



Comparative effect of age diversity on employee performance among public and private tertiary institutions in Ekiti State - Nigeria

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Abstract

This paper investigated comparative effect of age diversity on employee performance in public and private tertiary institutions in Ekiti State, Nigeria. Precisely, this study examined the influence of age diversity on employee performance towards the institution's objectives and goals. The study was conducted among four public and five private tertiary institutions in Ekiti State Nigeria. The population of the study was 9,351 teaching and non-teaching staff of the selected institutions. The sample size used for the study was 349 academic and 377 non-academic staff. The data collected were analysed using table, percentage and ANOVA, t-test and multiple regressions. The results of the tests of hypotheses revealed that: Age has positive and significant effect on employee performance in public institutions (t-value 20.975 is significant at 5% level of significance). The study discovered that age diversity enhances employee performance in public institution better than the private institutions in Ekiti State, Nigeria. The verdicts found by the study, deduced that age diversity significantly contributed to employee performance in public and private institution but greater significance value was found in public than private institutions. This research suggested that management must encourage the same employment for all without giving one preference over the other.

Keywords: Age diversity, employee performance, diversity management

1. Introduction

Age diversity is the variance and resemblances in generations (age) in the midst of individuals. According to Owoyemi, Elegbede and Gbajumo (2011), age diversity includes diverse group of employees with diverse, frequently contradictory worth and approaches. As opined by Kunze (2013), age diversity could be expounded as the dissimilarities in age dissemination amid employees and is used to relate the structure of the institution or the formation of workgroups inside an institution. Fajana (2009) discovered that age diversity signifies cross-generational conduct between old and young employees, which explains the variances in perceived office conduct.

As maintained by Nelson and Quick (2009), diversity comprises all kinds of differences amid staff by way of sex, age, beliefs, religion, character and sexual

orientation. Diversity has influence over the employees' attitude if critical management actions are not taken. Labour force conotes the totality of persons employed in an institution. People of diverse upbringing are engaged to do administrative jobs so as to achieve organisational common aims. In sight of the anticipatable demographic variations and the ensuing variations in the age planning of the working populace, the enquiry comes up as to what special effects an age diversity would have over the output of institutions. Institutions would remain threatened by way of age diversity, on the one hand, through variations in age arrangement, on the other hand. Hence, they would require to make better usage of the abilities of a growing amount of progressively old employees whom, by chance, would have to be efficiently engaged within a declining number of new, and in certain cases fresh, employees.



Currently, in dissimilarity, several institutions have little, aged staff on their workforces. This connotes that the normal age of engaged staff would rise in the predictable prospect, by way of difference in staff age.

The labour force comprises persons of diverse creations with separate job morals, profound placed manners and diverse initiators. Kreitner and Kinichi quoted in Ogbo, Kifordu and Ukpere (2014) postulated that labour force decent variation is the big number of individual contrast and resemblance that triumphs amid persons working in a related relationship. Carrell, quoted in Munjuri (2012) that labour force diversity is the method individuals vary from one another which can disturb a job or employee affiliation within the institution. Greenberg (2004) equally perceived workforce assorted variety as the collection of disparities among persons that work in a related association. These variations are age, gender, ethnic group, personality and cognitive style.

On these notes, organisations are targeting to be more diversified so as to have advantage by becoming very resourceful, inventive and exposed to valuable amendment. Nowadays, institutions are moving at a very speediness rate then the transformation of the workers' demographics, rise of occupations in the economy, continuous evolution of the globalization and condition for effective and efficient teamwork have appeared as important forces moving the standing of diversity in an organisations. With the upsurge of globalisation and rivalry, the staff in entire developed countries have turned out to be increasingly heterogeneous. Developments in knowledge and the arrival of a universal economy have taken the societies to the same place, closer to one another (Akpakip, 2017).

The environment of the work place is getting more intricate owing to

globalisation and competition which, has required the labour force that comprises individuals by changing age, skill, ethnicity, know-how and upbringings to exploit reasonable benefit (Ragins & Gonzalez, 2003). Akinnusi, Sonubi and Oyewunmi (2017) maintained that half of the population in Nigeria are people of working age which denotes that organisations draw large pool of talents in order to achieve their desired aims. Toward accomplishment of the labour force, management has made multiplicity rules that are capable of protecting all categories of workers from discernment for the reason that their age classification (Ugwuzor, 2011).

