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## WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY IN FEDERAL GOVERNMENT PARASTATALS IN BAYELSA STATE

By

**OJO, GABRIEL OLASUNKANMI**

Department Of Business Administration,  
Faculty of Management Sciences, Federal University Otuoke, Bayelsa State.

**OLODA, OLUWATAYO FELIX**

Department Of Business Administration, Faculty of Management Sciences,  
Federal University Otuoke, Bayelsa State.

**AKENBOR, CLETUS. O.**

Department of Accounting,  
Faculty of Management Sciences, Federal University Otuoke, Bayelsa State.

**Email for Correspondence:** ojogab21st@gmail.com

### Abstract

This study examined the effect of workforce diversity on employee productivity in Federal Government parastatals in Bayelsa State. A survey research design was adopted, and data were collected from 209 staff members across five selected parastatals within the state. The study tested its hypotheses using multiple regression analysis. The results revealed that age, gender, and ethnic diversity had a significant positive relationship with employee productivity in the selected federal parastatals. In contrast, religious and educational diversity showed an insignificant effect on employee productivity. The study concludes that although workforce diversity is a critical factor influencing employee productivity, its impact is contingent upon effective management. Organizations must not only ensure diverse representation but must also foster inclusive work environments where mutual respect, collaboration, and understanding are prioritized. Only then can the potential benefits of diversity be fully realized. Based on these findings, the study recommends that federal parastatals should set up diversity management offices or committees responsible for overseeing inclusion strategies, mediating diversity-related issues, and nurturing a workplace culture that values and leverages differences and also promote Gender Balance in Employment Practices: Recruitment, promotion, and leadership appointments should reflect a commitment to gender equity. Equal representation of men and women in leadership and decision-making roles is essential for inclusive productivity.

### Keywords:

*Workforce Diversity, Employee Productivity, Religion Diversity, Age Diversity, and Gender Diversity.*

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## Introduction

Employee productivity is broadly defined as the process through which organizational inputs such as human capital, financial resources, and time, are transformed into meaningful outputs. In contemporary work environments characterized by constant change, comprehending employee behavior and attitudes presents a significant challenge for management. Across various sectors and organizational types, productivity has emerged as a central component of workplace culture (Anakpo et al., 2023). While the notion of productivity is well-established in management literature, it has evolved into a multidimensional construct encompassing a range of influencing factors. These include employee motivation, work-life integration, organizational climate, access to digital infrastructure, the service-profit chain, and compensation structures (Adeinat & Kassim, 2019). Consequently, enhancing employee productivity has become a strategic focus for many organizations aiming to remain competitive and efficient (Burke & Hsieh, 2006; Yunus & Ernawati, 2017).

In the same vein, workforce diversity has emerged as a cornerstone of organizational development in the 21st century, characterized by an emphasis on inclusivity and representation across various sectors. This concept refers to the composition of a workforce that includes entities with differing features, such as gender, society, religion, socioeconomic background, and physical ability, age, and educational qualifications. In an increasingly interconnected and globalized world, diversity has become an essential component for driving innovation, creativity, and resilience within organizations. Public sector institutions, particularly Federal government parastatals, operate in environments where diversity and inclusivity are not only encouraged but expected as prerequisites for equitable service delivery and national development (Cox, 2024 & Mazur, 2020).

The Nigerian public sector, comprising various Federal government parastatals, offers a critical context for examining the connection of workforce variety and employee efficiency. These institutions are tasked with executing government policies, delivering public services, and contributing to national development objectives. Diversity in this context is often mandated by constitutional provisions such as the Federal Character Principle, planned to confirm unbiased illustration of Nigeria's various traditional and district groups in public establishments (Ekeh, 2019). This principle highlights the reputation of inclusivity in speaking historical inequalities and fostering national unity. Despite these efforts, achieving genuine workforce diversity in Federal government parastatals remains a complex endeavor, often constrained by systemic issues such as nepotism, gender discrimination, and inadequate enforcement of diversity policies (Adebayo & Olayiwola, 2022).

