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EFFECT OF WORKPLACE DIVERSITY ON EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE OF SEVEN-UP BOTTLING COMPANY LIMITED, KADUNA, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

This study examined the effect of workplace diversity on employee performance at Seven-Up Bottling Company in Kaduna, Nigeria. A survey research design was employed, and a sample of 250 employees was selected from a population of 526 using stratified random sampling. The Taro Yamane formula was used to determine the sample size. The data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS version 4. The results revealed that age diversity and religious diversity have significant positive effects on employee performance, while ethnic diversity does not have a significant positive effect. The findings have implications for human resource management practices, particularly in promoting diversity and inclusion in the workplace. The results of this study contribute to the existing literature on workplace diversity and employee performance, offering insights into the Nigerian context.

Key Words: Workplace Diversity, Employees' Performance, Seven-Up Bottling Company, Age Diversity, Ethnic Diversity, Religious Diversity.

Introduction

The modern workplace is becoming increasingly diverse, with employees from different backgrounds, cultures, and identities working together to achieve organizational goals. Workplace diversity, which refers to different groups or individuals with unique characteristics, experiences, and perspectives within an organization, has become a critical issue in human resource management (Cox, 2001). Nigeria, with its diverse cultural, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds, presents a unique context for studying workplace diversity.

Seven-Up Bottling Company, one of Nigeria's leading beverage companies, operates in a multicultural environment with employees from diverse backgrounds. As the company continues to grow and expand its operations, managing workplace diversity effectively becomes crucial for achieving its goals. Employees' performance, which is critical to organizational success, can be influenced by various factors, including workplace diversity. However, there is a lack of understanding of how these diversity factors affect employees' performance. Research has shown that workplace diversity can have both positive and negative effects on employees' performance (Harrison & Klein, 2007). On the one hand, diversity can bring different perspectives, ideas, and experiences, leading to improved creativity, innovation, and problem-solving (Ely & Thomas, 2001). On the other hand, diversity can also lead to communication breakdowns, conflicts, and decreased cohesion among employees (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Despite the growing importance of workplace diversity, there is a paucity of research on this topic in the Nigerian context. this study seeks to add to the already existing literature on workplace diversity by examining the empirical and theoretical concept of workplace diversity in terms of age, ethnicity, and religious diversity. This study investigates workplace diversity on employees' performance in the Seven-Up Bottling Company, Kaduna, Nigeria. Specifically, the study examines the extent to which age, ethnic, and

religious diversity influence employee' performance in the Seven-Up Bottling Company, Kaduna, Nigeria.

A previous study on workplace diversity was carried out by Andoh et al. (2022), who explored how workplace diversity affects the relationship between employees and performance. Another study on workplace diversity was carried out by Shijimol (2024) in India, and it focuses on the employee perception towards the impact of workforce diversity on their performance. Similar studies were conducted in Nigeria by Ngalo et al., (2023) and Akpakip (2017). Both studies carried out their investigation in the banking sector of Nigeria. Previous studies reviewed employed SPSS for their data analysis. This current study will carry out its investigation in the manufacturing sector of the Nigerian economy and also, Smart PLS Structural Equation Modeling will be used for data analysis. This study contributes to the existing literature on workplace diversity and employees' performance by providing insights into the Nigerian context. Its findings will provide practical recommendations for managing workplace diversity effectively in Seven-Up Bottling Company and other organizations in Nigeria.

The following hypotheses were tested in null form:

H01: Age diversity has no significant positive effect on the employee performance of Seven-Up Bottling Company Limited, Kaduna, Nigeria.

H02: Ethnic diversity has no significant positive effect on the employee performance of Seven-Up Bottling Company Limited, Kaduna, Nigeria.

H03: Religious diversity has no significant positive effect on the employee performance of Seven-Up Bottling Company Limited, Kaduna, Nigeria.

Literature Review

Concept of Workplace Diversity

According to Choi & Rainey (2010), workplace diversity is defined as the degree of heterogeneity among employees that is concisely limited to particular cultural attributes such as age, gender, class, ethnicity, physical and mental ability, race, economic status, sexual orientation, educational background, beliefs, and interests. Cox (2001) defined workplace diversity as the presence of different groups or individuals with unique characteristics, experiences, and perspectives within an organization. This can include differences in race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, disability, and other characteristics. The diversity of the workforce at work suggests that the workplace is varied in terms of gender, race, and ethnicity, and that each employee has exceptional characteristics that set them apart from one another (Shijimol, 2024). According to Daizy Raj (2014), Globalization and internationalization are among the benefit that workforce diversity brings to the table, which is why foreign executives are very successful in the corporate world in America.