Starting from previous and current studies on age diversity, it was revealed in the studies of Owoyemi, Elegbede and gbajumo (2011), Kunze (2017), Fajana (2009), Kunze, Boehu & Bruch (2013) and Akpakip (2017) to mention but a few on age diversity and its comparative outcome had been carried out in Africa specifically Nigeria. All the aforementioned studies engrossed additional on diversity outcome on organisational performance, corporate performance otherwise output, few studies only exist on age diversity and employees' performance which in turn increases the whole organisational performance. Also, the studies did not comparatively evaluate the result of age diversity on employee performance between public and private institutions. in Nigeria. Therefore, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, there is little empirical studies that has comparatively analysed the effect of age diversity on employee performance in Nigeria.

In the light of the above, this study, therefore, examined the possible effects of age diversity has on performance of employee of public and private tertiary institutions particularly in Ekiti State, Nigeria with the aid of comparative analysis.



The study investigated age diversity on employee performance among public and private tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The research on age diversity on employee performance among public and private tertiary institutions is well-timed when some institutions engage different age groups of employees. The study would benefit the government, stakeholders, employees, employers and management, Nigerian citizens and researchers.

Objective of the Study

Investigate the comparative effect of age diversity on employee performance among public and private tertiary institutions

Research Question

What is the comparative effect of age diversity on employee performance among public and private tertiary institutions?

2. Review of Related Literature

An age-diverse workforce will show a mass of diverse standards, inclinations and skills, which create it most likely that employees would also express divergent views and tackle issues in diverse methods. In contrast, within a similar employee, there is the threat that only extremely related means of viewing at and impending problems would surface, which be likely to prompt additional of an innovation-inhibiting culture (Mas, & Moretti 2006)

One of the sturdiest opinions for hiring an age-diverse employee is that study displays age diversity has a optimistic influence on team efficiency and performance. This is partly because diversity in overall upsurges invention and enhancements institutions efforts. But age diversity in precise seems to improvement output at the team level, possibly because of “understanding spillover” — team associates share knowledge acquired from past involvements, which in turn triggers new way out to difficulties while evading costly errors (Uschi Backes-Gellner & Stephan Veen 2002).

Accordingly, even if employees observe particular methods of age prejudiced conduct at the specific level by coworkers

or superiors, it is not certain that they would generalize such happenings and notice the institution as commonly age prejudiced. In other words, under circumstances of high diversity-friendly employees are further possible to observe their employer as age-neutral, just, reliable, and upright (Triana & García, 2009; Triana et al., 2010). In those institution with high diversity-friendly the adverse social classification procedures activated by age diversity, such as subsection creation and observed desecration of career programmes, are not likely to surface, permitting at least a zero connection among age diversity and the negative age discrimination climate. If employees observe that their institution cherishes diversity through its practices and doings, they might chande these practices to their own conduct and evade prejudiced behaviour towards coworkers or subordinates from different age clusters. In other cases, under conditions of low diversity-friendly, independently qualified cases of age discernment prompted by the processes of age subsection creation might simply lead to the creation and insight of a robust institution-wide climate of age discernment.

Workers old and young possess diverse talents and skills (Johnson 2005; Skirbekk 2005; Staudinger 2006). The know-hows and abilities of old and young employees differ contingent to their job-related field and doings. It usually could be presumed that contingent to the kind of duty, individual output deteriorations by age and this procedure starts sooner or later and advancements further or less speedily. Nevertheless, this age-related change in the individual output of every individual is only one facet of productivity-relevant effects of aging, since in institutions persons effort together with other individuals.

Age diversity known as a common marvel which is existing in almost all alliances, such as relations, tertiary institutions, teams of sport, and work or band clusters with membership of changing ages (Kunze,



Boehm, & Bruch, 2013). Akpkip (2017) elucidated that labour force is exceptional in its creational diversity, that brings fresh defies to institutions trying to entice, hold, manage, and inspire best employees. Every creation has faith which muscles are exceptional, also they did not increase persons of new cohorts (Rowe, 2010). Wherever age diversity is being experienced, the advantages accumulate together to the organisation and the employees. Devising an environment of diverse age creates and makes best in work interactions and increases communal unity for all.

An age-diverse labour force would show a multitude of diverse standards, favorites and skills, which make it possible that employees would also convey divergent views and address difficulties in discrete means. In contrast, inside a similar staff, here is the danger that lone extremely related methods of seeing at and upcoming difficulties would occur, which have a tendency to give rise to additional of an upheaval-impede value (Mas, Moretti 2006; Wiersema, Bird 1993: 1015-1019). Age homogeneousness lean towards “groupthink”, which denotes a stiff, stagnant stylishness of policymaking that is favourable to within-group cliquy opinions and rounds (Janis 1982). Age diversity in an institution touches administrative efficiency has really been ignored and little hypothetical outlines have been delivered to compact with the configuration of this tricky.

