identifying the factors that foster employees' creativity in order to directly stimulate an organization's effectiveness and promote active mental health among employees. Employees that are willing to brainstorm, take on new positions, and learn new skills in order to tackle organizational difficulties perform better irrespective of gender.

It is observed that the deteriorating rate in employee performance in tertiary institutions in Nigeria is alarming and fast becoming a serious threat for the survival of universities in Nigeria (Ogbulafor, 2011) ^[39]. Adopting effective ways to get employees satisfied, perform creatively and engaged in turn increasing the performance of the organization is the main objective of every institution (Lee and Wu, 2011) ^[52]. Universities just like other organization relies on its employees to achieve their objectives. It is generally known that no university will grow beyond the quality of academic and non-academic staff that constitutes it. Those universities that are successful are those that are able to create a culture in the organization where differences in individuals are recognized and accepted. When staff perceive that recruitment, promotion or judgment are not based on their effort or merit but on some bases of social difference the tendency exists that it may lead to decreased employee motivation, low commitment, low creative thinking and less dedication to work. This can eventually increase the rate of employee absenteeism and turnover. It is to thus backdrop that the researcher deemed necessary to assess the influence of gender and age diversity on employees performance (using work engagement and employee creativity as determinants of

employee performance) in universities in Anambra state.

Statement of the problem

Despite the positive contributions of the Nigerian universities to the educational sector of the economy, Nigerian universities as well as universities in Anambra State seem not to be sensitive to workforce diversity. Statistics shows that there are around 87 thousand academic and 52 thousand non-academic male staff respectively. On the contrary, female staff are about 65 thousand in total (Statista Research Department, 2022). The male staff represented the majority in all discipline which reflect an under representation of the female gender in universities. This seeming biasness or favoritism in the workplace during recruitment may be based on the stereotype that women are to be relegated to house chores and home making. When staff perceive any form of biasness or discrimination on the basis of age or gender, it may lead to decreased or damaged morale, increased turnover, interpersonal conflict and communication problems in the work place (Forma, 2014) ^[13]. Inefficiency amongst staff in the Nigerian tertiary institutions can be traced to mismanagement and nepotism (Adejare, Olaore, Udofia, Emola, 2020) ^[1]. This is because organizational leaders view diversity as a matter of legal compliance, instead of as a value addition to organizational growth and profitability (Leboho, 2017) ^[31]. Universities greatly rely on the performance of their employees to remain productive and competitive in the educational sector and when it does not have a conducive environment for practicing workforce diversity, employees will be deprived of all the positive benefits that would have resulted to creative thinking and increased engagement that will boost the organizations overall performance (Ikom and Osemene, 2017) ^[22]. In the light of the above, the main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between workforce diversity and performance of employees of universities in Anambra state. Specifically, the study sets to examine the relationship between gender diversity and employee engagement in Universities in Anambra state and to determine the relationship between age diversity and employee creativity in Universities in Anambra state.

Review of Related Literature

Gender Diversity

Gender diversity is concerned with how people perceive males and females. These gender differences have an impact on how people react to other people's conduct in the workplace or in any other group environment. Prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination all reflect gender differences. Women are considered as a group of people who have experienced discrimination at some point in their lives. For example, in some organizations some women are fired from their jobs when they become pregnant, but the men who got them pregnant keep their jobs. According to Kossek, Lobell, and Brown (2006) ^[28], there are 20% women in the workforce and 80% men in the labor in businesses all over the world. Women do not have the same educational and advancement possibilities as males due to gender discrimination (Bhushan, 2016). Discrimination in hiring and promotion has a significant impact on employee performance. It is critical to provide equal job opportunities for men and women in order to promote team performance in a company (Kirton and Greene, 2015) ^[27]. According to Eagly and Wood (1991) ^[11], a team with gender diversity outperforms a team made up entirely of the same gender.

Gender diversity is favorably associated with employee performance, according to empirical studies. Brown (2008)^[7] claims that the inability to recognize gender concerns from the outset and remains unmanaged makes workforce diversity ineffective. A mix of cognitive abilities of male and female may increase the organization's overall creativity and innovation (Hoffman, 1965)^[20]. Gender heterogeneous teams produce high quality decisions over a homogenous team (Roberson and Kulik, 2007)^[43].

