



Effect of Workforce Diversity on Employee Performance in the United States of America

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Abstract

The study examines the effect of workforce diversity on employee performance at Toyota of Bowie, United States of America. A review of the literature indicated that individuals of different races are not treated equally to those of the same race, which has had a serious detrimental impact on the workplace environment. To assess the situation, this study uses two dimensions of workforce diversity to measure employee efficiency and performance in the selected organization. The study employed a survey research design and a simple random sampling technique. A total number of eighty-six (86) responses were returned via Google Forms. The formulated hypotheses were tested using linear regression and Pearson correlation. Results showed that gender diversity significantly affects employee efficiency. There exists a relationship between age diversity and employee satisfaction in the organization. It was concluded that employee performance is influenced by workforce diversity and recommended, among others, that organizations should formulate policies that encourage employees, as this will create a wide pool of knowledge within the organization, thus enhancing organizational competitiveness.

Keywords *Workforce Diversity, Gender Diversity, Age Diversity; Employee Performance; Employee Efficiency; Employee Satisfaction*

INTRODUCTION

It is generally known and recognized that there is diversity in the workforce of any enterprise, be it a business, government, or society, which has led to the reduction of human resources while establishing a hostile environment for employees and workers. The world's rising globalization necessitates more connections among people from varied origins than ever before. This is because people no longer live and work in small communities; instead, they are now part of a global economy that competes in practically every area of the globe (Patel, 2016). For these reasons, firms strive to diversify to obtain a competitive edge by increasing their creativity, innovation, and willingness to adapt to positive change.

Workforce diversity symbolizes the individuality that incorporates a person's personality, age, gender, ethnicity/race, religion, marital status, income, work experience, and all other viewpoints that assume and uphold an organization's basic principles (Nwinami, 2014). Employing a diverse workforce is now required for organizations, but doing so has grown increasingly difficult as organizations try to reap the benefits of diversity while minimizing any potential negative repercussions (Saxena, 2014). In addition, Griffin and Moorhead (2014) mentioned that a diverse workforce necessitates managers to recognize and coordinate the various characteristics that exist among workers in the organization. This condition has made businesses, educational institutions, and other organizations develop new strategies to serve their end users (customers) and keep their best and qualified staff to gain a competitive advantage over others. (Gupta, 2013).

For the organization to succeed, organizational leaders must have good communication skills to raise everyone's self-esteem and confidence and be aware of how the social work environment affects employees' perceptions of their jobs (Griffin & Moorhead, 2014). Also, to gain and keep a

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competitive advantage over rivals, managers must be able to tap into the most priceless resource available, which is the skills of their workforce. Therefore, this study focuses on the employee's perception gained through their personal experience in dealing with workforce diversity in the context of Toyota of Bowie in the United States of America.

Statement of the Problem

Globalization and competition have made the workplace more complex, making it necessary to have a workforce with a diverse range of ages, races, experiences, knowledge, and backgrounds to optimize competitive advantage. One of the things you notice about someone when you first meet them is their race (Norton & Apfelbaum, 2013). In the world of business, we frequently pretend that we are "color blind" to reduce the likelihood of us displaying prejudice and participating in segregation (Norton & Apfelbaum, 2013). If workforce diversity is not adequately managed, separate groups will form, which could result in power struggles, emotional confrontations, misunderstandings, and ultimately high employee turnover (Syed & Ozbilgin, 2015). Consequently, this will stop the organization from expanding.

As a developed nation, the United States of America is known to have a diversified population with a wide range of ethnic and cultural groups (William, 2020). There have been several instances of racism in the workplace where individuals of different races are not treated equally to those of the same race (Aboud, & Yazdanifardσ, 2015; Funk & Parker, 2018). This has had a serious detrimental impact on the workplace environment as it affects the physical and psychological well-being of employees, posing a serious threat to their performance, which will have an impact on organization productivity (McEwen 2017; Gonzalez, Kenney, McDaniel & Skopec, 2021; Miller et al. 2021). Both governmental and commercial enterprises appear to still practice nepotism, tribalism, and discrimination in hiring, promotion, and other areas of the employer-employee relationship (Funk & Parker, 2018). Another issue is that organizations are still relying on outdated programs that they have been utilizing for years to address contemporary workforce diversity issues, decrease prejudice, and improve diversity and inclusion in the workplace (Dobbin & Kalev, 2016). It is crucial for management to understand that a diversity plan that is successful or supported by one organization might not function in another because of the hierarchical structure that may exist there. This is because some organizational leaders still lack the knowledge to manage diversity effectively and the experience to foster an inclusive work environment.

