

DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN THE ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION

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ABSTRACT

The issue of diversity management practices is very important in modern academic libraries because of the possibility of having diverse workforce. Globalization has also made it very possible for different people from different countries to come together in the academic libraries with their expertise to provide cutting edge services to its patrons for the sustenance of the University system and business opportunities. In order to achieve the benefits of diversity, the management of workforce diversity is therefore very crucial to the success of any academic library that is determined to remain successful and have competitive advantage against its counterpart. Diversity management practices may be identified through social characteristics of today's workforce demographic behaviors. There are three basic categories of diversity management practices which are: demographic diversity, organizational diversity, socio-cognitive diversity. Therefore, this paper will be looking at the workforce demographic aspect of diversity management in organization through the eye of the academic libraries. Thus, it is against this backdrop that this paper will discuss the topic diversity management practices in the academic libraries in the age of globalization. The paper will further highlight the concept of globalization, concept of diversity, concept of diversity management, diversity management practices in the age of globalization, diversity management practices in the academic libraries, advantages and disadvantages of diversity management practices in the academic libraries, and finally the way forward for the adoption of positive diversity management practices in the academic libraries for the growth and sustenance of academic libraries in by Heads of libraries as leaders and managers for the growth and sustenance of any academic library will be proffered.

keywords: Globalization, Diversity, Diversity Management, Diversity Management Practices.

INTRODUCTION

In today's understanding, it has become a known knowledge that the world is undergoing a rapid process of change which is ascribed to the emergent of globalization. Globalization has become a familiar word, the meaning of which has been discussed by many scholars and writers. Workforce demographics characteristics have changed drastically over the last few decades and continued changes are still expected in the age of globalization. Economies are now globally determined and diversity management practices inclusion in the academic libraries are becoming the norm rather than exclusion. Today, most academic libraries have been or soon will be impacted by diversity management practices. As a result, dynamic diversity management practices of workforce demographic characteristic, is of essence to the achievement of set goals and objective in order for the academic library to remain competitive.

Currently, in the 21st century, diversity management practices is a crucial option of necessity to be embraced by modern academic libraries in Nigeria and in the world at large. With all the available talent, academic libraries can no longer afford to restrict its ability to recruiting

talented employees of diverse workforce because of the diverse nature of their expertise. Diversity management in the age of globalization can only aid Academic libraries to have the ultimate lead in the market place if effective and efficient Heads of libraries as well as human resources personnel are in the right position for proper recruitment of diverse workforce to occupy strategic positions in the academic libraries.

Managing demographic characteristics and changes of the workforces (Wankel, 2007; Choi and Rainey, 2014; Barak, 2016) is the core concept of diversity management practices. During the early era of diversity management, few theories existed to guide the practitioner's actions to creating programs to manage people. Despite the lack of theory, considerable research regarding the effects of diversity management practices within the workforce exists, and a myriad of diversity management practice initiatives have been applied in order to manage diversity in the workplace in the age of globalization. (Nkomo and Hoobler, 2014; Barak, 2016)). Luring, (2013) states that though the concern with demographic diversity in academic libraries has increased in recent years, international diversity management still remains an understudied area. This is unfortunate since the management of workforce diversity within academic libraries are faced with particular challenges in balancing between global integration and local responsiveness.

There are three basic categories of diversity management practices which are: firstly, demographic diversity that has to do with age, gender, ethnicity and nationality; secondly, organizational diversity which has to deal with functional or job portfolios, staff job tenure, hierarchical ranking, and professional experiences; thirdly, socio-cognitive diversity which entails, cultural practices, religious values, beliefs, knowledge levels and personality characteristics. Therefore, this study will be looking at the workforce demographic aspect of diversity management in organization through the eye of the academic libraries.

Thus, it is against this backdrop that this paper will discuss the topic diversity management practices in the academic libraries in the age of globalization. The paper will further highlight the concept of globalization, concept of diversity, concept of diversity management, diversity management practices in the age of globalization, diversity management practices in the academic libraries, advantages and disadvantages of diversity management practices in the academic libraries, and finally the way forward and recommendation for the adoption of positive diversity management practices in the academic libraries for the growth and sustenance of academic libraries in by Heads of libraries as leaders and managers for the growth and sustenance of any academic library will be proffered.

