Analysis of Workplace Diversity and Employee Productivity in Rivers State Civil Service, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT:-This study is an investigation on workplace diversity and employee productivity in organizations using Rivers State civil service as its focus. It attempted to establish whether differences in employees' cultural background create alienation among employees in the Rivers State civil service. It investigated how the differences in the cultural background of civil servants affect employee productivity; the impact of politics of exclusion on employee commitment, creativity and efficiency; and how to adequately equip officials and management of Rivers State civil service with requisite skills to manage workplace diversity. This study adopted the qualitative survey design. A sample size of 796 was selected out of a population 2056. The simple random sampling method was adopted as method of sample selection. Data collected were subjected to appropriate statistical analysis using tables and simple percentages. Chi- square test of significance was used to weigh the evidence suggested by the data before reaching conclusion. Three hypotheses were formulated for this study and were tested at 0.05 level of significance. This study adopted the Theory of Alienation and the Acquired Needs Theory as the theoretical framework upon which the analysis were based. The findings of the study reveal among others that: when human resource managers ignore the cultural and language diversity between employees, the ground for alienation amongst employees is inadvertently fertilized; when workplace diversity is ineffectively managed and when employees are not taught to harness the advantages inherent in the diverseness of the work teams, it leads to work teams that lack the ability to perform optimally; and that there is no positive impact of existing workplace diversity policies provided by human resources departments in both ministries on the productivity of employees. It recommends (i) increased effort in minimizing the negative aspects of cultural and language differences among employees while at the same time maximizing those aspects of these differences that improve relationships among employees, (ii) management of diversity should be directed towards the creation and maintenance of a positive work environment where the similarities and differences of employees can be harnessed to nurture creativity and innovation. (iii) an inclusive and stimulating organisational diversity policies and strategies, as well as effective employee engagement and utilization which will provide the enabling atmosphere for employees to be fully motivated to become prone to improving their productivity.

KEY WORDS: *Alienation, Employee Productivity, Management, Rivers State Civil Service, Workplace Diversity.*

Introduction

All over the world, there have been calls for workplace diversity management in organizations for improved organizational outcomes. The reason adduced is because human resource diversity management is about creating enabling environment and opportunities to elicit or evoke organizational members' potential directed towards organizational success (Kreitner et al, 2002). This involves fostering employees' commitment and productivity necessary for organizational success, integrating diverse interests and potentials of the workforce for organizational productivity and creating opportunities for organizational members to meet their full potentials within the organization (Udoma, 2001; Kreitner et al, 2002; Oben, 2002; Abdullah, 2005; Iheriohanma, 2007). The outcomes are measured in terms of employees' commitment, team spirit and sense of ownership, efficiency, turnover and most importantly, productivity.

In Nigeria, the subject of workplace diversity has not been a major issue before as much as it is today. This has changed in the past two decades. As observed by Balogun (2005), diversity has always been part of organization and management calculus but how it was perceived in the past is substantially different from the way it is currently viewed. This is supported by Idowu (2012) who argues that since the 1990s, there has been increased attention devoted to the factor of human resource diversity in organizational success. Hence, emerging studies and literature espouse the 'business case' argument for recognition of the importance of workplace

diversity and its management in achieving positive organizational outcomes. This 'business case' implies that a "more diverse workplace will increase organizational effectiveness" (Kochan et al, 2002).

However, although management of diversity has been espoused to be one of the veritable human resources management strategies for establishing high performing work systems, the Rivers State Civil Service appears to be finding it difficult in terms of human resource management and improving employees' productivity. A cursory observation indicates that there appears to be a strong evidence of deterioration about the work standard in the Rivers State Civil Service as a result of the behaviour of workers which is characterized by such attitudes as hostility to co-workers and members of the public. There also appears a challenge in managing, training and effectively motivating diverse employees so that they can contribute effectively to the state's civil service goals through improved productivity.