It was learned from a web search on workforce diversity that only a relatively small number of studies on workforce diversity and its relative impact had been carried out globally, specifically in the United States of America. Some of those that already exist concentrated more on the impact of diversity on business success, corporate performance, and university productivity (Naetor, Iheriohanma & Ukachukwu, 2016; Akpakip, 2017; Akinnusi, Sonubi & Oyewunmi, 2017, Ikon & Okolie-Osemene, 2017; Ikenyi & Worlu, 2018). Few of these studies, if any, didn't provide a thorough analysis of how workforce diversity affects and relate to employee performance. Therefore, this study intends to fill this gap using age and gender as measures of workforce diversity and employee efficiency and satisfaction as measures of employee performance.

Research Objectives

Based on the issues raised above, the following are the specific objectives of the study.

1. Examine the effects of gender on employee efficiency.
2. Identify the relationship between age and employee satisfaction.

Research Questions

1. What are the effects of gender on employee efficiency?
2. To what extent does age have a relationship with employee satisfaction?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Hypotheses Development

Organizations are beginning to appreciate demographic differences such as gender and age and as well recognize their effect on the working connection between employees towards performance (Rafa & Mohammed, 2017). This is because research studies have revealed how broadly employee performance is affected by workforce diversity. The study by Osabiya (2015) explained that employee wouldn't quit their job when given recognition, pay rise, and promotion for their performance by the employer without being gender or age biased. In addition, Sharma (2016) pointed out that any organization that prioritizes gender diversity has a chance to keep talented employees and improve performance.

The study of Bohem and Kunze (2015), on the other hand, noted that there would be an increase in productivity when employees of different age groups work together with their skills, perspectives, and personality traits. If age diversity is not managed properly, it causes communication problems and conflicts among employees leading to a reduction in productivity (Mwatumwa, 2016; Rizwan, Khan, Nadeem & Abbas, 2016; Zhuwao, 2017). Based on these empirical studies, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H₀: Gender does not have a significant effect on employee efficiency.

H₀: There is no relationship between age and employee satisfaction.

Workforce Diversity

The global workforce is becoming diverse as minorities, women, people of various age groups, and others are increasingly represented in organizations (Makhdoomi & Nika, 2017). This diversity has led to variances in their interests, attitudes, thoughts, and perceptions (Alghazo & Shaiban, 2016). If managed well, it is of great advantage for an organization and, on the other hand, could lead to conflict if not managed (Alghazo & Shaiban, 2016). Several scholars and schools of thought have defined workforce diversity in different ways by linking it to its dimensions.

According to the society for human resource management, as cited in Akeem, Unekwu, and Dare (2020), diversity means to value the characteristics that make an employee unique in a working environment, such as age, gender, background, religion, etc. Furthermore, Kokemuller (2011) defined diversity as the existence of people from various backgrounds and with various characteristics.

Workforce diversity refers to the mix of individuals with various or comparable psychological, sociological, economic, and personality traits at the workplace (Ehimare & Ogaga-Oghene, 2011). Phelps (2013) defines workforce diversity as the gathering of employees belonging to different backgrounds in an organization with the obligation to work as a team and achieve a similar goal. In the opinion of Ogbo, Ukpere, and Iyamho (2014), it refers to the wide range of individual distinctions and similarities that exist among those who work for an organization.

Workforce diversity, according to Foroma (2014), is the recognition, understanding, acceptance, valuation, and celebration of differences among employees across a broad spectrum, including age, class, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, race, political affiliation, sporting interests, economic status, sexual orientation, educational attainment, religion, traditions, cultural beliefs, values, and norms, spiritual practices, and public assistance status.

