

Promoting Inclusivity: Gender Diversity Management Strategies in Multinational Corporations in Rivers State

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Abstract: *This study investigated the relationship between gender diversity management strategy and workplace harmony of multinational companies in Rivers State. The study adopted the cross-sectional survey in its investigation of the variables. Primary- source of data was generated through self-administered questionnaire. The population of this study was forty-five (45) respondents from forty-five (45) registered and functional multinational oil companies in Rivers state. The research instrument was validated through supervisor's vetting and approval while the reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring above 0.70. Data generated were analysed and presented using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation Statistics. The tests were carried out at a 95% confidence interval and a 0.05 level of significance. Results from analysis of data revealed that there is a significant relationship between gender diversity management strategy and workplace harmony of Multinational Companies in Rivers State. The study concluded that organizations are ready to accept gender diversity inclusion at the workplace, even though many policies are made to run this process smoothly but there is the gap in execution phase. There is need for the management to make some modification in existing policies specific to managing gender diversity which in turn promotes workplace harmony. The study recommends that management of multinational companies should develop a way of managing gender diversity among employees and maintain workplace harmony within their environment. This will go a long way to help improve the harmony of the employees within the organization.*

Keywords: *Gender Diversity Management Strategy, Equal Opportunity, Inclusive Environment, Workplace Harmony, Enhanced workplace collaboration, and fewer grievances*

Introduction

The origin of diversity recognition in the workplace started in the US, when from the 1960s, American society started to observe changes within the workforce (Allard and Harvey, 1995). This was visible through the increase of women within the workforce, along with an influx of workers traditionally excluded based on race and ethnicity. This evolution of the American workforce had been greatly impacted through diversity legislation, namely the civil rights act of 1964. Allard and Harvey (1995) outline a 'three phase diversity programme', the first being mainly focused on changes to policies and procedures within an organization that meet legislative needs. The second stage was focused on understanding general differences within society, based on beliefs, values, and experiences. These authors add that Human Resource leaders had started utilizing talent across diverse colleagues within the workforce leading to the third and current phase of diversity which is based around pro-active management of diversity through detailed internal strategies.

Diversity incorporates complex contrasts and similarities in viewpoints, characters, and perspectives among employees of an organization and individuals who make up the wider community. While according to Kossek and Pichier, the best practices for diversity focus on selecting for diversity, to decrease work place discrimination, and creating financial effectiveness which brings to the significance of diversity management practices as well as any formalized practices anticipated to upgrade stakeholder diversity, make positive working relationship among various stakeholders and develop value from diversity. However, gender inequality in the workplace is one of the evergreen issues found in our society alongside with other discrimination. Everyone boasts about giving equivalent rights to men and women, hut only in terms of advice and lecturing to others. While more women are in management roles in today's organizations, misleading assumptions in regards to women in leadership positions have not changed much throughout the years. Companies with gender 'diversity is more successful in keeping a low turnover rate, which significantly decreases their expenses. Moreover, they exhibit more innovation and make more intelligent decisions. Gender Diversity Management offers a structured approach towards a gender balanced workforce. It thereby supports companies in expanding their talent pool and provides solutions to the most pressing human resources(HR) challenges: recruitment, retention and development of employees. With female labour force participation being 26 percentage points below that of men, women currently represent the minority gender in the labour market. Thus, Gender Diversity Management today especially focuses on increasing the share of female employees in the workforce. This guide to Gender Diversity Management accordingly focuses on promoting the employment of women. If in a sector or at a company men represent the minority gender, the overall approach introduced in the guide is equally suitable for enhancing their employment opportunities.