Ongori and Agolla (2007:72) define workplace diversity as "the co-existence of employees from various socio-cultural backgrounds within the company". This means that employees working purposively in any given organization are unique in terms of personal and mental attributes that make them different from other employees. Diversity is a characteristic trait of the human species. People are all different from other people in relation to something. There are however, certain dimensions of diversity which seem to have more social significance in everyday lives, possibly because they influence the way people see themselves and the way others see them. These include culture, language and tradition.

With increasing attention directed at the importance of workplace diversity, organizations have become increasingly faced with the daunting task of effectively managing the diversity they have (Balogun, 2005). For a variety of reasons, including the new global economy, workplace diversity and management of workplace diversity have become central issues of concern for managers and organizations. This is because "today's workplaces have presented the largest diversity with distinct work ethics, deep-seated attitudes, opposing perspectives and diverse motivators. Such differences have led to the emergence of various management challenges of such diversity at work" (Owoyemi and Sheehan, 2011:65). Hence, with the workplace becoming an ever-changing and ever-evolving environment, workplace diversity has become a business reality.

Based on the above, there is no organization that could be argued to be homogenous in the sense of it (Udoma, 2001; Oben, 2002; Balogun, 2005). The civil service, as a result of the national trend of changing demographics and globalization, has become more and more diverse in terms of human resource characteristics in terms of culture, language and tradition. This study therefore, investigates workplace diversity and its implications on employee productivity in the Rivers State civil service.

Statement of the Problem

Twenty-first century organizations are challenged by workplace diversity in many arenas. Demographic changes in workforce composition and client or customer populations are increasing the amount of diversity organizations must manage, both internally and externally. As an institution which has the pivotal role and challenge of implementing government policies and processes, the [Rivers State] civil service is one such body where the diversity of the entity is found (Bande, 2001). Unfortunately, the environment of the civil service in recent times is becoming encumbered with various forms of diversities coupled with differing work ethics, deep-seated attitudes, opposing perspectives and diverse motivations (Owoyemi et al, 2011). This might be the reason why low productivity is recorded in almost all civil service sector organizations in Nigeria (Iheriohanma, 2006). This, therefore, is one of the problems to be investigated in this study.

Also, Nwokocha (2014) observes that in addition to the limitations imposed by dwindling skills, poor work attitudes, corruption, etc, the seeming diverse populations serving in Rivers State civil service appears to create an ideal breeding ground for conflict and misunderstanding which usually result in feelings of alienation among the staff and between staff and management. This in turn appears to undermine employee productivity and therefore needs investigation. Furthermore, it is observed that the general work environment and especially that of the Rivers State civil service seems to be a source of stress and frustration for the civil servants as they find themselves at the mercy of language barriers, different cultural values and beliefs and which are completely different from what they are used to. The differences as observed above may have negative effects on the productivity of the civil servants.

In addition, the Rivers State civil service also appears to experience a challenge of management of workplace diversity. This challenge seems to be tied to the problems relating to how human resources managers can develop a civil service organization that is positioned to take optimum advantage of its workplace diversity and of what best practices they should apply. When this is not done, workplace diversity can become an obstacle to good working relationships, lead to conflict and chaos in the workplace, create difficulties on team spirit, dysfunction and lead to wasted man-hours. It can also be a source of controversial, counterproductive and conflict-prone work environments. The Rivers State Civil Service also seems to be faced with an uphill task of integrating and managing the diverse cultural and traditional backgrounds of civil servants and adapting these to other changes and challenges which the civil service constantly undergoes, especially in this age of

globalization. This study therefore investigates the implication of workplace diversity on employees' productivity using Rivers State civil service as a reference point.

Research Questions
1. To what extent does perceived diversity create alienation among employees in the Rivers State civil service?
2. To what extent do differences in employees' cultural background affect employee productivity in Rivers State civil service?
3. How can the officials in the Rivers State civil service be adequately equipped with requisite skills to effectively manage workplace diversity to realize organizational outcomes?
4. How can an efficient management of workplace diversity increase employee productivity in Rivers State civil service?