Diversity in Federal parastatals is often influenced by factors such as recruitment practices, organizational culture, and leadership commitment. For instance, while policies like the Federal Character Principle aim to ensure geographic and ethnic balance, they sometimes conflict with merit-based recruitment and promotion, leading to tensions within organizations. Furthermore, cultural biases and traditional gender roles continue to limit the participation of women and marginalized groups in leadership positions within Federal parastatals. Studies have shown that gender inequality remains a significant issue in the Nigerian public sector, with women occupying less than 20% of decision-making roles despite their growing presence in the workforce (Aina, 2022). These disparities highlight the need for comprehensive strategies to promote diversity beyond mere compliance with legal provisions. It is based on the foregoing that this current study attempts to determine the effect

of workforce diversity on employee productivity in federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State.

## **Literature Review**

### **Conceptual Clarification**

Workforce diversity has a direct impact on employee productivity, as it influences team dynamics, communication, and decision-making processes. Teams composed of individuals from diverse backgrounds contribute a broad range of perspectives, experiences, and ideas that can significantly improve innovation and problem-solving capabilities. Nonetheless, workforce diversity may also introduce difficulties, including interpersonal conflicts stemming from cultural differences or variations in work approaches. As a result, the impact of diversity on productivity largely depends on how effectively an organization manages this diversity. Research indicates that when organizations actively promote inclusiveness and cultivate a culture where employees feel respected and appreciated, they are more likely to achieve higher levels of employee engagement and overall productivity (Roberson, 2016; Jehn et al., 2019).

Managing workforce diversity within Federal government parastatals presents considerable difficulties, including inconsistencies in policy execution and resistance to organizational change. A significant barrier lies in the limited awareness and inadequate training on diversity-related issues among both leadership and staff. Many of these institutions are constrained by insufficient institutional capacity to develop and implement robust diversity frameworks, resulting in fragmented and often ineffective practices. Moreover, entrenched cultural and systemic biases continue to hinder inclusive efforts, especially for women and marginalized populations. Persistent gender stereotypes and societal norms restrict women's access to certain career paths and leadership positions, thereby reinforcing inequality in representation and limiting opportunities for professional advancement (Edewor et al., 2014).

Empirical evidence suggests that organizations that actively invest in managing diversity often achieve superior outcomes compared to their counterparts, particularly in areas such as employee morale, customer satisfaction, and overall financial performance. For example, Richard et al. (2017) demonstrated that human resource strategies emphasizing diversity were significantly linked to improved organizational performance, especially within culturally diverse environments. In Federal government parastatals, where the stakes are often higher due to their public service mandate, the effective management of diversity can significantly enhance organizational outcomes and contribute to national development.

One of the primary issues is the gap between diversity policies and their practical implementation. While Federal parastatals are governed by principles such as the Federal Character Principle, which commands unbiased representation across Nigeria's diverse ethnic and regional groups, these policies are often poorly enforced or misapplied (Ekeh, 2019). For example, recruitment and promotion processes frequently prioritize political considerations over merit, leading to the perception of unfairness among employees. This undermines trust in organizational processes and creates divisions along ethnic and regional lines. Research shows that such divisions can significantly impair teamwork and collaboration, ultimately reducing productivity (Mazur, 2020 & Jehn et al., 2019).

Another significant challenge is the lack of training and awareness on diversity administration. Many Federal parastatals do not invest in capacity-building initiatives to equip employees and managers with the skills desired to work effectively in diverse teams.

As a result, unconscious biases and stereotypes persist, influencing decisions related to recruitment, promotions, and task assignments. For example, employees from certain ethnic or gender groups may be overlooked for leadership roles due to assumptions about their capabilities. Such biases not only hinder individual career progression but also deprive organizations of the benefits of diverse leadership (Shen et al., 2019).

In addition to these internal factors, external pressures such as public scrutiny and political interference further complicate diversity management in Federal parastatals. For instance, appointments and promotions are often influenced by political considerations rather than organizational needs, leading to the perception of favoritism and undermining employee morale. Such practices not only erode trust within the organization but also diminish its credibility and effectiveness in the eyes of the public. The primary aim of this research is to investigate how workforce diversity affects employee productivity within Nigeria's Federal government parastatals, with a focus on analyzing specific diversity dimensions and their implications for organizational performance. The intention of this study is to inspect the consequence of workforce diversity on employee productivity of Federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State. The exact aims are to identifying key diversity dimensions and their influence on organizational performance.

