THE CHANGING WORKFORCE AND ITS IMPLICATIONS TO PRODUCTIVITY: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

The changing workforce may to some extent be a boon or bane to the business. Although it may not be absolute to conclude that the current changes in the workforce with regards to attitude, skills, interest and above all how the workforce deal with their fellow employees, managers, and supervisors are entirely beyond control for management to intervene and make it somehow less impairing to the firm. These changes once properly managed and exploited can be beneficial for the firm in terms of higher productivity or even efficiency in the use of resources. But the big question now is how companies may deal productively with these changes in the workforce without undermining or contravening workers' cultural/behavioural orientation that may lead to resignation or decline in performance. Therefore, due to the foregoing scenarios in workers' cultural and behavioural conditions today, this study is thus envisioned to explore possibilities and come up with appropriate strategies that may be recommended on human resource policies and strategies that may be beneficial for the firm.

Keywords: Multi-Generational Workforce, Demographics, Diversity, Human Resource, HR Strategies

INTRODUCTION

A multitude of changes is expected by most organizations to happen in their operations at the current time due to some occurrences in human resource trends such as work arrangements, globalization, aging population, women and minority group at work, expatriation, and multi-generational workforce which is now in the mainstream and has captured the attention of many business firms today. Many organizations are increasingly facing enormous challenges due to this new and complicated development in human resource thus becomes imperative for every firm to take strategic actions and develop innovative solutions to accommodate these workforce challenges. Among these changes that have taken place in every firm's workforce and can be difficult to reckon with is the issue of diversity. The workforce diversity which emanates from the entry of various generational cohorts with a highly distinct characteristic that requires a subtle management approach becomes the focal point of human resource management today. The fading influence of baby boomers and the entry of highly versatile but independent-minded millennials and technology-oriented Gen Z plus the employment of more women in the workforce and minorities. These are also issues that require a novel solution hence some countries have adopted laws intently to protect

these two groups against discrimination in the workplace *(Donohue and John,1989; Harlan, S L, and C White Berheide,1994; Smith JW and SE Joseph, 2010).* However, in some countries, the negative perception about these two groups continues to linger in various organizations making it harder for management to achieve full coherence and camaraderie in the workplace.

Globalization also paves the way to the changing workforce considering the exodus and mobility of the talented and highly skilled workforce. The internationalization of business operations brought about by globalization has impacted human resource development and management *(Natter, 2018).* Employers need to consider a diverse range of practical adjustments to be able to hire, deploy and redeploy, retain, and support a workforce that can be assigned throughout several business operations across countries. The thrust of globalization makes it imperative for employers to take responsibility for unleashing the full potential of their workforce through its initiative to conduct training and development for them to be qualified for a particular job and for the benefit of the organization in maintaining its competitive advantage. A company's ability to utilize its human capital competitively in new markets will depend on its ability to fill needs with skilled workers and make them more productive. It is the tasked of the HR people to provide training and development programs able to increase workforce value in the organization but the willingness and motivation of workers to be trained and developed could be the key factors to transform them and become more valuable and productive. The employees with a complete sense of development are happier that results in higher productivity and retention *(Peltoniemi and Dhaunya, 2015).* The Human Resources department must adapt its thinking and practices to include cultural differences, foreign regulations, and technological developments. Going global requires continuous training and development of talents with potentials for global deployment hence globalization provides more incentives and dividends for highly efficient firms which are primarily anchored on human resource competency especially in the areas of technical know-how and productivity.

Demographic changes in the composition of the workforce have greatly impacted the business environment which allows many countries to have a much bigger younger population. This issue is something a firm must give greater concern about because of increasing labor force diversity that could be somehow a bone or bane to the firm depending on the HR strategies to be promulgated to address the changing pattern of the workforce. Workforce diversity is a strategic business issue for an overwhelming majority of organizations that genuinely promote and encourages respect for others and differences in the workplace. Employees can be productive and motivated despite their differences, cultural orientation, religious beliefs, age, gender, race, and many other dimensions depending on what human strategies and policies to be initiated by the firm.