Workplace diversity can be categorized into three dimensions:

1 Surface-level diversity: Refers to the visible differences among employees, such as race, gender, and age (Harrison & Klein, 2007).

2. Deep-level diversity: Refers to the underlying differences among employees, such as personality, values, and attitudes (Harrison & Klein, 2007).

3. Organizational diversity: Refers to the diversity of the organization as a whole, including its culture, policies, and practices (Cox, 2001).

According to Ely and Thomas (2001), Diverse teams can bring different perspectives and ideas, leading to improved innovation and creativity. Cox (2001) observed that diverse teams can make better decisions by considering a wider range of perspectives and options. Kochan et al., (2003) posited that a diverse and inclusive workplace can lead to increased

employee engagement and retention. Cox (2001) observed that diversity can trigger prejudice and bias and can lead to discrimination and unequal treatment of diverse employees.

Concept of Age Diversity

Age diversity refers to the presence of different age groups within a workforce (Kunze, Boehm, & Bruch, 2011). It involves the coexistence of employees from various generations, each with distinct values, attitudes, and work styles (Ng & Feldman, 2012). Age diversity can bring numerous benefits to organizations, including improved problem-solving, increased innovation, and enhanced decision-making (Pitt-Catsouphes & Matz-Costa, 2008).

Concept of Ethnic Diversity

Cox (2001) defined ethnic diversity as the presence of different ethnic groups within a workforce or organization. It involves the coexistence of employees from various ethnic backgrounds, each with distinct cultural values, norms, and practices (Ely & Thomas, 2001). According to Richard (2000), Ethnic diversity can bring numerous benefits to organizations, including improved creativity, increased innovation, and enhanced decision-making.

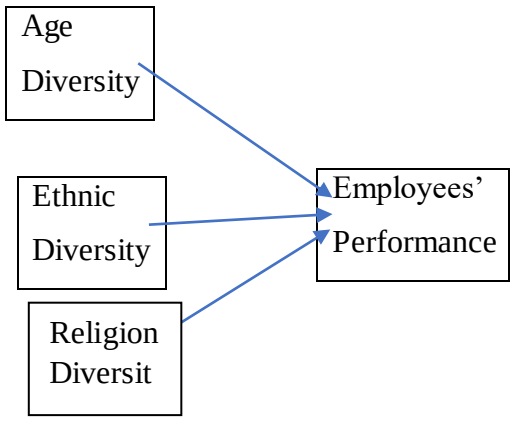
Concept of Religious Diversity

Krauss (2006) defined religious diversity as the presence of different religious beliefs, practices, and affiliations within a workforce or organization. It involves the coexistence of employees from various religious backgrounds, each with distinct values, norms, and practices (King, 2008). Cavanaugh (2006) posited that religious diversity can bring numerous benefits to organizations, including improved employee satisfaction, increased creativity, and enhanced decision-making.

Concept of Employees' Performance

Cheong (2022) defined employee performance as the dependent variable that depends on age, gender, education, work experience, and religious diversity. Employees' performance refers to the degree to which an individual employee achieves their job responsibilities and contributes to the organization's goals (Campbell, 1990). Mahapatro (2022) posited that what an employee does and what he/she does not, do represents employee performance. It involves the evaluation of an employee's work outcomes, behaviors, and results in relation to their job expectations (Bommer et al., 1995). Employees' performance is a critical aspect of organizational success, as it directly impacts the achievement of organizational objectives (Katzell & Thompson, 1990). According to Shijimol (2024), there is a positive moderate correlation between workforce diversity and employee performance. Ng & Sears (2020) posited that performance is affected when managers fail to understand diversity and are not skilled enough to manage issues of diversity.

