

WORKFORCE DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN ONDO STATE INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE (ODIRS)

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ABSTRACT

The effective management of public service organizations has become increasingly aware that diversity within their respective workforces and the proper management of such diversity is essential for enhanced performance within their organizations. This research study focused on assessing the extent of workforce diversity within ODIRS, examining the effect of such diversity on organizational performance, as well as the role played by diversity management in influencing performance with an ultimate objective of improving the organization's non-financial performance. In this case, a survey research design was employed, targeting a sample of 212 individuals from among 450 operational employees, based on the Yamane formula. The data collection process involved the use of a questionnaire, while data analysis used inferential statistics, particularly correlation and regression. For the second objective, the analysis revealed that only inclusive climate had a positive and statistically significant positive effect on organisational performance ($\beta = 0.451$, $t = 5.782$, $p < 0.01$), while demographic diversity ($\beta = 0.123$, $t = 1.245$, $p > 0.05$) and functional diversity ($\beta = 0.198$, $t = 1.908$, $p > 0.05$) had no significant effect. Regarding the third objective, diversity management practices were found to significantly influence organisational performance, with leadership commitment showing the strongest positive effect ($\beta = 0.389$, $t = 6.321$, $p < 0.01$), followed by diversity training ($\beta = 0.312$, $t = 4.872$, $p < 0.01$) and diversity policies ($\beta = 0.275$, $t = 3.998$, $p < 0.01$). In conclusion, promoting an inclusive climate and implementing robust diversity management practices, particularly in leadership commitment, are key to improving the non-financial performance of ODIRS. The study recommended among others, that ODIRS focus on strengthening its inclusive culture and ensuring ongoing leadership engagement in diversity initiatives to enhance organisational performance

Keywords: Diversity, Organizational Performance, Management Practices, Efficiency, Employee Satisfaction.



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1. | Introduction

As in other public sector agencies in Nigeria, Ondo State Internal Revenue Service (ODIRS) is dealing with an ever evolving and increasingly diverse workforce. This diversification includes different age groups, women and men, ethnicities, educational levels, among others, which is common

with public sector organizations elsewhere in the country (Kowo *et al.*, 2020). As ODIRS continues to expand its workforce to meet the needs of the state's revenue collection systems, it will need to adjust to the challenges of dealing with this diversity. The service should not only be good at collecting the revenue effectively, but also maintain a friendly and efficient

working environment, allowing different ideas to be shared and used to enhance the efficiency and sustainability of the service. Diversity management is very important at ODIRS. The diversity of a workforce provides opportunities for increased innovation, problem solving, and creativity that can lead to better service delivery, employee engagement, and service performance (Abass *et al.*, 2024). But, when not managed properly, diversity can also cause problems at work like miscommunication, discrimination and exclusion, which can impact the efficiency of the organization (Kravariti *et al.*, 2023). Therefore, ODIRS, like other public institutions, needs to establish and apply effective diversity management strategies to create a climate of inclusion, to promote inter-employee cooperation and to ensure equal opportunities for all employees.

The link between workforce diversity and organizational performance has been documented in the literature and has already been explored in terms of the impact of diversity on non-financial performance dimensions such as job satisfaction, organizational engagement, and organizational innovation (Rafaqat *et al.*, 2022; Kim and Lee, 2023). In public sector organizations, such as ODIRS, non-financial performance is especially significant since a positive attitude among employees and a sense of team work can create an efficient service delivery system, improved employee efficiency and the effectiveness of the revenue collection system. Since ODIRS has a large workforce, it is important to understand the impact of diversity management on these non-financial outcomes for the purposes of optimizing ODIRS' performance and meeting its objectives. In this context, the study aims to understand the dimensions of workforce diversity at ODIRS and its impact on non-financial performance outcomes from its diversity management practices. To maximize benefits of a multi-faceted workforce, employee satisfaction, creativity and organizational effectiveness, this exploration is a necessity for ODIRS. Workforce diversity is now a major challenge to be addressed in the public sector,

especially in Nigeria, in order to achieve optimal organisational performance. Despite the potential benefits of workforce diversity, it is still a challenge for many public sector organisations, including the Ondo State Internal Revenue Service (ODIRS) to effectively manage this diversity. Problems in diverse workforces are especially noticeable in relation to job satisfaction, teamwork, employee engagement, and other aspects. Poor diversity management practices are frequently the root cause and are a major obstacle for an organization to realize the potential of diverse workforce members. Without addressing the problems of workforce diversity management in ODIRS, the company will face continuing problems with low employee engagement and satisfaction, which will negatively impact the organization's efficiency. When a diversity management strategy is not in place, there can be missed opportunities for innovation because diverse teams may not work well together because there is no cohesion. This could further hinder the organization's capacity to meet its objectives, ultimately affecting service delivery and revenue collection, which are key to the functioning of the state. Addressing these issues through targeted research and the implementation of effective diversity management practices is critical for ensuring that ODIRS maximises its workforce's potential and improves its non-financial performance outcomes.