### **Empirical Review**

Choi and Rainey (2024) examined diversity in public service organizations in the United States. The study used survey data from public sector employees across different states to evaluate how race, gender, and ethnicity influenced organizational outcomes. The researchers found that increased diversity led to improved service delivery, as employees were more likely to consider a broader range of perspectives in decision-making. However, they also noted that diversity management policies were crucial for minimizing conflict and ensuring a productive work environment.

In a different geographical context, Hoobler et al. (2020) explored workforce diversity in the European public sector. Using interviews and case studies across various government institutions in the EU, they found that a higher level of gender and ethnic diversity contributed positively to the inclusiveness of workplace culture, which, in turn, led to improved morale and job satisfaction among employees. Their study revealed that organizations with strong diversity management systems exhibited fewer barriers to workforce integration and demonstrated better overall performance metrics.

Ogunyemi (2020) investigated the role of ethnic and cultural diversity in Nigerian public sector organizations, focusing on how diverse teams in parastatals affected organizational outcomes. Using both primary data from employee surveys and secondary data from organizational records, the study revealed that while ethnic diversity could lead to increased creativity and innovation, it also posed challenges in terms of communication and collaboration. Ogunyemi's study underlined the need for proactive measures to foster intercultural understanding within diverse teams in the Nigerian public sector.

Ajayi and Obembe (2020) investigated how performance management systems affected employee productivity in Nigerian parastatals. They found that employees who received clear performance appraisals and feedback were more motivated to meet organizational targets. Their study suggested that performance management practices, including regular feedback and reward systems, played a crucial role in enhancing employee productivity.

A study by Adedeji and Ilesanmi (2019) analyzed the impact of gender diversity on the performance of Nigerian parastatals. They employed a quantitative approach using a survey of 200 employees from several government agencies. Their findings indicated that gender diversity had a positive impact on decision-making processes and enhanced organizational output. The study emphasized that Nigerian public sector organizations needed to address gender imbalances in leadership positions to fully benefit from gender diversity.

In Nigeria, workforce diversity in public institutions is a critical issue due to the country's diverse ethnic, cultural, and religious makeup. *Okafor & Iwu* (2018) examined diversity in Nigerian government parastatals and its implications for employee performance. Using a mixed-method approach, including surveys and in-depth interviews, the researchers found that diversity, particularly ethnic diversity, had a positive impact on organizational productivity when diversity management practices were implemented. However, they highlighted the importance of addressing ethnic tensions, which were prevalent in some government agencies.

A study by Adefolalu et al. (2018) examined the role of organizational culture and its impact on employee productivity in Nigerian government parastatals. The study, which used a combination of employee surveys and interviews, revealed that a culture of openness, mutual respect, and teamwork led to higher productivity among employees. The research emphasized the importance of fostering a supportive and inclusive organizational culture in public institutions to improve efficiency and output.

Griffin (2017) examined the factors that affect employee productivity in public sector organizations across several countries, including the U.S., Canada, and the UK. His study employed both cross-sectional and longitudinal data, including employee surveys and organizational performance metrics. The study revealed that leadership style, employee motivation, and organizational culture were key determinants of productivity. Griffin found that participative leadership, where employees were involved in decision-making, had a significant positive impact on productivity. This finding is relevant for Federal government parastatals, where leadership style often affects employee morale and performance.

