

# EFFECT OF WORKPLACE DIVERSITY ON EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE IN SELECTED DEPOSIT MONEY BANKS IN ABUJA

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## Abstract

*This study investigates the effect of workplace diversity on employee performance in selected deposit money banks in Abuja, focusing on age and gender diversity employing a structured Likert scale questionnaire of five point with a sample size of 214 respondents. Utilizing SmartPLS-SEM for data analysis, the findings revealed that both age diversity (path coefficient = 0.290, T-value = 3.285, P-value = 0.001) and gender diversity (path coefficient = 0.561, T-value = 7.035, P-value = 0.000) have statistically significant positive effects on employee performance. Based on these results, the study recommends implementing age and gender diversity programs, providing diversity and inclusion training, promoting diverse leadership, and developing comprehensive diversity policies to enhance employee performance and achieve better organizational outcomes.*

**Keywords:** Workplace Diversity, Age Diversity, Gender Diversity, Employee Performance

## INTRODUCTION

In today's interconnected and globalized world, businesses operate in increasingly diverse environments, making workplace diversity a crucial factor in employee dynamics and overall performance. A diverse workforce brings a wealth of perspectives, ideas, and problem-solving approaches, which promote creativity and innovation within teams. Additionally, diversity fosters an inclusive work environment, enhancing employee morale, job satisfaction, and retention rates. Conversely, mismanaged diversity can lead to conflicts and communication barriers, potentially hindering team performance and organizational success (Robbins & Judge, 2022). Smith et al. (2023) highlight the role of inclusive leadership in maximizing the positive effects of diversity on team performance, emphasizing the importance of effective management practices in leveraging diversity's potential benefits.

The banking sector in Nigeria's capital has experienced rapid growth and transformation in recent years, characterized by a diverse workforce. Workplace diversity encompasses differences in age, gender, ethnicity, religion, educational backgrounds, and experiences among employees. This diversity has garnered attention from researchers, practitioners, and policymakers due to its potential impact on team performance and organizational productivity. Diverse teams can enhance creativity, innovation, problem-solving, and decision-making processes (Sousa et al., 2019). Jackson et al. (2017) assert that diverse teams tend to outperform homogeneous ones in problem-solving and adaptability, enhancing overall performance in dynamic and complex environments. However, diversity can also introduce challenges related to communication, conflict resolution, and cohesion, necessitating inclusive practices and diversity training for employees (Thomas & Ely, 2020).

Moreso, the banking sector in Abuja faces escalating challenges of declining job satisfaction and increasing turnover rates (Tummers, 2013), which have repercussions that extend beyond resource depletion and knowledge loss, ultimately impacting the quality of services delivered (Webb & Carpenter, 2012). While numerous studies have explored the correlation between workforce diversity and employee performance across various industries, a significant research gap persists in examining age and gender diversity and their implications for workforce diversity and employee performance specifically within the context of the banking sector in Abuja. This study aims to bridge this gap by shedding light on the influence of workplace diversity on team performance in the context of Abuja's banking sector.

The study is guided by the following stated hypotheses:

**H0<sub>1</sub>:** Age diversity does not have significant effect on employee performance in selected deposit money banks in Abuja.

**H0<sub>2</sub>:** Gender diversity does not have significant effect on employee performance in selected deposit money banks in Abuja.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### ***Workplace Diversity***

A diverse workforce includes individuals from various backgrounds, encompassing differences in color, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, physical abilities, and other demographics (Eze et al., 2022). Gitonga et al. (2016) defines workforce diversity as acknowledging, understanding, accepting, valuing, and celebrating differences among people regarding age, class, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, race, sexual orientation, spiritual practice, and public assistance status. Workforce Diversity Management is the ability of a manager to achieve organizational success by leveraging employee similarities and differences in age, cultural background, physical abilities and disabilities, race, ethnicity, religion, sex, personality, values, attitudes, perception, and cognitive style (Ahmed, 2021). Diversity involves groups of people with varied backgrounds, values, perspectives, and benefits, becoming assets for their organizations (Otikey et al., 2011). It refers to the co-existence of people from different cultural backgrounds within an organization, leading to a more productive, innovative, and creative workforce (Kerby & Burns, 2012; Afzal et al., 2013). Workforce diversity encompasses similarities and dissimilarities among workers from various socio-cultural backgrounds, such as age, gender, ethnicity, disability, origin, and religion (Dahanayake, 2020). It promotes the integration of diverse human differences and the use of diversity and inclusion policies as workplace guides (Alghazo & Al Shaiban, 2016).