1.1 | Research Objectives

The aim of this study is to investigate workforce diversity management practices and organisational performance in Ondo State Internal Revenue Service (ODIRS). This is with a view to improving the non-financial performance of ODIRS. The objectives are to:

- i. assess the level of workforce diversity in Ondo State Internal Revenue Service;
- ii. examine the influence of workforce diversity on organisational performance in the study area;

- iii. determine the effect of workforce diversity management practices on organisational performance in the study area.

1.2 | Research Hypotheses

H_{01} : There is no significant effect between workforce diversity and organisational performance in the study area.

H_1 : There is no significant effect between workforce diversity management practices and organisational performance in the study area.

1.3 | Literature Review

Workforce diversity refers to the wide range of characteristics that differentiate employees within an organisation, including both bio-demographic and job-related attributes. These features cover factors such as gender, age, ethnicity or race, culture, religion, professional expertise, level of education, organisational tenure, and work experience (Shammugam & Marimuthu, 2018). According to Muthoni (2017), effectively managing these differences is essential for organisational success, as it enables each employee's unique strengths to contribute meaningfully to overall performance. Building on this perspective, Prasad (2017) adds other factors including age, gender, race, education, religion etc., as it is important to create a supportive and inclusive environment that allows for exploration of such factors, which is termed as diversity management. Likewise, Olowookere (2021) adds variations in race, gender, ethnicity, age, personality and cognitive style. This is its broad perspective as outlined in the US National Partnership for Reinventing Government (NPR) Diversity Taskforce (2007) definition of diversity: "all individual traits and life experiences."

Workforce diversity transcends race and ethnicity. According to Kundu and Mor, it is the differences between the employees with regard to gender, age, education, culture, and physical abilities. Worrell *et al.* (2022) acknowledges the changing definition

of diversity, especially in relation to gender, which is now including the LGBTQ community, and the binary nature of such concepts are problematic. Interdisciplinary views on diversity highlight the complexity and the significance of diversity in the organizational dynamics. Intergroup relations and attitudes towards diversity are central components highlighted by Brouwer and Boros (2010). Barak (2013) and Alesina and Ferrara (2005) examined the different demographic traits of a diverse workforce. Cole (2004) and Pitts and Wise (2010) point to the influence of diversity on organisational responsibilities and allegiances. The importance of workforce diversity is gradually gaining recognition on a global level. According to Kyalo (2015), diversity is key to innovation and success in the present competitive market. It is important to understand the implications that diversity has on organisations with effective management (Cole, 2004). Organisations that have a diversity focus are more likely to be successful and create innovative cultures (Barak, 2013; Kyalo, 2015).

1.4 | Dimensions of Diversity

Alshaabani *et al.* (2021) classify diversity into four types: organisational, primary, secondary, and tertiary. Employees are distinguished based on primary characteristics like their age, and secondary characteristics like their educational qualifications or the way they communicate. Primary dimensions include those characteristics that are visible and permanent, such as: age, gender, sexual orientation, physical attributes, race, ethnicity, etc. that have a significant influence on a person's identity (Alwali and Alwali, 2022). These aspects have a huge influence on first impressions and people's world view. Secondary differences, as described by Moon and Christensen (2020), are differences in things such as education, communication style, marital status, and religion which may not be readily noticeable but over time will affect interactions. These are called 'experience-based diversity' by organisational researchers, referring to changes throughout the

life course, like work experiences or location. As these can be changed, people are less concerned about these issues of diversity. The organisational dimension described by Moon and Christensen (2020) relates to characteristics of the organisation and encompasses position, organisational culture and employment status. The information processing and decision-making theory aspects of the management of diversity are associated with the increased diversity of opinions, abilities, and knowledge that comes from working with diversity within these dimensions, which benefits work group outcomes. Experience in analysing and debating issues related to a task from multiple perspectives will help improve performance, taking advantage of the individual's educational background, industrial experience and practical skills. Some of the various dimension of workforce diversity obtained from literature are further explained below.

Gender Diversity: is one of the important factors which affects the performance of the organisation. It is the presence of males and females in the work place (McMillan-Capehart, 2003). Research indicates that gender differences can have positive as well as negative impact on performance. For example, in male-dominated groups, gender diversity can have a negative impact on group performance, and not in female dominated groups (Pelled, 1997). Gupta (2019) believes that appropriate gender diversity will be instrumental to the competitive advantage while too much diversity will hamper the organisational effectiveness. Gender is the biological classification given to a person's sex while the research area of gender diversity is based on the perception and response to gender differences, including workplace gender biases and discrimination (Powell, 2013; Ullah *et al.*, 2020).

Age Diversity: In the context of workplace diversity, age diversity is an important aspect of organisational performance improvement as it brings a diversity of perspectives into the decision-making process. Contrary to popular belief, numerous studies have

found that older workers are valuable contributors and are as active and committed as younger workers (Algahtani, 2013; Barrington and Troske, 2001). According to Williams and O'Reilly (1998), multi-generational workforces can be a source of creativity, variation and vitality, which will in turn bolster the effectiveness of the organisation.

But it can be difficult to manage age diversity because of ongoing attitudes and stereotypes about working with older people. Despite the evidence that contradicts these beliefs, there are concerns about higher costs, health restrictions, adaptability and perceived lower performance compared to younger colleagues (Davey and Cornwall, 2003; McGregor and Gray, 2002). Interestingly, no significant correlation was discovered between employee performance and age (Ilmarinen, 2016).