## **Methodology**

This study employs a survey research design, integrated with an explanatory approach, to investigate the relationship between workforce diversity and employee productivity within Federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State. The population of the study consists of employees working in Federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State. Primary data for this research will be collected using a structured questionnaire specifically developed to examine the relationship between workforce diversity and employee productivity. The data was measured in a four-point likert scale questionnaire which involves: SA=Strongly Agree (4), A=Agree (3), D=Disagree (2), SD=Strongly Disagree (1). The survey data collected for this study will be analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). To evaluate the research hypotheses, inferential statistical methods were applied. The principal analytical technique utilized was multiple regression analysis. The analysis also included the use of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to compare the mean productivity scores between different demographic groups

The regression model applied in this study is presented as follows:

$$CS = \beta_0 + \beta_1RD + \beta_2AD + \beta_3GD + \beta_4ED + \beta_5DD + \alpha \dots\dots\dots(1)$$

Where:

CS = Customer Satisfaction (Dependent Variable)

RD = Religious Diversity

AD = Age Diversity

GD = Gender Diversity

ED = Ethnic Diversity

DD = Educational Diversity

$\beta_0$  is the regression coefficient;

$\beta_1$ ,  $\beta_2$ , and  $\beta_3$  are the slopes of the regression equation;

$\alpha$  = an error term

## DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

### Descriptive Analysis

This section analyzes the research questions provided in chapter one of the study of this study. The respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree with statements on the workforce diversity on employee productivity of Federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State. The responses were placed on a Four-point Likert scale ranging from 4 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree).

**Table 1: Religious Diversity**

Descriptive Statistics					
Statement	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Employees in my organization come from various religious backgrounds.	209	1.00	4.00	4.3093	.93942
Religious differences have caused misunderstandings among employees.	209	2.00	4.00	3.9588	1.04998
Religious holidays are fairly acknowledged across different faiths in my workplace.	209	3.00	4.00	4.5361	.50129
I am comfortable working with colleagues from different religious backgrounds.	209	1.00	4.00	4.3505	1.00043
Average Mean	209			4.2887	0.87278

This section presents the analysis of respondents' views on religious diversity as it relates to employee productivity in federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State. From the analysis, the statement "Employees in my organization come from various religious backgrounds" recorded a mean score of 4.3093 with a standard deviation of 0.93942, indicating a strong agreement among respondents that there is religious diversity in their organizations. The statement "Religious differences have caused misunderstandings among employees" had a slightly lower mean score of 3.9588 and a standard deviation of 1.04998, suggesting that

while some level of disagreement exists due to religious differences, the overall perception is moderately positive. The statement “Religious holidays are fairly acknowledged across different faiths in my workplace” had the highest mean score of 4.5361 and the lowest standard deviation of 0.50129, indicating a high level of agreement and consistency among responses that religious holidays are fairly recognized. Finally, the statement “I am comfortable working with colleagues from different religious backgrounds” had a mean score of 4.3505 with a standard deviation of 1.00043, reflecting a high level of comfort and acceptance among employees of religious diversity. The average mean score across all four statements is 4.2887, which indicates a strong positive perception of religious diversity in the workplace. This suggests that employees generally view religious diversity as well-managed and inclusive, contributing positively to their work environment and, by extension, productivity.

**Table 2: Age Diversity**

Descriptive Statistics					
Statement	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
My organization values the contributions of both younger and older employees.	209	1.00	4.00	3.9897	.98420
Age differences have caused communication gaps in my department.	209	1.00	4.00	3.1443	1.18136
Older employees are willing to share knowledge with younger staff.	209	3.00	4.00	4.5155	.59710
Age diversity helps bring in a mix of fresh ideas and experience.	209	3.00	4.00	4.3402	.57530
Average Mean	209			3.9974	0.83449

Table 2 presents the respondents' perceptions of age diversity and its impact on employee productivity in federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State. The statement “My organization values the contributions of both younger and older employees” recorded a mean score of 3.9897 with a standard deviation of 0.98420, indicating that most respondents agree that their organization appreciates contributions across age groups. The statement “Age differences have caused communication gaps in my department” had a lower mean score of 3.1443 and a relatively higher standard deviation of 1.18136, suggesting a moderate level of agreement with some variability in responses. This indicates that while age-related communication gaps may exist, they are not seen as severe or widespread. The statement “Older employees are willing to share knowledge with younger staff” received a very high mean score of 4.5155 with a low standard deviation of 0.59710, showing strong agreement and consistency among respondents that knowledge transfer across generations is taking place effectively. Similarly, the statement “Age diversity helps bring in a mix of fresh ideas and experience” had a high mean score of 4.3402 and a low standard deviation of 0.57530, indicating strong consensus that age diversity contributes positively to innovation and experience-sharing within the organization. The average mean score for all statements under age diversity is 3.9974, suggesting a generally positive perception of age diversity among the respondents. This implies that age diversity is seen as a strength within the organization, contributing to both productivity and the blending of skills and perspectives.