### ***Age Diversity***

Age diversity in the workplace, as highlighted by Soylu (2022), is a critical component of an organization's demographic attributes, involving the coexistence of individuals of varying ages within a team or organization. This diversity fosters both differences and similarities, evolving into an integral aspect of modern organizations (Stankiewicz, 2015). It is more than just a demographic statistic; it serves as a catalyst for innovation and creativity by offering a wide range of values, knowledge, and perspectives essential for enhanced problem-solving. The combination of experiences and insights from employees of different generations creates a richer tapestry of ideas and solutions compared to a homogenous workforce. Lopes and Martins (2018) note that age diversity, representing different age cohorts, contributes to enhanced innovation and creativity within a group. Recognizing the value of age diversity, organizations must create inclusive work environments to fully harness the potential of a multi-generational workforce. Pitt-Catsouphes et al. (2018) emphasize the importance of valuing and respecting individuals of all ages, ensuring equal opportunities for employment and career advancement as part of comprehensive diversity and inclusion efforts.

### ***Gender Diversity***

Gender diversity in the workplace, as defined by Onwuchekwa et al. (2019), refers to the presence of an appropriate mix of male and female employees within an organization, extending beyond traditional binary notions to embrace the spectrum of gender expressions and experiences. Fulcher (2014) highlights that this diversity includes various aspects such as clothing, appearance, and behavior. Gender, a multifaceted concept encompassing both physiological attributes and social constructs, is defined by Powell (2011) as the binary categorization of individuals based on biological characteristics, while also encompassing societal expectations, beliefs, and stereotypes regarding attitudes, behaviors, values, knowledge, skills, and interests deemed suitable or typical for each gender. These social constructs significantly shape individuals' identities and influence their experiences in various contexts.

### ***Employee Performance***

Employee performance refers to the measurable outcomes and behaviors exhibited by individuals in relation to their job responsibilities, encompassing the effectiveness, efficiency, and quality of their contributions to the workplace (Yamin, 2022). It reflects an employee's ability to meet or exceed organizational goals and expectations, making performance evaluation a crucial aspect of talent management for assessing value, identifying improvement areas, and making informed decisions about promotions, compensation, and

development opportunities. DelloRusso and Stoykova (2020) highlight the multidimensional nature of employee performance, emphasizing both task performance and contextual performance. Thus, employee performance is defined not only by how well employees execute their job duties (Johari et al., 2019) but also by various factors that contribute to their overall contribution to the company's success.

## **Empirical Review**

### ***Age Diversity and Employee Performance***

Joseph (2014) posits that age is one of the most commonly diversified demographic variables in the workforce. His study in Singapore focused on employees' perceptions of the effect of age diversity on organizational performance, utilizing a self-administered questionnaire with a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.708. Analyzing the data with SPSS, the study found a negative relationship between employee age and performance, suggesting that factors like organizational culture, human resource practices, nature of work, and business strategies might mask the impact of age diversity on performance across different firms. Similarly, Hapompwe et al. (2020) assessed the impact of age and gender diversity on employee performance at the Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency (ZCSA) through descriptive research involving 103 employees. Using stratified and random sampling techniques and analyzing data with SPSS, the study found that both age and gender diversity positively influenced employee performance, with employees comfortable working with colleagues of different ages and genders. However, both studies were conducted in specific contexts—Singapore and Zambia, respectively—making their findings less directly applicable to deposit money banks in Abuja, Nigeria.