Educational Diversity: Educational diversity in an organisation is essential to have a variety of skills and knowledge to perform tasks effectively. Education is important and better-educated employees are linked to productivity, as Choi and Rainey (2010) state. Similarly, Shrestha and Parajuli (2021) suggest that educational level of a person can directly impact his/her productivity, which further emphasizes educational importance of employees. Educational diversity also makes a positive contribution to organisational performance, as evidenced by empirical studies. In a study of information technology firms in Nairobi County, Mugwe and Moses (2020) found that educational diversity plays a positive role in the organisational outcomes, highlighting the wide-ranging knowledge, skills and perspectives that employees bring to the workplace from their varied educational backgrounds. Similarly, Muange and Kiptoo (2020) revealed that the diversification of education boosted the performance of employees in the selected universities of Kenya. These results indicate that the acceptance of educational diversity can result in an organizations having access to greater knowledge

and experience, which can lead to better overall performance.

Ethnic Groups Diversity: Diversity within an organisation helps to evaluate the problems from different perspectives that can enhance team productivity (Malik, 2022). Shrestha and Parajuli (2021) propose that societies characterized by ethnic diversity are more prosperous as ethnic diversity fosters the learning and creativity of a society. Nevertheless, while Setati *et al.*, (2019) has indicated that the impact of ethnic diversity on organisations is not always positive, it can be beneficial if managed well, yet harmful if managed poorly. Van Knippenberg *et al.* (2013) also argue that developing a diverse workforce increases creativity and innovation, and consequently the organisation's performance. Empirical research also indicates that ethnic diversity has a positive correlation with employee performance. Citing Muange and Kiptoo (2020), there was a positive correlation between ethnic diversity and employee performance in selected universities of Kenya, while Hunegnaw (2017) found the same correlation at the UNESCO Addis Ababa liaison office. In summary, celebration of ethnic diversity helps organisations to benefit from a range of cultural perspectives, experiences and knowledge, which results in greater collaboration, creativity and problem solving.

Religion Diversity: A research on the impact of religious diversity on organizational performance is still limited. In an attempt to address this relationship, Ali *et al.* (2021) investigated the relationship between religious diversity and employee performance and found that there is a positive relationship between the two. The study's results indicate that proper understanding and sensitivity towards religious diversity foster a more inclusive and unified workplace, thereby enhancing employee satisfaction, engagement, and organizational success. Although there is little existing research, the findings here show the importance of valuing religious diversity as a key component of workforce diversity. Kravariti

et al. (2023) highlighted three important factors that contribute to the growing diversity of the workplace. Globalisation becomes a salient factor in this respect. Globalisation has made it easier for businesses to participate in international activities, thanks to the elimination of market barriers. This has allowed companies to expand abroad, boosted their competitiveness and made them adapt to a variety of social norms and customs as they set up branches and offices abroad. As a result, organisations experience a natural increase of diversity when people cross national borders. Other legislation and judicial rulings have significant impacts on workplace diversity. Traditionally, there have been discriminatory practices that kept certain groups of people (e.g. women) at the margins of key positions. But in the present context, the law requires employers to hire people based on their qualifications, and thus lessen the risk of bias and stereotyping during hiring (Kravariti *et al.*, 2023).

1.4.1 | Diversity Management

Diversity can be put into practice with good diversity management. These include recruitment and selection, organisational learning and employee development to improve skills and capabilities (Casper *et al.*, 2013; Gold *et al.*, 2013; Madera, 2013). These programs are intended to leverage on strengths of the organisation, as well as individual strengths, and to address inequalities in the workplace (Kim & Park, 2017). Having a diverse employee base with a wide range of talents is important to ensure that staff can reach their full potential (Langholz, 2014), and diversity can be encouraged. Diversity is not only a good aspect, but it also fosters employee commitment, understanding and meaningful contribution (Langholz, 2014).

The managed diversity also meets the behavioural needs of employees, thereby enhancing their engagement and commitment. This therefore enhances the organizational performance and competitiveness (Gold *et al.*, 2013; Kim & Park, 2017;

Langholz, 2014). Further, diversity management contributes to understanding the dynamics of an organisation; fostering an environment that is productive and promotes sustainability and resilience in fulfilling organisational purposes (Kim & Park, 2017). In the course of time, diversity has become a norm in the world of organizations and it is considered ethical and proper, as it helps to foster respect, tolerance and inclusion (Pasztor, 2019). Public sector organisations are becoming more aware of the benefits of diversity, but it is difficult to implement those ideals and ensure that they have the desired effect. While there are positive benefits associated with diversity programs in the organisation, Park and Liang (2020) point out that diversity does not directly result in better performance, but in combination with merit-based systems.