THE THEORY ON WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

Workforce diversity can be defined as a mixture of people with different group identities within the same work environment. Most organizations today embrace workforce diversity as part of their HR strategy anchored to their business strategy. It can be an excellent strategic move to become more competitive and create a pleasant working climate because it brings together a variety of people with a wide range of experiences, various talents, skills, knowledge, backgrounds, values, and characteristics to one workplace. Increasing workforce diversity has some benefits including creativity, innovation, and a positive organizational reputation *(Weiss, 2015).* It also helps the organization achieves its social responsibility and maintain its competitive advantage *(Dubrin, 2014).* Because of the growing trend of workforce diversity, it also brings issues and challenges in the organization that the HR department must address and give significant consideration to factors such as race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, ability, and sexual orientation. According to *Reilly & Williams (2012),* HR practitioners are increasingly concerned to see diversity in thinking style, management style, personal beliefs, and working preferences.

The firms' decision to rethink its HR policies and embark on workforce diversification although hesitant to initiate because of the burden that entails doing it especially on the side of the manager hence having a workforce of varied cultural background and academic orientation not to mention their respective individual objectives, traits and character is a tough job to conglomerate all of these highly volatile elements into something that would make the company and all other stakeholders in the company benefit through higher productivity *(Saxena, A., 2014).*

There are various studies initiated to come up with a holistic model necessary to treat human resource diversity especially in the aspects of culture and other areas of diverse orientation to produce a uniform approach towards formulating HR strategies however the generation of the appropriate model for this is still in the infancy *stage (Fernando, M.A., Fernandez, P.M.R., and Gardey G. S., 2013).*

GENERATIONAL DIVERSITY

Workforce generation is becoming increasingly prevalent as individuals live and remain in the workplace longer than in previous years. Different generations need to be able to work alongside each other in a modern organizational setup to ensure the firm's sustainability and excellent performance through its human capital. Employers are now dealing with challenges of the multi-generational workforce that continues to challenge workplace trends. The five distinct workforce generations in the workforce today are illustrated in the figure below.

The Multi-Generational Workforce

Demographic Group	Born (Age Range)	Values, Traits, Characteristics	Learning Styles
Traditionalists	1928-1945 (61+ years old)	Hierarchical, loyal to institutions, motivated by financial rewards and security	Traditional, instruction-led, reading, homework *"teach me"*
Baby Boomers	1946-1964 (42-60 years old)	Idealistic, competitive, striving to achieve	Traditional, group effort, expert-driven, self-driven *"lead me to information"*
Generation X	1966-1980 (36-41 years old)	Self-reliant, willing to change rules, tribal, and community-oriented	Team-driven, collaborative, wisdom of crowds, peer-to-peer *"connect me to people."*
Millennials	1981-1990 (26-35 years old)	Confident, impatient, socially conscious	Give context and meaning, make it fun, entertain me *"connect me to everything"*
Gen Zen	1990- 2000 16-25 years old	Entrepreneurial, customize the rules, high expectations	Explorer, technology-based, diverse, life-long learner *"learning things on my own"*

Figure 1: The Multi-Generational Workforce (Adapted from Bersin, 2007)

Traditionalists, born between 1928 and 1945 may retire in the next several years who showed unique characteristics and passion for work. This generation is known by others for their commitment and loyalty to the organization and instills institutional memory and leadership that can be passed on through generations. Baby Boomers generation who born from 1946 to 1964, have different characteristics in executing untraditional ways to solve problems that may have presented the opportunity for conflict because of their competitive characteristics. Gen X, born between 1965 and 1980, usually has an aversion to risk and high confidence levels because they are self-reliant and willing to change rules for them to embrace change and connect with people as part of their continuous learning process in the organization. Millennials, born in 1981 and later, value their individuality and appreciate being rewarded for individual achievements while Generation Z born in 1990 t0 2000 also known as the digital natives possess a high level of propensity for creativity and innovation because of their being life-long learners desire and being technology savvy. The multi-generational workforce is working together under the same roof of the organization; it could experience the challenge of having different sets of values, expectations, and work styles in the workplace *(Mayhew, 2015).*