CONCEPT OF GLOBALIZATION

Globalization is a fascinating spectacle that can be understood as global systems of competition and connectivity. These man-made systems provide transport, communication, governance, and entertainment on a global scale. Globalization can be defined as a process where academic libraries or businesses start to operate in an international scale. Companies are more open to internationalize their operations, they choose an efficient location to operate. Prices of inputs vary all over the world, which attracts companies to shift some of their production to countries with cheaper inputs such as labour in developing countries but are usually limited to save countries. Workforce diversity is a critical measure to companies who seeks to establish themselves. (Globalization and business 2013)

The term “globalization” comes from the English word, used by Beck, (2015), which refers to the emerging of an international network, belonging to an economical and social system.

Todd, (2015) affirmed that one of the earliest uses of the term "globalization" was in 1930. Bhatia and Chaudary, (2008) went further to state that the idea of "diversity" emerged when globalization came into the picture in the 1990s. As globalization began to affect academic libraries, there has been a coverage of workforce from diverse countries, cultures, values, and styles that present tremendous opportunities as well as challenges to the success and growth of old and emerging academic library. (Emeh, Njoku, and Ukenna, 2017).

Today the concept of globalization is deployed across disciplines, across the world, across theoretical approaches, and across the political spectrum. Globalization can be linked to the local, national and international borders. Globalization, Cuterela, (2012) says, refers to those spatial-temporal processes of change, which constitutes the fundament of the transformation of human concerns in an academic library, linking together and expanding human activity across regions and continents. Without referring to the expansion in space of the connections, there can be no clear and coherent formulation of the term globalization. A satisfactory definition of globalization must address each of these items: extension, intensity, rapidity and impact.

Globalization is usually used as a handy form to describe the spread of communication production and connection technologies throughout the world. Most often, the term globalization is used with respect to the efforts of IMF, World Bank and the institutions to create a free global market for goods and services. This political project otherwise significant is in fact designed to develop and exploit more complex processes. Globalization in terms of connectivity across the entire world of economic and cultural life has increased throughout the centuries. (Cuterela, 2012).

Globalization in terms of connectivity across the entire world has increased economic and cultural life throughout the centuries. With the increase of economic interconnection, political changes have also deepened. What is undeniable is that globalization in one form and another is impacting on the lives of everyone, in age, ethnicity, race gender, or class in the world today, it is the changing consciousness, that everyone, everywhere are becoming more globally aware and oriented. In order words, globalization can be seen as the defining feature of the human society since the beginning of the 21st century and the impact that globalization has created maybe considered to be direct as well as indirect. Globalization have distinct economic, political, cultural and social dimensions that focuses on the idea of: relocation and over-territoriality; speed and power of technological innovation; growth of multinational corporations and how movements of global free markets lead to instability and division.

CONCEPT OF DIVERSITY

Diversity as a concept (Foster and Harris, 2005) has different meanings and applications depending on where you are in the world. Diversity is strategic and can determine the success or failure of an academic library. It is important to handle the issue of diversity seriously. According to (Daft, 2008; Schindler, and Rogers, 2016), diversity refers to a workforce made up of people with different human qualities or who belong to various cultural groups. Many scholars observed workforce demographic to include people with characteristic. Diversity as noted by (Robbins and Judge, 2011; Hu, & Ho, 2016), is acknowledges as workforce which comprises of women and men. Diversity is further observed as individuals with variety of physical or psychological abilities. Diversity is generally defined as acknowledging, understanding, accepting, valuing and celebrating

differences among people with respect to age, class, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, race, sexual orientation, spiritual practice, and public assistance status.

Diversity according to Olson and Eoyang, (2001) brings a rich tapestry of experience, insights, backgrounds, and cultures. These differences are essential to maintain a lively mix of agent activity in the workplace environment. In the same way, non-diverse workforce may not promote innovation and divergent ideas. Too much similarity reduces the ability to adapt and learn, since a closed system will increasingly develop a homogenous view. Diversity is created by opening academic library boundaries to let in new views that will offer a rich pool of talents useful for solving complex problems of highly competitive and uncertain environment

Therefore, the concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect for its workforce. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing the individual differences. These can be achieved along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies. It is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual in the work environment.

Consequently, the need to recognize that each individual is raised differently, in different environments and are exposed to different cultures is key to the success of any academic library leadership managing diversity of the workforce in the age of globalization. In workplace, it is fundamental to note that people are taught different values and beliefs, and our life experiences are unique. Workers are different culturally, ethnicity, religiously, educationally, gender wise and in abilities/disabilities.