Mulenga (2020) similarly examined age and gender diversity at Zambia Compulsory Standards Agency, confirming that such diversity positively affects employee performance and organizational output. This study also emphasized that gender diversity has a high predictive power on performance and that creating an inclusive environment benefits organization. Odhiambo et al. (2018) explored age diversity in public universities in Western Kenya, using a mixed-method design and finding a statistically significant positive relationship between age diversity and employee performance. They recommended maintaining age diversity policies to enhance workforce diversity benefits. Krishnan et al. (2017) also investigated age diversity's impact on employee performance, revealing significant contributions of age diversity in predicting performance, with variations across gender, age group, work experience, and position. Despite these insights, their applicability to the banking sector in Abuja remains uncertain, necessitating localized research to understand the specific dynamics in that context.

### ***Gender Diversity and Employee Performance***

Krishnan (2020) explored the effects of gender diversity on employee performance in the food processing industry in Kerala through a descriptive study involving 230 respondents surveyed via convenience sampling. With a sampling adequacy of 0.771 (KMO Test) and significant Bartlett's sphericity test results ( $p = 0.000$ ), the data were analyzed using ANOVA, correlation, and regression analysis. The findings revealed that gender diversity significantly predicts employee performance and varies across gender, age group, and work experience. This study underscores the importance of gender diversity in enhancing employee performance. However, its findings may not be directly applicable to the banking sector in Abuja, Nigeria, highlighting the need for localized studies. Similarly, Amsi and Kiflemariam (2023) examined the influence of gender diversity on various dimensions of employee performance in Tanzania, finding a statistically significant positive impact on adaptive, contextual, and task performance. The study recommends organizations ensure a balanced gender mix through equitable recruitment, retention, and career development practices while basing promotions on merit. Yet, the context-specific findings in Dar es Salaam may not directly translate to Nigerian banks.

Other studies also highlight the positive impacts of gender diversity in different contexts. Reguera-Alvarado et al. (2017) investigated the relationship between board gender diversity and economic results in Spain, finding that increased female board representation, driven by mandatory quotas, correlates with improved economic outcomes. However, these findings, based on Spanish non-financial firms, may not be directly applicable to Nigerian banks. Chepkemoi et al. (2022) investigated gender diversity's impact on employee

performance in the County Government of Bomet, Kenya, revealing a strong positive relationship ( $r=0.689$ ;  $p<0.05$ ) and influencing performance by 72.3% ( $R^2=0.723$ ). This suggests that county governments should advocate for gender diversity to enhance performance, although these findings may not be entirely applicable to the banking sector in Abuja. Onwuchekwa et al. (2019) examined gender diversity and employee engagement in cable manufacturing companies in Anambra State, Nigeria, concluding that gender diversity significantly enhances employee engagement and recommending non-discriminatory recruitment, training, and promotion practices. This localized study reinforces the positive relationship between gender diversity and employee engagement within Nigerian contexts, suggesting potential benefits for the banking sector in Abuja.

### ***Social Identity Theory***

Turner's (1978) social identity theory suggests that individuals are inclined to support and positively evaluate groups that reflect significant aspects of their social identities, such as age, ethnicity, and religion, driven by the desire to boost self-esteem and maintain a positive self-identity (Hogg & Terry, 2000). This theory indicates that people are more likely to identify with a workgroup when they share demographic similarities, which fosters a stronger psychological connection and involvement in achieving the workgroup's objectives. However, when demographic features differ, it can lead to a loss of self-identity, making it challenging for individuals to express their views and opinions (Ng et al., 2019). This issue is exacerbated when organizational management practices are biased regarding resource distribution, information sharing, promotion, and task allocation based on gender, religion, ethnicity, talents, and age (Li et al., 2018). Recognizing and addressing these dynamics is crucial for promoting a diverse and inclusive workplace that fosters positive social identities and overall productivity.

Research by Turner and Reynolds (2013) highlights how social identity can escalate conflicts between different ethnic groups, with individuals favoring their in-group and exhibiting negative attitudes toward out-groups. Hogg and van Knippenberg (2003) further explored how strong group identification enhances group cohesion and performance. Haslam et al. (2000) examined the impact of social identity on leadership emergence, finding that individuals with prototypical group identities are more likely to be perceived as leaders. These studies demonstrate the utility of social identity theory in understanding group dynamics, intergroup conflict, and leadership within diverse teams. The theory underscores the importance of social categorization, social identity, and social comparison in shaping attitudes and behaviors, suggesting that managing these dynamics is essential for leveraging the benefits of workforce diversity while mitigating potential challenges.

