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Research Paper

The Impact of Workplace Diversity on Employee Performance

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Abstract

Workplace diversity has emerged as a critical variable influencing employee performance, particularly in organizations that operate in diverse sociocultural environments. This study examines the influence of workplace diversity on employee performance in XYZ Nigeria Plc, illustrating the imperatives of diversity management for improving innovation, teamwork, and organizational effectiveness. This study adopts a positivist research philosophy and employs survey techniques to collect employees' primary data in XYZ Nigeria Plc. Using regression analysis, the results indicate that there is a strong positive relationship between workplace diversity and employee performance (R = 0.852, R^2 = 0.727, p < 0.001), indicating that diversity accounts for 72.7% of the variation in employee performance. The key predictors of this relationship are inclusivity, diversity training, and leadership commitment to diversity initiatives. This study makes theoretical contributions to social identity theory in the context of workplace diversity. This demonstrates how diversity is a strategic resource that enhances competitive advantage while, at the same time, affecting employee identity and intergroup relations. The study recommends that XYZ Nigeria Plc offer targeted diversity training programs, foster an inclusive organizational culture, and ensure sustained leadership commitment to diversity initiatives. Future research should employ mixed-method designs and examine industry-specific differences to advance the literature on diversity-performance relationships in different organizational settings.

Keywords: *workplace, diversity, employee performance*

INTRODUCTION

Workplace diversity has become a prominent area of focus in organizational research, particularly in terms of its influence on employee performance (Jankelová et al., 2021). It encompasses various dimensions such as race, gender, age, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, and educational background. In Nigeria, which has a richly diverse population, understanding the impact of workplace diversity on employee performance holds significant relevance. This paper aims to determine how diversity in the workplace affects the performance of employees in one of the leading financial institutions in Nigeria (Chaarani et al., 2022). The bank selected will represent the greater Nigerian corporate setting, where diversity is defined and plays a significant role in shaping organizational dynamics.

Workplace diversity and employee performance are closely intertwined in a complex relationship (Farmanesh et al., 2020). Advocates have suggested that a diverse workforce introduces a variety of perspectives, ideas and skills, fostering enhanced creativity, innovation and problem-solving within organizations. However, critics caution that managing diversity may present challenges, including conflicts, communication breakdowns, and feelings of exclusion among employees, potentially diminishing performance (Gragnano et al., 2020). Nonetheless, organizations such as XYZ Nigeria Plc have recognized the strategic importance of diversity, implementing initiatives to promote inclusivity and harness the advantages of a diverse workforce

(Rodgers et al., 2023). Understanding how diversity impacts employee performance in this context is essential for developing effective strategies to manage diversity and improve organizational outcomes (Gragnano et al., 2020).

Nigeria's rich cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity creates a unique work environment where employees contribute varied ideas, experiences, and skills. This diversity can enhance creativity, innovation, and problem-solving because different perspectives are considered in decision-making (Kucharska & Rebelo, 2022). However, managing this diversity effectively is crucial because cultural differences can lead to misunderstandings or conflicts that hinder performance (Dahlbom et al., 2020). Therefore, the adoption of sound diversity management practices incorporating principles of inclusiveness, respect and openness will be very instrumental in ensuring maximum benefits of diversity for improved organizational performance.

Although workplace diversity has become a mainstay area of concern in human resource management, an empirical understanding of its impacts on the performance of Nigerian private sector employees is limited. The existing literature acknowledges that diversity, whether by gender, age, ethnicity, religion, or education level, is capable of influencing organizational outcomes such as creativity, adaptability, and job satisfaction. However, most of these studies have utilized Western or Asian contexts, whose institutional design, social norms and HR practices differ immensely from the Nigerian context. This raises questions about the generalizability of such evidence to Nigerian firms like XYZ Plc given the country's sociocultural diversity and dynamic industrial landscape.

Few studies have been conducted in Nigeria on workplace diversity and its impact on employee performance. Verma (2020) researched gender diversity and employee commitment within certain Nigerian banks, which were concerned with how educational diversity is applied in public sector organizations. Although such studies are informative, they are generally limited in scope and do not consider industry-specific depth. Furthermore, their methodological designs, primarily cross-sectional surveys with low generalizability, are incapable of addressing the dynamic and multi-faceted nature of diversity in large private companies like XYZ Plc. In addition, the diversity variables used are often addressed in isolation without consideration of their combined or interactive effects on employee performance measures like task completion, innovation, and job satisfaction.

The other significant limitation is the lack of an in-depth probing of real organizational issues concerning diversity. Although many Nigerian firms operate in multicultural environments, little empirical evidence exists on how they manage potential issues of diversity, such as communication disparities, interpersonal conflict, or discrimination in team environments. Poor diversity management results in low morale and low employee participation, but such research is little supported with sector-specific, performance-oriented evidence. Consequently, the efficiency and productivity of employees as a result of diversity are inadequately researched in Nigerian business settings.