This study introduces the concept of gender diversity management and provides an overview of how companies can better tap the female talent pool. It is designed for human resources and diversity managers as well as business consultants aiming at introducing or expanding Gender Diversity Management at a company. According to Fisher (2010), workplace harmony constantly derives from the direct employee experience of dealing with his or

her employer. Accordingly, this attitudinal construct shapes employee behaviour and positive feelings towards work atmosphere, colleagues and employer. Erdogan et al. (2012) affirm that workplace harmony can be seen as a result of employee satisfaction with their. Leadership, work employee behaviour and positive feelings towards work atmosphere, colleagues and employer. Erdogan et al. (2012) affirm that workplace harmony can be seen as a result of employee satisfaction with their leadership, work atmosphere, job description, job specification, career development and more. This view is shared also by other authors such as (Kahn, 1990; Harter et al. 2002; Helsin et al., 2001; Wu et al., 2017; Brunetto et al., 2014). However, there has been relatively little empirical research report that details how multinational oil and gas companies can strategically achieve workplace harmony, through gender diversity management. Therefore, this study as its point of departure intends to empirically fill the gap by investigating the relationship between gender diversity management and workplace harmony of multinational oil and gas companies in Rivers State.

Statement of the Problem

While it could be said that much has been written on gender diversity globally, relatively little research-oriented publications have been done and reported on individual perspectives concerning gender diversity management. This is a problem considering that recent effort towards improving diversity both in theory and practice are designed based on the same framework of corporate focused diversity management approaches that has failed individuals and made things complicated (Zanoni et. al, 2010).

Dobbin and Kalev (2016), in their Harvard Business Review article buttress this view based on the argument that “companies are basically doubling down on the same approaches they’ve used since the 1960s which often make things worse, not better”. Similarly, in the Parker (2016) report commissioned by the UK government, it was argued that the gender diversity effort in many organisations is so obviously ‘pro forma’ that it makes a mockery of the very concept. The author goes further to suggest that gender diversity in the modern workplace has become merely a politically correct cause to adopt, like the concept of corporate social responsibility. Making gender diversity a matter of political correctness, however, undermines the extent to which it can be implemented with sincerity of purpose and the sustainability of its outcome.

This is especially true for organisation-initiated gender diversity approaches such as equal opportunity, quotas and targets including and work-life balance programs, which depend on the commitment of executives for successful implementation and perpetuation. This is a problem as Dobbin and Kalev (2016) argues because such approaches are based on a ‘classic command-and-control’ method that boils down on ‘expected behaviours and to dos and don’ts’ from employees. “This approach, as the authors argue, flies in the face of nearly everything we know about how to make changes and get the best out of people”.

Since a lot seems to depend on company executives’ attitudes and commitment levels to gender diversity, it may be suggested that too much emphasis needs not be placed on

standardized approaches. Therefore, the present study examined the relationship of gender diversity management and workplace harmony of multinational oil and gas companies in Rivers State.