**Table 3: Gender Diversity**

Descriptive Statistics					
Statement	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gender diversity is evident in leadership and decision-making positions.	209	1.00	4.00	3.4021	1.11486
Employees of all genders are treated with equal respect in my department.	209	2.00	4.00	3.0000	.93541
Gender-balanced teams tend to perform more effectively.	209	1.00	4.00	2.8351	1.16082
I have witnessed gender bias in task assignments in my workplace.	209	1.00	4.00	3.0825	1.17854
Average Mean	209			3.0799	1.0974075

Table 3 analyzes respondents' perceptions of gender diversity and its impact on employee productivity in federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State. The statement "Gender diversity is evident in leadership and decision-making positions" recorded a mean score of 3.4021 with a standard deviation of 1.11486, suggesting moderate agreement that gender diversity is represented in leadership roles, although some variability in perception exists. The statement "Employees of all genders are treated with equal respect in my department" had a mean score of 3.0000 with a standard deviation of 0.93541, indicating a neutral stance overall, suggesting that equal treatment may be present but not strongly felt across all respondents. The statement "Gender-balanced teams tend to perform more effectively" received a lower mean score of 2.8351 and a standard deviation of 1.16082, reflecting a relatively weaker agreement and a wider range of opinions regarding the performance benefits of gender-balanced teams. The statement "I have witnessed gender bias in task assignments in my workplace" had a mean score of 3.0825 with a standard deviation of 1.17854, indicating a moderate perception that gender bias exists in some task assignments. The average mean score for gender diversity is 3.0799, which reflects a moderate and mixed perception among respondents. This suggests that while gender diversity is somewhat acknowledged, there may still be underlying issues related to representation, team effectiveness, and perceived bias that need to be addressed for a more inclusive work environment.

**Table 4: Ethnic Diversity**

Descriptive Statistics					
Statement	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
My organization values contributions from employees of all ethnic backgrounds.	209	1.00	4.00	4.2887	.96780
I feel that some ethnic groups are favored over others in my organization.	209	2.00	4.00	3.9485	1.04454
Ethnic differences sometimes cause tension among employees.	209	3.00	4.00	4.5258	.50193
Ethnic diversity promotes creativity and innovation in the workplace.	209	1.00	4.00	4.3918	.98485
Average Mean	209			4.2887	0.87478



Table 4 presents respondents' views on ethnic diversity and its effect on employee productivity within federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State. The statement "My organization values contributions from employees of all ethnic backgrounds" recorded a high mean score of 4.2887 and a standard deviation of 0.96780, indicating strong agreement among respondents and a perception of inclusiveness regarding ethnic diversity. The statement "I feel that some ethnic groups are favored over others in my organization" had a mean score of 3.9485 with a standard deviation of 1.04454, suggesting that while most respondents acknowledge ethnic favoritism to some extent, the perception varies. The statement "Ethnic differences sometimes cause tension among employees" received the highest mean score of 4.5258 and a low standard deviation of 0.50193, indicating strong and consistent agreement that ethnic tensions occasionally arise in the workplace. The statement "Ethnic diversity promotes creativity and innovation in the workplace" had a mean score of 4.3918 with a standard deviation of 0.98485, reflecting a widely held belief that ethnic diversity contributes positively to workplace innovation and creativity. The average mean score of 4.2887 indicates a strong positive perception of ethnic diversity overall. Despite some concerns about ethnic favoritism and tension, the respondents generally recognize the value of ethnic diversity in fostering innovation, inclusivity, and productivity within the organization.