Moreover, the literature is lacking in its account of the performance issues that HR managers face when developing inclusive practices that capitalize on diversity to improve performance. In organizations like XYZ Plc, which have a diverse workforce across functional, geographical and hierarchical levels, HR practitioners often neglect to link diversity policies to measurable performance indicators. No data-based evidence exists to inform practices such as fair talent management, diversity-sensitive performance management systems, and inclusive team leadership. By addressing these practical issues, this research not only seeks to add to theoretical knowledge but also makes practical recommendations to improve HR strategy and operational

effectiveness in Nigeria's private sector.

This study adds to the literature by providing empirical evidence on the nature of the relationship between workplace diversity and employee performance in XYZ Nigeria Plc. The critical factors that influence this relationship will be identified to guide human resource policies and practices in a way that enables organizations to harness the benefits of diversity while surmounting its challenges.

Research Questions

1. What is the concept and context of workplace diversity, specifically within the context of XYZ Plc, Nigeria?
2. What critical factors contribute to enhancing workplace diversity and employee performance in XYZ Plc, Nigeria?

LITERATURE REVIEW
Context of Workplace Diversity

Workplace diversity is a multifaceted concept that refers to the presence of various individual differences within an organization (Tjimuku & Atiku, 2023). These differences span across race, gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, physical abilities, religious beliefs, educational background, and socioeconomic status. The concept emphasizes recognizing and appreciating the unique qualities and perspectives each individual contributes to the organization. Diversity is also seen as a strategic benefit and a competitive advantage to organizations, as noted by Johnstone, (2023). Teams of diverse nature will lead to the generation of more ideas, alternatives, and solutions to challenges. A diversified workforce enriches decision-making by bringing a different set of viewpoints and experiences, which often helps in more effective problem-solving and better organizational outcomes (Stewart et al., 2022)

Nevertheless, managing diversity in the workplace brings about various challenges. Differences in the background, experience, and views of employees at times lead to misunderstanding, conflict, and communication gaps in the workplace (Stanford, 2020). To manage this, there is an important need for an organization to adopt an inclusive culture in which no employee, due to personal differences, will be treated in a hostile way. Managing diversity effectively requires a holistic approach involving policies, practices, and programs aimed at fostering inclusivity and mutual respect. This includes initiatives such as diversity training programs, the establishment of diversity councils or committees, and the integration of diversity and inclusion into the organizational culture and operations (Budhwar et al., 2023). It is dynamic, complex workplace diversity that requires an unwavering and continuous effort on the part of all organizations if the potential is to be maximized (Etalong et al., 2024). An organization that embraces diversity and offers an inclusive work environment will result in a more dynamic, creative, and thriving workplace for all employees.

The concept of workplace diversity is closely tied to the evolving demographics of the workforce and the growing globalization of business operations (Okatta et al., 2024). As societies become more heterogeneous, organizations inevitably reflect this diversity. This development is influenced by several factors, including increased immigration, globalization of markets, and technological advancements that facilitate remote work and cross-border collaboration (Olasoji, 2021). A significant element of workplace diversity emanates from the demographic changes occurring in many countries. For instance, the United States' population is becoming increasingly diverse. It is projected that by 2050, racial and ethnic minorities will comprise the majority. Many other countries are similarly experiencing demographic changes, resulting in increasingly diverse

human resources (Sukalova & Ceniga, 2020a).

Globalization is another important factor that shapes the context of workplace diversity (Adewumi & Ogunnubi, 2019). As companies expand their operations into new markets, they encounter diverse cultures, languages, and ways of doing business. This requires organizations to adapt to and embrace diversity to effectively navigate these global markets and compete on a global scale. The context of workplace diversity is also influenced by changing social attitudes and values (Adebosin et al., 2021). There is a growing recognition of the importance of diversity and inclusion in the workplace, from both a moral and ethical standpoint, as well as a business perspective. Research has revealed that diverse teams are more innovative and better able to solve complex problems, leading to improved organizational performance (Sukalova & Ceniga, 2020b).

On the other hand, managing diversity in Nigeria can be challenging due to historical and cultural factors. Nigeria has a history of ethnic and religious tensions, which can sometimes spill over into the workplace (Ayega & Muathe, 2018). Additionally, differences in educational backgrounds, language barriers, and cultural norms can impact how individuals from diverse backgrounds interact and collaborate in the workplace. Despite these challenges, efforts are being made in Nigeria to promote workplace diversity and inclusion (Héliot et al., 2020a). Many organizations have implemented diversity policies and programs aimed at creating a more inclusive work environment. These initiatives often include diversity training, mentorship programs, and employee resource groups to support employees from diverse backgrounds. The concept of workplace diversity in Nigeria is an evolving and important issue that requires ongoing attention and effort from organizations. By embracing diversity and fostering an inclusive work environment, organizations in Nigeria can unlock the full potential of their workforce and drive innovation and growth (Maspul, 2023).