Conceptual Framework

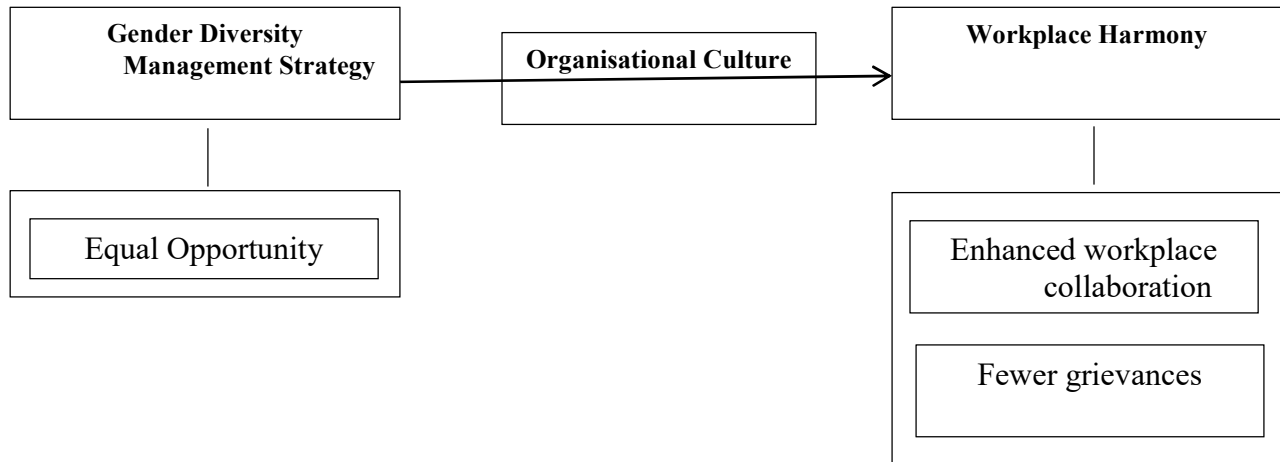


Fig 1.1: Conceptual Framework showing Gender Diversity Management and Workplace harmony of Multinational Companies in Rivers State.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this paper is to investigate whether gender diversity management strategy leads to workplace harmony in Multinational Oil and Gas Companies in Rivers State. While the specific objectives of the study were:

- i. To examine the relationship between equal opportunity and workplace harmony in multinational oil and gas companies in Rivers State.
- ii. To examine the moderating effect of organizational culture on the relationship between gender diversity management strategy and workplace harmony in multinational oil and gas companies in Rivers State.

Literature Review

Theoretical Review

This study was anchored on the similarity-attraction paradigm theory

Similarity-Attraction Paradigm Theory

The similarity-attraction paradigm explains how diversity can have negative outcomes for an organization. Some research has shown that members who belong to diverse work units may become less attached, are absent from work more often, and are more likely to quit. There is also evidence that diversity may produce conflict and higher employee turnover. Similarity-attraction theory is one of the foundational theories that attempts to explain why this occurs it posits that individuals are attracted to others with whom they share attitude similarity.

Attitudes and beliefs are common antecedents to interpersonal attraction. However, other traits such as race, age, sex, and socioeconomic status can serve as signals to reveal deep- level

traits about ourselves. For example, numerous studies investigating job-seeker behaviours have shown that individuals are more attracted to companies whose recruitment literature includes statements and images that reflect their own identity group.

Concept of Gender Diversity Management

The concept of gender diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing the individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, socio economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs or other ideologies. It is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive and nurturing environment and it is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual.

Dimensions of Gender Diversity Management Strategy

Equal opportunity

The concept of equal opportunity is complicated as it entails political assumptions and is, generally speaking, loosely defined. As Rees (1998) indicates "Equal opportunity has proved to be an enormously difficult objective to define, let alone deliver." Arriving at a definition can depict what equal opportunity is not. It has been stated that "... unequal regimes represent interrelated practices, processes, actions and meanings that result in maintaining class, gender and racial inequalities within particular organizations" (Acker, 2006).

Concept of Workplace harmony

In recent years, the concept of workplace harmony has been the topic of research. With a better grasp of the concepts importance in terms of leadership, the topic has begun to surface more frequently, and research into it has increased. The issue of Modern Company, according to Nwinyokpugi (2015), is that employees are becoming more conscious of their rights and privileges. The rise in this consciousness has become a thorn in the neck of increasing management, causing them to question the splendour of capitalistic mindedness, which once ruled the road to managing like a goliath. This trend appears to be affecting workplace harmony, since the frequency of managementworkforce confrontations is rapidly increasing in many areas of the global economy.

Organizational harmony means easy and cooperate agreement existing between employers and employees on job involvement which in turn benefits them mutually (Otobo, 2005; Osad and Osas 2013). Harmony is the state of social behaviour where every individual delays, controls their personal or religious or racial gratification for the empowerment of mutual relationships with other people, creatures (including animals and nature) in society, environment and wisely avoids the situation that can raise unnecessary conflicts.

Measures of Workplace Harmony

Enhanced Workplace Collaboration

Collaboration is to work jointly with other person, party or institution. For a successful collaboration to take place, organizations should focus on both personal and impersonal trust. Organizations are composed of diverse workforce where people from different

locations and backgrounds work together, trust among the people are highly required by the organizations to meet their goals and objectives successfully.