In reality, it can be difficult to improve diversity within organisations due to conflicts between the desire to be diverse and the continued gap between the two. Strategies to address representational imbalance can have the unintended consequence of compromising strategies for diversity fostering, which can result in limiting perceptions that can impede organisational goals (Parsons, 2006). Leadership is important in diversity initiatives, and is expected to be involved and responsible for fostering diversity (Lockwood, 2005). But Diversity programmes need to go beyond the rhetoric and create inclusive and positive attitudes towards diversity across organisations (Mor Barak, 2015). Audits, benchmarking, training, talent development, leadership development, and improving cross-cultural competency are all potential approaches that can be used to promote diversity (Mathews, 1998; Lockwood, 2005). Conflict stemming from diversity can be reduced through skills training, awareness building and better team processes, which can lead to members of a team working in a more cooperative and communicating manner (Choi & Rainey, 2010). Choi & Rainey (2010) suggest that integrative diversity management strategies can

help to promote tolerance and understanding among employees about uncertainty related to workforce diversity.

Organisational performance is defined as a combination of financial performance, product market performance and shareholders returns (Abbas *et al.*, 2024) which are outcomes arising from the firm-specific resources, capabilities, and routines (Israel, 2022). It represents the effectiveness of an organisation, its productivity, market expansion, the customers' satisfaction and the relevance of an organisation to its stakeholders (Boso *et al.*, 2017). According to Dragomir and Panzaru (2014) performance is competitiveness, attained through effectiveness and productivity of various factors. It focuses on its evaluation in various fields such as strategic planning, operations, finance and organizational development, as noted by Lyles (2014).

There are internal factors that influence organisational performance, including organisational structure, culture, strategic direction, managerial competence, employee commitment, and stakeholder engagement (Brix & Peters, 2015). Leadership is a key factor in achieving performance through decision making and strategies that are in line with the aim of the organisation (Abukabar *et al.*, 2017). Because the concept is subjective, there are a number of theories and ideas on organisational performance, which have resulted in the creation of various models of organisational performance (Negulescu, 2019). However, the lack of a consensus on standards for measuring performance reflects subjectivity of the concept (Negulescu, 2019). Thus, in order to understand organisational performance, it is important to have knowledge of organisational theories and various perspectives, and recognise that it is a complex and variable process.

2. | Materials and Methods

This study adopted a survey research design to generalise from a sample of the population so that inferences can be made and to give the researcher the opportunity to collect data without manipulating any variables of interest to the study. The state of Ondo is located within the tropical forest belt of southwestern Nigeria. It shares boundaries with the states of Ekiti and Kogi in the north, Edo in the east, Osun and Ogun in the west, and the Atlantic Ocean in the south. The state has a population of about 3.44 million people as at 2006 and possesses great potential for flourishing business and economic activities, thereby making it a significant contributor to the country's economy. Ondo State is blessed with abundant natural resources which have not been fully exploited yet. Its geographical location and peaceful atmosphere make it a suitable place for investments. Some of the investment areas in Ondo State are mineral exploration, agriculture, and tourism. The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) is the primary agency for internal revenue generation (IGR) in Ondo State. It was created by the Personal Income Tax Act 2004 (amended). A population comprises all the possible items or observations connected to a certain phenomenon of interest in respect of a research subject or item. The population for this study consists of the total number of the operational staff at the Internal Revenue Service Ondo State, consisting of staff involved in different areas of the service's operation. On the other hand, the target population consists of the four hundred and fifty (450) operational staff that comprise the main staff at the State Internal Revenue Service of Ondo State. This estimate is carefully calculated using the organization's directory. The sample size was determined to be 212 for the study; participants were selected using simple random sampling method. The sample size was predetermined using Yammane's (1973) sample size formula. Questionnaire served as the main tool for collecting information in this study. The face and content validity of the tool was tested through an expert analysis conducted by

experts in the area, including a statistician and a research analyst, among others, besides the inputs of the study supervisor. This helped to ensure that the tool adequately captured the concepts and provided meaningful results in terms of behaviors under study. For this study, all questionnaire items related to each construct were combined into a single variable to assess reliability. The reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach's Alpha (CA), which measures the internal consistency of the items representing each variable. A threshold value of 0.7 was adopted as the acceptable standard. The results of the reliability analysis are presented in Table 1. The result showed that all variables have Cronbach Alpha values above the 0.7 threshold, with the exception of Innovation having CA value of 0.669, which is close to the threshold. The study employed both descriptive and inferential statistics to analyse the objectives of the study. The first objective was analysed using frequency tables and mean ranking and objective two and three were analysed with multiple linear regression and analysis of variance (ANOVA) with the aid of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 25. The regression model is presented below.

- i. The effect of workforce diversity on organisational performance in the study area.

$$OP = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 DD + \alpha_2 FD + \alpha_3 IC + e \quad (1)$$

where; OP is organisational performance, α_0 is constant term, $\alpha_1 \dots \alpha_3$ are Parameter coefficient, e - error term, DD is demographic diversity, FD is functional diversity, and IC is inclusion climate.

- ii. The effect of diversity management on organisational performance in the study area.

$$OP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 LC + \beta_2 DT + \beta_3 DP + e \quad (2)$$

Where; OP is organisational performance, β_0 is constant term, $\beta_1 \dots \beta_3$ are Parameter coefficient, e is error term, LC is leadership commitment, DT is diversity training, and DP is diversity policies.

3. | Results and Discussion

In order to achieve the objectives of this research, two hundred and twenty (220) copies of the questionnaire were distributed (of a minimum

sample size of 212) to the respondents, one hundred and thirty-two (132) copies were properly completed and returned representing a percentage of 60% as shown in Table 1.

