
Workplace Diversity and Organizational Commitment: A Review of Literature

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Abstract

The concept of diversity and its management has become an important issue in the global workforce as a result of globalization. But managing diversity in the organization has been a challenge. Employees are not committed due to diverse challenges as a result of workplace diversity. What then is the relationship between demographic diversity in the workplace and organizational commitment to an organization? The study aims at examining the relationship between workplace diversity (age, gender, and education) and organizational commitment (affective, normative, and continuance commitments). The findings of the study show that workers commitment is influenced by demographic diversity that exist within an organization.

Keywords: Diversity, Age, Gender, Educational, Affective, Normative, Continuance, Commitment.

Introduction

Workplace diversity is a concept with a global challenge. Managing diversity for the benefit of an organization is an enormous task for managers and the organization. Globalization has brought different diversities including demographic diversity (ethnicity, race, age, educational level, etc) to the workplace. According to Dessler (2005); Fajana (2009) as cited in Toga, Qwabe and Mjoli (2014), diversity is based on religion, gender, age, race, and education which are all demographic and affect workplace commitment. In any organization, the ability or inability of the managers to manage these diversities can make or mar workplace relationships. When workplace diversity is not managed, it can create problems (Oditia & Egbule, 2015). This is because employees who are the most important component of the organization must be committed. Employee commitment translates to organizational commitment. This may be affected by workplace diversity. This confusion has further propelled the researcher to examine the relationship between workplace diversity and employee organizational commitment. For instance, Toga et al (2014) in their study choose to identify age, and gender differences as dimensions of the independent variable (workplace diversity) while continuance, affective, and normative are measures of the dependent variable (organizational commitment).

Literature Review

The concept of diversity

Oditia and Egbule (2015) described diversity as a psychological occurrence, created by individual groups based on their separate social identities to categorize others as like or unlike. Explaining further he said a group is diverse when it is made up of individuals who differ on the typical way, they base their social affinity. Diversity is classified under different categories. One of the categories of classification is demographic diversity which is of immense benefit to the organization but must be managed. Yucel and Bektas (2012) in their study identified demographic variables of diversity as age, sex, job level, and organization tenure. In this study gender, age, and education is examined. Oditia and Egbule (2015) said that diversity is not easy to understand, not simple, and difficult to manage.

Educational diversity

Educational diversity is used interchangeably with professional diversity in this study. This is because the profession deals with education. According to Emoh and Akhigbe (2022), employees may vary due to the level and kind of education which differs from their professions. Blackman (2017) as cited in Emoh and Akhigbe (2022) professional diversity entails different types of professional qualifications in education obtained by different employees who are in the organization to promote organizational goals and objectives. Emoh and Akhigbe (2022) also posited that management needs to understand the differences in educational qualifications and types during recruitment to enable managers to identify and differentiate the type of orientation for employees and professional ethics in order to accommodate educational diversity. Mousa and Alas (2016) also asserted that most parts of training which is part of education to integrate diversity.

Age diversity

Yucel and Bektas (2012) posited that age diversity is an actual measure of time that forms a sequence of temporal markers. According to Nasir, Sajjad, Muhammad, Abdul, and Amjad (2017), age diversity is one of the most critical attributes of employees in an organization to create innovativeness and bring creativity to solve problems in the organization Yucel and Bektas (2012) explained that in every organization, the older employee sees the long service

years as an investment. Therefore, it is difficult for such an employee to leave for another job or engagement in a different organization. Mathieu and Zajac (1990); Meyer et al (2002); Suliman and Lies (2000) as cited in Yucel and Bektas (2012) averred that an employee with a long service develops a sentimental attachment to the organization and such employees are observed to be more committed to the organization. Age may be an advantage to an organization or a course (Barinua & Poyeri, 2022). As Nasir et al (2017) puts it, age diversity is the participation of different age's employees in a workplace where age is the vital element for organizations, but there are different challenges associated with both younger and older employees in the organization.