Concept of Employee Performance

The discussion on employee performance is multivariate and multidimensional, as has been argued at every level in organizational psychology, human resource management, and organizational behavior (Moyo, 2015). Central to this discourse are questions about the best way to measure, appraise, and develop employee performance and the factors that influence performance outcomes. A central aspect of the debate concerns performance criteria. Traditional appraisal systems often emphasize objective metrics, such as sales figures and production targets. However, critics contend that these metrics may fail to capture critical aspects of performance, including teamwork, creativity, and customer satisfaction (Sishuwa & Phiri, 2020). Consequently, there is increasing interest in integrating subjective methods, such as peer evaluations or self-assessments, into performance evaluation frameworks (Goel, 2018).

Another area of debate is the extent to which individual performance can be attributed to personal characteristics rather than environmental factors. Some researchers have argued that individual differences, such as personality traits and cognitive abilities, play a significant role in determining performance outcomes (Minh & Nwachukwu, 2020a). Others have emphasized the importance of situational factors, such as organizational culture, leadership styles, and job design, in shaping employee performance. This debate highlights the complex interplay between individual and environmental factors that influence performance outcomes (Fatema & Sakib, 2022). The debate on employee performance also extends to questions about how best to motivate and incentivize employees to perform at their best (Anwar & Abdullah, 2021). Traditional motivation approaches, such as monetary rewards or performance-based bonuses, are often criticized for their limited effectiveness in sustaining high levels of performance over the long term. Alternative approaches, such as intrinsic motivation and job enrichment, are gaining traction as organizations seek to create work environments that foster high performance and employee engagement (Mishra,

2023). The debate on employee performance is a complex and evolving issue that touches on various topics, from measurement and evaluation to motivation and engagement. By understanding and engaging with this debate, organizations can gain valuable insights into how best to enhance employee performance and achieve organizational goals (Minh & Nwachukwu, 2020b). Employee performance in XYZ Nigeria Plc Nigeria is a critical aspect of the bank's overall success and competitiveness in the Nigerian banking sector (Mnakwe & Ojiabo, 2018). As with any organization, the performance of its employees at XYZ Nigeria Plc is influenced by a variety of factors, including individual capabilities, job satisfaction, organizational culture, leadership styles, and the effectiveness of performance management systems. One key aspect of employee performance at XYZ Nigeria Plc is the bank's emphasis on customer service and relationship management (Gaurav & Tripti, 2021). As a customer-centric organization, XYZ Nigeria Plc places a strong emphasis on ensuring that its employees can deliver high-quality service to customers and build long-term relationships with them. This requires employees to have a deep understanding of customer needs and preferences, as well as the ability to communicate effectively and resolve issues promptly.

Another important factor influencing employee performance at XYZ Nigeria Plc is the bank's organizational culture (Oruh et al., 2020). XYZ Nigeria Plc has a reputation for fostering a supportive and inclusive work environment where employees are encouraged to collaborate, innovate, and take ownership of their work. This culture of empowerment can have a positive impact on employee motivation and engagement, leading to higher levels of performance (Krithi & Pai, 2021). Leadership also plays a crucial role in shaping employee performance at XYZ Nigeria Plc. The bank's leadership is responsible for setting the tone for the organization, defining goals and expectations, and providing guidance and support to employees. Effective leadership can inspire employees to perform at their best and create a culture of accountability and continuous improvement.

The connection between workplace diversity and employee performance is a topic of considerable interest and debate within the disciplines of organizational behavior, human resource management, and diversity management (Otsupius & Eshiemogie, 2023). A prominent argument supporting a positive link between diversity and performance is the notion that diverse teams foster greater innovation and creativity. Teams with diverse demographics, experiences, and perspectives have a higher chance of creating unique ideas and finding appropriate solutions to difficult situations. According to Dwivedi et al., (2023), this is because the distribution of knowledge bases and skills enables these groups to considerably enhance their capabilities for generating innovative results.

Other advantages of workplace diversity include the increased capability of diverse teams to adapt to change and respond to challenges. In the modern dynamic business world, one of the crucial keys to organizational performance and success is adaptability and innovation (Pereira et al., 2022). Teams with diverse perspectives and approaches often show greater resiliency and creativity when navigating change and addressing emerging challenges.
However, not all findings in the literature show a positive relationship between workplace diversity and employee performance. Kyove et al., (2021) noted that diversity can sometimes promote conflicts and barriers to communication among team members, which negatively impacts performance. This reiterates the importance of effective diversity management strategies that encourage open communication, respectful and inclusive culture, and cross-cultural competence training for employees.

In a nutshell, workplace diversity is complex and multilevel in influencing employee performance. In addition, although diversity brings significant benefits to an organization, such as enhancing its innovative and adaptive capabilities, there are formidable challenges associated with

diversity that must be effectively managed. Indeed, embracing diversity and incorporating policies and practices that ensure inclusiveness assist organizations in creating a work culture in which every employee is valued, respected, and empowered to give their best (Héliot et al., 2020b). Furthermore, diversity can enhance decision-making processes at XYZ Nigeria Plc by ensuring that several viewpoints are considered. This can lead to more informed and effective decision-making, ultimately benefiting bank performance and competitiveness. However, managing diversity effectively is crucial for realizing these benefits (Madey & Devi, 2018). Without proper management, diversity can lead to conflict and communication barriers within teams, which can negatively impact employee performance. To address this, XYZ Nigeria Plc has implemented various diversity management strategies, such as training programs, diversity councils, and inclusive leadership practices.

