

AGE DIVERSITY AND EMPLOYEE EFFECTIVENESS OF MULTINATIONAL MANUFACTURING COMPANIES IN SOUTH-EAST NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examined age diversity and effectiveness of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria. The aim of the study was to determine the relationship between age diversity and effectiveness (productivity, employee commitment and employee morale) of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria. The study adopted the survey research design. The target population of the study consisted of all the 45 registered multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria while the accessible population was limited to 25 selected multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria. A population of 3,184 permanent staff (comprising managers and employees) was identified in the 25 selected multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria. A sample size of 355 permanent staff was used for the study. The sample size was determined using the Taro Yamene's formula. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection. The data collected from the respondents were analyzed statistically while the hypotheses were tested using Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient (ρ) and the SPSS software program version 23. The findings revealed that age diversity has a significant relationship with productivity of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria. The study also found a significant relationship between age diversity and employee commitment of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria. The study also discovered a significant relationship between age diversity and employee morale of brewery companies in South-South Nigeria. Based on these findings, it was concluded that age diversity significantly enhanced the effectiveness of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria. Based on these findings and conclusion, it was recommended that multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria should ensure that their work environment is made up of workers of different age groups as it would enable both the younger and older workers teach, share and learn from one another so as to increase their productivity and achieve organizational effectiveness.

Keywords: Age diversity, Employee effectiveness, Employee commitment, Employee morale

Introduction

Background of the Study

Multinational organizations are companies that are registered and operate in more than one country at a time (Magoshi & Chang, 2009). These companies have their headquarters in their home country and operate wholly or partially owned subsidiaries in other countries. Examples of multinational companies in Nigeria are Shell Petroleum Development Company (SPDC), Coca-Cola Company, 7Up Bottling Company, MTN, Airtel, Glo, 9Mobile, United African Company (UAC), Unilever Company, Addax Oil and Gas Company, Nestle Company Ltd to mention but a few. These

companies are very rich in all ramifications because of the huge profit they make from different countries. Multinational organizations are known for having expatriates who bring their knowledge, skills and expertise to the table to achieve organizational goals. These companies assemble different age groups of workers to perform different tasks that will lead to the achievement of their goals. The different age group assembled by the companies is known as age diversity.

Companies that employ workers from different age groups have the advantage of creating a dynamic, multi-generational workplace with a diverse range of skill sets that is beneficial to the company (Malewar & Nair, 2013). A workforce composed of different age demographics creates an environment where each generation brings different skills and talents to the table (Dahm, 2003). For example, young employees likely have a strong grasp on the use of high-tech business mediums such as social networking, online product demonstrations and webcasting. More mature professionals often have exceptional interpersonal skills and perform well in environments where traditional in-person communication is used. The diverse range of skills sets can offer an advantage to a company that caters to a multi-generational demographic.

Age diversity in the workplace can help an organization to achieve effectiveness. Organizational effectiveness is crucial to top managers and directors in any company. Every manager strives to achieve organizational effectiveness. In fact, achieving organizational effectiveness is the primary objective of every managers and organizations. In Nigeria, a lot of pressure is being mounted on managers to achieve organizational effectiveness given the huge amount of resources committed to the organization. Cameron and Moore (2004) stated that organizational effectiveness is especially important for profit organizations as most people who invest their money to these organizations are interested in knowing whether the organization is effective in accomplishing its goals.

Therefore, to achieve organizational effectiveness, multinational companies assembled workers of different age groups to perform crucial tasks that will lead to organizational effectiveness. Assefa(2014)posited that companies need to hire workers from different age groups because they are certain jobs that can be best performed by employees that fall between the age group of 30-45 years, and those that are be best performed by workers between the age group of 46-55 years. In a mixed age workforce where companies value knowledge, experience and skill above age or seniority, employees of all ages have the opportunity to teach, share and learn from one another. A workforce heavily composed of only of people in a particular age demographic runs the risk of becoming obsolete (McQuerrey, 2005).

Traditionally, older workers train younger professionals in the way of the company, passing down accumulated years of experience. In a workforce dominated only by young professionals, there is no opportunity for generational mentoring. In a workforce dominated only by mature employees, workers eventually retire from the company, leaving behind few people who are familiar with the company's history (McQuerrey, 2005). Hence, to ensure a balance in the workforce, multinational manufacturing companies hire workers from diverse age grades. Simons and Rowland (2011) stated that companies that assembled workers of different age groups stand a better chance of achieving organizational effectiveness. It is against this backdrop that this study examines the relationship between age diversity and effectiveness of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria.

