

GENDER DIVERSITY AND PERFORMANCE OF FEDERAL ESTABLISHMENTS IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined gender diversity and performance of Federal Establishments in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive research design. Using a combination of Krejcie Morgan sample determination and Bowley's population proportionate distribution; a sample size of 226 respondents were obtained from a population of 558 staff of ten federal establishments in Rivers State. After validation, 226 copies of structured questionnaire were administered while 214 copies were retrieved. Pie chart was used to present the percentage of the demographic data, mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while Simple Linear Regression was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level. The study revealed gender diversity had positive significant effect on the performance of Federal Establishments in Rivers State. The implications of the results were that any Federal establishment in Rivers State that ignored workforce diversity is bound to experience poor performance. The study encouraged Federal establishments in Rivers State to pay much attention to issues of workforce diversity.

Keywords: Gender Diversity, Workforce Diversity, Federal Establishment Performance

INTRODUCTION

The world's increasing globalization requires more interaction among people from diverse backgrounds. People no longer live and work in an insular environment; they are now part of a worldwide economy competing within a global framework. For this reason, profit and non-profit establishments need to become more diversified to remain competitive. Maximizing and capitalizing on workforce diversity is an important issue for establishment where supervisors and managers need to recognize the ways in which the workforce is changing and evolving.

In addition, advances in technology and the advent of a global economy bring the people of the world closer together than ever before. Workforce diversity has important implications toward management practices and policies. Frequently, diversity is viewed in a limited fashion, primarily addressing issues of educational background, marital status, age, race, ethnicity, cultural or gender differences. With regard to this study, there is broad definition of workforce diversity, to encompass most characteristics that individuals possess that seem to affect the way they think and do things. Arnold and Randall (2010) stated that in today's world of globalisation and demographic change, the workforce is becoming increasingly diverse. This has resulted in a greater variety of knowledge, skills, experiences and attitudes which contribute to the establishment performance.

However, it appears that the shifts from an establishment to an information-based society to a service economy, coupled with the forces of globalization, have forced innovative changes on the work place arrangements. These tendencies have affected work not just in establishment societies of the global society, but also in the developing countries such as Nigeria. Several conjecture on the best way to organize tasks and people as well as the solutions to establishment problems based on those hypothesis do not seem to make sense any more. A paradigmatic shift is taking place in contemporary time on how we think about contemporary establishments and their governance. The Nigeria Public Service is however not exempted from this modern establishment reality.

In further explanation, workforce diversity has been widely attributed to the demographic composition of a workforce in public sector. However, workforce diversity is usually measured using the compositional approach, otherwise known as Surface-level or demographic diversity which refers to the extent to which a unit is heterogeneous on characteristics such as educational background, gender, marital status, age and ethnicity (Tsui & Gutek, 2000).

Research Hypothesis

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between gender diversity and the performance of Federal Establishments in Rivers State.

Gender Diversity

Across many countries in the world, women have been visibly discriminated and continue to be discriminated due to the patriarchal nature of the society and gender stereotype. However, due to legislation, activism and anti-discriminatory campaigns and movements, significant improvements have been made in combating gender based discrimination at the work place. Like other diversity factors, there has been mixed results on the impact of gender diversity on establishment performance. Gupta (2019) found that gender diversity can have either positive or negative impact on establishment performance. The study further revealed that moderate level of gender diversity increases competitive advantage while higher level of gender diversity in establishments negatively impact on establishment performance. Gender diversity is an umbrella term used to describe gender identities in terms of whether an individual is a male or female.

However, Powell (2011) defined gender as the physiological inference of a someone being either male or female, like expectations and beliefs regarding what kind of attitudes, behaviours, values, knowledge, skills, and interests areas are more suitable for or typical of one sex than the other. The study of gender diversity focuses on how individuals believe that males and females differ. These gender variations influence the manner in which individuals react to the behaviours of others in the work settings or any other group coalition. Gender diversities are visible in prejudice, stereotypes, and discrimination.

Singh and Vinnicombe (2004) in their study discovered that women are almost if not completely absent when it comes to occupying senior positions in establishments. However, male directors often form an elite group at the top of the establishment world and only very few women are able to breakthrough these glass ceiling into this elite group, despite making inroads into middle management. This point out that gender in the board of directors in some big establishment is a barrier for career advancement. Singh and Vinnicombe further argued that this is a matter of concern, because the talents of women are not being fully utilized. The private sectors is seen and characterized as influential, powerful, financially important and generally not controlled by the state. Historically, the private sector, including the board of directors has been male dominated where men have controlled the majority of high-level positions and especially those related to power (Healy, Kirton, & Noon, 2011).