Table 1 | Questionnaire Response Rate and Retrieval

Items Distributed	Number	Percentage (%)
Copies of the questionnaire distributed	220	100
Copies of valid questionnaire Returned	132	60.3
Copies of invalid questionnaire	88	39.7
Total	220	100

Source | Researcher’s Field Report (2024)

In Table 2, the age distribution of respondents shows that a significant proportion of the workforce falls within the youthful age bracket. The highest representation is from the 31-40 years age group, accounting for 51.5% of the total respondents, followed by those in the 21-30 years category, making up 37.1%. In contrast, the least represented groups are those less than 20 years (2.3%) and those between 41-50 years (9.1%). The graph above shows that ODIRS has a fairly young labor force, with more than half of the employees belonging to their most productive age range of 31-40 years. As shown from the table, the number of female workers (56.1%) in ODIRS is more compared to the number of male workers (43.9%). Respondents are split fairly evenly between single (49.2%) and married (47.7%) employees, with a relatively small proportion of respondents being divorced (3.0%). This variation in marital status may impact the workplace environment, as individuals' personal situations can also impact their work-life balance, commitment level and workplace flexibility needs. Years of experience data show that the majority (45.5%) of the workforce have less than 5 years' experience, and 41.7% of the workforce have 5 to 10 years of experience. Fewer than 11.4% of the respondents are in the age range 11 to 20 years and 1.5% are above 20 years. This indicates that the work force is relatively untrained and has a high number of early career workers. The distribution of educational qualifications of the respondents is

skewed towards higher education as most of them have HND/B.Sc/B.A high number of degrees were tech related (62.9%) and a large number had M.Sc/M. Tech degrees (25.8%). The Ph.D holders constitute only 3.8 per cent of the population of the workers, while the least represented are those holders of WAEC/NECO (2.3 per cent) and OND (5.3 per cent). The high level of educational attainment indicates that ODIRS has a highly qualified staff, which has a positive effect on the organisation's performance.

Table 2 | Demographic Features of Respondents

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
less than 20	3	2.3
21-30yrs	49	37.1
31-40yrs	68	51.5
41-50yrs	12	9.1
Total	132	100.0
Gender		
Male	58	43.9
Female	74	56.1
Total	132	100.0
Marital status		
Single	65	49.2

Married	63	47.7
Divorced	4	3.0
Total	132	100.0
Years of Experience		
below 5yrs	60	45.5
5-10yrs	55	41.7
11-20yrs	15	11.4
above 20yrs	2	1.5
Total	132	100.0
Educational Qualification		
WAEC/NECO	3	2.3
OND	7	5.3
HND/B.Sc/B.Tech	83	62.9
M.Sc/M.Tech	34	25.8
Ph.D	5	3.8
Total	132	100.0

Source | Researcher’s Field Report (2024)

3.1 | Level of Workforce Diversity

The results of the level of workforce diversity at Ondo State Internal Revenue Service (ODIRS) is presented in Table 3. Overall, respondents were consistent across Table 3 in saying that ODIRS is diverse in terms of the characteristics of its workforce. The first item, ‘Our team includes employees from a variety of ages’, received a mean of 4.44 and a relatively low SD of 0.703 indicating a high level of agreement among employees that age diversity is well represented. This implies that having a younger and older staff can be advantageous for ODIRS, as it enables the organisation to use a combination of energy, creativity and fresh ideas from the younger staff, with wisdom and experience from the older staff. The item 'There is a balanced representation of genders within our organisation' had a mean score of 4.37 and the standard deviation was 0.692 when it came to gender diversity. This high mean shows

that the employees have a relatively balanced gender representation in their ODIRS, with both male and female employees having fair opportunities in the organisation. A diverse workplace is vital to a successful workplace, as it brings in variety of perspectives, helps in innovation and enables a more inclusive workplace. The mean score for the item, "Our organisation employs people with a variety of educational backgrounds," was 4.35 (SD = 0.710) for employees when it came to educational diversity. This means that ODIRS has employees with a variety of educational backgrounds. Educational diversity allows the organisation to look at a problem from many angles and utilize a variety of analytical tools, methods and thought processes by employees from their educational experiences. Ethnic diversity (item "Ethnic diversity is evident among the employees in our workplace") had slightly lower mean score (4.08) and higher standard deviation (0.997) than other items included in the demographic diversity scores. This implies that while ethnic diversity is present in ODIRS, there is some variability in employees’ perceptions of how well it is represented. When transitioned to functional diversity, the findings show a high level of diversity among employees in skills, expertise, and experiences. The highest mean score was for item 'Employees in our organisation have a wide range of skills and expertise' (4.65) and the standard deviation was significant (4.486). Odirs staff have a shared understanding that their employees have a wide range of skills which is beneficial to their ability to tackle various issues. The knowledge and skills vary among employees, enabling the organisation to improve its problem-solving skills and create new approaches to challenges, such as revenue collection, financial management and tax enforcement. Another high-scoring item, with a mean of 4.34 (standard deviation = 0.675) was "Our team members bring different perspectives and approaches to problem solving". This shows that ODIRS is perceived to be gaining from many different perspectives, which contributes to a positive impact on the performance of ODIRS.