Theoretical Framework

Social Identity Theory (SIT) explains how an individual's self-concept and self-esteem are shaped by their affiliation with social groups (Kiran, 2023). According to this theory, people categorize themselves into various groups based on attributes such as gender, ethnicity, occupation, and organizational affiliation. These group memberships significantly contribute to an individual's sense of identity and influence their attitudes, behaviors, and interactions with others. Organizational settings show that workers often identify themselves with either certain teams, departments, or the entire organization itself. Such identifications build their allegiance and solidarity in their groups; this occasionally leads to what is termed the in-group favoritism phenomenon whereby people show partiality toward members of their group in comparison with other groups. For instance, employees may feel a stronger bond and allegiance to their immediate team when compared with colleagues in other departments.

SIT further posits that group affiliations play a crucial role in shaping how individuals perceive themselves and others, thereby influencing attitudes, behaviors, and workplace performance (Bharadwaj, 2023). The theory also provides insight into intergroup dynamics, including the development of stereotypes, prejudices, and discrimination. Strong identification with a particular group often leads individuals to internalize the group's norms and values, which can sometimes result in stereotypical perceptions of others. For example, employees from one department may develop stereotypes about colleagues in another department, attributing differences in work style or personality to group characteristics (Shaban, 2016).

Inclusive workplaces are better positioned to attract and retain top talent because employees are more likely to feel valued and respected for their unique contributions (Navjeet & Pallvi, 2020). This sense of appreciation fosters higher levels of employee engagement and productivity. By applying the principles of Social Identity Theory (SIT) and Diversity Management, XYZ Nigeria Plc Nigeria can cultivate an environment where every employee feels included and valued, ultimately enhancing organizational performance. However, one noted criticism of SIT is that it overemphasizes social categorization, which may be detrimental to the development of in-group and out-group differences. Critics contend that such a focus will lead to increased stereotyping and prejudicial thinking, thus solidifying group divides.

According to Zaman et al., (2021), the model is overly reductionist when describing identity and group membership and might elide the intersectional and complex nature of individual selfhood. By generalizing group dynamics, the model may fail to address the unique experiences and perspectives of individual members within a group (Verma & Sharma, 2019).

Another limitation is that SIT tends to make group membership the sole predictor of behavior, which may not give enough attention to individual differences, such as personality traits, situational factors, and personal agency. This narrow focus, critics argue, misses some of the most

critical elements in human behavior and interaction, hence restricting the model from fully capturing the dynamics of groups and relationships at work.

RESEARCH METHOD
Research Design

A quantitative research design is used in this study to examine the impact of workplace diversity on employee performance at XYZ Nigeria Plc. The survey approach was used to collect primary data from employees in various departments within the company. Use of a quantitative approach allows statistical analysis of the relationship between workplace diversity and employee performance (Kumasey, 2014).

Sampling Method

A stratified random sampling technique was used to get a representative sample from differentfunctional units of XYZ Nigeria Plc. The employees were separated based on job roles, hierarchical levels, and departments to obtain a diverse range of opinions. The sample size was determined based on the population size of the employees at XYZ Nigeria Plc. A representative sample will be selected to ensure that the findings can be generalized to a larger population of bank employees.

The Taro Yamane Formula was used for sample size determination.

$$n=N/(1+N〚(e)〛^2)$$

Here, n represents the sample size, N is the total population, e is the error term depending on the confidence level, and P = 0.05 is assumed for the equation.

If n = Sample Size
N = 1,946
e = 5% or 0.05, respectively
CL = 95%
Therefore, n = 331 employees

The inclusion criterion required participants to have at least 6 months of work experience in the organization to ensure exposure to workplace diversity policies and their impact on performance.

Survey Items and Validation

The measure was built using a combination of adapted and in-house-created items. Existing validated scales from prior studies on workplace diversity and employee performance Kucharska & Rebelo, 2022) were employed to supplement reliability. Additional items were developed to capture the unique diversity dynamics within the Nigerian business context. The questionnaire consisted of three main sections:

1. Demographic Information: Gender, age, educational level, tenure, and department.
2. Workplace Diversity: Items assessing diversity in the form of gender, ethnic origin, religious background, education level, and inclusiveness (derived from previous studies).
3. Employee Performance: Items gauging work satisfaction, productivity, teamwork, and

motivation (derived from common performance rating scales).

A pilot test was conducted with 30 employees from a similar organization to test the clarity and consistency of the survey items. Cronbach's alpha internal consistency measure was above the recommended level of 0.7, indicating that the instrument was reliable.