There is enough basis to suggest that the older workforce has higher psychological maturity and psychological empowerment than the younger generation. Thus, it would be easier to say that in dealing with their work, and other decisions affecting their jobs and some other elements in the workplace, older people are more flexible in their manner of dealing

THE GRAYING OF THE WORKFORCE

The two significant differences in the sizes of workforce generations– the baby boomers and the Millennials have continued and will continue to have a pronounced effect on the age distribution of the workforce today. One study presented by the *National Academy of Sciences (2000)* that over the past years, there is a decline in the numbers of labor force belonging to baby boomers (ages 25-54 years old) that reflects the aging of this generation. This generation of the workforce intended to leave their job and prepare or look forward to their retirement years.

Employers can be at risk to run out of their human capital, and a competitive workforce and management must take caution of it; a more structured method of knowledge transfer is required to avoid talent shortage in the organization. The HR department must explore and develop various creative and innovative means to capture and transfer older workers' knowledge and a sophisticated understanding of workforce tasks *(Alexandria, 2015).* New approaches can be adopted by the employer to retain older and competitive workers through more magnificent work flexible arrangement such as part-time hours, working from home and like any other workers in the organization, older workers may benefit from training and re-training on new tasks to keep them energetic, motivated, happy, and remain productive. But keeping an aging workforce can also bring an unfavorable situation to the organization because of some negative aspects such as the perceived resistance to change by older workers, increased healthcare costs for senior workers, the possibility of blocking advancement opportunities for younger workers, and higher wage & salary costs for senior employees.

THE WOMEN AND MINORITY GROUPS IN THE WORKFORCE

Participation of women in the workforce has the fastest growth rate in today's time. Many research studies proved the employment growth rate for women appears to be increasing, minority labor force participation is expected to continue to grow in various countries. Based on the study of *Lanier (2019),* in some states in the US, Hispanics will be forecasted to become the second-largest workforce group in 2025, accounting for 17% of the total labor force. Moreover, as of 2000, Hispanics have a huge share of the market than African Americans, 13% versus 12.7 percent. The percentage of African Americans in the labor force is expected to increase by only 1.8 percent during the same period.

Other races such as Asians would account for 8% of the labor force by the year 2025 therefore, Hispanics and Asians will continue to be the two fastest-growing groups.

The women of today mostly occupy a large number of different positions across industries. in the global business arena, most women expatriates in various countries conquer the higher rank positions and take charge of the day-to-day operations of the firm. The representation of females in the top management improves firm performance in terms of innovation *(Dezso and Ross, 2011).* The role of women managers is likely vital in making a strategic decision in the achievement of the firm's objective thus company invested a lot in hiring women managers, train and develop their skills and competence, and assigned them globally to fully maximize their management and leadership skills in heading international operations. While the many women of today join the workforce and rising to management are emerging, there is still a shred of evidence that most women find it difficult to secure the top of the organizational structure, and many observers described this as a "glass ceiling" acting as a barrier between women and the top-level positions they are striving for *(Lanier, 2019).* This concept probably leads to occupational sex segregation and gender discrimination at work. Minority groups have faced these same invisible, subtle, yet very real institutional barriers to promotions into higher-level executive positions. The belief that minority groups reach organizational plateaus consisting of artificial barriers that derail them from senior management opportunities has been alternately termed "the brick wall." These barriers found in the structure of many organizations have often hindered the advancement of these select employee groups. To address these challenges, HR people should promote an equal employment opportunity that enables the workforce to be qualified in the position and perform the task effectively regardless of his/her gender, race, ethnicity, and cultural orientation.

