

## ABSTRACT

This research examined Managing Diversity in Multinational Organization with special reference to Unilever Nigeria Plc. The research adopted survey research design. Data were gathered through primary source with the aid of a well-structured questionnaire. Simple random sampling technique was adopted in the selection of sample, this was used to eliminate biasness in the selection process of the respondents.

Data garnered were presented on table using percentage and the formulated hypotheses were analysed with the use of Chi-square statistical method. The result of the analysis shows that there is no significant relationship between recruitment and diversity management. Also, Communication plays an effective role in managing diversity and there is a correlation between diversity management and organizational productivity.

Based on the conclusion of the analysis, recommendations were proffered to the staff and management of Unilever Nigeria Plc.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.0 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

Managers are increasingly being asked to boost productivity, quality and customer satisfaction while also reducing costs. These goals can only be met, however, through the cooperation and effort of all employees. By creating positive work environments, where people feel valued and appreciated, organizations are more likely to foster the employee commitment and performance necessary for organizational success.

Considering the following examples by *Kreitner, Kinicki and Buelens (2002)*, which are in contrast with the above statement, taken from three different work environments. “*Ade Arogundade*, a finance manager with Springboard Southward Trust has received racist

literature telling him he is not wanted at the organization and has been the subject of anonymous petitions sent to managers demanding that all black employees be removed from the workforce”.

Also, a report revealed appalling behaviour in the Dutch police force: “79 percent of female employees had been confronted with pin-ups, 55 percent with “dirty gestures”, 38 percent with blue films and 44 percent had the feeling of male colleagues “undressing them with their eyes (Hooghiemstra 1998).

Finally another example cited by *Kreitner et al (2002)* described *Sarah Locker*, “a woman police officer, received pornographic magazines on her desk and literature making derogatory reference to her Turkish background: she decided to take her complaints to court. She won her case, but met even more hostility on her return to work. The episode finally ended in a serious suicide attempt.

Sandra Valentine, a woman pilot claimed that she was told by a male colleague, “Women should not be let loose with anything more technical than a knife and fork. Once a senior pilot had announced to passengers. “The first officer is *Ms. Valentine* and yes, ladies and gentlemen, she is a woman we have then in the front as well as the back these days as, do not blame me”.

Managing diversity however is a sensitive potentially volatile and sometimes uncomfortable issue. In Europe, as well as in the USA, creating a diverse workforce is increasingly considered a necessity. *Jitan Patel*, race equality manager with HSBC, a major UK bank, declares “for us the idea is true diversity, which means that we value every individual for who and what they are and we provide them with the opportunities to meet their full potential within the organization.

However, diversity represents the multitude of individual differences and similarities that exist between people (*Kreitner et al, 2002*). This definition underscores three important issues about managing diversity. First, there are many different dimensions or components of diversity. This implies that diversity pertains to everybody. It is not an issue of age, race or gender. It is not an issue of whether one is heterosexual, gay or lesbian; or indeed Catholic, Jewish, Protestant, Celestian or Muslim etc. Diversity also does not pit ‘White males’ against all other groups. Diversity pertains to the host of individual differences that makes all of us

unique and different from other. Secondly, diversity is not synonymous with “differences”. Rather, it encompasses both differences and similarities. This means that managing diversity entails dealing with both simultaneously.

As *Price, (2004)* puts it, people are different. They vary in gender, culture race, social and psychological characteristics. He affirmed that our attitudes towards their differences could be negative or positive depending upon individual perspectives and prejudices.

As members of organizations, it is difficult to challenge the often sub-conscious actions and elaborately entrenched justifications for unfairness. Not least, because discrimination and prejudice are expressions of power entailing the ability to prevent, inhibit or punish critical comment. Yet, if people are the key assets of a business, it is important to realize the maximum benefit from their human capital. True competitive advantage, requires the best from everyone, without restrictions, it demands a prejudice-free inclusive attitude towards actual and potential employee. It requires diversity.

Nevertheless, fairness, justice, or whatever we call it, it is essential and most companies in general and most multinational firms in particular do not have it. Everybody must be judged on his performance, not on his looks or his manners or his manners or his manners or his personality or whom he knows or is related to (*Townsend, 1970*). Why should multinational organizations and their managers offer equal opportunities to a diverse range of employees? The judgmental perspectives are indefinable which can be related to different models of Human Resources Management (*Goss, 1994*). These are Human Capital and Social Justice. Human capital, which artificially blocking the progress of any group results in less than optimal use of an organization’s human capital. Discrimination is irrational since it limits the resource value of employees. On the issue of social justice, a moral or ethical interest in social equality, compatible with soft or social market Human Resources Management (HRM). Economic benefits are secondary to this social dirty.

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