Gender diversity

Gender refers to how society identifies the self-identity of a person on how strongly a male or female relates to masculine or feminine (Barinua and Poyeri, 2022). According to Barinua and Poyeri, (2022), gender diversity may have a positive or negative impact on behaviours such as prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping. This mindset can impact working organizational commitment. Gender discrimination and disparities has an implication for the organization. Discrimination is described according to different treatments of a person or groups of persons which may be arbitrary or involves criteria like sex, race, parental status, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age, marital or, socio-economic background, political opinions, and trade union membership as well as activities (Eurofound, 2012) as cited in Imam and Shah (2013).

According to Imam and Shah (2013), discrimination can from different areas such as hiring staff, pay-off staff, and promoting staff. They further said that female employees are victims of gender discrimination on the above patterns. Employees comprise both genders. That is to say, males and females. But the female employees are more venerable to gender discrimination in the organization (Imam & Shah, 2013). Tonoyan and Boudreaux (2022) concluded that gender diversity is a connection of organization ownership.

The concept of organizational commitment

Mai and Nguyen (2017) said that workers' organizational commitment, employees' organizational commitment, or organizational commitment are business management concepts that mean the same thing. Habib (2020) described organizational commitment as a more proactive commitment of the employee to the organization. Allen and Meyer (1990), as cited in Prabhakar and Ram (2011); Yap, Holmes, Hannan, and Cukier (2010), defined the concept of organizational commitment as a psychological condition of attachment of a person to their work to maintain a high level of retention that takes several patterns of attachment of the individual that brings about some relevance to the organization. Jena (2014) defined organizational commitment as a person's devotion and dedication to that organization. Mai and Nguyen (2017) described organizational commitment as the workers' empathy and emotional attachment which express a strong desire to maintain continuous feeling to be part of the organization. Blackwell (2000) as cited in Habib (2020) defined organizational commitment as a powerful belief in and acceptance of the organizational objective value chain and the wiliness to remain sections of the organization.

According to Mousa and Alas (2016), it is a mental situation that indicates a person's connectivity and affiliation with that organization that lessens the tendency of the employee will leave. Organizational commitment is important because it seeks to reduce various behaviors that are not encouraged in the workplace such as absenteeism or turnover (Miller, 2019). The importance of this cannot be far-fetched. Imam and Shah (2013) asserted that an employee's organizational commitment is a critical component to the growth and success of

an organization. There are three key components of organizational commitments. These are affective, normative, and continuance commitments (Jena, 2014). Ghosh and Swamy (2014) describe these three components as strong acceptance, participation, and employee loyalty.

Affective commitment

Jena (2014) said that affective commitment is a situation that explains the employee's involvement or strong emotional attachment and affiliation in the organization. Gantasala and Padmakumar (2011) revealed that the above mental state is induced by the person and organizational value consistency. It could be explained as natural to enjoy continuous fellowship in the organization. Bryant et al (2007) as cited in Mousa and Alas (2016) said that affective commitment is a state that an employee is emotionally attached and integrated and is directly involve with his organization. Gantasala and Padmakumar (2011) posited that the attachment, identification, and involvement of the worker to the organization with emotional sentiment is what is referred to as affective commitment. Employees with a very high emotional attachment to the organization tend to stay because they wouldn't want to leave. Also, Perry (2004) as cited in Mousa and Alas (2016) revealed that certain factors can affect the level of affective commitment. These factors include friendliness, promoting healthiness, and supportive discussions with supervisors. Gantasala and Padmakumar (2011) observed that factors such as autonomy, skills variety identity, and perceived organizational support, feedback concerning employee job performance, to mention a few are responsible for creating an intrinsic rewarding stance for an employee to have that emotional sentiment to stay.