Statement of the Problem

The organization that wishes to improve the effectiveness of its employees may always need to leverage on the strengths inherent in its workforce age diversity. This is the ideal situation. It is however very disturbing that many organizations have been observed by the researcher to have failed to take advantage of employee age diversity in enhancing the employee effectiveness indices of their workforce. When workers are not given tasks commensurate to their age differences, they may be counter-productive in the organization. Age differences among workers have been observed to have been misused by enterprises as many organizational human resources seem to be promoters of age politics in organization instead of utilizing the age differences for improving employee productivity, employee commitment and employee morale. All these may have the capacity to cause ineffectiveness and even redundancy among the workforce.

Indeed, empirical studies accessed by the researcher in the area of workforce diversity did not show how age diversity influenced employee productivity, employee commitment and employee morale in multinational companies in Southern Nigeria. This shows that a wide research gap exists. For instance, Ngalo, Daniel and Ibrahim (2023) investigated workforce diversity and employee performance: an empirical analysis of Nigeria's banking sector. They did not examine the relationships which this study assesses. Ekejiuba, Muritala, Abubakar and Sharma (2023) examined the impact of workforce diversity management on employee commitment in the Nigerian public sector. They did not investigate the relationships which this present study emphasizes. Tongo, Awomailo Ajose and Aderemi (2023) assessed the impact of workplace diversity and inclusion on organizational productivity in Nigeria: a case study. Their study did not assess the relationships which this present study investigates. It is based on these research gaps that this study is conducted to bridge the gaps. This is with a view to contributing to knowledge.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between age diversity and effectiveness of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. determine the relationship between age diversity and productivity of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria;
2. ascertain the relationship between age diversity and employee commitment of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria; and
3. Investigate the relationship between age diversity and employee morale of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions are raised to address the objectives of the study:

1. To what extent does age diversity relate to productivity of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria?
2. What is the nature of relationship between age diversity relate and employee commitment of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria?
3. To what extent does age diversity contribute to employee morale of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide this study:

- Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between age diversity and productivity of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria.
- Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between age diversity and employee commitment of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria.
- Ho₃: There is no significant relationship between age diversity and employee morale of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria.

Scope of the Study

The content scope centered on age diversity and effectiveness of multinational manufacturing companies. It discussed age diversity and relate the concept to effectiveness such as productivity, employee commitment and employee morale of companies. The geographical scope of the study was limited to multinational manufacturing companies in the South-East Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria. The South-East Zone is made up of five states namely; Abia State, Anambra State, Ebonyi State, Enugu State and Imo State. The unit of analysis consisted of managers and employees of the multinational manufacturing companies in the South-East Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria.

Significance of the Study

The study would be of great benefit to different groups of persons and organization. The results of this study would be useful to multinational manufacturing companies as it would educate them on how age diversity can be used to achieve organizational effectiveness. This study would be relevant to top executives and managers as it would sensitize them on how age diversity can be used to increase the level of employee commitment and achieve greater productivity. The findings of the study will make top executives and managers understand the potentials of age diversity in achieving organizational effectiveness. This information will assist top managers in formulating policies and strategies that will facilitate the practice of age diversity to achieve organizational effectiveness. This study would be useful to foreign investors especially those who are planning to establish manufacturing companies in Nigeria as it would educate them on the importance of age diversity in achieving organizational effectiveness. The study will enlighten them on how age diversity can help to increase employee commitment and productivity. This information will guide them in making the best investment decision regarding the direction of workforce diversity to adopt. The study will be useful to students, lecturers and research consultants especially those that intend to carry further research on this topic as it would serve as a good reference material for their studies.

Review of Related Literature**Conceptual Review****Concept of Age Diversity**

Workforces are becoming increasingly diverse in age demographics, creating professional environments that are rich with experience and maturity as well as youthful exuberance. Companies that employ workers in wide ranges of age have the advantage of creating a dynamic, multi-generational workplace with a diverse range of skill sets that is beneficial to the company (Malewar & Nair, 2013). A workforce composed of different age demographics creates an environment where each generation brings different skills and talents to the table (Dahm, 2003). For example, young employees likely have a strong grasp on the use of high-tech business mediums such as social networking, online product demonstrations and webcasting. More mature professionals often have exceptional interpersonal skills and perform well in environments where traditional in-person communication is used. The diverse range of skills sets can offer an advantage to a company that caters to a multi-generational demographic.