Data Collection and Analysis

data collection occurred over the timeframe of 3 months, with both online and offline questionnaires having been employed to maximize responses. Ethical protocols, including informed consent and confidentiality measures, were maintained. Aggregate data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics were used to describe demographic characteristics, and inferential statistics, including regression analysis and correlation tests, were conducted to test determinants of the relationship between diversity in the workplace and employee performance.

Analysis

Table 1. Analyses of Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (n=331)

Demographic Profile	Data	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	152	45.9%
	Male	179	54.1%
Age	Under 20	17	5.1%
	20-30	105	31.7%
	31-40	148	44.7%
	41-50	47	14.2%
	51 above	14	4.2%
Ethnicity	Nigerian	288	87.0%
	Non-African	6	1.8%
	Other African	37	11.2%
Educational Level	Secondary school	20	6.0%
	Diploma	35	10.6%
	Bachelor of Science	126	38.1%
	Master's degree	102	30.8%
	Doctorate	48	14.5%
Job roles	cleaner	17	5.1%

Demographic Profile	Data	Frequency	Percentage (%)
	Customer Sales Rep	53	16.0%
	Driver	10	3.0%
	Teller	25	7.6%
	Relationship officer	111	34.7%
	Loan officer	72	21.8%
	Other	39	11.8
Years of Experience	Less than 1 year	41	12.4%
	1-5 years	158	47.7%
	6-10 years	90	27.2%
	More than 10 years	42	12.7%

Source: Researcher's survey, 2025

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics Results

S/N	Items	SA Freq. (%)	A Freq. (%)	N Freq. (%)	D Freq. (%)	SD Freq. (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
1	The concept of workplace diversity is clear to me.	262 (79.2)	48 (14.5)	17 (5.1)	2 (0.6)	2 (0.6)	4.80	1.189
2	Workplace diversity is important for fostering creativity and innovation.	217 (65.6)	99 (29.9)	15 (4.5)	-	-	4.57	.668
3	Gender diversity is adequately represented in my workplace.	219 (66.2)	84 (25.4)	27 (8.2)	-	1 (0.3)	4.61	.574
4	Ethnic and racial diversity is valued and promoted in my workplace.	218 (65.9)	86 (26.0)	24 (7.3)	1 (0.3)	2 (0.6)	4.57	.668
5	Diversity of thought and perspective is encouraged in my workplace.	238 (71.9)	73 (22.1)	16 (4.8)	4 (1.2)	-	4.66	.599

S/N	Items	SA Freq. (%)	A Freq. (%)	N Freq. (%)	D Freq. (%)	SD Freq. (%)	Mean	Std. Dev.
6	My organization has policies in place to support diversity and inclusion.	229 (69.2)	73 (22.1)	26 (7.9)	1 (0.3)	2 (0.6)	4.60	.659
7	Diversity training and education are provided to employees.	216 (65.3)	84 (25.4)	27 (8.2)	4 (1.2)	-	4.57	.640
8	I feel respected and included in my workplace regardless of my background.	221 (66.8)	84 (25.4)	22 (6.6)	3 (0.9)	1 (0.3)	4.59	.647
9	I believe that diversity enhances teamwork and collaboration.	216 (65.3)	84 (25.4)	29 (8.8)	1 (0.3)	1 (0.3)	4.56	.678
10	I am optimistic about the future of diversity and inclusion in my workplace.	220 (66.5)	88 (26.6)	21 (6.3)	1 (0.3)	1 (0.3)	4.59	.637

According to the findings on table 2, most respondents in XYZ Plc agreed and strongly agreed to the concepts and contexts of workplace diversity, as highlighted in the ten (10) questions. All the responses had high perception based on their mean and standard deviation. The mean for the questions is between the range of 4.56 – 4.80, while the standard deviation is between the ranges of 0.574 - 1.189. The findings revealed that the concept of workplace diversity was clear, with 93.7% of respondents agreeing and strongly agreeing. Workplace diversity is important for fostering creativity and innovation with 95.5%, gender diversity is adequately represented in my workplace with 91.6%, ethnic and racial diversity is valued and promoted in XYZ plc with 91.9%, being optimistic about diversity and inclusion in XYZ Plc in future is strongly agreed and agreed with 91.9% and so on.

Table 3. Pearson Correlations on the relationship between workplace diversity and employee performance

		Diversity in background, perspectives, and experiences	Promotion of diversity and inclusion	Employee performance	VIF
Diversity in background, perspectives,	Pearson Correlation	1	.676**	.629**	**1.84**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	

and experiences	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	196.278	125.909	115.069	
	N	331	331	331	
Promotion of diversity and inclusion	Pearson Correlation	.676**	1	.808**	**1.84**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	125.909	176.943	140.477	
	N	331	331	331	
Employee performance	Pearson Correlation	.629**	.808**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	115.069	140.477	170.767	
	N	331	331	331	

**. The correlation was significant at the 0.01 and 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Researcher's survey, 2025

Decision rule: The Pearson correlation analysis shown in Table 3 was used to determine the relationship between workplace diversity and employee performance. The findings indicated that correlation coefficients between diversity of backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences and employee performance had a significantly positive correlation (r=.629**, N=331, $p<0.05$. The correlation coefficient between the promotion of diversity and inclusion and employee performance is r=.808**, N=331, $p<0.05$, which is statistically positively significant.