Age Diversity

The disparities in age distribution among employees within an organization are referred to as age diversity (Kunze, 2013). It refers to the age gap between personnel and is used to characterize the organization's makeup (Kunze, Boehm, and Bruch, 2009). Organizations are unable to adequately utilize the abilities of older workers due to the mistaken perception that they are unable to adapt to changes and new technology owing to a variety of health conditions (Joseph and Selvaraj, 2015)^[24]. Age diversity offers both advantages and disadvantages, according to several study reports. According to Mwatumba (2016)^[35], the downsides of age diversity include communication issues and disagreement among staff. Managerial inefficiency in managing age variety leads to conflict, which lowers staff productivity (Mwatumba, 2016)^[35]. To Boehm and Kunze (2015), the advantages of age diversity is that an age heterogeneous workforce can produce huge number of multiple skills and creative ideas, intellectual styles, increases morals, that may result in increased productivity. According to Gellener and Stepen, (2009)^[14] when employees of different ages work together in group it leads to improved productivity than working alone because different people have different skills, perspectives, personality traits and a larger problem solving toolbox. The study of Zhuwao, (2017)^[54], Rizwan khan, Nadeem and Abbas, (2016)^[42] shows the positive relationship between age diversity and employee performance.

Employee performance

There are various definitions of employee performance highlighted in different studies. Durga (2017)^[9] defined performance as the act of executing a task or an accomplishment or achievement. He adds that employee performance is how well an employee is effectively fulfilling his/ her job requirement or discharging his/ her duties so as to achieve good results (Ayat, 2019)^[4]. Odhiambo (2014)^[38] sees performance as an effective discharge of duty for which one is hired to do. The author further explained that, regardless of numerous duties one has performed, one can be regarded to have performed well if the performance outcomes are related to the goals and objectives of the organization. In another definition by Tinofirei (2011)^[51], employee performance is defined as the successful completion of tasks by a selected individual, as a set and measured by a supervisor or organization, to pre-defined acceptable standards, while efficiently and effectively utilizing available resources within a changing environment.

Performance may be equally beneficial to both the employees and the organization itself (Osabiya, 2015)^[40]. Highly performing employees are more productive and this may indirectly reduce their intention to quit their jobs (Hassan, 2013)^[19]. This supports Vroom (1964)'s Expectancy Theory which describes a high-performance appraisal as a signal that alerts employees of earning recognition and receiving

benefits such as salary increase and promotion. In turn, these benefits may influence one to stay in the organization. On the organization itself, Osabiya (2015)^[40] argues that increased employee performance leads to positive business outcomes such as increased market share and revenue growth. Above all, employee performance acts as a huge determinant for individual, team and organizational growth. According, AMO theory is one of the most established (HR) management theories concerning the facilitation of employee performance. The theory suggests that people perform well when they have the skills, knowledge and abilities to perform; when they have motivation to perform; and when they are provided with opportunities and support from an organization to perform (Apelbaum, Bailey, Berg, 2000)^[3].

Employee Performance Variables

Employees will not work in a vacuum. Certain factors may affect employees' performance. According to Revanth (2020)^[41] and the primary factors that improve employee performance include:

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement was characterized by Harter, Schmidt, and Hayes (2002)^[17] as an individual's involvement, contentment, and excitement for work. Employee job engagement, according to Hewitt Associates LLC (2004), is the desire of employees to talk positively about the company and act in a positive direction. Employee engagement according to (Schaufeli, Salanova, González-Romá, Bakker, 2002) is a pleasant, work-related state of mind marked by vitality, dedication, and absorption. They go on to say that engagement is not a fleeting and discrete state, but rather a more permanent and ubiquitous affective cognitive state that is not centered on any one object, event, person, or behavior. An engaged employee is one who is completely invested in and excited about his or her job. Employee engagement contributes to increased productivity because engaged employees are energized and passionate about the work they do and with passion comes excitement, enthusiasm and productivity Gulzar and Teli (2018)^[16]. Revanth (2020)^[41] opines that 85% of employees are not engaged in their work place, so managers of organizations need to find a way to get them engaged. To him, Employee Engagement equal to (=) Greater Performance equal to(=) Better retention equal to(=) higher profitability. Scholarly literature on engagement has emphasized that harmonious relation between coworkers fosters a psychological sense of safety in the work environment. A study found a positive relationship between positive emotions and engagement suggested that employee engagement at work varies based on the ways in which they "psychologically" experience their jobs. Additionally, Schaufeli and Van Rhenen (2006)^[46] attributed increased productivity of engaged employees to positive emotions they experience at work. Harter, concluded that employee engagement "generates higher frequency of positive affect (job satisfaction, commitment, joy, fulfillment, interest, caring)," which in turn affects employee retention and performance.