Collaboration (co-labour) is to work closely and jointly with others for shared outcomes. Collaboration generally refers to individuals or organizations ‘working together’ to address problems and deliver outcomes that are not easily or effectively achieved by working alone” (Keast&Mandell 2009). Some of the best workplace collaborations occur when employees have unplanned interactions at work.

Fewer Grievances

A grievance may be defined as any dispute that arises between an employer and employee, which relates to the implied or explicit terms of the employment agreement (Hunter & Kleiner, 2004). According to Michael Jucious, “grievance is any discontent or dissatisfaction whether expressed or not, whether valid or not, arising out of anything connected with the company which an employee thinks, believes or even feels to be unfair, unjust or inequitable”. A grievance is any dissatisfaction or feeling of injustice having connection with one’s employment situation which is brought to the attention of management. Speaking broadly, a grievance is any dissatisfaction that adversely affects organizational relations and productivity. Over the years conflicts in the world have had an effect on employee performance both positively and negatively (Okotoni&Okotoni, 2003).

Organizational culture

According to Magee (2002) organizational culture is the set of assumptions that members of an organization subscribe to. The assumptions are mainly beliefs and values. Beliefs focus on reality and they come from experience while values are about ideals that are desirable and worth striving for. It is the specific assortment of principles that are shared by everyone in the organization. This in turn controls the way these people intermingle with each other and with outsiders. The sharing of these beliefs and values create a business culture (Azhar, 2003). Robbins (2012) views organizational culture as a homogeneous discernment of the organization based on outstanding uniqueness separating one organization from the other.

Organizational culture has a pervasive effect on an organization, because it defines who its relevant employees, customers, suppliers and competitors are, and how to interact with these key actors (Barney 2012). The culture’s intensity or strength, and its addictiveness are the components that enable organizations to meet the twin demands of internal consistency and external flexibility (Schein, 2011).

Equal Opportunity and workplace Harmony

Equal opportunity and workplace harmony are interconnected concepts that are crucial for creating a positive and inclusive work environment. Equal opportunity in the workplace refers to the principle of giving all individuals the same rights and opportunities regardless of their background, characteristics, or beliefs. It ensures that everyone has a fair chance to succeed based on merit, skills, and abilities rather than factors such as gender, race, age, religion, or other protected characteristics. Promoting equal opportunity helps in fostering diversity, reducing discrimination, and improving overall productivity and innovation in the workplace. Workplace harmony reflects a positive, collaborative, and

respectful atmosphere among employees. It encompasses good relationships, effective communication, mutual respect, and a shared commitment to common goals. When there is workplace harmony, employees feel valued, supported, and motivated to work together towards the success of the organization.

Inclusivity: Equal opportunity practices promote inclusivity by ensuring that all employees are given a fair chance to contribute and succeed within the organization. This inclusivity leads to a more diverse and harmonious workforce where individuals feel respected and valued for their unique perspectives and contributions.

Trust and respect: When employees feel that they are being treated fairly and have equal opportunities for growth and advancement, it fosters trust and respect within the workplace. This trust forms the foundation for positive relationships, effective teamwork, and overall workplace harmony.

Conflict resolution: Equal opportunity policies and practices help in reducing discrimination and bias, which can be sources of conflict in the workplace. By promoting equality and fairness, organizations can minimize conflicts and create a more harmonious work environment where employees feel safe and supported.

Based on the foregoing, the study was hypothesized that:

H0₁: There is no significant relationship between Equal opportunity and enhanced workplace collaboration in multinational oil and gas companies in Rivers State.

H0₂: There is no significant relationship between Equal opportunity and less grievance in multinational oil and gas companies in Rivers State.

H0₃: There is no significant moderating effect of organizational culture on the relationship between gender diversity management and workplace harmony in multinational companies in Rivers State.