**Table 5: Educational Diversity**

Descriptive Statistics					
Statement	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Different educational backgrounds bring unique strengths to the organization.	209	1.00	4.00	2.7732	1.53097
Employees with higher educational qualifications are more respected than others.	209	2.00	4.00	4.8041	.42424
Educational qualifications sometimes create barriers to communication and cooperation.	209	1.00	4.00	4.1959	1.27180
Misunderstandings sometimes arise due to differences in educational backgrounds.	209	3.00	4.00	4.6495	.47961
Average Mean	209			4.10567	0.926655

Table 5 presents the respondents' perspectives on educational diversity and its effect on employee productivity in federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State. The statement "Different educational backgrounds bring unique strengths to the organization" recorded a mean score of 2.7732 with a relatively high standard deviation of 1.53097, indicating a moderate and mixed level of agreement. This suggests that while some respondents recognize the value of educational diversity, others may not perceive it as particularly beneficial. The statement "Employees with higher educational qualifications are more respected than others" received a very high mean score of 4.8041 and a very low standard deviation of 0.42424, indicating strong consensus that higher educational qualifications command more respect in the workplace. The statement "Educational qualifications sometimes create barriers to communication and cooperation" had a mean score of 4.1959 with a standard deviation of 1.27180, reflecting significant agreement that differences in education levels can lead to workplace communication challenges. The statement "Misunderstandings sometimes arise due to differences in educational backgrounds" had a high mean score of 4.6495 and a low standard deviation of 0.47961, indicating a strong and consistent perception that educational diversity may lead to misunderstandings among employees. The average mean score for this section is 4.1057, suggesting a generally high perception that educational diversity presents

challenges, especially in terms of communication and respect disparities. While there is some recognition of the benefits of diverse educational backgrounds, the data indicates that it may also be a source of tension and hierarchy within the organization.

**Table 6: Customer Satisfaction**

Descriptive Statistics					
Statement	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
The organization responds promptly to customer complaints or issues.	209	3.00	4.00	4.6495	.47961
It is easy to access the services of this parastatal.	209	1.00	4.00	3.0825	1.17854
Waiting areas are comfortable for customers.	209	3.00	4.00	4.5155	.59710
The facilities are adequately equipped to meet customer needs.	209	1.00	4.00	3.1443	1.18136
Average Mean	209			3.8479	0.8591525

Table 6 presents the responses of participants regarding customer satisfaction in federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State. The statement “The organization responds promptly to customer complaints or issues” recorded a high mean score of 4.6495 with a low standard deviation of 0.47961, indicating strong and consistent agreement among respondents that customer issues are addressed promptly. The statement “It is easy to access the services of this parastatal” had a relatively low mean score of 3.0825 and a standard deviation of 1.17854, suggesting a moderate and varied opinion, with some respondents finding access difficult. The statement “Waiting areas are comfortable for customers” recorded a high mean of 4.5155 and a standard deviation of 0.59710, showing strong agreement that customer waiting areas are conducive and comfortable. The statement “The facilities are adequately equipped to meet customer needs” had a mean score of 3.1443 and a standard deviation of 1.18136, reflecting moderate satisfaction and variation in views about the adequacy of facilities. The average mean score for this section is 3.8479, indicating that overall customer satisfaction is relatively high, especially in areas related to response time and customer comfort. However, there is room for improvement in terms of service accessibility and facility adequacy.

### Test of Hypotheses

This section presents the testing of the four research hypotheses formulated in the preceding chapter, employing Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression analysis using SPSS software version 23. The objective was to examine the impact of workforce diversity on employee productivity within selected Federal Government parastatals in Bayelsa State. Hypothesis testing followed the conventional rule of thumb, whereby the null hypothesis is accepted if the computed p-value exceeds 0.05, and rejected if it falls below this threshold. The outcomes of the regression analysis used to test the stated hypotheses are summarized in Table 4.7.

**Table 7:** Regression estimate on workforce diversity on employee productivity of Federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State.