Workforce diversity is known as the different mix of employees working for the same firm in terms of gender, age, color, and educational background (Alghazo & Shaiban, 2016). Barak (2016) put forth a broader definition of workforce diversity as employee differences that cover values, organizational roles, occupations, and behavioral styles. Furthermore, Scott and Sims (2016) described it as an approach that encourages and supports the integration of human variety at all

levels and employs targeted diversity and inclusion policies and practices to direct this strategy in the workplace. From the above definitions by scholars and schools of thought, it is noted that diversity includes differences in human characteristics.

Dimensions of Workforce Diversity

Gender Diversity

Ehimare and Ogaga-oghene, (2018) defined gender diversity as the extent to which male and female employees work together. They also mentioned that certain expectations and beliefs, such as attitudes, behaviors, values, knowledge, skills, and area of interest, are more specific to one gender than the other. This shows how males and females react differently to specific organizational stimuli, which could result in a dysfunctional organization or improved performance (Makhdoomi & Nika, 2017; Ogbo, Ukpere & Iyamho, 2014). Similarly, Gitonga, Kammara, and Orwa (2016) made an argument that cognitive skills in a gender-diverse workforce may improve organizational performance. Furthermore, gender diversity is more likely to lead towards stereotypes and discrimination with female employees considered unskilled and incapable of tasks, which has led to denial in social support to rise to some organizational positions regarded as masculine positions (Ukpere & Iyamho, 2014; Bhushan, 2016; Kundu, & Mor, 2017). In addition, Sharma (2016) pointed out that any organization that prioritizes gender diversity has a chance to keep talented employees on staff and improve performance.

From the literature, it is noted that a higher level of gender diversity diminishes organizational performance and, when maintained to a moderate level, would increase competitive advantage over other competitors.

Age Diversity

Age diversity entails a group of employees working in an organization while belonging to different generations (Owoyemi, Elegbede & Gbajumo, 2011). Age diversity is defined by differences in age categories among employees in the same workgroup within an organization by Kunze, Boeham, and Brunch (2013). They also concluded that age diversity is a shared phenomenon that exists in families, schools, churches, workplaces, etc., and would be advantageous for both parties (employee and employer) involved if a better working environment is created.

Ogunsanwo, Adelugba, and Obarfo (2020) defined age diversity as the intergenerational behaviour among younger and older employee, which account for differences in observed workplace behaviour. Gitonga, Kamaara, and Orwa, (2016) opined that age is a crucial form of diversity in any organization, as the majority of workplace activities are characterized by people of various age groups and classifications. In agreement with this assertion, Azam (2018) provided an explanation, explaining that no organization has employees that belong to the same group because age varies across all aspects. Zhakata et al. (2017) also added that each age group of workers has unique performance, behaviours, and features, as well as strengths and shortcomings.

Employees under the age of 30 are seen as competent when it comes to performance since they are quick to adapt to new situations and have an open mind (Gitonga et al., 2016; Busolo, 2017). This would result in a speedy improvement in performance. The majority of these high performers always belong to the school dropout and recent graduates category (Zhuwao, 2017; Azam, 2018). Employees between the ages 40 and 50 are known to be reasonable individuals of any organization, the reason being that they make balanced decisions as a result of their thinking ability, exposure to excellence, and work experience, which has an effect on their performance (Busolo, 2017). This category of employees has been in service or contract for numerous years, and the majority of them have switched organizations, which makes them resourceful and called upon during seminars to orientate new intake about the organizational (Ekot, 2018).

It is well known in any organization that employees above the age of 50 years are close to retirement. According to Ekot (2018), employees belonging to this category are not bothered about employee productivity which makes them unproductive to the organization, especially when they occupy non-managerial positions as their main priority is life after employment. He went further to conclude that most of them are filled with rage and regret about their poor retirement planning. Despite having years of expertise, older workers tend to learn at a relatively slow speed and have decreased reasoning and memory skills (Schlick, Frieling, & Wegge, 2013). Therefore, they will find it challenging to adapt to new ways of doing their jobs. Joseph and Selvaraj (2015) also added that organizations find the skills and talent of old employees outdated and not needed as they are prone to health issues and can't adapt to changes and the digital revolution. However, Azam and Waheed (2018) in their study countered those statements with their findings and concluded that this is the most resourceful age category as most of them are managers, directors, and executives with numerous experiences, which has enhanced employee productivity and increased performance of the organization.