### **METHODOLOGY**

This study adopted the survey research design, a structured five-point likert scale questionnaire was used to obtain data from employers of the selected deposit money banks. The study population covers all the staff of the five (5) DSIBs (Domestic Systemically Important Banks) in Abuja. These DSIBs are Zenith Bank; Guaranty Trust Bank, Access Bank, First Bank and United Bank for Africa, Domestic Systemically Important Banks are financial institutions whose distress or disorderly failure, because of their size, complexity and systemic interconnectedness, would cause significant disruption to the wider financial system and economic activity (Ehilebo et al, 2022). The selected banks are also listed by CBN (2022) as first tier banks in Nigeria. The study used only the banks zonal headquarters staffs in Abuja. The total staff strength of the selected banks is 217 employees' as obtained from the Human Resource Department of the selected Banks. Considering the small size population of the study, the study adopted a census survey which allows for the usage of the entire population as sample size in a study (Parker 2011). The responses were coded and analyzed using the Partial Least Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) through the measurement and the structural model. The model of study is specified below: -

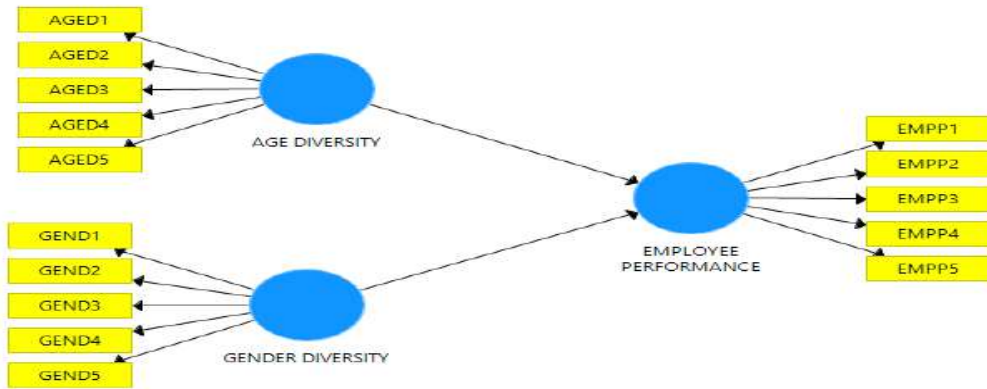


Figure 1: Model of study

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The study administered 217 copies of questionnaire to the employees of the selected deposit money banks in Abuja, 214 were returned correctly filled, this represents 98% response rate. To ensure data integrity, a preliminary assessment was performed to detect any potential issues such as missing values, outliers, or biased responses. The findings from the analysis indicated an absence of missing data, outliers, or biased responses within the collected information.

**The Measurement Model**

In the assessment of a measurement model, the initial step involves evaluating the outer loadings of study items, which indicates the strength of the relationship between each item and its corresponding construct in a measurement model. As advocated by Hair et al. (2019), loadings exceeding 0.70 are generally considered acceptable as they signify a substantial contribution of the construct to the variation in the indicator. This benchmark is crucial as it demonstrates that more than 50% of the variance in the indicator is explained by the construct, thereby ensuring a reliable measurement of the items. When loadings surpass this threshold, it implies a robust connection between the items and their underlying constructs, bolstering the confidence in the measurement model's accuracy and validity.