Objectives of the Study
This study generally aims to critically assess the management of workplace diversity and the impact on productivity among employees in the Rivers State civil service. Specifically, it aims:
a. To ascertain whether perceived diversity creates alienation among employees in the Rivers State civil service.
b. To examine if differences in employees' cultural background affect their productivity in Rivers State civil service.
c. To investigate how the officials in the Rivers State civil service can be adequately equipped with requisite skills to manage workplace diversity to realize organizational outcomes.
d. To proffer suggestions on ways of improving management of workplace diversity so as to increase employee productivity and organizational outcomes in Rivers State civil service.

Hypotheses
1. Ho[1] There is no significant relationship between workplace diversity and alienation among employees in the Rivers State civil service.
2. Ho[2] There is no significant relationship between differences in employees' cultural background and employee efficiency in Rivers State civil service.
3. Ho[3] There is no significant relationship between efficient management of workplace diversity and employee productivity in Rivers State civil service.

Significance of the Study
Theoretically, this study will attempt to highlight that organizations that manage diversity effectively have better satisfied and better performing employees. This assertion becomes more critical in the civil service in which government policies and programmes are converted into concrete actions for the benefit of the people. Furthermore, when differences such as culture, language and tradition are not properly managed, they could lead to disagreements, failing competencies and low productivity among employees as their motivation levels would be low. This will ultimately increase employee alienation and reduce individual and organizations' productivity since it will also narrow the opportunities available for employees to maximize their potentials.

Practically, this research is undertaken to find out the attitudes of employees and management toward diversity in the workplace especially in the Rivers State civil service. This will enable state civil services to formulate diversity programmes that incorporate the diversity of each individual employee which in turn will induce more commitment and increase productivity in their respective roles. The study will also identify the most frequently encountered barriers toward implementing and accepting workplace diversity management. It will emphasize some of the strategies that increase inclusiveness and awareness in the workplace considering that diversity in culture, language and tradition will increase significantly in the coming years. Successful organizations must recognize the need for immediate action and be willing to spend resources on effectively managing such diversity in the in the Rivers State civil service.

Theoretical Framework
This study will adopt the Theory of Alienation as espoused by Melvin Seeman (1959) and the Acquired Needs Theory developed by David McClelland (1961) as the theoretical framework upon which the analysis will be based. In his work titled '*On the Meaning of Alienation'*, Melvin Seeman took the works of theorists such as Marx, Weber, Durkheim, and Merton, and combined the works to form variants of alienation. The five components of alienation which he identified include powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, isolation

and self-estrangement (Seeman, 1959). On his part, David McClelland in his Acquired Needs Theory (1961) identifies three themes, each corresponding to an underlying need that he believes is important for understanding individual behaviour in work situation. These themes are: (a) Need for Achievement (nAch) which drives the desire to do better, solve problems or master complex tasks and do high-quality work. (b) Need for Power (nPow) which is the drive to influence people and change situations. (c) Need for Affiliation (nAff) which drives employees to seek friendly and warm relations with others.

Alienation exists when employees are unable to develop a sense of purpose and function which connects their jobs to the overall production and when they fail to become involved in the activity of work as a mode of personal self-expression. What this translates to is that if an employee starts to experience alienation at the workplace, it is only a matter of time before the employee will start to feel alienated towards his fellow employees. This may drive the employee into a state of self-estrangement which can change or ruin the employee's work life as an outcome of the resultant loss of motivation. More so, diversity factors such as culture, language and tradition also impact upon the extent to which an employee is alienated and can deal with its implications.

The challenge facing the civil service is primarily that of diversity management. There is no denying the fact that the federal and the state civil services are confronted by a formidable challenge on the diversity management front (Owoyemi *et al*, 2011). To start with, the conflict in the various groups' world-views tends to promote relativist responses to critical ethical and professional management questions. This is because the concept of diversity focuses on the attachment of value to individual differences in the workplace which is made up of heterogeneous groups. Human resources managers must therefore ensure that no group of members has advantage or disadvantage over the other in the workplace. This will reduce alienation among civil servants and increase their motivation. Motivated employees are needed in the rapidly changing workplaces. This is because motivated employees help organizations survive and thrive. Motivated employees are productive. As such, increase in the motivation of civil service employees will ensure that the productivity, creativity and commitment of the civil servants are maximized while meeting the needs of their diverse interests within the organization.