Conceptual Framework



The conceptual framework of the study is depicted in Figure 1

Empirical Review

Age Diversity and Employee Performance

Andoh et al. (2022) explore how workplace diversity affects the relationship between employees and performance. Descriptive statistics were used for data analysis on 175 respondents, consisting of academic and administrative staff of four selected private universities in Ghana. The results showed that Age significantly positively impacted employee performance in the universities.

Ngalo et al. (2023) carried out a study in Nigeria and investigated 300 respondents to ascertain the relationship between age diversity and employee performance. Descriptive statistics and Regression analysis were used for data analysis. The study's results indicated that age diversity has a significant negative impact on employee performance.

Akpakip (2017) carried out a study in Ogun state and surveyed 81 respondents who are employees of First Bank, Ogun state, to examine the relationship between age diversity and employee performance. Correlation Coefficient Analysis was used for data analysis. The results showed that Age diversity has a significant positive impact on employee performance.

Jekelle (2021) carried out a study in Abuja and surveyed 137 respondents to ascertain the relationship between age diversity and employee performance. Multiple regression analysis was used for data analysis. The results showed a significant positive relationship between age diversity and employee performance.

Ethnic Diversity and Employee Performance

AIraise et al., (2019) carried out a study in Oman and surveyed employees of Shell in Oman to assess the relationship between ethnic diversity and employee performance. Descriptive. Analysis was used for data analysis. The result of the study indicated that ethnic diversity in the workplace positively affects employee performance. Findings from the study revealed that ethnic diversity leads to more productivity and creativity

Akpakip (2017) carried out a study in Ogun state, and a survey was conducted on 81 respondents who are employees of First Bank to assess the relationship between ethnic diversity and employee performance. Correlation Coefficient Analysis was used for data analysis. The result of the study indicated that ethnic diversity in the workplace has a negative effect on the performance of employees.

Ngalo et al., (2023) carried out an investigation on 300 respondents in Nigeria to examine the relationship between ethnic diversity and employee performance. Descriptive statistics and Regression analysis were used for data analysis. The result of the study indicated that ethnic diversity has a significant positive impact on employee effectiveness and performance. Findings from the study revealed that diversity is an important aspect of businesses that cannot be overlooked.

Religious Diversity and Employees' Performance

A study by Tjimuku and Olusegun (2024) was carried out to examine the effects of workplace diversity dimensions on employee performance in selected State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) in Namibia. A quantitative approach was adopted following a cross-sectional survey research design for data collection. Data were collected from 350 employees. Data was analyzed using structural equation modeling with the aid of Smart PLS 4 for path analysis. Findings of the study revealed that religious diversity has no significant positive effect on employee performance.

Shijimol (2024) carried out a study in India and surveyed 100 respondents to examine the relationship between religious diversity and employee performance. Regression analysis was used for data analysis. The result of the study indicated that religious diversity has a significant positive relationship with employee performance. Findings

from the study revealed that diversity dimensions have a favorable effect on employee individual performance, which in turn has benefited organizational performance.

Irin et al., (2022) conducted a study in Bangladesh a conducted an investigation on 175 respondents to ascertain the relationship between religious diversity and employee performance. Regression analysis was used for data analysis. The result of the study indicated that religious diversity has a significant positive relationship with employee performance. Findings from the study revealed that religious diversity and employee performance are interrelated and interdependent.

Theoretical Framework

Diversity-Value-Outcome (DVO)

The Diversity-Value-Outcome (DVO) model, developed by Cox and Blake (1991), is a theoretical framework that explains the relationship between diversity, organizational values, and outcomes. The model posits that diversity can lead to improved organizational outcomes, such as employee performance, when diversity is valued and managed effectively.

Key Components of the DVO Model

1. Diversity: Refers to the presence of different groups or individuals with unique characteristics, experiences, and perspectives within an organization.
2. Value: Refers to the extent to which an organization values and appreciates diversity. This includes the organization's culture, policies, and practices that promote diversity and inclusion.
3. Outcome: Refers to the organizational outcomes that result from diversity, such as improved employee performance, increased innovation, and enhanced decision-making.

The DVO model is relevant to this study titled "The Effect of Workplace Diversity on Employees' Performance of Seven-Up Bottling Company, Kaduna, Nigeria," in several ways:

1. Diversity and Employee Performance: The DVO model suggests that diversity can lead to improved employee performance when diversity is valued and managed effectively. It enables the study to explore how diversity affects employee performance in the context of Seven-Up Bottling Company, Kaduna, Nigeria.