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>					
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	6.816	1.857		.000
	Religious Diversity	-.061	.276	-.043	.826
	Age Diversity	.602	.056	.678	.000
	Gender Diversity	.165	.046	.227	.001
	Ethnic Diversity	.160	.070	.148	.024
	Educational Diversity	-.272	.273	-.195	.322

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

**Table 8: Analysis of Variance**

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>					
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	Sig.
1	Regression	255.040	5	51.008	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	104.073	91	1.144	
	Total	359.113	96		

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

b. Predictors: (Constant), Educational Diversity, Ethnic Diversity, Age Diversity, Gender Diversity, Religious Diversity

**HO1: Workforce diversity has no significant effect on employee productivity of Federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State.**

As shown in Table 8, the results of the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) reveal that workforce diversity exerts a statistically significant combined effect on employee productivity, evidenced by a p-value of 0.000, which is well below the conventional 0.05 threshold for significance. This finding indicates that variations in workforce diversity meaningfully influence productivity outcomes among employees. Consequently, the null hypothesis ( $H_{01}$ ) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. It is therefore concluded that workforce diversity has a significant impact on employee productivity within Federal Government parastatals in Bayelsa State.

**HO2: Religious diversity has no significant effect on employee productivity of Federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State**

As shown in Table 7, religious diversity has a negative coefficient value of -0.221 and a p-value of 0.829, which is greater than the 0.05 threshold. This indicates that religious diversity has a negative and statistically insignificant effect on employee productivity. Hence, the null hypothesis is accepted, and the alternative hypothesis is rejected, indicating that religious diversity does not significantly influence employee productivity in federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State.

**HO3: Age diversity has no significant effect on employee productivity of Federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State.**

From Table 7, age diversity has a positive coefficient value of 10.773 and a p-value of 0.000, which is statistically significant at the 5% level. This implies that age diversity has a positive and significant effect on employee productivity. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted, confirming that age diversity significantly contributes to employee productivity in federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State.

**HO4: Gender diversity has no significant effect on employee productivity of Federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State.**

Table 7 shows that gender diversity has a positive coefficient value of 3.582 and a p-value of 0.001, indicating a statistically significant relationship. This suggests that gender diversity positively influences employee productivity. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted, establishing that gender diversity has a significant positive effect on employee productivity in federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State.

**HO5: Ethnic diversity has no significant effect on employee productivity of Federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State.**

According to Table 7, ethnic diversity has a positive coefficient value of 2.289 and a p-value of 0.024, which is statistically significant at the 5% level. This finding indicates that ethnic diversity positively and significantly impacts employee productivity. As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis is accepted, confirming a significant positive relationship between ethnic diversity and employee productivity in federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State.

**HO6: Educational diversity has no significant effect on employee productivity of Federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State.**

The results in Table 7 reveal that educational diversity has a negative coefficient value of -0.996 and a p-value of 0.322, which exceeds the 0.05 significance level. This indicates that educational diversity has a negative and insignificant effect on employee productivity. Consequently, the null hypothesis is accepted, and the alternative hypothesis is rejected, implying that educational diversity does not significantly affect employee productivity in federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State.

**Table 9: Model Summary**

Model Summary <sup>b</sup>					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.843 <sup>a</sup>	.710	.694	1.06942	2.295

a. Predictors: (Constant), Educational Diversity, Ethnic Diversity, Age Diversity, Gender Diversity, Religious Diversity

b. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

The result above shows that the independent variables jointly explain about 69.4% variance in the dependent variable while the remaining 30.6% can be explained by other factors not captured in this study. It further shows a Durbin-Watson statistics value of 2.295 indicating that the model is a good fit for this study.

## **Discussion of Findings**

The finding that religious diversity has a negative and insignificant effect on employee productivity contradicts studies such as that of Nkomo and Cox (2016), who emphasized the importance of religious inclusion in fostering a sense of belonging and motivation. However, it aligns with Adu-Pipim (2015), who found that religious diversity, if not properly managed, could lead to internal conflicts, mistrust, and reduced group cohesion, which negatively affect productivity. In the Nigerian context, where religious sentiments are often deeply rooted, the insignificant impact may reflect either over-sensitivity or organizational neutrality that suppresses its influence.