CONCEPT OF DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

The concept of diversity management from an academic library perspective requires first a definition of workplace diversity itself. These definitions of diversity have evolved significantly over time. When defining diversity management, academic libraries must first go beyond the paradigm that Workforce Diversity (WFD) is limited to gender, sex or national origin. In reality, workforce diversity also includes: differences in style, culture, age, education, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, length of time in the academic library, geographic origin etc. Diversity represents the multitude of individual differences and similarities that exist among people. Like seashells on a beach, people come in a variety of shapes, sizes and colours and this variety represents the essence of diversity. (Afolabi and Omole, 2011: p. 382).

Gardenswartz and Rowe (2003) a team of diversity experts identified four layers of diversity to help distinguish important ways in which people differ. Taken together, these layers define one's personal identity and influence how each of us see the world. One, personality that is at the center of the diversity wheel represents a stable set of characteristics that makes one unique as an individual.

The Business Dictionary defines diversity management as the practice of addressing and supporting multiple lifestyles and personal characteristics within a defined group. Management activities includes educating the group and providing support for the acceptance of and respect for various racial, cultural, societal, geographic, economic and political

backgrounds. In addition, diversity management practices is the ability of a manager to achieve success for an academic library by making the best use of the similarities and differences among employees in terms of age, race, gender cultural background, physical abilities and disabilities, ethnicity, religion, as well as in terms of personality, values, attitudes, perception and cognitive style.

Heads of libraries who think towards deeper level of diversity in the workforce are more likely to perceive themselves as similar, rather than dissimilar, to members of their workgroup. (Liao, et. al, 2008). So, the best approach to diversity management practices is one that includes all individuals in the workforce and excluding none. Diversity management practices provides a climate that supports all types of individuals in the workplace since its goal is to include everyone in the inner cycle of employees who are continuously constantly learning to create continuous improvement in activities that contributes to the bottom-line success of the academic library.

DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN THE AGE OF GLOBALIZATION

Diversity management practices in the age of globalization is the ability of a leader or manager to put in place mechanism on how to achieve success by making the best of use of the similarities and differences among employees in terms of age, cultural background, physical abilities and disabilities, race, ethnicity, religion, sex, as well as in terms of personality, values, attitudes, perception and cognitive style. Managers who think towards deep level of diversity are more likely to perceive themselves as similar, rather than dissimilar, to members of their workgroup on unobservable qualities (Liao, et.al, 2008). Diversity management is about finding ways to get the diverse contributions from employees. The appropriate management of workforce diversity therefore becomes an essential concern to strategic individuals and groups in the workplace. Hence, diversity management practices in the age of globalization is about finding ways to getting the optimum and diverse contributions from every employees in an academic library. For any Head of the academic libraries to manage diversity effectively, the following should be put into consideration:

1. The management of diversity in workplace begins with building a strong policies of equality. Once these policies are in place, the academic library can begin to implement diversity measures throughout the entire academic library.
2. For effective management of diversity, the qualifications of the candidate must be rated based on the quality of their experiences, not basically based on mere age or any other category, when hiring. When you hire qualified workforce, you are on the right track towards being able to manage the diversity in the academic library. If a leader or manager creates a work group that does not utilize the skills of the most qualified employees, then the academic library will run a risk of losing the expertise of the qualified workforce in the academic library.
3. Diversity management practices will treat complaints of favoritism or discrimination seriously. Leaders and managers practicing diversity management will encourage employees to report all instances of discriminatory behavior, and have a definitive process in place for investigating and dealing with these issues.
4. If diversity in the academic library is properly managed, it can make a company blossom very quickly because of all the raw and fresh ideas, different perspective, and an increase of innovation and creativity that could not possibly be achieved without such diversity. Workforce around the world no longer work domestically; but are now part of a player in the global business world where competition is present from almost every continent. For this, global academic libraries need diversity to avoid cultural clashes during business

deals, and it is always helpful to get different insights and ideas from employees of a different culture to help better understand their people.

DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN THE ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN NIGERIA

The idea of diversity management practices in this age of globalization in the academic libraries in Nigerian context borders on the promotion of culture, value systems, as well as the support for equality for all. In understanding diversity management in the age of globalization in the academic libraries in Nigerian make it very important to identify some peculiar characteristics that applies to people and a major one is the social characteristics. Social characteristic is a dominant factors that stresses that an individual's social identity establishes him/her in a social group where other individuals of his/her kind exhibit similar social characteristics (Hogg and Terry, 2000; Burke, 2006). Worldwide, there are basic social characteristics that categories individuals within the workplace environment with similar cultural features such as age, gender, ethnicity, nationality and some others like education qualification, employment status, and disability.