Age Diversity: is the aptitude to admit the diverse sorts of age inside an occupational condition. Age diversity is defined as the differences in age dissemination among workforces and is used to refer to the structure of the organisation or the formation of workgroups within an organisation.

Diversity Management: connotes the formation of an inter- and intra-national territory surrounded by these contrary perceptions, advanced and tactful are

combined and established to control diversity in a manner that the complete prospective (output and specific ambitions) of persons and institutions may be achieved completely.

Diversity: is described as the concession, perception, accommodating, cherishing and commemorating variances among people through esteem to age, category, customs, sex, corporeal and psychological aptitude, sprint, sensual familiarisation, mystical rehearsal and communal support position.

Employee Performance

According to Durga (2017), performance is being referred to as implementing an assignment or an execution or completion. The author added that in what way employee is performing his/her duties excellently in a rewarding manner for the job requirement or carrying his/her obligations so as to attain better outcomes. O'Flynn, Ricciotti, Nicholas, Lau, Sammarino and Fisher (2001) citing William and O'Reilly (1998) believed employee performance can be defined through three dimensions. Firstly, employees' productivity meets up with the set standard of performance agreed by the outsiders of the institution. Secondly, employee's performance can be seen in relations to how the societal procedures exploited in the performance of their careers enhance or keep the competence of the employees to work collectively on succeeding cluster tasks. Lastly, that employee's individual wants are fulfilled as an alternative to being discouraged by the group performance. Performance is a personality's conduct and outcomes. Likewise, it is seen as the method in which individuals do their work (Armstrong, 2012).

Nevertheless O'Flynn, *et al.* (2001) maintained that the performance of employees is not actually demonstrative of performance of a group is. Somewhat, experience of individual members in a group and the consequent capability of the staff to carry out forthcoming



responsibilities likewise describes the employee's performance. O'Flynn, *et al.* (2001) claimed that there are manifold measurements when it concerns evaluation of performance perceive that unrelated components need their diverse performance standard and entry to facts. For example, institution might be further concerned for watching the productivity of the employees conversely; the employees might be concerned in making a creative atmosphere for one another. The information on their interfaces may be on daily bases with co-staff or cluster members and use these facts to assess performance. Information and decision-making theory envisage that optimistic result happen among employee performance in reasonable and multifaceted responsibilities and information as employees have various understanding, expertise, knowledge and skill which leads to invention, fresh merchandise plan and enhanced decision making.

2.2 Theoretical Review

Theory of Human Capital (Elucidating Age Diversity)

According to Grund and Westergård-Nielsen (2005) in human capital theory, an organisation which accommodates various labour force (both older and new employees) could gain from both human resources. The newer employees have the physical resilience and the capability and readiness to acquire knowledge on new things. They as well deliver fresh concepts and talents on novel technologies into the organisation, and old employees have their assortment of experiences to the organisation. They also possess the working confidence, consciousness of excellence and understanding of the intra firm arrangements and the pertinent knowledge about appropriate markets and linkages owing to their long years of experience.

For the human resources to be completely functioned, societal resemblance is actually important for group harmony, contact and communiqué. Henceforth, wherever there

is common difference among employees, it could result to little interactions, communication, discontentment and a provoked effectiveness of the institutions. Observing the performance of employee in relation to age diversity, scholars such as Schlick, Frieling, and Wegge (2013) debate that though old employees possess years of experiences, they have a habit of learning at a very sluggish speed and they have decreases in their thinking and memory capabilities. Many times, they are likely to have problems in bending with the different methods of executing their works. The theory had been used to describe discernment against older staff, proposing that they are to be castigated for their weakness position in the labour market in that they have a tendency to fail in keeping their expertise up to date and therefore uphold themselves as appropriate competitive staff. Likewise, this theory demonstrates that possessing both old and newer employees in an institutions could boost both employees' and institutional efficiency as old employees could guide fresh employees and the younger employees could as well portion their expertise and knowledge with older employees in an approach called 'inverse mentoring' (National Integration Working Group for Workplace, NIWGW, 2009).