2. Value and Diversity Management: The DVO model emphasizes the importance of valuing and managing diversity effectively to achieve positive outcomes. It helps to investigate how Seven-Up Bottling Company, Kaduna, Nigeria, values and manages diversity and how this affects employee performance.

3. Outcome and Organizational Performance: The DVO model suggests that diversity can lead to improved organizational outcomes, such as employee performance. It helps to explore how diversity affects organizational performance in the context of Seven-Up Bottling Company, Kaduna, Nigeria.

Methodology

The design of this study is a descriptive survey design; hence, the study made use of primary data. The questionnaire was used to sample the opinions of the respondents selected for this study. It also describes the attitudes, behaviors, or characteristics of the population. The design was based on the primary source of data (questionnaire). The population that was used in this study consists of all employees of Seven-Up Bottling Company, Kaduna, Nigeria, selected across all the departments in the company. The population of the study was 526. Taro Yamane's Formula (1973) was used to arrive at the sample size of 227. An additional 10% was included to account for unreturned or wrongly filed responses, which brought the total sample size to 250. A stratified random sampling method was used to select a sample of employees from different departments. Smart PLS – Structural Equation Model was used for data analysis. The model is specified below as:

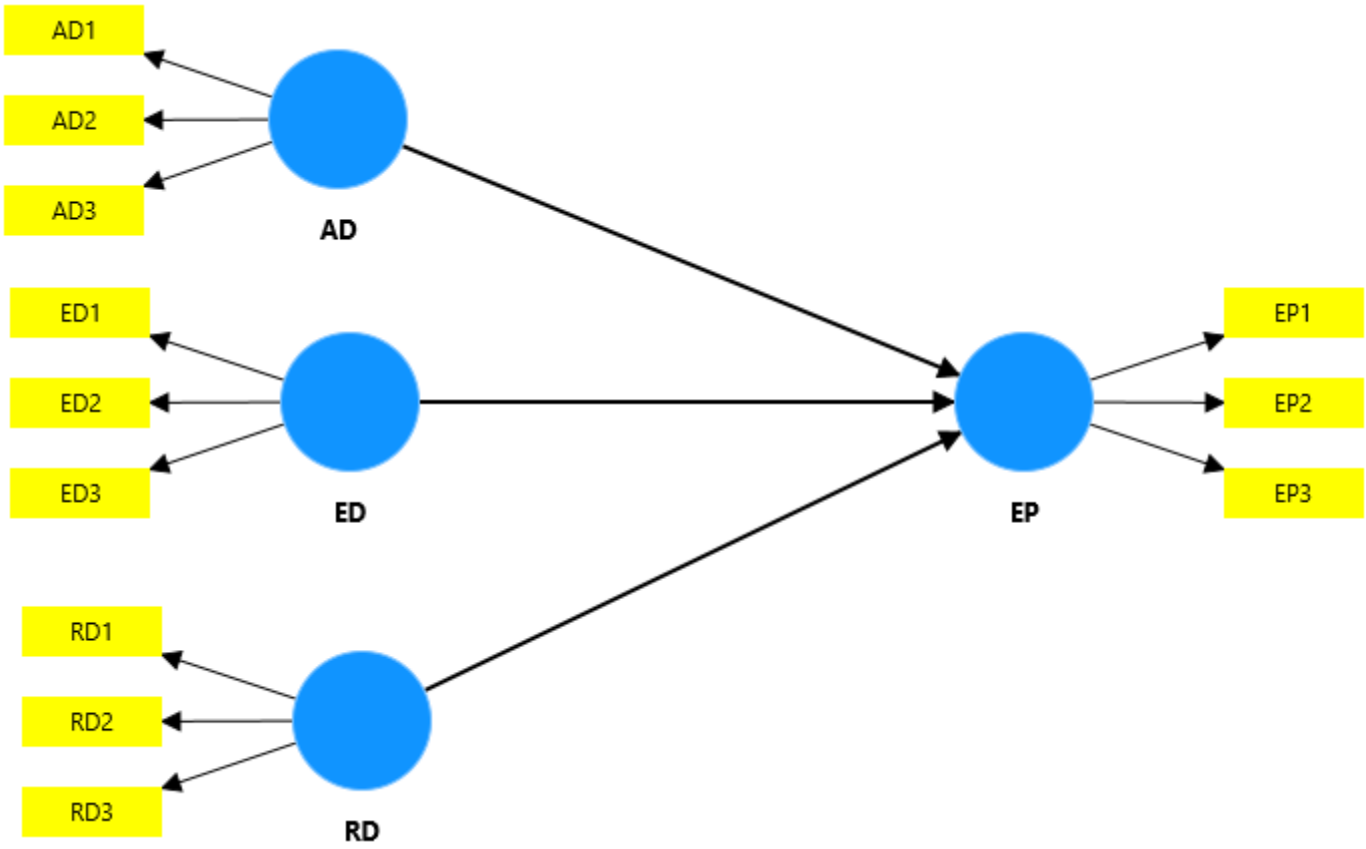


Fig. 2: Conceptual model of the study,

The model depicts the Effect of Workplace Diversity on Employees' Performance in Seven-Up Bottling Company, Kaduna, Nigeria.

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 4. 1: Convergent Validity and Reliability of the Constructs and Indicators

Variables	Factor Loadings	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
AD1	**0.700**	**0.751**	**0.793**	**0.673**
AD2	**0.901**			
AD3	**0.866**			
ED1	**0.907**	**0.882**	**0.909**	**0.844**
ED2	**0.871**			
ED3	**0.940**			
RD1	**0.719**	**0.748**	**0.788**	**0.652**
RD2	**0.863**			
RD3	**0.849**			
EP1	**0.862**	**0.704**	**0.730**	**0.618**
EP2	**0.800**			
EP3	**0.700**			

Source: SmartPLS Output, 2024