However, highlighted ten factors that drive employee engagement, called "The Ten C's of Employee Engagement". These are connect (relationship between manager and employee), career (room for career advancement), clarity (understanding the goals and vision), convey (regular feedback and expectations), congratulate (praise and

recognition), contribute (involvement), control (control over his or her job), collaborate (teamwork), credibility (feeling of pride in one's job or organization), and confidence (confidence in employee's own ability, or in the credibility of the team or organization). If the employee perceived these factors positively, then his or her engagement level would most likely increase. Based on the above, teamwork and manager/employee relationship are important attributes of employee engagement, which can be negatively affected by discrimination. Generally, the higher the engagement level, the higher the performance, feedback, appraisal, and the lower the turnover rate.

Employee Creativity

According to Amabile *et al.* (1996) ^[2], creativity is the production of novel and useful ideas in any domain, and innovation is the successful implementation of such creative ideas in the organizational context. Creativity in this sense is a deliberate process of hatching successful ideas to solve organizational problems. Ideas can be generated by employees in any job, and are either a part of an individual's job or for the organization in general. Employee's creativity can be most commonly be referred to an individual who has new ideas for his work & working style, he must be flexible in order to work in team rather than individually completing a project. A creative employee is one who has better skills of understanding and is adaptable in order that new technology is introduced in the organization (Runco, 2004) ^[45]. Employees will perform creatively when they have abilities and desirable attributes, when they are motivated adequately, and when they can fully participate in work processes. Specifically, motivation- or opportunity-enhancing practices in combination with ability practices contribute to higher levels of creativity. These ability practices (e.g., training and recruitment) enable employees' natural capacities (e.g., skills, experience, and attitudes) that are relevant for performing tasks, which emphasizes obtaining employees with given personal attributes (Kim, Hon, Lee, 2010) ^[26]. Nevertheless, there are key conditions among employees that can be considered as factors determining the level of creativity and innovation in the workplace.

Presence of Challenge in Job

In the short and long term, any firm must achieve certain objectives (Dubrin 2007) ^[8]. The path to such ambitions is fraught with difficulties. A challenge should not be viewed as a tough or impossible task; rather, it should be viewed as an opportunity to think outside the box. Employees will not be encouraged to use their creative abilities if their work environment is too easy to manage (Sternberg 2003) ^[50]. It necessitates a job challenge, the willingness to take risks, and the willingness to try new things. When confronted with a difficult challenge, a person's chances of coming up with a creative solution improve significantly (Dubrin 2007) ^[8].

Freedom and Flexibility in Doing Job

Regarding job autonomy, Liu, Chen, Yao (2011) ^[32] examined the role of autonomy such that autonomy directly promotes creativity. Employees have enough freedom and flexibility in their jobs to adopt other ways of doing work, and they have the ability to make varied decisions about their work. They are free to plan their work, do it in their own way, and innovate. It gives them a sense of control and ownership over their work. The origins of planning freedom can be

traced back to the organization's encouragement of innovative ideas (Amabile, 1996) ^[2]. Employees must be given the opportunity to come up with their own answers to problems during planning as well as during work, especially for those who are truly passionate about that subject or field, as this stimulates the creative process (Sternberg 2003) ^[50].

Theoretical framework

This study is based on social identity theory, which considers factors such as age, gender, religion, and ethnicity, all of which are taken into account in this study. Individuals define their own identities in relation to social groupings, and these identifications operate to maintain and strengthen self-identity, according to social identity theory. The social identity theory is seen as a useful tool for better understanding of how people in social groups interact, as it predicts that they would carry out their various roles based on a stereotype. Employees have a tendency to categorize themselves based on the groups they belong to, according to the notion. Such a group could be formed based on age, gender, ethnicity and religion, amongst others. According to the authors, these groups are the basis of egotism and self-confidence or agony and low self-confidence. In most instances, a group will develop high self-confidence through discriminating and prejudging members of other groups, what the describe as in group and out group classification. Individuals in the work environment (employees) categorize themselves and other salient groups into "us" versus "them". These discriminatory practices and biased perceptions, for example, on age grade and gender may result into conflict which can further lead to lack of commitment and ability to think creatively. According to the theory, an employee's work behaviour is defined by the inside principles of the group to which they belong. In consequence, this directly influences the performance of the employee.