Young professionals grew up in a high-tech world and have greater familiarity with business technology tools compared to their mature counterparts. While all age demographics must embrace technology in the professional world to communicate and effectively reach customers, a workforce that contains tech-savvy employees has a definite advantage over companies that employ only mature workers (Simons & Rowland, 2011). Just as younger generations are credited with having good working knowledge of business technology, more mature members of a workforce have the advantage of traditional business skills. This diversity gives businesses the advantage of being able to communicate and deal with customers across all age spectrums (Robbins & Judge, 2011). For example, one customer may prefer the fast pace of email correspondence, while another may appreciate the tradition of a formal business letter.

A diverse workforce can cater to both types of customer (Robbins & Judge, 2011). The practice of multi-generational workplace mentoring offers many advantages. In a mixed age workforce where companies value knowledge, experience and skill above age, seniority or gender, employees of all ages have the opportunity to teach, share and learn from one another. A workforce heavily composed of only of people in a particular age demographic runs the risk of becoming obsolete (McQuerrey, 2005). Traditionally, older workers train younger professionals in the way of the company, passing down accumulated years of experience. In a workforce dominated only by young professionals, there is no opportunity for generational mentoring. In a workforce dominated only by mature employees, workers eventually retire from the company, leaving behind few people who are familiar with the company's history (McQuerrey, 2005).

Concept of Organizational Effectiveness

Organizational effectiveness is an abstract concept (Denison, 2003), and it entails how effective an organization is in achieving the outcomes the organization intends to produce (Hartley, 2004). Mitchell (2012) defined organizational effectiveness as a concept of how effective an organization is in achieving the outcomes the organization intends to produce. The idea of organizational effectiveness is important for all organizations be it private or public organization, small, medium or large organization. Kepes (2009) noted that an organization's effectiveness is dependent on its communicative competence and ethics. The relationship

between these three is simultaneous. Ethics is a foundation found within organizational effectiveness. An organization must exemplify respect, honesty, integrity and equity to allow communicative competence with the participating member. Along with ethics and communicative competence, members in that particular group can finally achieve their intended goals. Cameron and Moore (2004) stated that effective organizations are characterized by:

- i. Diversity of linguistic forms.
- ii. Techniques to break out of normal cognitive and normative constraints.
- iii. Means of simultaneously crediting and discrediting information received.
- iv. Structural units that are loosely articulate to maintain sensitivity to environment and diversity of response.

Organizational effectiveness is very important to shareholders and business owners. Shareholders who invested their funds in the establishment of companies are interested in knowing whether or not the organization is effective in terms of accomplishing its goals. The effectiveness of an organization can be determined using various criteria. According to Mitchell (2012), the key areas of organizational effectiveness include talent management, leadership development, organization design and structure, design of measurements and scorecards, implementation of change and transformation, deploying smart processes and smart technology to manage the firms' human capital and the formulation of the broader human resources agenda. If an organization has practices and programs in these areas, such organization can be said to be on its way towards achieving organizational effectiveness.

Measures of Organizational Effectiveness

Organizational effectiveness can be measured using various indicators. However, in this study, organizational effectiveness is measured using productivity, employee commitment and employee morale.

Productivity

Productivity is the relationship between output generated by a production or service system and the input provided to create this output (Obiezekwem, 2020). It is the measure of how well resources are brought together and utilized to accomplish organizational goals. The overall productivity of an organization is a function of the individual employee productivity. If the employees in an organization are productive, the organization is more likely to accomplish more in a given period of time (Nawaz & Nawaz, 2012). On the other hand, when employees are unproductive, they will take much time to complete their task and the organization will accomplish less despite the huge resources (input) invested in the project (Nawaz & Nawaz, 2012). Therefore, it is important for an organization to have productive workers in order to increase its productivity. Gamage (2015) stated that when an organization possess productive workers, there is a possibility for the organization to increase its productivity and profitability. Okoye and Ezejiofor (2013) added that productive employees make an organization to grow and prosper; they are always the brain behind the success of the organization. It is for this reason that effective HRM practices become imperative to attract, motivate and reward the human element in the organization to increase their productivity.

Employee Commitment

Employee commitment in an organizational setting has been defined in various ways. For instance, Porter, Steers, Mowday and Boulian in Cagliyan, Attar and Derra (2017) defined employee commitment as the degree of intensity with which an employee identifies with his or her organization and engage in it. It could as be defined as employees' belief in and acceptance of organizational goals and values, their willingness to work towards accomplishing the organization's goals, and their strong desire to continue as member of the organization (Porter, Steers, Mowday & Boulian in Hassan, 2002). Employee commitment is the readiness of an employee to apply elevated levels of hard work on behalf of the organization, accept its goals, values, ethics, principles and standards, and show aspiration to stay with the organization (Porter, in Mohamed & Anisa, 2012).