Although women work in establishments purporting to have policies that offers equality of pay and opportunities, and though they most of the time appear to be well qualified, the career ladder for women in large establishments appear to be often shortened, while the male ladder extends to top of the career tree. Women are often hived off into specialist or gendered positions, such as human resources- known as the 'velvet ghetto' (Gatrell & Swan, 2008). These practices and processes do not only appear in large establishments and public service establishments but also in small and big firms, women are often absent at board level within family businesses, where sons continue to take precedence over daughters and where women's contribution is frequently marginalized. Men have thus become the 'somatic norm' in establishment roles involving management and decision making.

Performance of the Establishments

Establishments performance means system outputs. Every establishment feeds inputs such as raw materials, people or resources and transforms them into finished goods or services aimed at satisfying the consumers' need. According to Daft (2014), establishment performance is defined as an establishment's ability to attain its goals by using resources in an efficient and effective manner. Consequently, it is an evidence of the output of members of an establishment measured in terms of efficiency, innovations, service delivery, profit, growth, development and expansion of the establishment. Establishment performance comprises the actual output or results of an establishment as measured against its intended outputs (or goals and objectives) (Ingram, 2019). Thus, the extent to which an establishment is able to operate smoothly and achieve its goals or mandates is what this work sees as establishment performance.

Establishment performance is defined as a continuous and action oriented with focus on improving performance by using objective, standards, appraisal, and feedback. Establishments performance comprises the actual output or results of an establishment performance as measured against its intended goals and objectives. Establishments adopt performance measurement because it creates accountability, provides feedback to operations, and result in more effective planning, budgeting, and evaluation (Ammons, 2001). The performance as stated by Hunger and Wheelen (2007) is an end results of an activity, and an establishment performance is accumulated end results of all the organizations work processes and activities. Managers measure and control establishment performance because it leads to better assessment for management, to increase the ability to provide customer value, to improve measures of establishment knowledge, and measure of establishment performance do have an impact on an establishment's reputation. When the performance of the establishment is assessed, the past management decisions that shaped investments, operations and financing are measured to know whether all resources were used effectively, whether the profitability of the business met or even exceeded expectations, and whether financing choice were made prudently.

According to Richard, Devinney, Yip and Johnson (2009), establishment performance encompasses three specific areas of establishment outcomes, financial performance such as profits, return on assets and return on investment), product market performance such as sales, market share and shareholder return measure through total shareholder return and economic value added. Establishment performance is therefore the ability of an organization to fulfil its mission through sound management, strong governance, and a persistent rededication to achieving results. Basically the nature of Federal Government Establishments such as agencies and parastatals which was originally designed to provide public services like availability goods, street lights, access roads, water, relief materials and other social amenities for the wellbeing of the citizens.

Relationship between gender diversification and the performance of Federal Establishments

Gender is regarded as the description of masculinity or femininity of people (Connell & Messerschmitt, 2013). Mwatumba (2016) argued that gender diversity is positively linked to establishment performance. This concurs with Weiliang (2011) who used a resource based-view of establishment, stating that gender diversity at the management and establishment levels can provide establishment with better competitive advantage. However, Kirton and Greene (2015) argued that most establishments' do not realise these benefits as gender-based imbalances still persist in establishments. According to Nishli (2013), most cultures around the world still adhere to the notion that the world is dominated by men. As such, the corporate world holds the same belief establishments and thus prefer to hire men compared to women because men are perceived to have better performance and ability to manage their jobs and women are stereotyped against in those

characteristics. Kirton and Green (2015), however stated that providing equal engagement opportunities for women is important to improve performance in establishments.

Social Identity Theory

This study was guided by Social Identity Theory (SIT) as advocated by Tajfel (1978). The author begins with the premise that individuals define their own identities with regard to social groups and that such identifications work to protect and bolster self-identity. The theory explains that part of a person's concept of self comes from the groups to which that person belongs. An individual does not just have a personal selfhood, but multiple selves and identities associated with their affiliated groups. A person might act differently in varying social contexts according to the groups they belong to. Social identity theory posits that a portion of one's self-concept is dependent on the importance and relevance placed on the group membership(s) to which an individual belongs (Turner & Oakes, 1986). The theory suggests that individuals' drive for positive identity and esteem influences the social comparisons they make. In particular, group/category comparisons that accentuate group distinctiveness in favour of one's in-group over a relevant out-group are privileged.