Social identity theory is relevant for this study as it offers important insights regarding the social identity bases of discrimination, prejudice, and inter-group conflicts among employees in universities. Employees who identify with their group are more likely to discriminate against individuals who belong to a different group, leading to in-group favoritism or inequality in the workplace. When individuals feel that they have been discriminated against either based on age, gender, it can lead to a feeling of injustice, increased turnover, stress, poor organizational commitment, and poor performance on the part of the victim.

Empirically, there are several disparities between men and women in terms of how participation in one role is related to engagement in another. Women, on the other hand, feel depletion from work to family, whereas men enjoy enrichment. Men, on the other hand, do not experience links from family to job, whereas women do. As a result, gender disparities will have an impact on the level of work engagement among male and female employees (Rothbard, 1999) ^[44] women's absenteeism is higher than men's, necessitating the establishment of diversity management measures, such as flexible working hours initiatives, to address the issue. According to Gallup's US research, women are more involved in their employment than males because they find more fulfillment in their jobs (Johnson, 2004) ^[23]. Gulzar and Teli (2018) ^[16] investigated the impact of gender inequalities on academicians' work engagement in higher education institutions. The influence is investigated using the independent samples test in an empirical study comprising

123 academic staff members from three universities in the Kashmir region (University of Kashmir, Central University of Kashmir, and Islamic University of Science and Technology). The findings show that female academics at the sampled institutions have significantly higher levels of work engagement than male academicians. A 2006 cross-national study done by Schaufeli, Bakker, Salanova (2006) [46] which surveyed 14,521 employees and found that engagement did not differ significantly between genders.

About employee performance and gender generally, Kyalo (2015) [30] findings in a study conducted in the banking sector in Kenya, indicates that gender diversity was significantly related to employee performance. A similar study conducted by Ngao and Mwangi (2013) [36] in the Nigerian Port Authority revealed that gender diversity had a huge positive effect on employee and organizational performance. In support of Kyalo (2015) [30], Ngao and Mwangi (2013) [36] stated that the main reason for this maybe that females and males think differently thus if their ideas are put together, they lead to better decision making, creativity and innovation and improved employee performance. In addition, Selvaraj (2015) [24] found gender diversity positively related to employee performance. Based on these findings, gender diversity was found to be positively affecting employee performance.

Binnewies, Ohly and Niessen (2008) [6] carried out a study on Age and Creativity at work: The interplay between job resources, age and idea creativity. The purpose of the study is to examine the interplay between job resources (job control and support for creativity from coworkers and supervisors), age and creativity at work. Job control and support for creativity are assumed to benefit idea creativity and to moderate the relationship between age and idea creativity. A sample of 117 nurses completed questionnaire measures and reported a creative idea they recently had at work examined two important job resources for creativity, namely job control and support for creativity as moderators in the relationship between age and creativity. Finding revealed that job control moderates the relationship between age and creativity at work. A high level of job control helps older employees to maintain and strengthen their creativity at work, whereas a low level of job control should be detrimental for older employees' creativity. This is so because older employees are characterized by more work experience. Knowledge and experience increases an employee's creativity (Amabile, 1996) [2]. However, there is variability in the empirical relationships between age and creativity, indicating a need to search for moderators (Eder & Sawyer, 2007) [10].

Kerga and Asefa (2018) [25] conducted a study in the Ethio-telecom South-West Addis Ababa Zone to determine the impact of age diversity on employee performance. A total of 80 people were polled for the study, and data was collected via structure questionnaire. For the analysis, a multiple linear regression model was used. The finding demonstrated that employee performance is unaffected by age differences.