Given the increased competition in the global market and technological advancement, it becomes necessary for the workforce is encouraged and trained to perform efficiently and increase their level of job commitment. Rathore and Sen (2017) posited that high productivity level of an organization depend largely on increased level of workers' commitment. Tyler in Rahman et al (2016) noted that workers demonstrates high level of commitment when they feel that the decision making process is based on fairness. Meanwhile, Ohbuchi in Rahman, Shahzad, Mustafa, Khan and Qurashi (2016) argued that if all the workers in an organization are treated in a fairly manner by addressing their needs and interests without any favouritism, managers can be able to extract commitment from them and achieve organizational goals.

Employee Morale

Employee morale is the spirit of a company's workforce, and influences how successful an organization becomes (Hackman & Greg, 2006). Business managers are concerned with keeping morale high so that the organization is always moving forward. Building employee morale can add to the success of a company. When employees are happy, they are more willing to give their all and work productively towards the company's success. Morale can be the fuel that drives an organization forward or the fuel that feeds the fires of employee discontent, poor performance, and absenteeism (Shilpakraj, 2012). It is something that can be contagious in the workplace. Good morale means the staff has faith in the company and their mission. Poor morale can spread, obliterating employees' sense of commitment and loyalty to their organization. This leads to decreased productivity and increased absenteeism (Shilpakraj, 2012).

Although there are several factors that impact an employee's morale but there is no single factor that consistently explains good or poor morale. Rather, a combination of related factors results in good or poor morale. Javitch (2005) noted that external influences (economy, home life) and internal work-related variables impact on employee morale. When employees are satisfied with their jobs, morale is higher. It is important for managers to pay attention to staff morale and identify the signs of poor morale before the mood shifts and the company pays the price. Poor morale can be corrected if caught in time.

Age Diversity and Organizational Effectiveness

The relationship between age diversity and organizational effectiveness has been explored in literature. According to Nyikuli (2019), an organization that assemble workers with

different age groups would experience higher productivity and achieve organizational effectiveness. They explained that different age groups at work is important for organizational growth, development and competitiveness. Meena and Vanka (2013) noted that diversified age groups in the working environment improves organizational productivity. Magoshi and Chang (2009) argued that the possession both younger and older workers in the workplace brings about increased productivity and better chance of achieving organizational effectiveness.

Age diversity in the workplace stimulate employees to become more productive to work. According to Chamaniford et al (2015), assembling different age grades of employees in an organization usually lead to a pool of skills in the workplace and this contributes towards achieving organizational effectiveness. When younger and older people are assembled in an organization, it brings about knowledge sharing and transfer which in turns improve workers' productivity and better organizational performance. Wasti and Can (2008) stated that age diversity in the workplace significantly improves employees' creativity and innovativeness. They explained that collectivism and team work from both younger and older workers provides a great chance of achieving organizational effectiveness.

Age diversity has been shown to be a viable option for achieving organizational effectiveness. Manoharan and Yanadom (2013) posited that age diversity is deep level diversity that influences organizational effectiveness. They explained that what makes an organization agile is the knowledge it possesses from both younger and older employees. This means that organizations must have human capital with a mix of age grade to achieve effectiveness. Chamaniford et al (2015) stated that corporate agility brings about higher productivity. This relationship is made smooth with the help of age diversity in the work environment. Indeed, age diversity influence employee commitment and brings about organizational productivity, performance and growth. To validate this premise, Nyikuli (2019) opined that age diversity significantly influences organizational effectiveness. Meena and Vanka (2013) stated that when an organization assembles different professionals of different age groups, it is sure of getting maximum commitment from the workforce and improve its overall performance.

Theoretical Review

The researcher used the Ken-C Theory of Social Honour and the theory of heterogeneity to handle the study.