Definition of Basic Terms
The meanings of the following concepts are clarified as they relate to this study. These concepts are:
Alienation In this study, it refers to the separation or estrangement of individuals from themselves, the product of their work and from others in the workplace. It also refers to sense of hatred and
Culture This refers to that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs and other capabilities and habits that are acquired by man which makes him an integral member of society.
Diversity This refers to the consciousness of differences in cultural background, orientation, religious inclination, etc which exists within a group of people within a social setting. Such differences as culture, language, ethnicity, etc challenge their ability to cohere as a group with a common purpose.
Management of Workplace Diversity This refers to the process intended to create and maintain a positive work environment despite the differences in cultural background among a group of employees in a work organization.
Productivity In this study, this refers to a measure of how well an employee is fulfilling his work responsibilities in terms of competency, commitment, cooperation and professionalism which add to increase the overall goods and services an organization produces.
Workplace Diversity This refers to differences in cultural backgrounds, language, orientation, religious inclination, etc among a group of people working in network of relationships and systems towards a common objective of providing values.

Methodology
This study focused primarily on the challenges of management of workplace diversity in organizations in the Rivers State civil service. The survey design was used to obtain relevant data. The use of the survey design in this study enabled the use of a close-ended questionnaire to solicit information relating to the topic and the objectives of study.

A sample of the staff from the Ministries of Agriculture and Health was used for this study. The total number of workers in the Ministry of Agriculture is 733 while the Ministry of Health has 1323 workers in its employ. The total is 2056 workers. A sample size of 822 respondents representing 40% of total staff size was selected. Questionnaires were randomly administered to the selected 822 sample. Out of this number, a total of 796 questionnaires were returned properly filled. As such, the 796 respondents who returned their questionnaires properly filled constitute the actual sample size of this study. The simple random sampling method was adopted as method of sample selection. For the purpose of data analysis, the descriptive statistical

approach of simple percentages and the chi-square (X^2) technique were adopted. The hypotheses were tested at 0.5% significant level.

Data Presentation

Table 1: Distribution and Collection of Questionnaire

	Min. of Agriculture	**Min. of Health**	**Total**
Total questionnaire distributed	293	529	822
Total questionnaire returned	285	511	796
Total questionnaire not returned	8	18	26
% of questionnaire returned	97.3	96.6	96.8
% of questionnaire not returned	2.7	3.4	3.2

Source: Field Survey, 2014.

Table 1 indicates that a total of 822 copies of questionnaire were administered in both ministries. A total of 796 copies of questionnaire were returned in both ministries. This represents 96.8 percent of the total questionnaires distributed in both ministries. The analysis of data collected was made based on the 796 copies of questionnaire that were returned.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