Elsaid (2012) [12] looked into the effects of gender, age, and education on employee performance. The relationship between the dependent and independent variables was tested using multiple regression analysis, and Pearson's correlation analysis was used to determine whether there was a positive, negative, or no correlation between the dependent and independent variables. Only two variables, gender and education background were significant while surprisingly, age diversity was not significant. In contrast to the above, the

study conducted by Hapompwe (2020) [18] had findings that conflicted with the research outcomes of Kerga and Asefa (2018) [25] and Elsaid (2012) [12] who revealed that age diversity had no significant influence on performance. From the responses gathered in Hapompwe (2020) [18] findings, employees indicated that they felt comfortable working with either older or younger employees.

Gap in Knowledge

Based on the findings of related literature, it was observed that most of the studies on workforce diversity and employee performance both within and outside the country had recognized gender diversity and age diversity to influence performance of employees. However, none examined how gender influences employee engagement and how age diversity relates with employee creativity for better employee performance in universities in Anambra state. Therefore, this study seeks to examine how these independent and dependent variables interact.

Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design. This method was chosen because it is designed to scientifically describe phenomena and their relationships in the actual environment after a given time, given that the observer collects and analyzes data from only a few people considered to be representative of the entire population. The population of study was limited to the academic staff and non-academic staff of the selected universities in Anambra state. Three of these universities were used for the study which is a considerable representation of the population. The selection of these universities was based on their years of existence. (Researchers purposive sampling) considering the oldest universities in Anambra state. Nnamdi Azikiwe University (NAU), which represents federal university, Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University (COOU), represents state university, Madonna University Okija (MUO) representing private university are the oldest universities in Anambra State. The total population was 11,364.

Sample size and Sampling Technique

The sample size was obtained for the finite population using Taro Yamane's formula, which is given as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n = Sample size

N = Total Population

e = sampling error (0.05) or 5%

Where N = 11,364

Substituting in the formula, we have

$$n = 11,364$$

$$1 + 11,364(0.05)^2$$

$$n = \frac{11,364}{29.41}$$

$$n = 386.34$$

Hence, the sample size of the study is approximately 386. Proportional sampling technique was adopted for allocating the questionnaire amongst the universities. The reason for this technique is that it helps the researcher have an equal proportion of the employees within the sample frame to have equal chance of being selected. Thus, the questionnaire was distributed by the researcher and two assistants living and working within the areas of the states. The research assistants were given instructions on how to distribute the questionnaire. The proportion of each institution was determined using Bowley’s proportional allocation formula. Thus,

$$nh = \frac{n \times Nh}{N}$$

Where, nh = Number of questionnaire to be allocated to each of the institution

n = Total sample size.

Nh = Number of employees in each of the selected institution

N = Population size.

$$nh = \frac{386 \times 8022}{11,364} = 272$$

272 copies of questionnaire was distributed to Nnamdi Azikiwe University.

$$nh = \frac{386 \times 2350}{11,364} = 79.8$$

Approximately 80 copies of questionnaire was distributed to Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Igbaram

$$nh = \frac{386 \times 992}{11,364} = 34$$

34copies of questionnaire was distributed to Madonna University Okija

The researchers employed both self-delivery techniques and the help of research assistance in data collection. A total of 386 copies of the questionnaire were produced and distributed to the respondents in their various schools. The completed copies were collated and immediately analyzed.

Instrument for Data Collection

Both primary and secondary sources of data were explored in extracting useful information for the study. The primary

source of data consisted of questionnaire while the secondary sources of data consisted of data generated via websites, textbooks, theses and journals. Questions were prepared in form of statements and the researcher arranged them using a likert scale format ranging from lowest to highest ‘strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), undecided (3), agree (4) and strongly agree (5).

Validity of the Instrument

For the validity of the research instrument, the face and content validity methods were adopted. Using the face validity method, some experts in the field were used to assure that the items measured what they were intended to measure. Secondly, the researcher made use of the content validity which focuses on the conceptualization and the operationalization to ensure that all the concepts were covered

Reliability of the Instrument

To ensure that the instrument elicit consistent result, it was tested for internal consistency using Cronbach’s Alpha test. The pilot study was conducted using twenty five percent (25%) of the sample size of the study which is ninety seven (97) copies of questionnaire. At the end, eighty one (81) copies were retrieved representing twenty one percent (21%) of the sample size. The result obtained is shown in the table below:

Table 1

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.979	81

Source: Field Survey (pilot Study), 2022

Computation: SPSS ver. 25

From the result obtained, the reliability coefficient was .979 which if converted into percentage is 97%. This signifies that the instrument is reliable and capable of eliciting consistent result.