Ken-C Theory of Social Honour (2023)

First published in August 2023 in the TAA International Journal of African Sustainable Development Research, the Ken-C Theory of Social Honour, according to Njoku, Donatus; and Salamatu (2023) is a 21st Century theory designed to encourage Managements of various kinds of organizations (especially in Africa) to always honour their employees given the level of social injustice most workers experience in the course of their service to humanity in the continent. The theory is qualification-focused and postulates that workers who function in organizations and in the social space with good qualifications should be recognized with honorable titles so as to motivate them to increase their commitment and dedication to duty. Most Africans love titles and are motivated by same unto productivity. The theorist took time as an academic for over seventeen 17 years to observe that even in the most populous African nation which prides

itself as the giant of the Continent namely Nigeria, the most educationally qualified people who can only ascend to the peak of their career with the highest educational qualification available on planet earth, namely Academic Doctors/Professors earn less than 0.002 of the monthly salaries of those who are required by law to only possess School Certificates to reach their peak in their own career namely Senators/Politicians in the nation. Ken-C noted with dismay, the level of social injustice that Professors and Academic Doctors were subjected to in the nation and such was not far from what was obtainable in other African countries. Yet these politicians and people that occupy allied offices are given the highest titular honors in the socio-political space in the Continent like 'His Excellency', 'Distinguished Senator', 'Right Honorable' and others.

Ken-C advocates that those who hold doctorates and work in any organization especially in Africa should be recognized in the social space as "His Doctorate". For instance, one whose name is Dr JOHN Vianney should be addressed as "His Doctorate, Vianney Dr John" because he is eminently positioned in academics and human development. Governments and organizations should design ways of giving titular social honours to those who though are the most educationally qualified, are still the most cheated in the social, economic and political spaces of life especially in Africa.

The theorist was particularly pained that people who occupy various positions of honour in the political, religious, traditional and social spaces are honored and recognized by various social titles like His Excellency, His Holiness, His Lordship, His Grace, His Eminence, His Lordship, His Royal Highness, His Royal Majesty and these social titles and recognitions predict their value in and to the society. But it was only the class of individuals who worked as possessors of the highest academic qualifications in the universe but who found themselves in social structures that excluded them from critical opportunities to occupy hallowed social positions that were not socially honoured with social titles that equated those of the people that ruled the world politically, socially or religious despite the fact that they were Professors of Political Science, Sociology and Religion among others. Doctorate Degree holders were paid peanuts in most African ivory towers without any significant social value attached to these eminent members of the academia.

The theory was therefore a strategic model to give academic doctors and well qualified workers the social honour, prestige and relevance in the modern day society. The theorist believes that education makes a difference between man and man just like lack of it creates similarities between man and beast hence the social value of a human being should be directly related to the extent to which the human person is equipped with the formidable tool of education, the software of human training and development.

The assumption of the theory was that many nations' especially African nations were blessed with huge natural resources which should be prudently used to boost and value human capital with the instrument of education. That corruption had remained a moral cancer in the Continent and had gone far blindfolding most African leaders against the recognition and increased social values of the educated resources available to them. That this kind of situation drives serious brain drain that would continue to ravage and destroy African economies. That the political class in Africa was yet to see governance as a sacred duty for the common good of all. That the situation was as if the Continent walked with its head and reasoned with its feet

hence poor remunerations for the most educated but very high and lavish rewards for the least educated. That qualified workers were very rarely accorded befitting social recognitions due to them hence high levels of industrial actions and litany of social consequences.

Ken-C theory was propounded by Kenneth Chukwudi Njoku, an Mbaise-born Academic Doctor, a Management Specialist, young Lecturer and seasoned Educationist. Born in 1978 to the Catholic family of Late Catechist Simon and Madam Juliana Njoku, he studied at the Imo State University, Owerri where he also gained part time lecturing experiences for many years before joining Imo State Polytechnic and later University of Agriculture and Environmental Sciences(UAES), Umuagwo. The Ken-C theory relates to the present study as it is a booster of both employee morale and employee commitment and productivity in organizations – the employee effectiveness indices which this present study measures.

Peter Michael Blau Theory of Heterogeneity

This study adopted the theory of heterogeneity which was developed by Peter Michael Blau. The theory states that firms with different levels of workforce diversity experience dissimilar dynamics and organizational outcomes (Blau, in Obiezekwem, 2020). Team heterogeneity can take the form of age, level of education, years of experience, culture, race, gender, religion and nationality heterogeneity. Team heterogeneity has a great impact on the social dynamics of members of the team especially when it comes to communication among team members, level of coherence and integration level. Blau (1977) argued that heterogeneity group of workers has a strong problem solving capability than homogeneous group of workers.

The theory of heterogeneity emphasized the need to diversity in the social environment. Blau explains that in heterogeneity group of workers, there is cognitive differences among them and this group of workers can get information from various sources and analyses the different opinions of them members to arrive at a better solution to a problem. Zhang (2007) agreed with Blau's line of thought when he stated that the differences in opinion enables team members to analyze the possible opportunities and threats that exist in the environment and make the right problem solving decision. Blau (1977) argued that an increase in heterogeneity group of workforce contributes to increase social integration as measured by the rate of intergroup relations. So the more an organization is differentiated by gender, age, educational levels and ethnical diversity, the more knowledge that is gained by team members and this will result to higher productivity.