		Min. of Agriculture		**Min. of Health**			
		Number	**%**	**Number**	**%**	**Total**	**%**
Sex	Male	148	51.93	238	46.58	386	48.49
	Female	137	48.07	273	53.42	410	51.51
	Total	**285**	**100%**	**511**	**100%**	**796**	**100%**
Highest Educational Qualification	WASC/SSCE	35	12.28	69	13.50	104	13.07
	OND	76	26.67	133	26.03	209	26.27
	DEGREE/HND	153	53.69	274	53.62	427	53.64
	M.Sc	17	5.96	32	6.26	49	6.15
	Ph.D	4	1.40	3	0.59	7	0.87
	Total	**285**	**100%**	**511**	**100%**	**796**	**100%**
Age Bracket	21-25	22	7.72	36	7.05	58	7.29
	26-30	28	9.83	51	9.98	79	9.92
	31-35	46	16.14	89	17.42	135	16.96
	36-40	58	20.35	103	20.15	161	20.23
	41/Above	131	45.96	232	45.40	363	45.60
	Total	**285**	**100%**	**511**	**100%**	**796**	**100%**
Cultural/Language Group	Ikwerre	52	18.24	93	18.20	145	18.22
	Ogoni	42	14.73	76	14.87	118	14.82
	Ogba	30	10.53	48	9.39	78	9.79
	Obolo	15	5.26	20	3.91	35	4.39
	Ndoki	10	3.51	21	4.11	31	3.89
	Etche	23	8.07	40	7.82	63	7.91
	Egbema	4	1.40	7	1.37	11	1.38
	Ndoni	4	1.40	8	1.56	12	1.51
	Ibani	26	9.12	45	8.81	71	8.92
	Wakirike Ijaw	19	6.66	40	7.83	59	7.41
	Kalabari Ijaw	41	14.39	70	13.70	111	13.94
	Abua	12	4.21	25	4.89	37	4.64
	Others	7	2.46	18	3.52	25	3.14
Number of Years in Rivers State Civil Service	1-5	25	8.77	49	9.58	74	9.30
	6-10	38	13.33	67	13.11	105	13.19
	11-15	43	15.09	75	14.68	118	14.82
	16-20	59	20.70	108	21.14	167	20.98

	21/Above	120	42.11	212	41.49	332	41.71
	Total	**285**	**100%**	**511**	**100%**	**796**	**100%**

Source: Field Survey, 2014.

Table 2 covers the demographic characteristics of the respondents in the Ministries of Agriculture and Health, Rivers State. It reveals that a greater percentage of the respondents (51.51%) are females while (48.49%) are males. The total number of respondents who possess HND/Degree certificates is 53.64%, 6.15% possess M.Sc degrees while 0.87% possesses Ph.D degrees. Those between the ages of 40 and above make up 45.60% of the respondents while those between 21-25 years make up 7.29%. Ikwerre cultural/language group has the highest number of respondents at 18.22% of the total population while Egbema cultural/language group has the least number of respondents at a total of 1.32%. Respondents who have worked in the ministry for periods of up to 21 years and above make up the greater percentage of 41.71% while 9.30% have worked for periods of 1 to 5 years..

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1
Ho[1]: There is no significant relationship between workplace diversity and alienation among employees in the Rivers State civil service.
Question: How do you feel working in a team with co-workers who have different culture and language?

Table 3:   Relationship between Workplace Diversity and Alienation among Employees in the Rivers State Civil Service (Response Analysis)

Ministry	Accepted	Accepted but not Trusted	Not Accepted	Accepted and Trusted	Total
Agriculture	91	132	44	18	285
Health	150	301	31	29	511
Total	241	433	75	47	796

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 4: Calculation of Observed and Expected Frequencies

Ministry	Accepted	Accepted but not Trusted	Not Accepted	Accepted and Trusted	Total
Agriculture	91 (86.28)	132 (155.03)	44 (26.85)	18 (16.83)	285
Health	150 (154.7)	301 (277.97)	31 (48.15)	29 (30.17)	511
Total	241	433	75	47	796

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 5: Chi-Square Test of Hypothesis 1

Ob	Ex	Ob-Ex	$(Ob-Ex)^2$	$\frac{(Ob-Ex)^2}{Ex}$
91	86.28	8.72	76.04	0.88
150	154.7	-4.7	22.09	0.14
132	155.03	-23.03	530.38	3.42
301	277.97	23.03	530.38	1.91
44	26.85	17.15	294.12	10.95
31	48.15	-17.15	294.12	6.11
18	16.83	1.17	1.36	0.08
29	30.17	-1.17	1.36	0.05
				23.54

Source: Field Survey, 2014

From Table 5, at 5% (0.05) level of significance and 3 degrees of freedom, $X^2 = 7.81$. As the calculated value 23.54 is greater than the table value 7.81, the H_0 is rejected and the H_1 is accepted. This means that there is a significant relationship between differences in employees' cultural background and alienation among employees in the Rivers State civil service.