3. Methodology

Descriptive research design was employed. Descriptive research design could be seen as a logical technique that comprises perceiving and unfolding the conduct of a topic devoid of manipulating it in any way. Descriptive research studies are based on unfolding the features of a specific individual, or of a cluster. These types of studies pertained to a particular prediction, through recitation of realities, and features relating to different group or circumstance all are instances of descriptive research studies. The populace of the work was total number of academic and non-academic staff of the tertiary institutions in Ekiti State. The entire population of staff for the

institutions is nine thousand, three hundred and fifty-one (9,351). The total number of academic staff is two thousand, seven hundred and twenty-seven (2727) while non-academic staff is six thousand, six hundred and twenty-four (6624).

Research Instrument

Primary data used for this study were gathered through the use of well-structured questionnaire and divided into three sections.

Section A elicited information on the Socio-Demographic Characteristics of respondents aimed at capturing detailed profiles of respondents. Section B gathered information on age diversity scale. Section C made use of employee performance scale to gather necessary information needed for the study. Each item on each section of the questionnaire was adapted from the studies of Muasa, Egondi and Muthuva (2017) and

Akpakip (2017) respectively. The questions used for the work were arranged in statements format and the researchers prepared them adopting a Likert gauge method starting from bottom to the top ‘strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), indifference (3), agree (4) and strongly agree (5). The data for this study were primarily sourced through structured questionnaires found valid in achieving the objectives of the study.

4. Results and Discussion

Descriptive statistics (such as frequencies and percentage) were used to analyse the data generated from the socio-demographic variables. To achieve the stated objectives, t-test and multiple regression were adopted to measure the effect of the variations of the independent variable on the dependent variable (employee performance).

Table 1: Summary of sample size selected through proportionate sampling technique

S/N	Tertiary Institutions	Academic staff	Non-academic staff	$n = \frac{N_i n_i}{N}$ Academic staff	$n = \frac{N_i n_i}{N}$ Non-academic staff	Academic Sample	Non-academic sample
1	EKSU	923	1650	$\frac{(923)(2727)}{2727}$	$\frac{(1650)(6624)}{6624}$	118	94
2	FUOYE	523	1821	$\frac{(523)(2727)}{2727}$	$\frac{(1821)(6624)}{6624}$	69	104
3	ABUAD	400	701	$\frac{(400)(2727)}{2727}$	$\frac{(701)(6624)}{6624}$	51	40
4	Fed. Poly, Ado-Ekiti	355	1223	$\frac{(355)(2727)}{2727}$	$\frac{(1223)(6624)}{6624}$	45	70
5	Crown Poly, Ijero-Ekiti	95	127	$\frac{(95)(2727)}{2727}$	$\frac{(127)(6624)}{6624}$	12	7
6	College of Education	151	492	$\frac{(151)(2727)}{2727}$	$\frac{(492)(6624)}{6624}$	19	28
7	Delar College of Education	83	177	$\frac{(83)(2727)}{2727}$	$\frac{(177)(6624)}{6624}$	11	10
8	Fabotas College of Health Tech.	105	291	$\frac{(105)(2727)}{2727}$	$\frac{(291)(6624)}{6624}$	13	16
9	College of Health Tech	92	142	$\frac{(92)(2727)}{2727}$	$\frac{(142)(6624)}{6624}$	11	8
Total		2727	6624	2727	6624	349	377

Source: Author’s computation (2019).



$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} \text{-----} 3.1$$

Where n = Sample size to be tested =2727 and 6624 for academic and non-academic respectively

N = Total population size

e = Acceptable error term (0.05)

Therefore, the total sample size is calculated thus:

$$\text{Academic Staff} = n = \frac{2727}{1+2727(0.05)^2}$$

$$\text{Non-academic Staff} = n = \frac{6624}{1+6624(0.05)^2}$$

Academic staff = n= 349

Non-academic staff = n=377

Employing Taro-Yamane formula, it implies that 349 and 377 will be the sample size for Academic staff and Non-academic staff of the selected institutions respectively as used in the study.