The theory of heterogeneity is very relevant in explaining age diversity in the workplace and how it contributes towards achieving organizational effectiveness. The theory argues that the workplace is made up of heterogeneity group of workers who pool their knowledge, skills and experience together to perform certain task that can lead to the achievement of organizational effectiveness. With different age groups that make up the organization, there is bound to be different and shared perceptions as well as knowledge sharing which are essential for increasing workers' productivity and efficiency. When people from different age groups are integrated into one social system (workplace), there is bound to be varieties of problem solving ideas and this boosts the chances of the organization attaining effectiveness and efficiency.

Empirical Review

A significant number of studies have been conducted on age diversity and organizational effectiveness. For instance, Roy (2022) carried out a study to determine the impact of age, gender and ethnic diversity on organizational performance. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design and qualitative research approach. The researcher used a combination of pooled time series and cross-sectional observations to obtain data from commercial banks in Dhaka, Bangladesh. The data collected were analyzed using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The findings showed that age, gender and ethnic diversity have positive and significant impact on organizational performance. The study also revealed that age diversity has the strongest and most significant impact on organization while gender has a lesser impact on organizational performance.

Ehimare and Ogaga-Oghene (2011) carried out a study to determine the impact of workforce diversity on organizational effectiveness. The study adopted the survey research design and qualitative research approach. The researchers used the Blau's 1977 index of heterogeneity to measure the diversity index while growth assets were measured using 2007 and 2008 data index. The data collected from the respondents were analyzed using series of hierarchical regression analysis. The findings revealed that gender and ethnicity have a negative relationship with employee productivity and performance bonus. The study also revealed that gender, age and tenure diversities are positively and significantly correlated.

Simons and Rowland (2011) exported the impact of workforce diversity on organizational performance in Sweden. The study adopted the ex-facto survey research design where data were collected from 300 employees in 24 companies in Sweden. The data were collected with the aid of a structured questionnaire which was designed by the researcher. The data collected were analyzed using factor analysis and Pearson correlation. The results revealed that age diversity, gender diversity, educational diversity and ethnical diversity were positively and significantly correlated to corporate performance as measured by productivity and employee's morale.

Gupta (2013) explored the relationship between workforce diversity and organizational performance. Their study adopted the correlation research design and the quantitative research approach where data were collected from 200 employees in public sector organizations in Australia. The data collected for their study were analyzed statistically using percentage and frequency tables, mean and standard deviation while the formulated hypotheses were tested using Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient. The findings showed that age diversity, gender diversity, educational diversity and ethnical diversity are positively correlated to productivity of public sector organizations. The study concluded that workforce diversity significantly enhance organizational performance.

Nwinami(2014) empirically examined the effect of workforce diversity on employee performance at Tanesco in Kenya. The study employed the ex-post facto research design and used a structured questionnaire to obtain data from 250 employees in Tanesco. The researcher used the frequency counts and percentages, Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis to analyze the data collected from the respondents. After analyzing the data collected, the researcher discovered that distributive justice has a significant positive relationship with workers' commitment. The study also reported that age diversity, gender diversity, educational diversity and ethnical diversity are positively correlated to employee

productivity and employee commitment in Tanesco. The study equally concluded that workforce diversity has significant effect on employee performance at Tanesco.

Assefa (2014) carried out a study to determine the effect of workforce diversity towards employee performance in Total Nigeria Limited in Ethiopia. The researcher adopted the cross-sectional survey research design and used a structured questionnaire to obtain data from 250 employees in Total Nigeria Limited in Ethiopia. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentage and frequency tables, graphs, charts, mean and standard deviation, while the Pearson Correlation and regression analysis were used to test the hypotheses. The finding showed a significant positive relationship between educational diversity and employee productivity in Total Nigeria Limited. The study also found a significant relationship between age diversity and employee commitment. The study however concluded that workforce diversity has significant effect on employee performance.

Oluseyi, Olalekan, Adekunle and Tehii(2019) examined the nexus between workforce diversity and employee continuance commitment in the context of selected deposit money banks in Lagos State, Nigeria. Their data were collected from 350 employees in 15 deposit money banks in Lagos using a structured questionnaire. After analyzing the data collected using Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis, the researchers found out that age diversity, educational diversity, ethnical diversity, gender diversity and expertise diversity were positively and significantly correlated to employee continuance commitment in the banking sector. The study concluded that workforce diversity significantly influences employee continuance commitment in deposit money banks in Lagos metropolis, Nigeria.