TECHNOLOGY-DRIVEN WORKFORCE

The rapid growth of technological change in the workplace requires an organization to develop and reshape its workforce to be more productive and cultivate their knowledge in a changing hi-tech workplace. The use of computer and scientific technology in the workplace will continue to emerge and challenge many organizations today; this will be a continuing labor force trend as long as new developments are emerging, and these developments can augment workers' efficiency to perform their specific job. *Mayhew (2015)* emphasized that a technology-driven workplace restructures the workforce with increased remote access to video conferencing, remote offices access, and virtual work teams. Telecommunicating, remote management, and increased work style flexibility will become more commonplace in a driven-technology workplace; the possibility of long-distance reporting of employees will now be a management practice and part of the operations. The continuous advancement and innovation in technology have a more significant impact on the way how people in the organization accomplish their job through information technology and software applications. As technology has changed how organizations operate, employers must also change of how the way the workforce performs their tasks in a way that management modifies and develop various training programs that enable its workforce to sharpen their skills and gain new knowledge of more advanced technology in the workplace.

HR STRATEGIES IN MANAGING WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

Diversity brings a competitive advantage to the organization, and this can only be realized if the HR department can devise strategies on how to effectively manage workforce diversity. HR strategies can be enumerated as follows:

- *Job Restructuring.* Redesign some jobs in the organization that are more suitable for a specific gender orientation such for instance design a job that can only be performed by women and jobs that require masculinity to empower both genders at work.
- *Diversity Training Programs.* The contents of the program are generally intended to provide a vehicle for increasing awareness and examining stereotypes. Participants learn to value individual differences, improve their cultural understanding and confront stereotypes *(Robbins, 2003).* Diversity training can help the organization to strengthen cooperation in multinational work teams, facilitate group learnings, and reduce cultural misunderstanding.
- *Open Door Policy.* This strategy builds a strong communication bond between the management and its employees. It welcomes and encourages to bring concerns to higher management for discussion; this could help employees feel heard and valued at their workplace and make them feel and think that they are part of the organization.
- *Alternative Work Arrangement.* HR people must come up with an ideal work arrangement that can be suited to employees' work conditions and can also be beneficial to the organization. For instance, are the retirees of the aging workforce, working women, and persons with disability (PWD). The organization can practice flexi-time, compressed work hours, work from home, among others.
- *Create a healthy work climate.* Managing a multi-generational workforce must provide a working climate that can blend the old and the young workforce to fine-tune the generation gap and bring them together to provide an organization a distinct advantage in recruiting talented people that can be a future asset of the company.

PRODUCTIVITY

The term productivity is widely used in topics pertaining to business specifically production or manufacturing or even in economics however its popularity is less appreciated even among students and businessmen so that hardly they understood its meaning. Thus, the lack of understanding produces ignorance among businesspeople including people in production work can have a drawback in their work performance.

Productivity is simply the ratio between the quantity of output produced against the quantity of input employed. It signifies the efficiency of production inputs such as labor and materials including capital goods in the production of goods and services. Such as the US for example requires only 300 man-hours and also 200 machine-hours to cultivate 50 hectares as against 2000 and 1500 respectively for man-hours and machine-hours in the Philippines.

Productivity is an essential element in the firm's quest for higher profitability through the minimization of cost. When a firm spends less labor time and machine time to produce a product, it incurs lower production costs thus generating bigger profit. Since labor is a big fraction of the firm's operating and production costs thus success in its diminution through higher labor productivity can bring greater impact on the firm's profitability.

A firm that engages in labor diversity may easily initiate innovation due to its much higher chances to hire highly qualified labor thus realizing higher labor productivity. The creation of a pool of employees from different cultural backgrounds would provide the company able to develop a world-class culture capable of subduing competition in a highly globalized environment. A culturally diverse organization can provide the company ability to understand varying market conditions worldwide thus enabling it to serve fully foreign markets. It is a must for every company to be knowledgeable about some very important factors when operating overseas such as the host country's political, social-economic, cultural, and academic background *(Hamilton, P. and Webster, 2018).* The globalization policy borne out from the Doha agreement has allowed the free movement of labor within the boundaries of member countries, enabling high-tech and service industries to recruit and hire highly skilled labor and scientists from all over the world. This becomes a boon to corporate giants especially those in labor-intensive and advanced manufacturing industries. It enables them to create a multi-cultural organization run by highly trained manpower from different countries, thus diversity at this instance may allow the company to be more creative and become competitive in the face of a highly uncertain business environment, *(Martin, 2014).* The desirability of creating a culturally and ethnically diverse organizations as some studies have suggested is anchored on the following grounds; firms are more capable to engage in solving problems extensively and intensively and can make the company engage in more complex issues and activities because of the extensive background of its workforce both academically and practically. The issue of communication especially pertaining to language and culture can easily be addressed when it operates abroad including issues about laws, markets, and consumer behavior.