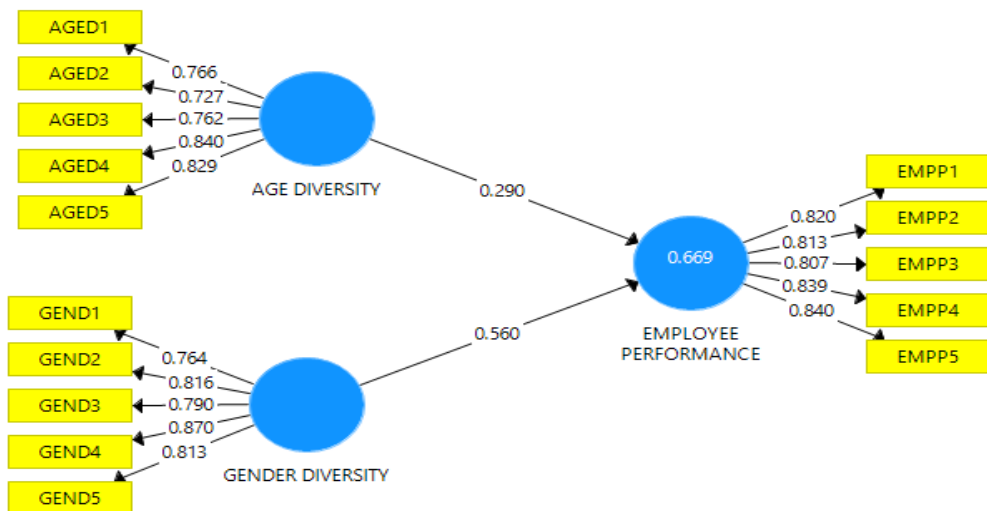


figure 2: Indicator outer loading

**Table 1: Reliability of the Study Scale**

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
AGE DIVERSITY	0.845	0.853	0.890	0.618
EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE	0.882	0.882	0.914	0.679
GENDER DIVERSITY	0.870	0.871	0.906	0.658

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2024

Table 1 presents the reliability metrics for the study scales, including Cronbach's Alpha, rho\_A, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for three constructs: Age Diversity, Employee Performance, and Gender Diversity. All constructs exhibit high reliability, with Cronbach's Alpha values of 0.845 for Age Diversity, 0.882 for Employee Performance, and 0.870 for Gender Diversity, indicating strong internal consistency. The rho\_A values are similarly robust, closely mirroring the Cronbach's Alpha values. Composite Reliability scores are all above the recommended threshold of 0.70, with Age Diversity at 0.890, Employee Performance at 0.914, and Gender Diversity at 0.906, further affirming the consistency of the constructs (Hair, et al 2017). The AVE values, all exceeding 0.50 (Age Diversity at 0.618, Employee Performance at 0.679, and Gender Diversity at 0.658), indicate that each construct explains more than 50% of the variance in its indicators, demonstrating satisfactory convergent validity.

**Table 2: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)**

	AGE DIVERSITY	EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE	GENDER DIVERSITY
AGE DIVERSITY			
EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE	0.584		
GENDER DIVERSITY	0.679	0.763	

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2024

Table 2 presents the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) values for the constructs Age Diversity, Employee Performance, and Gender Diversity. The HTMT value between Age Diversity and Employee Performance is 0.584, indicating a moderate relationship between these constructs. The HTMT value between Age Diversity and Gender Diversity is 0.679, also suggesting a moderate relationship. The highest HTMT value is between Employee Performance and Gender Diversity at 0.763, indicating a relatively strong relationship. All HTMT values are below the conservative threshold of 0.85, indicating satisfactory discriminant validity among the constructs, meaning that the constructs are distinct and not overly correlated.

***The Structural Model***

In assessing the structural model, the standard assessment criteria was consider which include the path coefficient, t-values, p-values and coefficient of determination( $R^2$ ). The bootstrapping procedure was conducted using a resample 5000.