However, it is important to note that these social characteristics could also vary from state to state. In support of this, Afolabi and Omole, (2011) asserts that diversity management practices in academic libraries in Nigeria must take into cognizance the social characteristics of the workforce such as personality and other dimensions of diversity issues which could also affect employee behavioral outcomes. As a result, Heads of libraries (leaders and managers) need to understand a wide range of diversity management practices in order to meet the behavioral needs of the workforce to bring out the best out of the distinctive competences of the workforce. Leaders and managers ought to recognizing that the survival of their academic libraries is crucial to the economic health and instrumental to the strategic positioning of their academic library among others.

Hence, Heads of libraries who understand that the task of surviving in today's world is an enormous one, are most likely to ensure that the best persons are selected and maintained for the optimum performance of their academic libraries. If and when these 'best persons' come into the academic libraries, how well the various dimensions of their diversity are consciously understood and managed leaves much to be desired, since, diversity management practice issues abound in academic libraries and it is expedient that they are proactively identified and appropriately addressed. (Ukachukwu and Iherionhanna, 2013; Ugwuzor, 2014.)

In this age of globalization and the pursuit of effective competition makes it imperative for leaders of academic libraries to device plans, objectives, activities and programmes for diversity management practices. The ability of Heads of academic libraries to manage a diverse workforce will be a major determinant for the continued survival and success in becoming a global corporation. Many academic libraries have begun by initiating training programmes that will improve the abilities and expertise of the diverse workforce. It is fundamental for leaders and managers to explore the full scope of a diverse environment by introducing a complete diversity programme that is fully supported by management in the academic library. Diversity is a very sensitive issue and if not handled properly, can be detrimental to the success and growth of an academic library. As a result of these, cultural evolution is taking place in the worldwide workforce, and those academic libraries that take immediate action will be in the forefront of the global business environment. (Magdaleno and Kleiner, 1996).

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The advantages of workforce diversity abounds, yet some academic libraries still find it difficult to benefit from this concept. Converting diversity management practices to the academic libraries advantage depends on how the Heads of academic library manages the diversity of the workforce and the extent to which diversity is politicized, that is to say how the academic library makes diversity the basis of political competition and the conflicts through the manipulation and mobilization of different stakeholders in the furtherance of the entire workforce's interests.

Academic libraries are now promoting diversity because of the advantages of having diverse workforce. Heads of academic libraries should strive to provide a working environment that treats people with fairness and respect and where the talents and resources of all employees are utilized to the fullest. Diversity management practices builds on the traditional principles of equal employment opportunity. It is accepting, welcoming and valuing the differences inherent in every individual and recognizing the contribution that a diverse workforce can make to academic libraries effectiveness and performance. A key aspect of workplace diversity is the contribution that each employee makes to a workplace that strives to eliminate discrimination and harassment.

Diversity in the workplace can help reduce lawsuits and increase marketing opportunities, recruitment, creativity, and business image. Diversity can have a positive impact on employee morale and the development of a working environment that feels inclusive to everyone. Diversity is about everyone. It is about creating a working culture that respects, welcomes, and harnesses differences for the benefit of the academic library. Therefore, the basic advantages of diversity management practices for leaders and managers to consider in adoption of DMPs are:

1. There is the saying that 'two Heads are better than one' that is why in a diverse workplace, when people from different cultures, backgrounds and beliefs come together to work for a common goal, increased creativity can be achieved. This is to say what already works can evolve into something else.
2. In order to address problems of workplace diversity, an academic library has to develop a variety of solutions, forcing them to adapt to a diverse workforce. It will be a long process, but totally worth it. Moreover, people from diverse backgrounds can provide ideas for adapting to ever-changing customer demands and fluctuating markets to achieve success and more competitiveness. This also means that an academic library has to develop a new process for people with different ideas to collaborate and work together. They must also learn to think cross-culturally and to quickly adapt to new situations.
3. No two people think exactly alike, and a company that knows how to exploit varying viewpoints of each individual can create a large pool of ideas and experiences. They can then draw from the pool strategies to effectively deal with business concerns and customer needs.
4. Globalization and internalization are two of the gifts that workforce diversity brings to the table, which is why for instance, foreign executives are very successful in the corporate world today. Put them together in one place and what you get is increased productivity.
5. A diverse workforce with different experiences, skills, cultural understanding, languages and other differences enables a company to provide customers services on a global basis. An institution of higher learning, for example, that employs people of different races will have the confidence to admit students from different races as well. This is because language and cultural gaps are avoided. Consequently, any management that gets an in-

depth understanding of the culture of a particular race, can be able to provide services that would appeal specifically to them.