According to Hogg and Terry (2000), social identity and intergroup behaviour are guided by the pursuit of evaluative positive social identity; through positive intergroup distinctiveness, which in turn, is motivated by the need for positive self-esteem. In addition to being motivated by self-enhancement, social identity processes are also motivated by a need to reduce subjective uncertainty about one's perceptions, attitudes, feelings, and behaviours and, ultimately, one's self-concept and place within the social world. According to Al Jishi (2009), the level of performance depends on the level of motivation that stimulates someone to work and carry out the necessary tasks to achieve the goals. This theory suggests that individuals tend to classify themselves and others into certain groups on the basis of dimensions that are personally relevant for them. These dimensions often include demographic categories such as gender, age, or ethnicity.

Social identity theory presumes that:

- People hastily stereotypes and discriminates people who come from different backgrounds that are dissimilar from theirs. Thus, in a diverse work team or firm, it is anticipated that there will be lack of trust, communication and problems of cooperation in carrying out job assignments.
- As a consequence, the job processes will be very difficult which will result to lower productivity. Therefore, this theory hypothesized a negative association between workforce diversity and performance.

Social identity theory viewed that one implication of identifying with a particular group is that the closer that individuals feel to a group (the "in-group"), the more uniform their behavior will be and the more likely they will regard members of other groups ("out-groups") as being cut from the same cloth. Social identity theory suggests that managers throw out like their subordinates) are likely to use salient social categories (such as race, gender, and functional specialization) as indicators of value and preference similarity, and thereby the potential for disruptive conflict.

This theory was relevant to this study since:

- Social identity theory predicts the circumstances under which individuals think of themselves as individuals or as group members.
- The theory also considers the consequences of personal and social identities for individual perceptions and group behaviour.

Research Design

The study adopted descriptive research design.

Population of the Study

The total population of Federal Establishments in Rivers State according to Federal Character Commission is one hundred and twenty-four (124). The researcher chose to study twelve (12) Federal Establishments under Information and Communication because they have similar mandate, focus, uniformity and service delivery.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample size of 226 was determined using Krejcie and Morgan sample size table (see appendix c). After determining the sample size of the study, Bowley’s (1960) population proportionate allocation formula was used for sample size distribution across the staff of Federal Establishments under Information and Communication in Rivers State.

Research Instrument

Structured questionnaire tagged: Workforce Diversity and Establishment Performance Questionnaire (WDEPQ) was used for the collection of primary data. The copies of the questionnaire were designed in five point Likert rating scale format with the following response options: Strongly Agree (SD) = 5, Agree (A) = 4, Neutral (N) = 3, Disagree (D) = 2 and Strongly Disagree (SD) = 1.

Method of Data Analysis

Pie chart was used to present the percentages of demographic data for the study, items and scores analysis was used to evaluate the Likert scale responses of SA, A, N, D and SD, descriptive statistic was used to determine the mean and standard deviation of the research questions one to five with benchmark of 3 criterion mean value while test of hypotheses was done using Simple Linear Regression at 0.05 significance alpha level with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.

Results

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between gender diversity and the performance of Federal Establishments in Rivers State.

Model Summary of the Relationship between Gender Diversity and the Performance of Federal Establishments in Rivers State

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.835 ^a	.697	.696	.39562	.225

a. Predictors: (Constant), GD

b. Dependent Variable: PFE

Sources: SPSS 21.0

The model summary of Table above reveals that R² perfectly measured the effect of independent variable on the dependent variable having the value of .697. Based on the 70% of the variation, the result showed positive significant relationship between gender diversity and the performance of Federal Establishments in Rivers State. This was supported by adjusted R² of .696. Furthermore, Durbin-Watson statistics value of .225 which shows that the variables in the model are not autocorrelated and that the model is reliable for predictions based on the positive significant relationship between gender diversity and the performance of Federal Establishments in Rivers State.

ANOVA of the Relationship between Gender Diversity and the Performance of Federal Establishments in Rivers State

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	76.389	1	76.389	488.072	.000 ^b
	Residual	33.181	212	.157		

Total	109.570	213
a. Dependent Variable: PFE		
b. Predictors: (Constant), GD		

Sources: SPSS 21.0

ANOVA result in Table above revealed the computed F-value of 488.072 and Sig. value of $.000^b < 0.05$ (which is less than) the chosen level of significant at 212 degree of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, while the alternate hypothesis is accepted. The study further concludes that there is positive significant relationship between gender diversity and the performance of Federal Establishments in Rivers State. Going further, the result output explained that most of the staff enjoys working with their fellow colleagues of opposite gender hence improving the establishments performance.