Table 4.1 shows the factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE) values for a measurement model that includes four constructs: Age Diversity (AD), Ethnic Diversity (ED), Religious Diversity (RD), and Employees' Performance (EP). The factor loadings for each item on its corresponding construct are within and some are larger than the threshold of 0.7 as advised by Hair et al., (2015). Those that were below but close to the threshold were rounded up to 0.7, respectively, while loadings below 0.65 were removed before further analysis. This indicates that each item is a good indicator of its construct.

The Cronbach's alpha values for each construct are also high, indicating that the items within each construct are reliable and have internal consistency. The composite reliability

values are also high, indicating that each construct is reliable and consistent across multiple indicators. The AVE values represent the amount of variance in each construct that is explained by its indicators. Generally, an AVE value of 0.5 or higher indicates that the construct is well-measured. In this case, the AVE values for Age Diversity (AD), Ethnic Diversity (ED), Religious Diversity (RD), and Employees' Performance (EP) are all above 0.5, indicating that they are well-measured.

Table 4.2 R-square – Overview

	R-square	R-square adjusted
EP	0.676	0.672

Source: Survey data analyzed using SMART PLS, 2023

R-squared measures the amount of variance in the dependent variable that is explained by the independent variable. The dependent variable is influenced by the independent variable. R-squared of Zero (0) indicates no explanation, while R-squared of one (1) indicates a perfect relationship. Generally, values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 are considered substantial, moderate, and weak for R^2. Employees' performance achieved a value of 0.676 (moderate) for $R^{2.}$ Table 4.2 shows the R-squared value of 0.676. This means that a 67.6% change in the dependent variable, which is employees' performance, can be explained by the independent variables, which are: Age Diversity (AD), Ethnic Diversity (ED), and Religious Diversity (RD).

Table 4.3 f-square – List

	f-square	**Decision**
AD -> EP	0.046	Small
ED -> EP	0.011	Small
RD -> EP	0.360	Large