Continuance commitment

Continuance commitment could be described as the consciousness of the implication of the cost to leave an organization (Jena, 2014). Gantasala and Padmakumar (2011) asserted that continuance commitment implies the assessment of employees on the costs to leave the firm is greater than the cost to stay. Accordingly, Sharma and Sinha (2015) as cited in Mousa and Alas (2016) posited that employees' advancement in age raises their perceived cost to leave the organization. This is because they begin to think of other issues in life attached to the organization. Gantasala and Padmakumar (2011) explained further by mentioning some important reasons that the employee has continuance commitment. Some of these reasons are skills acquired on the job, close working relationships with coworkers, retirement investments, the uniqueness of career investments of the organization, years of employment in that organization, and the location of the organization.

Normative commitment

Gantasala and Padmakumar (2011) explained that the drive and feeling of responsibility to remain with an organization is referred to as normative commitment. Jena (2014) described normative commitment as a duty to continue to stay and fellowship with the organization. It reflects a feeling of moral responsibility to carry on with the organization (Gantasala & Padmakumar, 2011). Some factors such as rewards, punishments, organizational culture, and employee autonomy indicate a key responsibility in identifying normative commitment (Chang, 2002; Haar and Spell, 2004; Sharma and Sinha, 2015) as cited in (Mousa and Alas, 2016).

Relationships between workplace diversity and organizational commitment

Magoshi and Chang (2009) revealed that diversity management is an integral part of commitment psychology that enhances employee organizational commitment. According to Kundu and Mor (2016) encouraging an encompassing for organizations to adopt policies that point to the fact that organizations are committed to diverse, employees will further yield a

committed workforce. Jena (2014) in her study found that demographic factors can improve different dimensions of organizational commitment. The study also exposed that women don't have as much organizational commitment compared to men. Again, women quit their work or are more absent from their office.

However, women have higher commitment compared to men in the case of normative commitment. Yucel and Bektas (2012) findings show that age affects organizational commitment. Jena (2014) also revealed that age has a significant relationship with affective and normative commitment. Gender has a strong relationship with affective commitment. On the other hand, Toga (2014) in their study revealed that overall organizational commitment does not have any significant difference between employees that are supervised by same-age, older or younger managers. In addition, female employees that are supervised by the same gender as managers do not have a significantly higher overall organizational commitment compared to female employees supervised by male managers. There is no significant difference in overall organizational commitment between staff supervised by male managers and those supervised by female managers (Toga et al, 2014).

Conclusion

Organizational Commitment is a key component in today's business world. But workplace diversity and its management may negatively influence the success of an organization. This scholarly work examined workplace diversity and organizational commitment. The study revealed that diversity in the workplace has a role to play in employees' commitment. Since employees are a vital part of the organization, policies geared towards a committed workforce are eminent. However, the managers have a very big role to understand and manage the diversity for the overall benefit of the organization. Gender diversity has a strong influence on normative commitment, particularly among women folk. On the other hand, age diversity has a significant relationship with affective and normative commitment. While education has a dominant relationship with affective commitment. Kumar and Sharma (2023) affirm that numerous diversity components are veritable indicators of commitment among employees. Accordingly, to mention a few age, gender has been related to organizational commitment in a positive fashion. Gender (women) is associated with stronger organizational commitment (Barak, Findler & Wind, 2001) as cited in Kumar and Sharma (2023). Generally, it reveals that there is a relationship between workplace diversity and organizational commitment.

Recommendations

Based on the review of literature, the study recommended the following:

1. Managers in organizations should manage diversity to leverage the gains of employee commitment.
2. Managers of organizations should understand the implication of diversity in the workplace and formulate policies to curtail the likely occurrence of gender discrimination in order to be more effective and build a more robust and committed workforce.
3. In order to have organizational commitment, managers should work with relevant government agencies to enact laws and strengthen the existing ones to ensure all levels of education are incorporated and accommodated. In the same vein, there should be an equal employment policy.
4. Managers should understand the educational levels and type of qualification during the recruitment process of employees to accommodate diverse qualifications and educational backgrounds in order to be fair and foster organizational commitment.

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