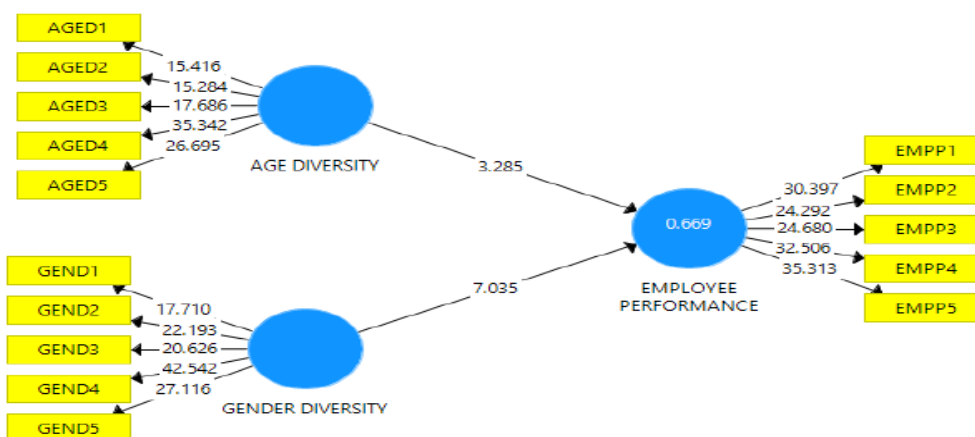


Figure 3: Path Coefficient of the regression model

Table 3: Path Coefficients

	Path Coefficients **(Beta)	T -values	P- Values	Decision
AGE DIVERSITY -> EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE	0.290	3.285	0.001	Rejected
GENDER DIVERSITY -> EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE	0.561	7.035	0.000	Rejected

Source: Smart PLS Output, 2024

Table 3 presents the path coefficients, T-values, and P-values for the effects of age diversity and gender diversity on employee performance in selected deposit money banks in Abuja.

**Test of Hypotheses**

The path coefficient for Age Diversity's effect on Employee Performance is 0.290, with a T-value of 3.285 and a P-value of 0.001. These results indicate a statistically significant positive effect of age diversity on employee performance. Consequently, the null hypothesis H01, which posits that age diversity does not have a significant effect on employee performance in selected deposit money banks in Abuja, is rejected. This finding underscores the importance of age diversity in enhancing employee performance within these banks.

Similarly, the path coefficient for Gender Diversity's effect on Employee Performance is 0.561, with a T-value of 7.035 and a P-value of 0.000. These results also show a statistically significant positive effect of gender diversity on employee performance. Therefore, the null hypothesis H02, which posits that gender diversity does not have a significant effect on employee performance in selected deposit money banks in Abuja, is rejected. This highlights the significant role gender diversity plays in improving employee performance, suggesting that fostering a gender-diverse workforce can lead to better organizational outcomes.

Table 4: R<sup>2</sup> and Predictive Relevance

	R <sup>2</sup>	Q <sup>2</sup> (=1-SSE/SSO)
EMPLOYEE COMMITMENT	0.669	0.463

Source: Smart PLS Output 2024

Table 4 presents the R<sup>2</sup> and Q<sup>2</sup> values for the construct of Employee Commitment. The R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.669 indicates that 66.9% of the variance in employee commitment is explained by the model, demonstrating a substantial level of explanatory power. The Q<sup>2</sup> value of 0.463, calculated as 1-SSE/SSO, signifies predictive relevance, as it is greater than zero. This indicates that the model has good predictive accuracy for employee commitment, confirming that the predictors used in the model, such as age diversity and gender diversity,

are significant contributors to understanding and forecasting employee commitment in the selected deposit money banks in Abuja.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study titled "Effect of Workplace Diversity on Employees' Performance in Selected Deposit Money Banks in Abuja" has yielded insightful findings regarding the impact of age and gender diversity on employee performance. The results demonstrate that both age and gender diversity significantly and positively influence employee performance in the selected deposit money banks in Abuja. The study concludes that fostering both age and gender diversity within the workplace is essential for improving employee performance, thereby contributing to better organizational outcomes. Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made to enhance employee performance through workplace diversity:

1. **Implement Age Diversity Programs:** Deposit money banks should actively promote age diversity within their workforce. This can be achieved through policies that encourage the recruitment and retention of employees from various age groups. Training and mentoring programs that facilitate knowledge transfer between younger and older employees should also be established.
2. **Promote Gender Diversity Initiatives:** To harness the benefits of gender diversity, banks should implement gender-inclusive policies and practices. This includes creating a work environment that supports gender diversity, providing opportunities for career advancement to all genders, and addressing any gender biases that may exist within the organization.

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