Table 4. Regression Model Summary[b] of the Critical Factors That Contribute to Enhancing Workplace Diversity and Employee Performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-squared value	Std. Error in Estimate	Change Statistics R Squared Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	Durbin-Watson
1	.852[a]	.727	.723	.320	.727	172.842	5	325	.000	2.208

a. Predictors: (Constant), Employee resource groups or diversity councils; Clear performance expectations and goals; Training and education programmes, leadership commitment to diversity and inclusion; Recognition and rewards for good performance.

b. Dependent Variable: Workplace diversity and employee performance.

Source: Researcher's survey, 2025

Decision rule: The regression analysis model result shown in tables 1.3 reveals the R-square (R^2) to be 0.727, which indicates that critical factors such as employee resource groups or diversity councils; clear performance expectations and goals; training and education programs, leadership commitment to diversity and inclusion; recognition and rewards for good performance accounts for 72.7% of the total variance, which is a very high coefficient in the determination of workplace diversity and employee performance. This signifies that critical factors have a significant impact on promoting workplace diversity and improving employee performance in XYZ Plc.

Table 5. Coefficientsa of critical factors that enhance workplace diversity and employee performance

| | | Coefficientsa | | | | | | |
| | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | | | | Collinearity Statistics |
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	-.106	.174		-.609	.543		
	Clear performance expectations and goals opportunities for growth and development	.243	.050	.211	4.906	.000	.457	2.190
	Recognition and rewards for good performance.	.405	.054	.372	7.507	.000	.343	2.915
	Diversity training and education programs	.162	.048	.152	3.362	.001	.409	2.446
	Leadership commitment to diversity and inclusion.	-.047	.048	-.048	-.974	.331	.343	2.912
	Employee resource groups or diversity councils	.255	.047	.278	5.375	.000	.314	3.186

a. Dependent Variable: Workplace diversity and employees' performance.
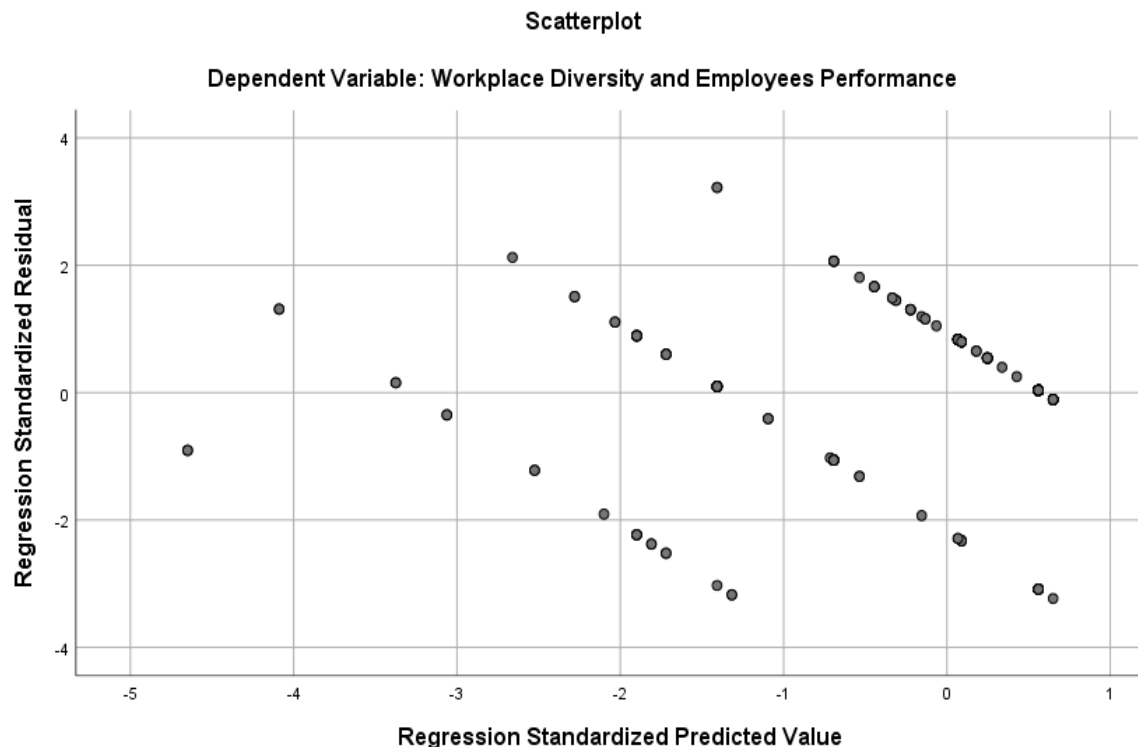
Source: Researcher's survey, 2025

Decision rule: The coefficient summary Table 5 indicates the degree to which critical factors contribute to workplace diversity and employee performance in XYZ Plc. The statistical result is as follows; clear performance expectations and goals β= 0.211, t= 4.906; p= 0.000<0.05; Recognition and rewards for good performance β= 0.372, t= 7.507; p= 0.000<0.05; Diversity training and education programs β= 0.152, t= 3.362; p= 0.001<0.05; Leadership commitment to diversity and inclusion β= -0.048, t= -0.974; p= 0.331>0.05 and employee resource groups or diversity councils β= -0.278, t= 5.375; p= 0.000<0.05. The findings show that the factors are statistically significant

except leadership commitment to diversity and inclusion, which is insignificant.