Table 3 | Descriptive Statistics of Level of Workforce Diversity

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
DEMOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY					
DD1-Our team consists of employees from a wide range of age groups.	131	1	5	4.44	.703
DD2-BB2-There is a balanced representation of genders within our organisation.	132	2	5	4.37	.692
DD3-Our organisation employs individuals with diverse educational backgrounds.	132	2	5	4.35	.710
DD4-Ethnic diversity is evident among the employees in our workplace.	131	1	5	4.08	.997
FUNCTIONAL DIVERSITY					
FD1-Employees in our organisation possess a wide variety of skills and expertise.	132	1	55	4.65	4.486
FD2-Our team members bring different perspectives and approaches to problem-solving.	132	2	5	4.34	.675
FD3-The diversity of professional backgrounds in our workforce contributes to innovative solutions.	132	2	5	4.29	.747
FD4-We have employees with a range of experiences and functional specialisations.	132	1	5	4.29	.726
INCLUSION CLIMATE					
IC1-Our organisation fosters a culture where all employees feel a sense of belonging.	132	1	5	4.11	.930
IC2-There is a high level of respect for diverse backgrounds and perspectives in our workplace.	131	2	6	4.23	.750
IC3-Our organisational culture promotes fairness for all employees, regardless of their characteristics.	131	2	5	4.12	.823
IC4-Employees feel valued and included in decision-making processes within the organisation.	131	1	5	4.12	.832

Source | Researcher’s Field Report (2024)

Key | DD is demographic diversity, FD is functional diversity, and IC is inclusive Climate diversity.

People who have different professional backgrounds and experiences working together can solve problems from a greater number of perspectives, which can lead to better solutions.

The next component of workforce diversity measured in the survey is an inclusive culture in ODIRS. This is an indicator of the employees' sense of belonging to the organisation, especially the employees' perception of fairness, respect for diversity and a sense of belonging. The mean score for the item "Our organisation fosters a culture where all employees feel a sense of belonging" is 4.11 (SD = 0.930) indicating that most employees feel included and valued within the organisation. It is essential for an inclusive climate to make sure that everyone who works within the organisation feels like they are a part of the organisation's success. Respect of diverse backgrounds and perspectives is also highly rated, with the item "There is a high level of respect for diverse backgrounds and perspectives in our workplace" having a mean rating of 4.23, and a standard deviation of 0.750. This means that ODIRS has created a positive working culture where diversity in background and opinion has been embraced.

The mean scores for all items of Table 3 illustrate, in essence, that ODIRS has been successful in fostering a high degree of workforce diversity. There is a significant proportion of the workforce that view the organisation as being highly diverse in terms of demographics, skills and inclusion. The mean scores for most of the items are relatively high (above 4.0), indicating that more than 80% of respondents have positive views on workforce diversity, with diversity in age, gender, education, and functional expertise being especially high. This indicates that ODIRS is a diverse organisation, likely to benefit the organisation in terms of innovation, problem-solving and employee engagement.

The relatively small scores for ethnic diversity and including employees in decision making processes

indicate opportunities for improvement. In general, there is considerable diversity, but increasing the proportion of ethnic diversity, and ensuring that everyone feels a part of decision making, may improve the organisation's diversity management practices and, consequently, its performance.

3.2 | Workforce Diversity and Organisational Performance

The regression results shown below give insights into the impact of workforce diversity on organisational performance in Ondo State Internal Revenue Service (ODIRS) for the second specific objective of the study. The results of the Model Summary table, the ANOVA table and the Coefficients table was interpreted to provide a complete picture of the relationships between the three concepts of workforce diversity (demographic diversity, functional diversity, and inclusion climate) and organisational performance. As seen in Table 4, the R-value is 0.437, representing a moderate positive correlation between the predictor variables (the components of the workforce diversity) and the dependent variable (organisational performance). This R Square (R^2) of 0.191 indicates that 19.1% of the variance of the organisational performance was explained by the three types of workforce diversity: demographic diversity, functional diversity and inclusion climate. This is a substantial proportion, but could also mean that other influences within the ODIRS are not related to workforce diversity, accounting for 80.9%. The Adjusted R Square of 0.172 is slightly lower than the R Square, which means that while workforce diversity explains about 17.2% of the variance in organisational performance, it has not increased with the inclusion of the predictors. This decrease in the Adjusted R Square indicates that more variables may slightly diminish the model's explanatory power. However, it is still a positive contribution to the diversity of the workforce in the organisation's overall performance.

Table 4 | Model Summary of Workforce Diversity and Organizational Performance

R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
.191	.172	.62820

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Inclusion Climate, Functional Diversity, Demographic Diversity
- b. Dependent Variable: Organisational Performance

Source: Researcher’s Field Report (2024)

In Table 5, the individual contributions of each diversity component to organisational performance are examined. Demographic Diversity has a B-value of 0.030 with a p-value of 0.815, which is well above the conventional significance level ($p > 0.05$). This means that demographic diversity does not have a statistically significant effect on organisational performance in this model.