Empirical review

Alicia and Thomas (2016) study on the impact of gender diversity on the research quality of higher education institutions in the United Kingdom argues that despite previous studies indicating substantially lower publishing productivity among female researchers, their study postulates the existence of a positive impact of gender diversity on institutional research quality due to possible synergy effects. Multiple panel regressions was performed and found out that when not controlling for other factors, gender diversity seems to have a negative impact on research quality. When relevant control variables namely an institution's size, its research emphasis, faculty age, and faculty maturity - are introduced, this effect disappears. Further, no difference in the effect of gender diversity was found across scientific disciplines. Abdel (2012) study explores the impact of gender, age, and education background on employee performance in the Egyptian Pharmaceutical industry which is renowned to employ highly diversified workforce. The study sample was 300 middle level management positions. Data was collected via self-administered questionnaires methodology.

The results indicated that only two variables, gender and education background, were significant in explaining the variance in employee performance when different work force work together, while age diversity does not. Ngao&Mwangi (2013) research to explore the

effects of managing gender diversity to enhance organizational performance used descriptive research design and data was collected from sixty employees of the Kenya Ports Authority (KPA) which is a profit making public institution in Kenya. Theoretical model and hypothesis in this study were tested using Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS). The results indicated that gender, age and marital status greatly impact on organization performance and success. In addition the study recommended that KPA should recruit a more diverse workforce as it will result to improved synergy in decision making, better understanding of customer's needs, and increased flexibility in staffing. The study then concludes that this should however be reinforced through well formulated human resource policies and practices. Kwang and Shery (2017) study analyzes the effects of gender diversity in management on organizational performance using Korea Workplace Panel Survey data for 2005, 2007, and 2009.

Few studies have examined this relationship for firms outside the United States, particularly in Asian countries. Similar to previous research, the findings show that gender diversity in management has a U-shaped relationship with firm productivity. Second, the curvilinear relationship between gender diversity in management and firm productivity is stronger in service-oriented industries relative to manufacturing industries, with the highest level of employee productivity within homogeneous management groups. Third, the study includes a measure of workplace family-friendly policies to moderate the relationship between gender diversity in management and organizational performance. The study found that the U-shaped pattern also holds in firms with a large number of family-friendly policies. This suggests that gender diversity in management has considerable influence on the productivity of Korean firms through interactions with family-friendly policies.

Yukiko (2015) research presents empirical evidence testing whether increasing gender diversity is associated with improved firm performance for Japanese listed companies, which have different cultural backgrounds from Western companies, after controlling for size and firm age. As Worthley et al. (2009) points out, the growing importance of the Japanese female workforce under global competition requires a better understanding of gender-related issues in organizational management which is undergoing a transformation from their rooted traditional managerial habits, such as seniority-based promotion, lifetime employment, paternalism, or prioritizing corporate harmony, which favour men. The study found statistically significant positive relationships between managerial gender diversity and one measure of firm performance. Similar to Siegel and Kodama (2011), the study found out that manufacturing firms benefit significantly and sensitively to a greater extent from increasing managerial gender diversity as compared to those in the service industries, and moreover the curvature of this relationship is significantly greater for manufacturers. Furthermore, firms that demand fewer hours of overtime by their employees also experience this performance boost with increases in management gender diversity, with the same concave shape, and the more over time is reduced the more pronounced is the effect.

Kundu and Mor (2017) examined “workforce diversity and organizational performance of IT industry in India.” The purpose was to determine the extent to which employee perceptions of diversity management influence performance as well as find out whether employee perceptions of diversity are related to their backgrounds in the Indian IT industry. They used primary data elicited from 402 respondents. Factor analysis, correlations, analysis of variance, means, grand means, and regression were performed to analyse the data. Results indicated that there was no significant relationship between employees’ background and diversity management, but perceived promotion of gender diversity by employees was found to have a significant positive influence on their performance.

Gap in literature

Although diversity management appears to be attracting attention in contemporary organizations in recent times, few researchers have investigated its relevance of organizational strategy. Kundu and Mor (2017) found that employees’ perception of promotion of gender diversity was positively related to organizational harmony. Oditia and Egbule (2015) found that cultural diversity, team building, and group training mediate between workforce diversity and organizational effectiveness. Sun and Sharma (2011) found a significant positive relationship between diversity management and organizational effectiveness of private firms. However, it is doubtful whether any empirical studies have examined the possible influence of diversity management on workplace harmony using these dimensions and measures. Furthermore, it is not certain if any studies have attempted to model the relationship between key dimensions of workplace diversity, especially equal opportunity, and inclusive environment of multinational companies in Rivers State. This study sought to bridge these gaps.