Hypothesis 2

Ho^2: There is no significant relationship between differences in employees' cultural background and employee efficiency in Rivers State civil service.

Question: Which of the following occurs as a result of cultural differences among employees in your place of work?

Table 6: **Relationship between Differences in Employees' Cultural Background and Employee Productivity in Rivers State Civil Service (Response Analysis)**

Ministry	Cooperation and increasing productivity	Distrust and decreasing productivity	Total
Agriculture	63	222	285
Health	161	350	511
Total	224	572	796

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 7: **Calculation of Observed and Expected Frequencies**

Ministry	Cooperation and increasing productivity	Distrust and decreasing productivity	Total
Agriculture	63 (80.20)	222 (204.80)	285
Health	161 (143.80)	350 (367.20)	511
Total	224	572	796

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 8: Chi-Square Test of Hypothesis 2

Ob	Ex	Ob-Ex	(Ob-Ex)^2	$\frac{(Ob-Ex)^2}{Ex}$
63	80.20	-17.2	295.84	3.69
161	143.80	17.2	295.84	2.06
222	204.80	17.2	295.84	1.44
350	367.20	17.2	295.84	0.81
				8

Source: Field Survey, 2014

From Table 8, at 5% (0.05) level of significance and 2 degrees of freedom, X^2 = 5.99. As the calculated value 8 is greater than the table value 5.99, the H_0 is rejected and the H_1 is accepted. This means that there is a significant relationship between differences in employees' cultural background and employee productivity in Rivers State civil service.

Hypothesis 3

Ho^3 There is no significant relationship between efficient management of workplace diversity and employee productivity in Rivers State civil service.

Question: Which of the following best describes the impact of existing policies on cultural differences among employees?

Table 9: **Relationship between Management of Workplace Diversity and Employee Productivity in Rivers State Civil Service (Response Analysis)**

	Min. of Agriculture		Min. of Health		Total	
Options	No. Of Respondents	%	No. Of Respondents	%	No. Of Respondents	%
Increased cooperation among employees	19	6.66	30	5.87	49	6.15
Increased employees productivity	40	14.04	59	11.55	99	12.44
No increase in cooperation among employees	71	24.91	193	37.77	264	33.17
No increase on employees productivity	155	54.39	229	44.81	384	48.24
Total	285	100	511	100	796	100

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 10:   **Calculation of Observed and Expected Frequencies**

MINISTRY	Increased cooperation among employees	Increased employees productivity	No increase in cooperation among employees	No increase on employees productivity	Total
Agriculture	19 (17.54)	40 (35.45)	71 (90.94)	155 (137.49)	285
Health	30 (31.46)	59 (63.55)	193 (163.05)	229 (246.51)	511
Total	49	99	254	384	796

Source: Field Survey, 2014

Table 11:   **Chi-Square Test of Hypothesis 3**

Ob	Ex	Ob-Ex	$(Ob-Ex)^2$	$\dfrac{(Ob-Ex)^2}{Ex}$
19	17.54	1.46	2.13	0.12
30	31.46	-1.46	2.13	0.07
40	35.45	4.55	20.70	0.58
59	63.55	-4.55	20.70	0.33
71	90.94	-19.94	397.60	4.37
193	163.05	29.95	897.00	5.50
155	137.49	17.51	306.60	2.23
229	246.51	-17.51	306.60	1.24
				14.44

Source: Field Survey, 2015

From Table 11, at 5% (0.05) level of significance and 3 degrees of freedom, $X^2 = 7.81$. As the calculated value 14.44 is greater than the table value 7.81, the H_0 is rejected and the H_1 is accepted. This means that management of workplace diversity has significant effect on employee productivity in Rivers State civil service.

Discussion of Findings

From the test of the three hypotheses above, it is found that (i) there is a significant relationship between differences in employees' cultural background and alienation among employees in the Rivers State civil service (ii) there is a significant relationship between differences in employees' cultural background and employee productivity in Rivers State civil service (iii) management of workplace diversity has significant effect on employee productivity in Rivers State civil service.