Source: Survey data analyzed using SMART PLS, 2024

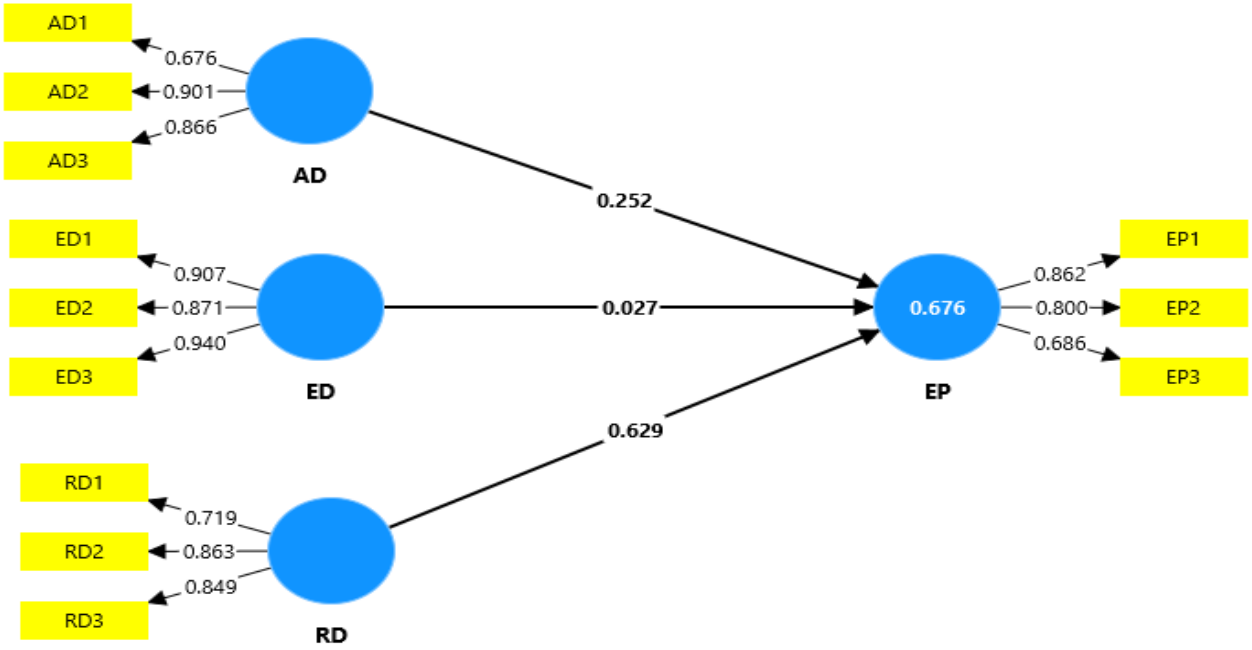
F-squared is the measurement of the amount of variance in the dependent variable that is explained by the independent variable, taking into account the error variance. An F-square of 0 indicates no explanation, while an F-square of 1 indicates a perfect relationship. Regarding effect sizes (f^2), values of 0.35, 0.15, and 0.02 are considered large, medium, and small for f^2. The value for AD -> EP is small (0.046), the value for ED -> EP is small (0.011), value for RD -> EP is large (0.360). This is an indication that 4.6 %, 1.1%, and 36% of the variance in EP is explained by AD, ED, and RD, respectively. However, the f-square values are not high, it is likely that other variables also play a role in explaining the variance EP suffers.

Values more than zero are meaningful for Q^2. Employees' Performance achieved a value of 0.675, which is considered Meaningful and also indicates that the model has good predictive validity.

Assessment of the Structural Model

Hair et al. (2013) suggested that at the R^2, beta, and corresponding t-values via a bootstrapping procedure with a resample of 5000. Again, they suggested that, in addition to these basic measures, researchers should also report the predictive relevance (Q^2) and the effect sizes (f^2). Figure 1 shows the structural model results, the loadings, and the R^2 values for Employees' Performance. The resampling of the bootstrapping procedure was done using 5000.

Figure 3 Structural Equation Modeling Showing Values of Latent Variables.



Source: Survey data analyzed using SMART PLS, 2024

Table 4.4: Discriminant validity

	AD	ED	EP	RD
AD				
ED	**0.826**			
EP	**0.818**	**0.734**		
RD	**0.753**	**0.667**	**0.836**	

Source: Survey data analyzed using SMART PLS, 2024

Table 4.4 shows the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) values. Generally, value less than 0.850 for HTMT criterion are values widely accepted. All constructs achieved values ranging between 0.667 and 0.836 for discriminative validity based on the HTMT criterion.