Method of Data Analysis

A simple percentage was adopted to present the data in this study. Also, the data collected were presented using descriptive statistics such as percentages while the Pearson-Product moment correlation analysis was used to test the hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

Table 2

Name of schools	Questionnaire Distributed	Questionnaire returned	Unreturned Questionnaire
Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka	272	267	5
Chukwuemeka Odumegwu Ojukwu University Igbaram	80	78	2
Madonna University Okija	34	33	1
Total	386	378	8

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Hypotheses I

H₀: There is no significant relationship between gender diversity and employee engagement.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between gender diversity and employee engagement.

Table 3

Correlations			
		Gender Diversity	Employee Engagement
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	.956**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	378	378
Engagement	Pearson Correlation	.956**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	378	378
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

From the analysis above, it shows that the calculated Pearson's correlation coefficient ($r = 0.956$) is statistically significant at .05 ($p\text{-value} < 0.05$). This is because the p -value is less than the given level of significance. The implication is reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative hypothesis which says that there is a significant relationship between gender diversity and employee engagement.

Hypotheses II

H₀: There is no significant relationship between age diversity and employee creativity.

H₁: There is a significant relationship between age diversity and employee creativity

Table 4

Correlations			
		Age Diversity	Employee Creativity
Age Diversity	Pearson Correlation	1	.978**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	378	378
Employee Creativity	Pearson Correlation	.978**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	378	378
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

From the analysis above, it shows that the calculated Pearson's correlation coefficient (0.978) is statistically significant at .05 ($p\text{-value} < 0.05$). The implication is reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative which says that there is a significant relationship between age diversity and employee creativity.

Discussion of Findings

The following findings were revealed from this study.

Result from test of hypothesis I

From the analysis above, it shows that the calculated Pearson's correlation coefficient (0.956) is greater than the critical value from the table (0.105), we, therefore, reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternative which says that there is a significant relationship between gender diversity and employee engagement. This finding is consistent with the study carried out by Ngao and Mwangi (2013) [36] which revealed that there is a strong positive significant relationship between gender diversity and employee engagement. The findings of this study was also in accordance with the study carried out by Gulzar and Teli (2018) [16] which revealed that gender influences the level of employee work engagement. To them, female academic members/respondents have a higher level of work engagement than their male counterparts. However, a contrasting finding was reported by a 2006 cross national study, conducted by Schaufeli *et al.* found that engagement did not differed significantly between genders. The implication of this findings is that when there is no discrimination or favoritism to the male or female gender and staff are been recognized, appreciated and involved in decision making, they become more engaged and perform better.

Result from test of hypothesis II

The result for the second hypothesis testing reveals that there is a significant relationship between age diversity and employee creativity. This result is contrary to Meta-analytic research on the relationship between age and creativity which shows that age is unrelated to creativity. However, a study carried out by Binnewies, Ohly and Niessen. (2008) [6] shows that age was positively related to idea creativity under high job control and negatively related to idea creativity under low job control and low support for creativity. A high level of job control helps older employees to maintain and strengthen their creativity at work. From the finding of this study we can deduce that universities in Anambra state does not discriminate based on age. Younger and older employees both generate new ideas to solve problems related to their job especially in the presence of challenging tasks and when given the freedom to work. Creative work by employees (both young and old) increases job satisfaction and engagement, and by extension employee performance and retention.

Summary of Findings

The following findings were made from the Analysis:

1. There is a significant positive relationship between gender diversity and employee engagement.

$$(P - value = 0.000 < 0.05,)$$

2. There is a significant positive relationship between age diversity and employee creativity.

$$(P - value = 0.000 < 0.05,)$$

Conclusion

Based on the summary of findings, the researchers conclude that there is a significant positive relationship between gender

diversity and employee engagement, there is a significant positive relationship between age diversity and employee creativity.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion, the following recommendations were made

1. Management need to implement a gender diversity management program in the institutions. They can begin by gaining a thorough grasp of their employees' gender diversity concerns and addressing them swiftly.
2. Management can encourage employees to ask for support from each other (regardless of their ages) and should maintain a discrimination-free work environment to encourage creative thinking that will boost employee performance.

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