Coefficient Estimates of the Relationship between Gender Diversity and the Performance of Federal Establishments in Rivers State

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-1.243	.267		-4.647	.000
	GD	1.213	.055	.835	22.092	.000

a. Dependent Variable: PFE

Sources: SPSS 21.0

In coefficient of the estimates of Table above, the result showed the computed t-value of 22.092 and Sig. value of $.000 < 0.05$ (which is less than) the chosen level of significant at 212 degree of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, while the alternate hypothesis is accepted. The study further concludes that there is positive significant relationship between gender diversity and the performance of Federal Establishments in Rivers State. Going further, the result output explained that most of the staff enjoys working with their fellow colleagues of opposite gender hence improving the establishments performance.

Discussion on the Relationship between Gender Diversity and the Performance of Federal Establishments

Descriptive statistic results of research question two in Table above revealed that responses of items 6 to 10 had positive mean set of 4.6682 which was above the criterion mean value of 3 with an agreed decision. In addition, the result showed that gender diversity correlated positively with the performance of Federal Establishments under Information and Communication in Rivers State whereby gender with difference experiences promote the establishments performance. In line with hypothesis two results above indicated the summary R^2 perfectly measured the effect of independent variable on the dependent variable having the value of .697. Based on the 70% of the variation, the result showed that gender diversity had positive relationship on the performance of Federal Establishment in Rivers State. This was supported by adjusted R^2 of .696. Furthermore, Durbin-Watson statistics value of .225 which shows that the variables in the model are not autocorrelated and that the model is reliable for predictions of the relationship between gender diversity and performance of Federal Establishment in Rivers State. Going further, above further showed the computed F-value of 488.072 and Sig. value of $.000^b < 0.05$ (which is less than) the chosen level of significant at 212 degree of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, while the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This implies that there was positive significant relationship between gender diversity and the performance of Federal Establishment in Rivers State. Lastly, table above result showed the computed t-value of 22.092 and Sig. value of $.000 < 0.05$ (which is less than) the chosen level of significant at 212 degree of freedom. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, while the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This further indicated that there was positive significant relationship between gender diversity and the performance of Federal

Establishment in Rivers State. In general, the result output explained that most of the staff enjoys working with their fellow colleagues of opposite gender hence improving the establishments performance. In another way, the study of Edih (2020) revealed that workforce gender diversity positively and significantly affect public services in Bayelsa State based on gender. Thus, there is the need for management of public services in Bayelsa State to pay attention to how the boardroom is composed in order to enhance the performance of public services in Bayelsa State.

At the Malaysian airline, Eugene *et al.* (2011) found out that there was a significant positive relationship between gender diversity and employee performance. Kyalo (2013) also reported similar results in a study conducted in the banking sector in Kenya, indicating that gender diversity was significantly related to employee performance. Another conducted study by Ngao and Mwangi (2013) in the Kenyan Port Authority revealed similar findings that gender diversity had a huge positive effect on employee and organisational performance.

Ibinabo, Samuel and Isaac (2020) findings of the study revealed that there is a significant relationship between gender diversity and organizational performance of 3-star hotels in South-South, Nigeria. The study of Obinna (2020) showed that there is a significant relationship between gender diversity and employee performance of hotels in Port Harcourt. Based on the observation, the empirical studies that supported relationship between Gender Diversity and the Performance of Federal Establishments in Rivers State does not dual on the current variable findings rather focused on the Malaysian airline gender diversity and employee performance; banking sector in Kenya towards gender diversity employee performance; Kenyan Port Authority gender diversity and effect on employee and organisational performance; gender diversity and organizational performance of 3-star hotels in South- South, Nigeria and gender diversity and employee performance of hotels in Port Harcourt.

CONCLUSION

The analysis of data revealed that workforce diversity enhances performance of Federal Establishments in Rivers State, Nigeria. Based on the findings of bio data, it was concluded that gender distribution ratio of Federal establishments in Rivers State, Nigeria had more male staff than female staff. It was equally concluded that there was positive significant relationship between gender diversity and the performance of Federal Establishment in Rivers State.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Federal Government should encourage gender diversification and performance of Federal Establishments in Rivers State. This can be achieved through proper orientation on how elimination of gender disparity positively correlation to the performance of Federal Establishments under information and communication in Rivers State.
2. Federal Government should ensure proper integration of different ethnic diversity in the various Federal establishments for effective performance. This can be achieved through research, holding of workshop and seminar to enlighten the workforce on the impact of ethnic diversity on work performance of Federal Establishments under information and communication in Rivers State.

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