Methodology

This study adopted correlation research design and its aim is to determine the frequency or level of a particular attribute in a defined population at a particular point in time. Correlation research design enables the study to examine the relationship between the dimensions and measures (Kothari, 2004).

The population of this study consists of forty-five (45) registered and functional multinational oil and gas companies in Port Harcourt. Where the population of the study is complex to achieve, or too large to cover; a representative of the population is relevant for the use in a study to produce acceptable findings to save time and cost (Saunders et al, 1997). A sample is a smaller group or sub-group obtained from the accessible population Mugenda & Mugenda (1999). Most often, it is not all the elements of the population of the study that would form the sample size for the study; but a reasonable proportion of the population, which findings can be generalized to the entire population (Ahiazu & Asawo, 2016).

The method of data collection for this study were questionnaire, this is the form which possesses the questions which give use the information required. A questionnaire consists of number of questions printed or typed in a definite order on a form or set of forms as it appears in the appendix (Adam and Kamuzora, 2008).

The research instrument was validated through supervisor’s vetting and approval.

The researcher used Cronbach alpha co-efficient method in measuring the reliability of the research instrument for the study which is a principal technique of testing reliability, especially among social science researchers (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2010). This is in line with the assertion that the reliability of data tested by Cronbach alpha method show reliability score greater than 70%. Below is the reliability statistics table extracted from the SPSS version 20 analysis output.

Table 1.1: Reliability Coefficients of Variables

S/No	Dimensions/Measures of the study variable	Number of items	Number of cases	Cronbach’s alpha
1	Equal Opportunity	4	45	0.703
2	Enhanced workplace collaboration	4	45	0.821
3	Less grievance	4	45	0.775
4	Organization Culture	4	45	0.778

Source: SPSS Output data 2024

Nunnally (1978) stated that the reliability of the data after testing by Cronbach’s alpha, should meet a reliability score of more than 70% i.e. > 0.7 . Therefore, from the Overall Cronbach’s alpha obtained based on standardized items as shown in the SPSS data output extract, it was clear that self-designed questionnaire was significantly reliable.

The method of analysis that was used in this study is the secondary analysis where inferential statistics was used (regression analysis). Data collected from the survey questionnaire shall be analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. Descriptive Statistics, such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations shall be used to describe the demographic characteristics of the participants and the study variables, inferential statistics such as correlation analysis and regression analysis shall be used to examine the relationship between gender diversity management and workplace harmony.

Data collected from the survey questionnaire was analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, was used to describe the demographic characteristics of the participants and the study variables. Inferential statistics, such as correlation analysis and regression analysis, was used to examine the relationship between gender diversity management and workplace harmony.

Results and discussion

In determining the statistical technique to suit our purpose, we considered Kothari (2004: 138) who argued that when there exist relationship or correlation between two variables, correlation technique should be used and when there exist cause and effect relationship between two variables in the case of the bivariate population or between one variable on

one side and two. This was the basis for our choice of the Spearman Rank Order Correlation to test our hypothesized relationships in our study. This section is used to present answers to our research questions and hypotheses. We commence by first presenting a proof of existing relationships.

Scatter Plot of the Relationship between study variables

According to Neuman (2000) cited in Asawo (2009), scatter graph is one of the techniques used in deciding whether a bivariate relationship does exist between interval scaled variables. In our bid to determine the existence and trend of this relationship, we plotted a scatter diagram as presented in Figure 4.6 gender diversity management as a predictor variable is plotted on the X axis whereas workplace harmony as the criterion variable is on the Y axis.