Most managers should ask about the performance of their employees is their level of productivity. In the firm's environment, the workers respond appropriately to the stimuli provided by the environmental factors which may include the work environment, leadership style, and culture *(Almaari and Alaswad, 2021).* The work environment may create a conducive work relationship among employees but most especially between them and their supervisor and department head. The degree of personal and work relationship between them can bring

enormous impact on productivity. The state of physical assets especially facilities that directly affect workers' conveniences may have an enormous bearing as well on productivity. Culture is a factor that may be a boon or bane to productivity. Organizational culture is the conglomeration of the culture of all people in the company including managers. Although in a real setting it's the managers' predominates but the employee's culture could have a strong basis for a personal relationship which is a key to achieving camaraderie. However, a company's culture which is expressed by managers' way of dealing with their employees has more far-reaching consequences in as far as productivity is concerned. The leadership style is the manner by which manager treats each and everyone in regards to their values, needs, skills and attitudes, and capabilities. Managers must have the right response and avoid miscalculating labor needs and values including attitudes of the generational cohorts.

The key to higher productivity is motivation but motivation per se is a vague idea. We need to be specific about how we should motivate employees because employees may not be motivated using any motivators, we need to be definite on this. Although employees are easily motivated by financial rewards not all may agree on it, they have distinct priorities and need. Thus due to their diverse economic, physiological, social, and psychological needs and wants, management should look for ways to identify them possibly through a review of each employees' dossiers to obtain information to correctly assess them before any offer of rewards is initiated. However, employees' most preferred form of motivation as suggested by some studies consist of robust pay, promotion, recognition, conducive working environment, equity, and fairness *(Bawa, 2017)*.

METHODOLOGY

There is an ambiguity as to what the generational cohorts have specifically impacted the firm profit or objectives via productivity and leadership style. There is no clear-cut policy on how to give answers to this question because so far no research has been made to specifically pinpoint the role played by generational cohorts in achieving corporate objectives especially financial objectives. Since we cannot come up with a conclusive answer to this question thus we are just to make a sort of exploring more the issue to enable us to generate ideas about it and thus can provide us sort of inconclusive result which can somehow enable us to build theoretical ideas and probably practical one of the generational cohorts issue with implication to firm's financial performance. The first activity was to identify the different generational cohorts and their specific characteristics primarily traits, values, age, learning methods and computer knowledge, and the period of their coverage. Primarily, the source of information is Google scholar site plus some other online magazines and internet reading materials specifically they can be enumerated: Researchgate.net, Proquest.com, Wiley Online Library, SHRM.org Jamanetwork.com, USIU.ac.ke, Academia.edu, Waldenu.Edu, Journals.Co. Za, GVSU.edu, NBER.Org., Springer.com, Researchgate.net. Since I employed the Narrative form of literature review, no specific guideline has been used to gather information on the topics of workforce diversity which voluminous studies have been gathered together with productivity. This information has been declassified that only those studies which portray values, skills, traits, and implications to a firm's operation are considered because these can prove their role in achieving productivity and financial performance.