The test of hypothesis 1 confirms that there is a significant relationship between differences in employees' cultural background and alienation among employees in the Rivers State civil service. This finding validates objective one which ascertained whether perceived diversity creates alienation among employees in the Rivers State civil service. When workplace diversity is not effectively managed, it could lead to the five dimensions of alienation as highlighted by Seeman (1959). When an employee feels excluded and discriminated against in the workplace as a result of the existing differences in culture and language within an organization, he will feel alienated. This arises from his feeling of isolation and self estrangement. This will in turn make his work meaningless and induce a sense of powerlessness in him which negatively affects his productivity. On the reverse, when an employee finds himself in a favourable work environment devoid of workplace diversity induced alienation, he tends to perform optimally. His productivity increases. This is more especially in a bureaucratic organization like the civil service. The findings here validate the adoption of the theory of alienation as the theoretical framework for this study.

The test of hypothesis 2 confirms that there is a significant relationship between differences in employees' cultural background and employee efficiency in Rivers State civil service. This finding validates objective two which examined if differences in employees' cultural background affect their performance in Rivers State civil service. Fernandez (1993) provides further insight into this in his argument that good workforce diversity practices enhance employee and organizational productivity. The degree to which services are provided by Rivers State civil service is a measure of the productivity of their employees. Low performance in the provision of critical services could be attributed to the deficiency of workplace diversity management policies and practices obtained in the Rivers State civil service.

Equally, when training of staff in workplace diversity is neglected, the relationship between employees is affected. The findings therefore show that the Rivers State civil service have not ensured that the required training processes are adequately undertaken. It also indicates that existing policies on workplace diversity have

not been effectively implemented and as such, it has had little impact. When combined to the absence of effective workplace diversity training programmes, it becomes evident that an enabling and supporting environment has not been created for increasing and sustaining the performance of employees in Rivers State civil service in particular and the civil service in general.

The test of hypothesis 3 confirms that efficient management of workplace diversity has a significant effect on employee productivity in Rivers State civil service. When the diversity of culture and language that exists among employees is not properly managed, it will be perceived as an instrument of discrimination and isolation by employees who differ in culture and language. Such perceptions and feelings will fester until it erupts in the form of alienation. In other words, workplace diversity "becomes an obstacle to good working relationships, leads to conflict, dysfunction and wasted man-hours which can be a source of controversial, counterproductive and conflict-prone work environments in organizations" (Ukachukwu and Iheriohanma, 2013:33). This affects employees' productivity negatively. On the other hand, given a favourable work environment devoid of diversity related alienation, employees within a bureaucratic organization like the Rivers State civil service will perform optimally. As such, when properly managed, diverse employees can generate a dynamic unique team that is more wide-ranging in its scope, breadth and depth, and thus better equipped to tackle complex problems and challenges. This will translate to improved productivity.

Conclusion

The findings of this study brought to the fore the existence of cultural and language differences among the employees of the Rivers State civil service and the need for improved management of workplace diversity not only in Rivers State civil service but also in other organizations in Nigeria. When employees within the Rivers State civil service are under-valued, under-trained, poorly motivated, excluded and discriminated as a result of cultural and language differences, the civil service experiences difficulties in accessing and effectively appropriating the true capabilities of its employees and other resources to meet organisational goals. This leads employees to perform below expectations. In addition, poor management of workplace diversity greatly hinders optimum realization of available potentials and utilization of opportunities to make the Rivers State civil service better and improve the quality of work life of its employees.

Furthermore, the wealth of any organization is not determined by the quantity of its assets or resources nor by the mere number of those working in the organization. Rather, it is the level and quality of acceptance employees experience and the level of motivation it generates in them. Assets and resources cannot transform themselves unless and until real value is added to them by exploitation and accommodation of employees whose achievement motive or their desire is to perform optimally in terms of a standard of excellence, or their desire to be successful in competitive situations within the organization. This is more so with the break-through in Information and Communication Technology (ICT). Hence, management of workplace diversity has become even more relevant and significant because of the new challenges in the total organisational environment.