Functional Diversity also shows a non-significant relationship with organisational performance, with a B-value of 0.019 and a p-value of 0.677**. This finding indicates that the variety of skills, experiences, and professional backgrounds within ODIRS is not significantly related to organisational performance.

In contrast, Inclusion Climate shows a strong and statistically significant effect on organisational performance, with a B-value of 0.373 and a p-value of 0.000**. This indicates that the inclusion climate the extent to which employees feel valued, respected, and included in the organisation has a substantial positive impact on organisational performance. The Beta value of 0.404, the highest among the predictors, further highlights that inclusion climate is the most influential diversity factor in this model. The Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for the predictors are all below 10 (ranging from 1.219 to 1.953), indicating that multicollinearity is not a concern in this model.

Table 5 | Coefficients of Workforce Diversity and Organizational Performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	2.316	.396		5.842	.000		
Demographic Diversity	.030	.126	.026	.235	.815	.512	1.953
Functional Diversity	.019	.047	.037	.418	.677	.820	1.219
Inclusion Climate	.373	.101	.404	3.681	.000	.529	1.892

- a. Dependent Variable: Organisational Performance
- Source | Researcher’s Field Report (2024)

In Table 6, the F-statistic (10.016) is statistically significant at the 0.000 level ($p < 0.05$), which indicates that the overall model is a good fit for the data. This means that the combination of demographic diversity, functional diversity, and inclusion climate significantly predicts organisational performance in ODIRS, and the model provides a statistically valid relationship

3.3 | Workforce Diversity Management and Organisational Performance

From the regression analysis presented in this section, it is evident that the three predictors; leadership commitment, diversity training, and diversity policies and practices, together account for 29.3% of the variation in organisational performance. Table

Table 6 | ANOVA of Workforce Diversity and Organization performance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11.858	3	3.953	10.016	.000 ^b
	Residual	50.118	127	.395		
	Total	61.976	130			

a. Dependent Variable: Organisational Performance
b. Predictors: (Constant), Inclusion Climate, Functional Diversity, Demographic Diversity

Source: Researcher’s Field Report (2024)

7 below illustrates this clearly, showing an R-Square value of 0.293. In other words, almost one-third of the increased performance of ODIRS is explained by these diverse management strategies.

Adjusted R-Square, which considers the number of predictors in the model, is 0.276. Therefore, there is a confirmation that the use of the three predictors including leadership commitment, diversity

training and diversity policies and practices does affect organisational performance even though the effect of inclusion of the three predictors reduces slightly. Moreover, there is an indication from the standard error of the estimate which is 0.58755 that the regression model is quite accurate in predicting the performance of organisations even though there is still some level of variability.

Table 7 | Model Summary of Workforce Diversity Management and Organizational Performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.541 ^a	.293	.276	.58755

a. Predictors: (Constant), Diversity Policies and Practices, Leadership Committment, Diversity Training
b. Dependent Variable: Organisational Performance

Source: Researcher’s Field Report (2024)

In Table 8, the leadership commitment towards diversity has a positive influence on organisational performance with a coefficient of 0.392 and a p-value of 0.000. The implication here is that leadership commitment influences organisational performance greatly in positive ways. This implies that there is improvement in organisational performance for every one unit improvement in the leadership commitment. There is a need therefore for active involvement of the leaders in diversity promotion as leaders are in a position to foster cooperation, collaboration and innovation among employees in the organisation. In addition, diversity policies and practices also have a significant and positive effect on organisational performance, as reflected by the coefficient of 0.212 and a p-value of 0.001.

This indicates that well-structured and effectively implemented diversity policies are associated with better organisational outcomes. The beta value of 0.294 suggests that an increase in the strength and comprehensiveness of diversity policies leads to an increase in performance.

However, in contrast, the results show that diversity training has a negative but non-significant effect on organisational performance, with a coefficient of -0.072 and a p-value of 0.373. While this result is not statistically significant, the negative coefficient suggests that, diversity training may not be yielding the intended positive effects on performance. This could indicate that the current diversity training programmes at ODIRS may not be adequately

Table 8 | Coefficients of Workforce Diversity Management and Organizational Performance

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients
		B	Std. Error	Beta
1	(Constant)	2.041	.321	
	Leadership	.392	.092	.385
	Commitment			
	Diversity Training	-.072	.081	-.081
	Diversity Policies			
	and Practices	.212	.064	.294

a. Dependent Variable: Organisational Performance
Source: Researcher’s Field Report (2024)

designed or implemented. It is possible that the training does not effectively engage employees or is not sufficiently linked to organisational goals.

The significance of the model is confirmed by the ANOVA results in Table 9, where the F-value of 17.510 and a p-value of 0.000 indicate that the model is

statistically significant. It can therefore be noted that the collective influence of leadership commitment, diversity training, and diversity practices does have a significant influence on organizational effectiveness, indicating the significance of diversity management practices in influencing the outcome within the context of ODIRS.