Employee Performance

According to Swaratsingh (2015), it is necessary for an organization to enhance and improve the performance of its employees in order to take charge of other competitors in this global capitalist market. Employee performance refers to the completion of tasks by a skilled or experienced individual and rated by a superior colleague to a remarkable standard while utilizing resources effectively within a changing environment (Krishnan, Gowrishankar & Kanagaraj, 2017; Zhuwao, 2017).

Osabiya (2015) and Lazaroiu (2015) noted in their studies that the performance of each employee is of great benefit to any organization's increased organizational growth and profitability and further suggest that organizations should establish high-performance appraisal to reward and recognize hardworking employees which will give a lesser probability for an employee to quit his or her job.

Dimensions of Employees' Performance

Employee Efficiency

Efficiency is defined as the ratio of output to input, whereas effectiveness is the degree of expected output attained by using a particular system. Efficiency is crucial for organizational performance across all industries (Vashist & Dey, 2016). Burma (2014) added that even if an organization is financially sound, the likelihood of success will be minimal if the human resources are not sufficiently active. This implies that low human resource effectiveness makes it difficult for the organization to meet its current and future profitability goals. Efficiency boosts GDP, boosts competitiveness, and leads to a better quality of life, according to Hossein, Jamshid, and Hossein (2012). Employees can contribute productively and successfully to the overall attainment of the organization's goals and objectives when human resources are managed efficiently (Burma, 2014).

Efficiency pivots on the human who may improve his quality and quantity of work, develop new plans, solve his problems creatively, increase his labour force and discover ways to reduce costs. Human is both the object and agent of efficiency. Organizations comprise important elements such as technology, human resource capital, and management. Human resources are considered the most important element and effective component of economic activity and trade because improving efficiency and achieving organizational aims depend on the rational and correct functioning of these resources (Pouryazdan, Soltani & Lari, 2015).

Employee Satisfaction

Employee satisfaction is defined as a multifaceted psychological reaction to one's work, encompassing internal cognitive (perception) and affective (emotional) states reachable through verbal or other behavioral and emotional responses (Atefi, Lim, Wong, & Mazlom. 2015; Hayes, Douglas, & Bonner 2015). The development, growth, and competitiveness of a company are all impacted by employee satisfaction (Meneghel, Borgogni, Miraglia, Salanova, & Martínez, 2016; Huang, Huang & Tzeng 2016). It also increases loyalty and commitment among employees, making them perform more conscientiously (Gil, Llorens & Torrente 2015; Babalola 2016; Pham & Pham 2016).

According to Dubey and Gunasekaran (2015), organizations that do not encourage employee satisfaction will experience counterproductive behavior-behavior that will harm the organization and manifest as corruption, sabotage, extortion, theft, fraud, or violence, as well as deviant work behavior like delays, absenteeism, or turnover. Peng, Li, Zhang, Tian, Miao, Xiao, and J. Zhang (2016) also added that employees who experience dissatisfaction tend to avoid voluntary work, neglect instructions, and deliver jobs late, leading to an increase in abuse of alcohol, drugs, stimulants, high-term costs, conflicts, and strikes.

Theoretical Framework

Glass Ceiling Theory

This theory was first put up in 1960 and is regarded as one of the most popular theories about how gender diversity affects employee performance. According to Ekot (2017), it is a very powerful obstacle to hinder female employees from reaching the managerial level or pursuing senior positions in an organization. It also shows that female employees are not given a chance to explore their potential to the beam, which prevents them from reaching their uttermost level of performance (Mulilima, 2019). The research by Gellner and Veen (2019), however, reveals that some female employees have overcome the glass ceiling, accepted, and excelled in senior roles.

Human Capital Theory

Age diversity is explained by this theory. Grund & Westergd-Nielsen (2005) assert that an organization can profit from both human capital if it employs a diversified staff, including both older and younger employees. The younger employees are more adaptable physically and more eager and able to learn new things. Older employees also provide their wealth of experience to the firm, as well as fresh perspectives and expertise in emerging technology. The older employees possess a positive attitude at work, a sense of quality, an understanding of the internal organizational structures, and pertinent information about key markets and networks.