DISCUSSION

The firms in the current times need to rethink their HR policies and strategies due to the emergence of a new set of workforces with new technical and cultural orientations. This new group subsequently has caused re-orientation of the workforce culturally, technologically, morally, and psychologically bringing complications in the firm's operational goals. However, workers' diversity is expected to promote better operational capability due to the employment of highly skilled and well-trained manpower sans disadvantages. The new economic order further makes matters complicated for firms not unless new measures are considered designed to take advantage of this change and accrue benefits therefrom. However, the new workforce is quite problematic for firms especially for managers with limited knowledge about them. The new generational cohorts may have the appetite to challenge conventional norms and rules *(Gursoy et. al., 2013)* which may be troublesome for most managers.

The firm now is confronted with the question of what decision to follow; revise HR policies and strategies or just live with the old one. The employment of old generational cohorts and avoiding having younger ones can make the firm less able to cope with competition because the older generation is less adept to new technologies *(Gursoy et. al., 2013)*, and *(Bott, 2011)*. The study of *(Lester et. al., 2012)* however rebuff this argument and found no significant difference among Boomers, Gen X, and Gen Y in the use of technology in the workplace. The old generational cohorts' handicap in the field of technology is not ultimately to cause them to be less productive. There are other areas by which older generations could have displayed an eagerness to perform well in their job just to achieve job security through a secured tenure status *(Hansen and Leuty, 2011)* however Gen X values job security than Gen Y *(Lub et. al., 2012)* and this attitude is a great factor of labor productivity. Older cohorts are known to value as well professionalism *(Lesko, 2012)*-an attitude governed by the rules and respect for authority and fellow employees' thus inculcating a sense of power and dignity. This may have promoted cooperation and a sense of

respect in the workplace contributing enormously to the attainment of higher productivity. In any organization, the rules play a very important role and so with ethics *(Wills et. al., 2011),* both are essential in realizing the firm's objectives and goals. It serves as the framework of performance because rules state the do's and don'ts and the observance of ethical standards can bring harmony among employees and between them and managers and with their clients thus generating a higher sense of respect and trust and bring greater productivity and earnings.

It is also noticeable to see the presence of some people in the organization that generally are power motivated and desirous in exacting influence over other people, these groups are identified in the clusters of Boomers and Gen X *(Wong et. al., 2008).* These attitudes can cause division and factionalism in the organization which if unabated can wreck unity and develop animosity both are known to detriment cooperation and productivity. However, between these two cohorts, Gen X is more likely to strive for power *(Gursoy et. al., 2013).* The fact that baby boomers are not so vocal about giving praise to employees than the younger generations *(Busch et. al., 2008)* is a repercussive stance on its importance to motivate people and ultimately productivity. The provision of more leeway on work methods especially for old people can mean to create better work methods that improve quality and reduce production time, Gen X are known to exhibit this trait which this group places importance to work autonomy and freedom in the conduct of their work *(Lub et. al., 2012), (Takase et. al., 2012).* Nevertheless, Baby Boomers in this regard places higher than Gen X and demand good working conditions, an attitude which may at a certain point compel management to introduce changes especially if unionism is strong and I suppose the presence of boomers and gen x guarantees the formation of a strong union in the firm. Baby boomers Gen X and Gen Y are known to have provided the idea of a diminished physical and face-to-face interaction in the workplace *(Haeger and Lingham, 2004)-* a measure believed to impact costs and productivity. There is also a strong indication for Baby Boomer to attain job satisfaction through social interaction and cohesion among workers, the degree of friendship among them, and the support from management *(Westerman and Yamamura, 2007).* In the case of Gen Y its affiliative attitude and desire for strong social interaction than older cohorts *(Real et. al., 2010)* and *(Wong et. al. 2005)* can enable them to develop a strong bond with co-workers which may be seen to develop strong unity and cooperation which can result to higher productivity. It may be seen as well that baby boomers & Gen X generational cohorts with the latter prefer to work alone than the former who gives greater value to teamwork more than Gen Y *(Yrle et. al., 2005).* The appropriateness of working alone is subject to the kind of Job performed. If one is a teacher or a salesman or a manager working solo is more productive because these jobs are not complimentary. For example, a teacher can teach his lesson well even without the help of fellow teachers for as long as he teaches his area of specialization otherwise he needs somebody to assist him. The same reasoning is also applicable for a salesman in this case