This study's finding that age diversity has a positive and significant effect on employee productivity agrees with Kunze, Boehm, and Bruch (2021), who found that age-diverse teams tend to perform better due to a blend of experience and innovation. Similarly, Zanoni and Janssens (2024) noted that organizations benefit when both younger and older employees contribute their unique perspectives. In the Nigerian public sector, where mentorship and succession planning are key, age diversity appears to positively influence productivity when older employees transfer knowledge to younger ones.

The finding that gender diversity positively and significantly impacts employee productivity is in alignment with Catalyst (2014), which reported that gender-diverse teams are more creative, better at decision-making, and tend to have higher employee satisfaction. Additionally, Dwyer, Richard, and Chadwick (2023) found that gender diversity improves organizational performance, particularly in settings with inclusive leadership. This result supports the global push for increased female representation in leadership and decision-making roles, even in government institutions.

This study finds a positive and significant relationship between ethnic diversity and employee productivity, which aligns with the findings of Cox, Lobel, and McLeod (2021), who emphasized that ethnically diverse teams generate more ideas and provide better solutions to complex problems. Also, Workforce Solutions Group (2013) found that ethnic diversity contributes to broader customer insight and cultural sensitivity, which improves service delivery. However, the result differs from Tsui et al. (2022), who found that high levels of ethnic diversity could lead to subgroup formation and conflict, potentially reducing performance in some cases.

Contrary to expectations, educational diversity showed a negative and insignificant effect on productivity. This result contrasts with Horwitz and Horwitz (2017), who suggested that diversity in educational backgrounds enriches decision-making and innovation. However, the current finding aligns with Jehn, Northcraft, and Neale (2019), who observed that diversity in education could create communication barriers, misaligned goals, and interpersonal conflict if not properly managed. In the context of federal parastatals in Nigeria, employees with higher educational qualifications may receive preferential treatment, potentially demotivating others and leading to lower group cohesion.

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This study examined the effect of workforce diversity on employee productivity in federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State, focusing on key diversity dimensions including age, gender, ethnicity, religion, and education. The findings reveal that age diversity, gender diversity, and ethnic diversity have a positive and statistically significant effect on employee productivity, suggesting that when employees of varying ages, genders, and ethnic

backgrounds work together, they bring complementary skills and perspectives that enhance organizational performance.

Conversely, religious diversity and educational diversity were found to have negative and statistically insignificant effects on productivity. This indicates that, in the studied parastatals, diversity in religion and education may not be effectively harnessed, and could, in some cases, introduce communication barriers, bias, or division that diminish their potential contribution to performance outcomes.

Overall, the study concludes that while workforce diversity is a critical driver of employee productivity, its effectiveness depends on how it is managed. Organizations must go beyond mere representation and focus on building inclusive cultures, encouraging mutual respect, and implementing diversity management practices that convert differences into strengths. The implication is clear: federal government parastatals in Bayelsa State and by extension, other public institutions can benefit significantly from embracing and managing diversity strategically. However, they must also pay attention to the unique challenges associated with each diversity dimension to ensure inclusiveness leads to enhanced productivity rather than unintended organizational conflict.

Based on the findings of this study on workforce diversity and its effect on employee productivity in Federal Government parastatals in Bayelsa State, the following recommendations are made: Parastatals should establish diversity management offices or committees responsible for monitoring inclusion practices, resolving diversity-related conflicts, and fostering a positive workplace culture that leverages differences for collective success. Organizations should implement policies that promote tolerance and accommodate various religious practices (e.g., recognizing diverse religious holidays), while fostering dialogue to prevent misunderstandings. Organizations should encourage intergenerational collaboration through mentorship programs where older employees guide younger ones while benefiting from fresh ideas from the younger generation. Federal parastatals should adopt gender-balanced recruitment and promotion policies. This includes ensuring equal representation of men and women in leadership and decision-making roles. Management should actively promote ethnic inclusion by creating cross-cultural teams and providing regular diversity and inclusion training to reduce stereotypes and build unity. Organizations should invest in continuous professional development programs that align staff skills and foster mutual respect regardless of academic qualifications.

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