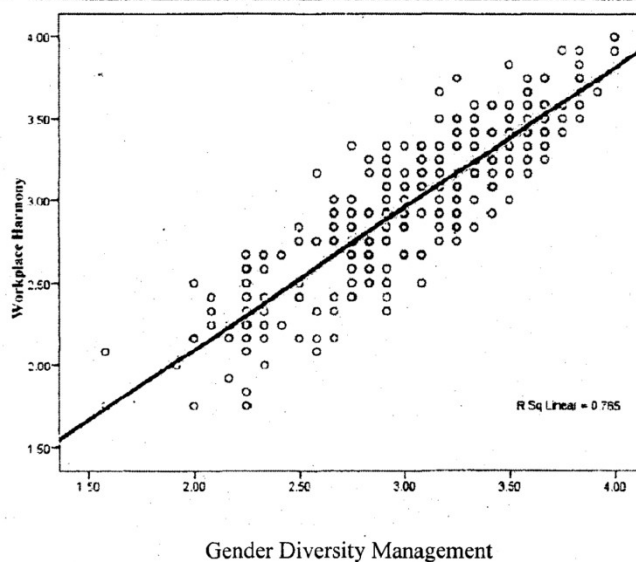


Figure 4.5: Scatter plot for relationship between gender diversity management and workplace harmony of multinational oil and gas companies in Rivers State.

The figure shows a strong relationship between gender diversity management strategy (independent variable) and workplace harmony (dependent variable). The scatter plot graph shows at R² linear value of (0.82 1) depicting a positive relationship between the two constructs. The implication is that an increase in gender diversity management strategy simultaneously brings about an increase in workplace harmony in the multinational oil and gas companies in Rivers State.

Test of Hypotheses

The Spearman Rank Order Correlation coefficient is calculated using the SPSS 21.0 version to establish the relationship among the empirical referents of the predictor variable and the measures of the criterion variable. Correlation coefficient can range from -1.00 to + 1.00. The value of -1.00 represents a perfect negative correlation while the value of +1 .00

represents a perfect positive correlation. A value of 0.00 represents a lack of correlation. In testing hypotheses one to nine, the following rules were upheld in accepting or rejecting our alternate hypotheses: all the coefficient values that indicate levels of significance (* or **) as calculated using SPSS were accepted and therefore our alternate hypotheses accept; when no significance is indicated in the coefficient r value, we reject our alternate hypotheses. Our confidence interval was set at the 0.05 (two tailed) level of significance to test the statistical significance of the data in this study.

Table 1.2: Correlation for equal opportunity and Enhance workplace collaboration

			Equal	Enhance Workplace Collaboration
Spearman’s rho	Equal Opportunity	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.655**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
		N	45	45
	Enhance workplace collaboration	Correlation Coefficient	.900**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
		N	45	45

Source: Research Data 2024.

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between equal opportunity and enhance workplace collaboration of oil and gas companies in Rivers State

From the result in the table above, the correlation coefficient shows that there is a positive relationship between equal opportunity and enhance workplace collaboration of oil and gas companies in Rivers State. The correlation coefficient 0.655 confirms the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it is statistically significant at $p\ 0.000 < 0.05$. The correlation coefficient represents a high correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate accepted. Thus, there is a significant relationship between equal opportunity and enhance workplace collaboration of oil and gas companies in Rivers State.

Table 1.3: Correlation for equal opportunity and less grievances

			Equal Opportunity	Less Grievance
Spearman’s rho	Equal Opportunity	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.897**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
		N	45	45
	Less grievance	Correlation Coefficient	.655**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	45	45

Source: Research Data 2024.

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between equal opportunity and less grievance of oil and gas companies in Rivers State

From the result in the table above, the correlation coefficient shows that there is a positive relationship between equal opportunity and enhance fewer grievances of oil and gas companies in Rivers State. The correlation coefficient .900 confirms the magnitude and strength of this relationship and it is statistically significant at $p < 0.000 < 0.05$. The correlation coefficient represents a high correlation between the variables. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate accepted. Thus, there is a significant relationship between equal opportunity and enhance less grievance of oil and gas companies in Rivers State.