However, the global economy is seen to be continuously immersed in dynamism. It continues to change in response to the introduction of new technologies, new ways of doing work, etc. In such a dynamic environment, management of workplace diversity therefore transcends mere promotion of non alienating diversity strategies and jettisoning of exclusion and discrimination through formal worker training. It is more situated in the transformation of the total employee. It is an indispensable component of the organizational process and a force that can tackle performance deficiencies. It is therefore tragic that in an age in which organizations are becoming increasingly knowledge-driven and technologically empowered, and where innovation and change are the real time dynamics that re-define and re-structure work relationships, the Rivers State civil service, still find itself saddled with a preponderance of workplace diversity induced obstacles to good working relationships and induce low productivity. This is counter-productive to a government organization that wishes to be counted among the first twenty by the year 2020.

The Rivers State civil service, Port Harcourt has taken on a more global outlook in its composition as gleaned from Table 2. This has led to an increase in the heterogeneousness among employees and has increased the challenge of managing diverse employees. Incorporating such diverse workforce and their perspectives remain a major concern for the Rivers State Ministries of Agriculture and Health, Port Harcourt in particular and the civil service in general. The repercussions for not managing this diversity would be decrease in employee efficiency and productivity to a great extent. This is because organizations that are able to manage diversity effectively are usually recipients of more committed and better satisfied, as well as better performing employees (Patrick and Kumar, 2012).

The development and application of effective and efficient workplace diversity management policies and practices will impact positively on the most immediate and visible employee-related qualities in Rivers State civil service. These qualities include employee capacities, skills, knowledge, abilities, creativity and attitudes necessary for achieving critical business outcomes in terms of improving productivity. The organisational environment must be such that allows space for employees' participation and inclusiveness.

Every effort should be taken, whether formally or informally, to enable an employee pursue his career aspirations without being inhibited by diversity factors that are irrelevant to productivity. Opportunities must be provided for such employees to maximize their contribution to the achievement of the civil service goals, particularly improving productivity in this knowledge-driven and competitive economy. The conclusion is that an aggressive pursuit of the above will put the Rivers State civil service in a critical position for onward march to be counted as a seasoned bureaucratic structure for development in this millennium.

Recommendations

Re-orientation for the older employees about the presence and need of diversity openness in Rivers State civil service through continuous training, workshops, group discussions, etc. The Rivers State civil service structure and procedures should be reviewed. All forms of cultural and language diversity considerations and discrimination in the recruitment and promotion processes, and the day to day activities of employees should be eliminated. This will reduce feelings of alienation while increasing workers' motivation. The management of diversity in the Rivers State civil service should be directed towards the creation and maintenance of a positive work environment where the similarities and differences of workers will nurture creativity and innovation. This will enable workers reach their potential and maximize their contributions to the civil service's strategic goals and objectives in terms of improving productivity. There is also the need for sustainable investments in managementofdiversityinRiversStatecivilservice.Inputssuchassoundanddynamicdiversitytrainingopportunities,m otivatingoperationalandorganisationalhumanresourcesmanagementenvironmentandsupportservices,inclusiveand stimulatingorganisationaldiversitypolicies and strategies, as well as effective employee engagement and utilization will provide the enabling atmosphere for employees to be fully motivated and become   prone   to improving their productivity. The Rivers State civil service should endeavour to organize on yearly basis, a week-long diversity celebrations where employees have the chance to ask questions and learn more about one another's unique cultural and language background.

Suggestions for Further Reading

This study identified that there is little research in the area of equality and diversity especially with regards to recruitment in the Rivers State civil service. Academic research will be helpful in this area to help address the dilemma of equality and diversity in the Rivers State civil service. This is deemed urgent if the effects of inequality must be reduced to achieve the fundamental millennium goal of eradicating inefficiency in the Rivers State civil service.

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