Table 9 | ANOVA of Workforce Diversity Management and Organizational Performance

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	18.134	3	6.045	17.510	.000 ^b
	Residual	43.842	127	.345		
	Total	61.976	130			

a. Dependent Variable: Organisational Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Diversity Policies and Practices, Leadership Commitment, Diversity Training
Source: Researcher’s Field Report (2024)

4. | Discussion

The results of the study on the Workforce diversity management practices and Organizational performance in Ondo State Internal Revenue Service (ODIRS) found to agree with and support some recent studies on workforce diversity in Organisations. Results from this study showed a high demographic diversity within ODIRS and employees felt that there was an equal balance between age,

gender, and educational levels. This is in line with results from Johnson *et al.* (2020), who showed that more age and gender diverse organisations exhibit better performance, specifically in their problem-solving and decision-making skills. Johnson *et al.* (2020) believe that there is a benefit of having people of different ages in an organisation as this brings expertise and innovation. This aligns with the ODIRS finding that diversity of age and gender representation

brought significant benefits to the employees. But, the results of the study on ethnic diversity issues are more complex, with some employees feeling there is less ethnic diversity. This finding is different from Aljunaibi and Uddin (2021) who claimed that ethnic diversity has a crucial role to play in increasing the organisational performance by creating a culture of creativity and innovation by integrating other cultural viewpoints. The ODIRS results suggested that there is diversity, but perhaps it is not as strongly perceived as other types of diversity. This indicates that ODIRS has the potential to enhance on this aspect as it was concluded by Aljunaibi and Uddin (2021) that organisations that have an effective ethnic diversity management would perform better especially in a diverse societal context. Additionally, this study confirmed that the inclusive workplace climate has also a significant positive effect on organisation performance which is consistent with findings from Sharma *et al.* (2021) who believed that the ambiance of an inclusive workplace has a significant positive effect on organisation performance. They found that when employees feel appreciated and at home, they will be more inclined to innovate in what they do, which ultimately will yield better performance results. Likewise, Joshi and Roh (2022) offer additional support, claiming that practices of a diversity management that is focused on inclusivity is essential to harnessing the potential of diverse teams. They found that organisations that invest in inclusion, including a sense of belonging and fairness, are more successful than those that only invest in demographic or functional diversity. In contrast to the results of this study, however, Garcia and Ortiz (2020) propose that demographic diversity, specifically the gender and ethnic diversity of an organisation, can be a major influence on organisational performance if managed well. They believe that such companies have a more diverse workforce that thus understand and cater to diverse customers which leads to better financial performance. The lack of any significant relationship between demographic diversity

and performance in ODIRS could suggest that demographic diversity is present in the organisation but may not be effectively utilised to bring about success. Furthermore, the positive and significant relationship between leadership commitment and organisational performance found in this study is in tandem with the findings of Osabiya (2020) that leadership's role of championing diversity has a significant impact on the success of an organisation. Osabiya's research revealed that workers who see inclusive leadership from the top are more engaged, creative and productive in the workplace. Few studies have examined the importance of well-designed diversity policies, with Martins *et al.* (2021) finding that such a policy is a significant factor. Martins *et al.* noted that organisations with positive, concrete diversity policies have higher financial and non-financial performance. These policies can foster greater inclusion, boost satisfaction, innovation and collaboration among employees, all of which contributes to better organisational results. This is in line with the results of this study which showed that diversity policies and practices had a positive and significant effect on organisational performance at ODIRS.

5. | Conclusion

The researcher in this study investigated the interrelationship of workforce diversity management practices and organizational performance of Ondo State Internal Revenue Service (ODIRS). The study adopted survey research design and collected the data from the ODIRS staff members by structured questionnaires. The research was directed at three main areas: (1) the level of workforce diversity, (2) the impact of workforce diversity on workforce performance, and (3) the effect of diversity management practices (such as management commitment, diversity training, and diversity policies) on diversity. The study revealed that ODIRS had a diverse staff which covered three dimensions of diversity – demographic, functional and inclusive

climate. These dimensions have a number of impacts on the performance of the organisation. It was surprising to discover that inclusive climate (the organisational culture that supports respect, fairness and equal opportunity) is the only one of the climates with a significant positive impact on organisational performance. However, demographic and functional diversity did not have a significant effect on performance. The study also revealed that diversity management practices, including leadership commitment, diversity training and policies for inclusion, play a key role in the enhancement of non-financial performance of ODIRS. In conclusion, it is recommended that all public sector organisations in the country embrace the concept of workforce diversity as inclusive climate is one of the factors that enhance the performance in ODIRS.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

It is recommended that ODIRS conduct regular reviews and audits of its workforce diversity. This will help to ensure that the organisation continues to

reflect diversity across demographic, functional, and inclusive climate dimensions. Particular attention should be given to maintaining an inclusive climate, as this dimension was found to significantly affect organisational performance.

ODIRS should prioritise fostering an inclusive climate, as this was the only dimension of diversity that had a significant impact on performance. By creating a workplace environment where all employees feel respected and valued, the organisation can maximise the benefits of its diverse workforce. Leadership should focus on initiatives that promote fairness, equality, and open communication within the organisation.

Leadership at ODIRS should demonstrate a strong, visible commitment to fostering inclusivity. Furthermore, diversity training should be conducted regularly to ensure that all employees are aware of the benefits of an inclusive climate and understand how to work effectively in such an environment. The organisation should also strengthen its diversity policies to ensure they are aligned with best practices and provide clear guidelines for inclusivity and equity.

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