Table 2 Age: diversity and employee performance between public and private tertiary institutions in Ekiti State

Items	Strongly agree		Agree		Indifference		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1 My team leader includes all members of different ages in problem solving	327	54.3	143	23.8	52	8.6	68	11.3	12	2.0
2 Age difference affects group formation in the workplace	83	13.8	197	32.7	47	7.8	195	32.4	80	13.3
3 Differences in age affect consensus building among employees.	159	26.4	197	32.7	103	17.1	94	15.6	49	8.1
4 Age differences affects group effectiveness	212	35.2	154	25.6	38	6.3	166	27.6	32	5.3
5 I have no problem working with people of different age	118	19.6	195	32.4	64	10.6	145	24.1	80	13.3
6 I feel motivated to work with employees of the same age group	188	31.2	211	35	22	3.7	143	23.8	38	6.3

Source: Field Survey Report (2020)

Comparative effect of age diversity on employee performance among public and private tertiary institutions in Ekiti State Based on the analysis of the table 2 item 1 revealed that out of all the respondents sampled in the study 327 (54.3%) strongly agreed and 143 (23.8%) agreed respectively that their team leaders comprise entire members of diverse ages in resolving problematic, 52 respondents representing (8.6%) were indifference, while 68 (11.3%) and 12 (2.0%) of the respondents disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively that

their team leaders include all members of different ages in problem solving. 83 (13.8%) and 197 (32.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed respectively that age difference affects group formation in the workplace, 47 (7.8%) of the respondents remained indifference to the assertion on the item 2 while the remaining 195 (32.4%) and 80 (13.3%) disagreed and strongly agreed respectively that age difference affects group formation in the workplace. Based on the assertion in item 3 of the same table



which states that differences in age affect consensus building among employees., 159 (26.4%) strongly agreed, 197 (32.7%) agreed, 103 (17.1%) were indifferent, while 94 (15.6%) and 49 (8.1%) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively.

Furthermore, 212 (35.2%) and 154 (25.6%) strongly agreed and agreed respectively that age differences affect group effectiveness, 38 (6.3%) of the respondents were undecided regarding the assertion, 166 (27.6%) disagreed and 32 (5.3%) strongly disagreed respectively that Age differences affect group effectiveness. Also, 118 (19.6%) of the respondent strongly agreed, 195 (32.4%) agreed, 64 (10.6%) were indifferent, 145 (24.1%) disagreed and 80 (13.3%) strongly disagreed respectively that they have no difficult in functioning with persons of diverse age. Finally, on the table, 188 and 211 respondents estimated to be (31.2%)

and (35%) strongly agreed and agreed respectively that they feel motivated to work with employees of the same age group, 22 (3.7%) of them neither agreed nor disagreed to the assertion, 143 (23.8%) and 38 (6.3%) disagreed and strongly disagreed respectively that they feel motivated to work with employees of the same age group. Hence, it can be established that age diversity strongly determines performance among the employees of selected public and Private institutions in the study.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis Age diversity does not have any significant comparative effect on employee performance among public and private tertiary institutions in Ekiti State.

Table 3: Result of t-test analysis showing the difference in means between age diversity of staff of public and private institutions and employee performance

Institution	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t	Prob.
Public institution	444	1.88	1.135			
Private institution	158	1.68	1.029	600	20.569	0.000

Source: Data Analysis from SPSS (2020). P<0.05

Table 3 showed that t-value 20.569 is significant at 5% level of significance. So, the null hypothesis is rejected. It means that there is a significant difference between the age diversity and employees’ performance of Public and Private institutions. The table also showed that the mean score of public institution at their age diversity (1.88) is greater than the mean score of private institution (1.68). This showed that age diversity enhances employee performance of public institution better than the private institution in Ekiti state.

Discussion of Findings

The result showed that age diversity has positive and significant effect on employee performance of public and private institutions in Ekiti state. This result is interesting and not surprising rather it

confirmed that management of tertiary institutions do not place priority on age rather it implies that the management of tertiary institutions employs or recruits without age discrimination into the educational system. However, based on the results of the test of hypotheses, it was discovered that age diversity significantly determined employee performance in public and private institution in Ekiti state. However, age diversity contributes to employee’s performance of public institution positively. The study validated the exiting finding of Sheth (2018) that age diversity significantly contributed to employee performance.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the analyses of data collected and the interpretation of results, the study



established that the degree at which age diversity contributed to employee performance of public institution cannot be compared to the way at which the age diversity contributed to the private institution. It also inferred that age diversity has significant effect on employee performance in public and private institutions. In the context of this study, age diversity is an influencer of employee performance. The way an employee carries out his/her job can have as a result of the competences he/ she has gained through education, experience, training. Also, age diversity has an effect on employee's performance; an employee can be more productive because he is young and still has the strength and skills to carry out task. On the other hand, an older employee can perform his task well because he has the experience and skills to perform.

This study suggested that management must encourage the same employment for all without giving one preference over the other. Management is implored to accommodate into the system irrespective of colour, height and behaviour this is because age diversity is associated with resources that could provide an institution with a sustained competitive advantage.

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