Diversity management practices also have some disadvantages such as appearance discrimination, stereotyping of individuals, prejudice against certain individual due to cultural conflicts, devaluation and rejection, alternative beliefs, and many more negative factors can endanger diversity management practices in an academic library in this age of globalization. The following are list of factors that are associated with disadvantages of Diversity management practices:

1. Effective communication is a driving factor for success. Unfortunately, diversity can be in the way, and can directly impact productivity because of a lack of cohesiveness. This explains why some academic libraries today catering for international customers hire multilingual or bilingual customer service representatives to meet the needs and demands of the customers. It is easier for a French-speaking customers to communicate with someone who understands their culture and knows their native language. So unless effective communication is achieved, workplace diversity can be a problem.
2. In a diverse workplace, an employee must be sensitive to others' race, cultural background, beliefs, ethnicity and customs. As a result, it will not be appropriate to comment or crack jokes about other individual cultural beliefs or practices, because in a diverse workplace it is not acceptable. Individuals cannot freely state their opinions or tell stories whenever they want for fear of being judged as discriminating. So in a diverse workplace, freedom of speech is also a disadvantage. Imagine working in an environment where you need to always tread carefully. Not exactly a fun and attractive workplace.
3. Apart from the usual training, academic libraries must invest in seminars, programs and lectures designed to promote diversity in the workplace. If unity is to be achieved, such training is essential as they will teach employees how to accept thoughts, ideas and personalities of others in the workplace. It will also provide information on how to deal with prejudice and conflict in a civilized and professional manner. Since it is a possibility that new employees will be hired from time to time, there is the likelihood that the academic library will continue to spend on training of the new entrants on the importance of diversity acceptance in the workplace.
4. Even in a non-diverse workplace exclusive social groups or cliques naturally happens, more so in a diverse workforce. When such groups form, informal divisions can occur, which will impede social integration. It will also lead to a situation where culturally diverse employees will avoid each other. This can hinder the effective sharing of knowledge, experience, skills, resulting in decreased productivity, team efficacy, and business growth. Therefore the issue of integration of all workforce will arise.
5. Competition in the workplace is good as it can drive success and higher productivity. But when employees do not accept other culture, they are likely to compete against each other, rather than become collaborative members of a team. This results in divisions where people prefer to work separately, prolonging the process of task or project completion. This can have a negative impact on business because progress will be attained in a sluggish manner as a result of increased competition among the workforce. There is strength in numbers, after all.
6. The same people who cannot accept other cultures are likely to openly show disrespect and indifference. This can lead to unnecessary tension and can inhibit communication in the workplace. The problem with a highly tense or hostile workplace is that everyone is affected, including those that accept and respect diversity in the workplace.

RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

Diversity management practice is germane to the success story of multinational academic library, it is in connection with the afore-mention advantages and disadvantages to diversity management practices in the age of globalization, hence the following recommendation are made for any leader and manager to adopt a positive attitude to diversity management practices:

1. Heads of academic libraries and managers should ensure the protection of their workforce from discrimination and harassment. Leaders and managers should ensure that the privacy of their workforce is considered.
2. Heads of academic libraries and managers must ensure that every workforce demographic is accommodated and accepted in order for task to be accomplished.
3. Heads of academic libraries and managers must ensure to appreciate the contributions, values and worth of the workforce.
4. Heads of academic libraries and managers must ensure that workforce are treated fairly and given equal compensation for same accomplishments.
5. Modern academic library and managers must ensure that quarterly trainings for the entire staff on the benefits of diversity management in the workplace is necessary. Encourage discussions at these meetings on how the company can better manage workplace diversity.

Finally, the advantages and disadvantages associated with workforce diversity put academic libraries in a position of managing a difficult situations if not properly handles. The consequences of not having a diverse management practices should not be overlooked. In an era where flexibility, innovation and creativity are keys to competitiveness, diversity management practices is critical for the academic libraries success in providing timely and current information to its patron in this age of information explosion.

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