The Interpretation of the Beta Coefficient

Standardized Beta coefficients in Table 5 provide insight into the relative impact of various variables on workplace diversity and employee performance. The variable recognition and rewards for good performance had the highest Beta value ($\beta = 0.372$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that it was the most significant predictor. This demonstrates that when employees are identified and compensated for their contributions, it has a significant positive effect on their performance and the sense of an inclusive workplace. Employee resource groups or diversity councils also have a significantly positive effect ($\beta = 0.278$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that formal representation and engagement channels effectively support diversity and performance. Clear performance expectations and goals ($\beta = 0.211$, $p < 0.001$) and training and education diversity programs ($\beta = 0.152$, $p = 0.001$) also have a significant positive effect, although with smaller magnitudes. These findings highlight the importance of clarity of communication and continuous learning in diverse workforce management processes. However, leadership commitment to diversity and inclusion reflects a non-significant negative Beta coefficient ($\beta = -0.048$, $p = 0.331$), suggesting that leadership commitment in the absence of actionable initiatives may not be enough to achieve measurable benefits. In aggregate, the results identified recognition, employee support systems, and performance clarity as having a core role in facilitating diversity outcomes and employee effectiveness in the organizational context.

Evaluation of Homoscedasticity

Figure 1. Regression

Table 6. Collinearity Diagnostics[a]

Model	Dimension	Eigenvalue	Condition Index	(Constant)	Clear performance expectations and goals opportunities for growth and development	Recognition and rewards for good performance	Diversity training and education programs	Leadership commitment to diversity and inclusion.	Employee resource groups or diversity councils
1	1	5.970	1.000	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
	2	.011	22.911	.53	.01	.00	.00	.07	.13
	3	.006	32.620	.38	.22	.12	.12	.28	.05
	4	.005	34.733	.00	.34	.01	.77	.00	.05
	5	.004	38.160	.05	.00	.09	.01	.58	.75
	6	.004	40.674	.03	.42	.78	.10	.07	.02

a. Dependent Variable: Workplace diversity and employees' performance.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings indicate that employees consider workplace diversity as a key and relevant factor in the development and enhancement of creativity and innovation. It was determined that ethnic and racial diversity was welcomed and highly encouraged in workplaces. Such findings are related to the work of Héliot et al. (2020b), who defined workplace diversity as the variation in differences among workers in an organization. These differences may include but are not limited to language, race, ethnicity, ancestry, culture, education, geographic origin, religion, gender, marital status, age, physical ability, and professional experience. Sundari (2018) added that diversity in the workplace refers to the representation of employees with unique attributes comprising the following: age, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic backgrounds, talents, and limitations.

The study's conceptualization of diversity aligns with Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), which posits that individuals derive a sense of belonging and self-esteem by identifying with social groups that share common characteristics such as age, gender, ethnicity, religion, or educational background. This identification influences employees' attitudes, behaviors, and performance within the organization (Sahabuddin et al., 2023). However, workforce diversity also has some problems in addressing the concerns of an organization. Kossek and Lambert (2004) A study identified some factors as interpersonal conflicts, personal biases, resistance to change, segmented communication networks, conflict between individual and group interests, diminished group cohesiveness, and lobbying. In addition, Chaarani et al. (2022) indicated that poor management of workplace diversity engenders a lot of confusion and conflicts among employees and management.

However, Shaban (2016) insists that organizations embracing diversity as a tool to enhance innovation, growth, and development are more likely to provide the behavioral support necessary

for such an initiative, with greater focus, commitment and perseverance in implementing the effective practices of diversity management. They tend to consider diversity not as a challenge but as a strategic asset that drives success.

Other factors contributing a great deal to better employee performance include the work environment, training or development, leadership and management, employee motivation, performance appraisal, and recognition. This fact is supported by the study of (Jaiswal & Dyaram, 2019), who stated that training and development are dynamic and bring modification to an individual's behavior, attitude, knowledge, and skills, hence enhancing overall performance.

The findings also agree with those studies by Balashova and Gromova (2016); Hee et al. (2019), which defined employee performance as the actions and achievements of the employees in doing their assigned duties following the policies, standards, and expectations of the organization. In those studies, performance was argued to be influenced by several factors, including training and development, employee motivation, effective communication, performance appraisal, rewards, and recognition (Zhuwao et al., 2019).