Discussions

Relationship between equal opportunity and workplace harmony of multinational oil and gas companies in Rivers State

The tests of hypotheses revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between equal opportunity and workplace harmony of multinational oil and gas companies in Rivers State. This finding agrees with the assertions of Acker, (2006) viewed that equality is fair treatment for people in every facet of life regardless of gender, race, disability, religion, nationality sexual orientation, or age. But here's the catch, equality doesn't necessarily translate to equal treatment for all. It is promoting an individual's right to be different. You can do it by making adjustments in the system to meet the needs of other people. Diversity is understanding accepting, and valuing differences between people, including those of different races, ethnicities, genders, ages, religions, disabilities, and sexual orientations. It also includes people with differences in education, personalities, skill sets, experiences, and knowledge bases while inclusion is when every person in the society is valued, heard, supported, and respected, and people feel a sense of belongingness. Establishing equality is a top challenge that the entire human society is facing at the moment. Businesses and specifically people management can play a significant role in making the workplace better for everyone. Equality in the workplace ensures people are given equal opportunities, equal pay, and are well accepted for their differences. It is creating an inclusive and conducive work environment where employees feel secure and happy. Equality ensures removing any chances of discrimination in the workplace. It has been stated that "unequal regimes represent interrelated practices, processes, actions and meanings that result in maintaining class, gender and racial inequalities within particular organizations.

Summary

This study examined the relationship between gender diversity management and workplace harmony of multinational oil and gas companies in Rivers State. The study was operationalized with the dimensions of gender diversity management being equal opportunity, and inclusive environment. Workplace harmony was measured by enhanced workplace collaboration and less grievance. The study was guided by three research questions and three research hypotheses. The study used a correlation research design. Data were analysed and results presented using frequency tables means and standard

deviation. The hypotheses were tested using the Spearman Ranking Correlation Coefficient. The study revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between gender diversity management and workplace harmony of multinational oil and gas companies in Rivers State. More specifically, all the dimensions of gender diversity management and all the measures of workplace harmony were positively correlated.

Conclusion

From the study it is concluded that organizations are ready to accept gender diversity inclusion at the workplace. Even though many policies are made to run this process smoothly but there is the gap in execution phase. Policies are there only in HR manuals in organizations but lack of proper implementation and execution and continuous monitoring of these policies and procedures affect the organizational effectiveness. So there is the need for the management to make some modification in existing policies specific to managing gender diversity and introduce some new policies according to the employee's need and then implement them properly and make it possible to have continuous monitoring of these policies to be operationalized. Report by McKinsey showed that "companies with a higher proportion of women at board level typically exhibited a higher degree of organization, above average operating margins and higher valuations. Effective gender diversity management is paramount for efficient workplace harmony. Thus gender diversity management significantly influences workplace harmony.

Recommendations

Based on the discussion and conclusion above, the following recommendations are hereby made:

1. Management of multinational oil and gas companies should develop a way of imbuing equal opportunity among employee to help build and foster workplace collaboration. This will go a long way to help improve the trust and commitment of the employee to the company.
2. Multinational oil and gas companies should encourage equal opportunity among their employee this will enhance less grievance and create high level commitment in the company
3. Management of multinational oil and gas companies should create a working environment that will encourage equality in the remuneration of both the male and female in same categories this will boost workplace collaboration and reduce grievance among employee of the company
4. Management of multinational oil and gas companies should create a working policy that give room for the female to be promoted to the highest level of management this will also boost workplace collaboration and less grievance among employee of the company
5. Management of multinational oil and gas companies should develop a plain and transparent style of recruitment and selection, promotion and remuneration to avoid any form of doubt and distrust between the management and employees and then workplace harmony will increase.
6. Multinational oil and gas companies in Rivers State should be transparent in their gender diversity management this will enhance less grievance and workplace collaboration.
7. Management of multinational oil and gas companies should put emphasis on embracing and adopting great organizational culture. This is because organizational culture positively influences gender diversity management and workplace harmony.

8. Multinational oil and gas companies should encourage their employees to work in line with their organizational culture to enhance productivity and workplace collaboration

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