Table 4.5 Path Assessment

Hypotheses	Beta	T. Stats	P. Value	Decision
H01: AD -> EP	0.624	4.220	0.000	Rejected
H02: ED -> EP	0.714	0.519	0.604	Accepted
H03: RD-> EP	0.642	10.895	0.000	Rejected

Source: *Survey data analyzed using SMART PLS, 2024*

The study conducted bootstrapping, which is regarded as a resampling technique to determine the significance of all constructs in explaining others.

Table 4.5 shows the regression coefficients (Beta), t-statistics, p-values, and decisions for a structural model that includes four constructs. The first hypothesis states that there is no significant positive effect of age diversity on the employee performance of Seven-Up Bottling Company Limited, Kaduna, Nigeria. the Beta value is positive (0.624), indicating positive relationships between the construct and employee performance. However, the p-value of the hypothesis is less than 0.05 (0.000), which means that the null hypothesis has been rejected. It means that age diversity has a statistically significant relationship with the employee performance of Seven-Up Bottling Company Limited, Kaduna, Nigeria. This report is similar to the findings of Andoh et al. (2022) and Jekelle (2021), who found that age diversity leads to improved employees' performance, creativity, and innovation. However, the result of this study is inconsistent with the findings of Ngalo et al., (2023), who found that age diversity was negatively related to employee well-being and job satisfaction.

Table 4.5 shows the regression coefficients (Beta), t-statistics, p-values, and decisions for a structural model that includes four constructs. The second hypothesis states that there is no significant positive effect of ethnic diversity on the employee performance of Seven-Up Bottling Company Limited, Kaduna, Nigeria. The Beta value is positive (0.714),

indicating positive relationships between the construct and employee performance. However, the p-values of the hypothesis are more than 0.05 (0.604), which means that the null hypothesis has been accepted. It means that ethnic diversity has no statistically significant relationship with the employee performance of Seven-Up Bottling Company Limited, Kaduna, Nigeria. This report is similar to the findings of Akpakip (2017), who found that ethnic diversity had no influence on the employee Performance of some selected First Bank in Ogun State. However, the result of this study is inconsistent with the findings of Ngalo et al., (2023), who found that ethnic diversity has a significant positive impact on employee effectiveness and performance.

Table 4.5 shows the regression coefficients (Beta), t-statistics, p-values, and decisions for a structural model that includes four constructs. The third hypothesis states that there is no significant positive effect of religious diversity on employee performance of Seven-Up Bottling Company Limited, Kaduna, Nigeria. the Beta value is positive (0.642), indicating positive relationships between the construct and employee performance. However, the p-value of the hypothesis is less than 0.05 (0.000), which means that the null hypothesis has been rejected. It means that religious diversity has a statistically significant relationship with the employee performance of Seven-Up Bottling Company Limited, Kaduna, Nigeria. This report is similar to the findings of Shijimol (2024), who found that religious diversity has a significant positive relationship with employee performance.. However, the result of this study is inconsistent with the findings of Tjimuku and Olusegun (2024), who found that religious diversity has no significant positive effect on employee performance.

Conclusion and Recommendation

Conclusion

This study investigated the effect of workplace diversity on employees' performance at Seven-Up Bottling Company in Kaduna, Nigeria. The findings revealed that age diversity and religious diversity have significant positive effects on employees' performance, while ethnic diversity does not have a significant positive effect. These results suggest that diversity in the workplace can have varying effects on employee performance, depending on the type of diversity.

Recommendations

1. Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives: Seven-Up Bottling Company should implement diversity and inclusion initiatives that promote age diversity and religious diversity, as these factors were found to have significant positive effects on employee performance.
2. Training and Development Programs: The company should provide training and development programs that cater to employees of different ages and religions, to help them develop new skills and improve their performance.
3. Ethnic Diversity Strategies: Although ethnic diversity was not found to have a significant positive effect on employee performance, the company should still strive to promote ethnic diversity and inclusion, as it can bring different perspectives and ideas to the workplace.
4. Diversity Management: The company should develop a diversity management strategy that takes into account the different types of diversity and their effects on employee performance.
5. Future Research: Future studies should investigate the effects of other types of diversity, such as gender diversity and disability diversity, on employee performance in the Nigerian context.

By implementing these recommendations, Seven-Up Bottling Company can promote a more diverse and inclusive workplace, leading to improved employee performance and overall organizational success.

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