In conclusion, this theory advice that having both older and younger employees in an organization can increase both employee and organizational effectiveness because older workers can mentor younger workers, and younger workers can do the same by sharing their knowledge and skills with older workers, a process known as "reverse mentoring".

Conceptual Framework of the Research

The framework below shows the relationship between the indicators of the independent variable with the dependent variable. This implies that the performance of employees will be of increase if the dimensions of workforce diversity are properly managed in an organization.

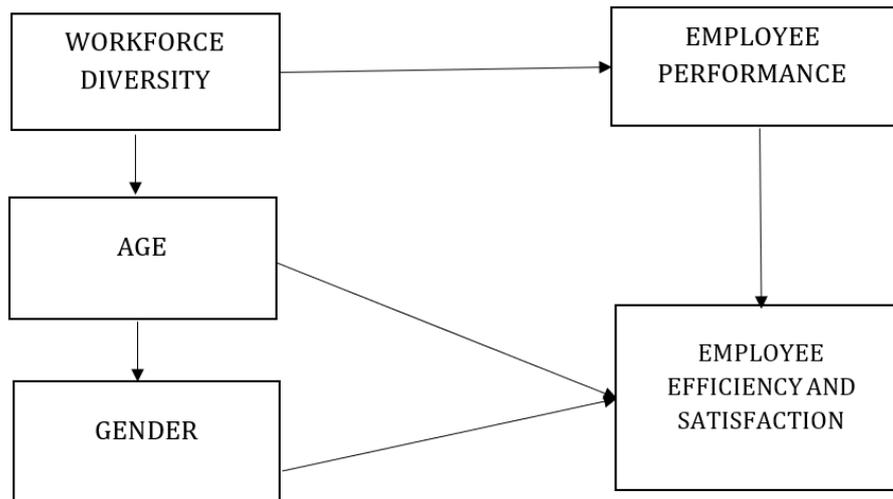


Figure 1. Relationship between indicators of the independent variable with the dependent variable.

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

Data can be collected in two ways, quantitatively or qualitatively. Quantitative is frequently described as the gathering of facts as it employs large amounts of representative data from respondents (Almalki, 2016). Examples of this approach include questionnaires and observations (Saunders et al., 2019). Qualitative, on the other hand, involves the interpretation and description of respondents' beliefs, norms, attitudes, and social behaviour (Gibbs, 2018). Examples of this approach include focus groups and interviews (Saunders et al., 2019).

This study is quantitative in nature as it depends on the replies of the respondents to address the research question and test the formulated hypotheses which in return provide an accurate and deep understanding of how workforce diversity affects employee performance. This would be accomplished by implementing a research design. A research design is a fundamental strategy that directs a research project's data-collecting and analysis phases (Kinnear, 1989). Additionally, it describes the kind of data that must be gathered and the source of the data-gathering process. Therefore, this study adopts a survey research design as it is more effective and accurate for seeking answers to the research questions (Nardi, 2018).

Sampling Technique and Population of the Study

The method of selection adopted for this research is the simple random sampling technique. This is to ensure that each respondent has an equal chance of being selected. The targeted population for this study comprises one hundred and ten (110) staff (Source: General Manager of Toyota of Bowie).

Source of Data Collection

The primary source of data was adopted for this study using a structured questionnaire, which was circulated to the staff of Toyota of Bowie via a Google Form. The questionnaire was of two sections. The first section was based on the respondents' demographic. The second section includes questions relating to the study using a five-point Likert scale checklist, namely: strongly

agree, agree, undecided, disagree, and strongly disagree.

Validity and Reliability of Research Instrument

The research instrument was self-developed to capture the information it intended to measure. The validity of the instrument was tested through construct validity. Construct validity was determined through the elaborate use of previous literature, which shows that this source of data collection is best for this type of research work as it creates linkages and correlations between workforce diversity and employee performance (Zhuwao, Ngirande, Ndlovu & Setati, 2019; Bhebhe & Murindi, 2020; Ogunsanwo, Adelugba & Obarfo, 2020). The reliability of the research instrument was tested using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The given value was 0.912, which exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70. This implies that the research instrument is valid and reliable.