Ezeanyim and Ezeanolue (2020) examined the relationship between diversity management and firm performance in selected breweries in South-East of Nigeria. The study adopted the descriptive survey research design where data were collected from 173 employees from brewery companies in South-East Nigeria using a structured questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed using percentage and frequency tables, mean and standard deviation while the hypotheses were tested using ANOVA. The results revealed that age diversity, gender diversity, educational diversity and ethnical diversity were positively and significantly correlated to corporate performance as measured by productivity and employee's morale. The findings revealed that gender diversity had significant positive effect on firm performance in South-East Nigeria. Age diversity had significant positive effect on firm performance in South-East Nigeria. Ethnicity diversity also has a significant impact on firm performance in South-East Nigeria.

Gap in Reviewed Literature

From the literature reviewed, it was observed that a good number of studies have been conducted on age diversity in the workplace, however, most of the studies conducted on age diversity in the workplace relate the concept to employee performance and organizational performance while empirical studies that relate age diversity to effectiveness of companies are lacking. Secondly, it was observed that most of the studies conducted on age diversity in the work environment in Nigeria focused on indigenous manufacturing companies and banks while empirical studies that examined the relationship between age diversity and effectiveness of multinational manufacturing companies in Nigeria are absent. Thirdly, it was noted that most of the studies conducted on age diversity in Nigeria were carried out on companies in the South-

West Geopolitical Zone while empirical studies that examined the relationship between age diversity and effectiveness of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria are limited. This has created a gap in literature which this study intends to fill and contribute to the existing knowledge on workforce diversity in the workplace.

Methodology

Methods

The survey research design was adopted in this study. The population of this study comprised all the registered multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria. Presently, there are 45 multinational manufacturing companies that are licensed and duly registered with the Manufacturers Association of Nigeria (MAN) in the South-East Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria. These multinational manufacturing companies spread across the five (5) States that make up the South-East Zone namely; Abia State, Anambra State, Ebonyi State, Enugu State, and Imo State. However, 25 multinational manufacturing companies were selected for the study as the accessible population. The unit of analysis was made up of managers and employees of the selected multinational manufacturing companies in the South-East Zone. The managers include: general managers, human resource managers, operational managers and production managers; while the employees include only senior staff of the companies. A population of 3,184 permanent staff (comprising 232 managers and 2,952 employees) were drawn from the 25 selected companies in the South-East Nigeria.

A sample size of 355 managers and senior staff was used for the study. The Taro Yamene's formula was used to determine the sample size. A structured questionnaire was used as the main instrument for data collection. The questionnaire was structured on a 5 Likert type scale namely: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (U), Disagree(D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The validity of the instrument was determined through face and content analysis while its reliability was tested using Cronbach Alpha method. After confirming the validity and reliability of the instrument, the questionnaire was administered to the respondents (managers and employees) of the multinational manufacturing companies in the South-East Nigeria. Three hundred and fifty-five (355) questionnaires were administered to the respondents across the six states in the South-East Zone with the aid of four trained research assistants and 287 copies were collected which represents 81% collection rate. The data collected from the respondents were analyzed statistically while the hypotheses were tested using the Spearman Rank Correlation Coefficient (ρ). The SPSS software program version 23 was used to perform the correlation analysis.

Results and Discussion

Empirical Results and Discussion

Results

The relationship between the two variables in each of the hypotheses were tested using the Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient (ρ). The correlation analysis was performed with the SPSS version 23.0. The results of the analysis are presented below:

Table 1: Result of correlation analysis between age diversity and productivity of multinational manufacturing companies

			Age Diversity	Productivity
Spearman (rho)	Age Diversity	Correlation	1.000	.665**
		Coefficient	.	.001
		Sig. (2 tailed)	287	287
	Productivity	Correlation	.665**	1.000
		Coefficient	.001	.
		Sig. (2 tailed)	287	287
		N		

**Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2 tailed)

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)

Source: SPSS-Generated Output, 2023

Table 1 presents the result of the correlation analysis carried out between age diversity and productivity of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria. The result shows that age diversity is strongly and positively correlated to productivity of multinational manufacturing companies (rho = .655**) and this correlation is significant at 0.01 level as indicated by the symbol **. Based on this result, the null hypothesis (Ho₁) is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This means that we then accept that there is strong, positive and significant relationship between age diversity and productivity of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria.