Similarly, Idowu and Olu-Ogunleye (2024) stated that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are both crucial in eliciting better employee performance. Smith and Bititci (2017) established evidence from a study conducted within the UK banking industry that employee engagement shows significant positive effects on performance, which thus brings out the responsibility to create an attractive and supportive atmosphere at the workplace.

Nevertheless, a comprehensive worldwide study indicated that unengaged individuals harm both the company and the nation (Hambler, 2016). Managers have acknowledged the importance of employee performance in guaranteeing the survival and expansion of a business (Armstrong & Taylor, 2020). Results on the relationship between workplace diversity and employee performance is significantly proven through this study on XYZ Nigeria Plc. The study findings are also similar to the findings of (Rizwan et al., 2016), who demonstrated that workplace diversity positively influences employee performance. Educational background, ethnic background, age group, and sex variations had a performance improvement, for example. Other studies confirm these findings and indicate a positive relationship between workforce diversity and employee performance. These include the studies of (Faloye & Owoeye, 2019; Jain, n.d.; Karwal & Tandon, 2021). These studies have identified that diversity promotes creativity and innovation and leads to better decision-making. People from different backgrounds bring different ideas, skills, and experiences when working together, thereby enhancing problem-solving capabilities that promote the success of organizations. Zhuwao et al. (2019) supported this view.

Adil et al. (2019) studied workforce diversity in Jordan's hospitality industry and reported a positive impact on job effectiveness. Another study by (Kundu & Mor, 2017) focused on the Indian IT sector and reported that gender diversity had a positive effect on perceived business performance. Not all studies have produced consistent results. Workforce diversity in terms of ethnicity, gender, and age. However, no significant influence of the variables on employee performance was identified. onflicting evidence exists that groups comprising diverse members may underperform compared to groups whose members share similar characteristics when diversity is not managed appropriately. These divergent results bring to the fore the need for effective diversity management practices that reduce potential pitfalls and enhance the gains of workforce diversity.

CONCLUSIONS

This study shows that workplace diversity is also crucial in ushering in creativity, innovation, and employee performance in XYZ Nigeria Plc. The majority of respondents concurred that diversity was crucial in guaranteeing that organizational goals were achieved and confirmed

the truth that XYZ Nigeria Plc has actually achieved policies and programs of gender representation, ethnic inclusivity, and equal opportunities. The policies and programmes illustrate XYZ Nigeria Plc's aspiration to create a culture of inclusion in the workplace where everyone is valued and respected regardless of their background. Commitment from leadership and positive workplace culture were viewed as key enablers of effective diversity management. Respondents emphasized the need for continuous feedback, regular performance feedback, and employee recognition as key determinants of sustaining motivation and commitment. The study also confirmed a positive and significant relationship between diversity in the workplace and employee performance, where diversity fosters cooperation, engagement, and innovation. A few of its key drivers are leadership commitment to diversity, employee resource groups, and recognition of individual contributions. This study contributes to the theoretical literature on workplace diversity by affirming the applicability of Social Identity Theory in explaining the diversity-performance link. In addition, this study extends Social Identity Theory by illustrating how inclusive workplace practices extinguish in-group biases and enhance cooperation among diverse groups of workers. In addition, the research also provides empirical insight into the diversity-performance relationship within a Nigerian business setting, thereby providing a gap in the literature that has been extremely focused on Western organizations. From a management perspective, the findings indicate the worth of ongoing investment in diversity and inclusion initiatives. To get the most out of workplace diversity, corporations must cement leadership commitment to diversity by making inclusivity a part of corporate policy and decision-making. In addition, formal mentorship programs and employee resource groups can provide a lifeline of support for underrepresented employees, which increases their feeling of belonging and engagement. Organizations must strengthen their performance management systems to integrate diversity performance indicators so that inclusivity becomes an embedded practice within talent management processes. Furthermore, targeted training programs on cultural competency, unbiased hiring, and inclusive leadership can be catalytic in designing an equitable and high-performing workplace.

LIMITATION and FURTHER RESEARCH

One of the primary limitations of this study is that it employed only one firm, thereby keeping the findings generalizable to others in other fields or regions in check. Using quantitative research processes, although optimal in terms of establishing a correlation between workplace diversity and employee performance, might be poor in terms of richness and depth when investigating the experience, views, and concerns of diversity among employees. Qualitative data, such as employees' own accounts of inclusion, team culture, and company culture, might more accurately explain how diversity impacts people. Future research should include a mixed-methods approach with qualitative processes, such as in-depth interviews or focus groups, to explore these issues more deeply. Additionally, this study does not account for industry-specific diversity concerns; manufacturing, healthcare, and technology industries may have different diversity-performance relationships due to varying workforce profiles, regulatory environments, and operating conditions. Longitudinal studies are also recommended to explore the long-term effects of diversity programs on worker performance. A broader comparative examination across industries, regions, and cultures would be helpful to learn how diversity interfaces with organizational dynamics and performance results in various contexts.

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