Table 1. Cronbhach's Alpha Result

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.912	86

Source: Field Survey, 2022

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and presented in descriptive statistics. Pearson correlation and regression analysis were implemented to verify the degree of relationship between the variables and effect.

Descriptive Statistics of Respondents' Biodata

Table 2. Respondents' Gender

	Frequency	Percentage
Male	41	47.7%
Female	45	52.3%

The result above showed that 47.7% of the respondents are male while 52.3% are female. This helped reveal respondents' differences in emotional experience and emotional expressivity.

Table 3. Age

	Frequency	Percentage
18 - 25 years	48	55.8%
26 - 30 years	23	26.7%
31 - 40 years	14	16.3%
41 years and above	1	1.2%

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 2 shows that 55.8% of the respondents are between 18 – 25 years of age, 26.7% are between 26 - 30 years of age, 16.3% are between 31 – 40 years, and 1.2% are 41 years and above. This result enables the researcher to understand the respondents' level of desire.

Test for Hypotheses

Hypothesis One

H₀: Gender diversity does not have a significant effect on employee efficiency.

Table 4. Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.305 ^a	.593	.782	.60463
a. Predictors: (Constant), Gender Diversity				

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3.145	1	3.145	8.604	.000 ^b
	Residual	30.708	84	.366		
	Total	33.853	85			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Efficiency

b. Predictors: (Constant), Gender Diversity

COEFFICIENTS^A

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.806	.304		9.234	.000
	averageG	.243	.083	.305	2.933	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Efficiency

Source: Researcher's Computation (2022)

The model summary that presented in Table 4 shows the strength of the relationship between variables. This implies that there is a weak positive relationship between gender diversity and employee efficiency, with Pearson correlation (R) given as 0.305. The model further shows the extent to which gender diversity accounts for influence on employee efficiency at Toyota of Bowie, United States of America with a coefficient of determination (R² = 0.593) given as 59.3%. This result is statistically significant because the p-value of the result (0.000) is less than the 0.05 level of significance used for the study. This finding is supported by the study of Sharma (2016), who pointed out that any organization that prioritizes gender diversity has a chance to keep talented employees on staff and improve performance.

Hypothesis Two

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

Table 5 shows the strength of the linear relationship between variables. The result indicates that there is a moderate positive relationship between age diversity and employee satisfaction with Pearson correlation value (R) given as 0.615. The study of Zhakata et al., (2017)

corroborates this finding noting that each age group of workers has its own satisfaction, behaviour, and characteristics, as well as strengths and shortcomings. In addition, Azam, (2018) stated that an age-heterogeneous workforce would produce a huge number of multiple skills and intellectual styles, increase morals, that and increase productivity.

Table 5. Correlations

		Age Diversity	Employee Satisfaction
Age Diversity	Pearson Correlation	1	.615*
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	86	86
Employee Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.615*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	86	86

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

Source: Researcher's Computation (2022)

CONCLUSIONS

Employee performance appears to be impacted by workforce diversity through the conducted analysis. This implies that the research objectives were met, and the analyses conducted provide a comprehensive answer to the research questions. The result from testing hypothesis one revealed that organizations that employ a balance of male and female would do better than one where one gender predominates. Also, it was seen that age diversity shares a relationship with employee performance. This implies that an organization with both young and old employees would gain a competitive advantage over others. This is because young employees are more productive in a task, while older employees possess a positive attitude at work, a sense of quality, an understanding of the internal organizational structures, and pertinent information about key markets and networks. Therefore, the relationship between workforce diversity and employee performance is moderated and explained by factors such as gender diversity, age diversity, employee efficiency, and employee satisfaction.

LIMITATION & FURTHER RESEARCH

Based on the research that already done, this study has several recommendations. Firstly, organizations should take cognizance of age as a significant workforce diversity factor that affects the job satisfaction of employees. This is because the older an employee becomes on the job, the more he/she is satisfied with the job. Secondly, Organizations should strategically manage gender differences in their firms to enhance organizational performance, job satisfaction, productivity, competitive advantage, and customer satisfaction. Then for the last, Organizations should formulate policies that encourage employees, as this will create a wide pool of knowledge within the organization, thus enhancing organizational competitiveness.

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