Table 2: Result of correlation analysis between age diversity and employee commitment of multinational manufacturing companies

			Age Diversity	Employee Commitment
Spearman (rho)	Age Diversity	Correlation	1.000	.523**
		Coefficient	.	.001
		Sig. (2 tailed)	287	287
	Employee Commitment	Correlation	.523**	1.000
		Coefficient	.001	.
		Sig. (2 tailed)	287	287
		N		

**Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2 tailed)

*Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)

Source: SPSS-Generated Output, 2023

Table 2 shows the result of the correlation analysis carried out between age diversity and employee commitment of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria. The result indicates a moderate positive correlation between age diversity and employee

commitment of multinational manufacturing companies ($\rho = .523^{**}$) and the symbol ** indicates that this correlation is significant at 0.01 level. Consequently, the null hypothesis (H_{02}) is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This means that we then accept that there is moderate, positive and significant relationship between age diversity and employee commitment of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria.

Table 3: Result of correlation analysis between age diversity and employee morale of multinational manufacturing companies

			Age Diversity	Employee Morale
Spearman n (rho)	Age Diversity	Correlation	1.000	.613 **
		Coefficient	.	.001
		Sig. (2 tailed)	287	287
		N		
	Employee Morale	Correlation	.613 **	1.000
		Coefficient	.001	.
		Sig. (2 tailed)	287	287
		N		

** Correlation is significant at 0.01 levels (2 tailed)

* Correlation is significant at 0.05 levels (2 tailed)

Source: SPSS-Generated Output, 2023

Table 3 presents the result of the correlation analysis carried out between age diversity and employee morale of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria. The result indicates that age diversity has a strong positive correlation with employee morale of multinational manufacturing companies ($\rho = .613^{**}$) and this correlation is significant at 0.01 level as indicated by the symbol ** . As a result of this, the null hypothesis (H_{03}) is rejected and the alternate hypothesis is accepted. This implies that we then accepted that there is strong positive and significant relationship between age diversity and employee morale of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

It was reported in this study that age diversity has a strong positive and significant relationship with productivity of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria. This finding was obtained from the result of the correlation analysis carried out on the two variables in the first hypothesis. The result showed that age diversity is strongly and positively correlated to productivity of multinational manufacturing companies ($\rho = .655^{**}$) and this correlation is significant at 0.01 level (see table 1). Based on this result, the null hypothesis (H_{01}) was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This means that we then accepted that there is strong, positive and significant relationship between age diversity and productivity of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria. This finding is

supported by Saxena (2014) and Stephen, Mathuva and Mwenda (2018) as both studies reported that age diversity enables companies to bring the knowledge, skills and expertise of both young and mature people to work effectively to increase organizational productivity.

This study found a moderate positive and significant relationship between age diversity and employee commitment of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria. This finding was obtained from the result of the correlation analysis carried out on the two variables in the second hypothesis. The result showed moderate positive correlation between age diversity and employee commitment of multinational manufacturing companies ($\rho = .523^{**}$) and this correlation is significant at 0.01 level (see table 2). Consequently, the null hypothesis (H_{02}) was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This means that we then accepted that there is moderate, positive and significant relationship between age diversity and employee commitment of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria. This finding is supported by Oluseyi, Olalekan, Adekunle and Tehii(2019) who revealed that there is high level of commitment among employees in organizations with diverse age grades. Kundu and Mor(2016) also agreed with this finding when they stated that both young and older workers in an organization are likely to display high level of job commitment if the right incentives are given to them.

Finally, it was reported that age diversity has a strong positive and significant relationship with employee morale of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria. This finding emerged the result of the correlation analysis carried out on the two variables in the third hypothesis. The result revealed that age diversity has a strong positive correlation with employee morale of multinational manufacturing companies ($\rho = .613^{**}$) and this correlation is significant at 0.01 level. As a result of this, the null hypothesis (H_{03}) was rejected and the alternate hypothesis was accepted. This implies that we then accepted that there is strong positive and significant relationship between age diversity and employee morale of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria. This finding is supported by Olusegun (2018) and Roy (2022) as both studies revealed that age diversity significantly increases employee morale of companies.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it was concluded that age diversity significantly enhanced the effectiveness of multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria. The implication of this is that if multinational manufacturing companies in South-East Nigeria embrace age diversity in the workplace, it would lead to the achievement of organizational effectiveness.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion, the researchers recommended that:

1. Management of multinational manufacturing companies need to always employ young and energetic workers of productive age brackets for the continuous enhancement of productivity in the organizations.
2. Age diversity should always be used by management to beef up employee commitment in the multinational manufacturing entities.

3. Age diversity should not be abused in the organizations so as to persistently improve employee morale in the enterprises.

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