The new economic order calls for increasing competitiveness and higher efficiency. This calls for firms to shape up their labor to achieve needed skills and motivation, thus a firm needs to be innovative and make its personnel capabilities especially skills and knowledge adequate to respond to market conditions in the globalized economy. However, some firms to a certain extent may somehow be hesitant to initiate the needed reforms because it entails greater cost and resistance from both managers and some employees. Although this endeavor entails greater effort and cost and can antagonize some sectors, its outcome however can be financially rewarding and may enhance the firm's competitive edge, achieve innovation and creativity (*Shahid M. and Raghavendra M., 2016; Cletos, H.E., Mahmood, N.A.b., Umar, A. and Ahmed Doko Ibrahim, 2018; Green K.A, Lopez M., Wysocki A. and Karl Kepner, 2019).* Moreover, the road to achieving success in a globalized economy is bumpy and for the firm to be victorious initially it must have the necessary manpower capable enough to provide the required skills and appropriate values and motivation to drive the firm against the forces of competition in the globalized economic environment. If firms succeed to match environmental conditions with appropriate qualities of manpower, it can achieve greater mileage in the area of productivity and efficiency thus achieving financial success; a boon for all stakeholders more particularly employees and owners *(Saxena, A. 2014).*

Managing workforce diversity is a complicated task especially in a globalized environment. Because of the highly mobile labor which allows them to move from country to country to work which is permissible under WTO rules. These rules have made labor a scarce commodity in some countries especially skilled ones. Due to high demand for them, wages have gone up and this become a problem for some firms. The migration of labor has brought also problems about culture, attitudes, traits, education, and personal objectives. When the firm operates in areas where it is not originally from, the issue of workforce diversity becomes problematic for the manager to deal with. There is a need to standardize the format in dealing with this issue to make managerial work much easier especially in decision making and human resource strategy formulation. There are various studies undertaken essential in the development of a holistic model necessary to treat human resource diversity especially in the aspects of culture and other areas of diverse orientation to produce a uniform approach towards formulating the appropriate HR strategies however the generation of the appropriate model for this still in the infancy stage *(Fernando, M.A., Fernandez, P.M.R., and Gardey G. S., 2013).*

There is enough basis to suggest that the older workforce has higher psychological maturity and empowerment than the younger generation. Thus, it would be easier to say that this group when it comes to their work, and other decisions affecting their jobs and some other elements in the workplace, they are more flexible basically because older people tend to be broad-minded, patient, understandable, and has more practical and personal experiences in dealing with a lot of things in the workplace. They are much also at liberty and immediate when making decisions affecting behavior and work considerations. We can also deduce some good ideas from them about the quality of empowerment they portray which means that, unlike younger generations whom who make decisions without looking at possible consequences and basis of such decisions, older generations tend to be more responsible in the discharge of their responsibility even at the need for urgency which they are highly dependable. This attitude can hardly be observed in the younger generation at the workplace.

The younger generation resent bureaucracy and related practices because it constrains them from making independent decisions which oftentimes can cause resentment against older people. After all, they always adhere to given rules and systems. One of the critical issues that hindered fomenting a strong bond between these two groups which make knowledge transfer highly problematic is their varied concept with regards to the manner of doing things, and older people's inability to grasp new technologies can be a ground to hinder knowledge transfer in the workplace *(De Toro, I., Fernandez, J.., and De Nicolas, V., 2019)*. Thus, the continuity of old workers' employment beyond the age threshold is highly contingent on their ability to exercise greater agency in their work and learning *(Dymock D., Johnson G. and Greg Martin, 2011)*.

The managers play a very important role in achieving leverage for a societal shift in demographics and allow the company to improve its products and services to continue satisfying the needs of its customers by creating more attractive work environments to enable recruitment of better people *(Nwosu, M., Igwe, K., and Chuma, Nnadozie, 2016)*. Everybody must understand that the response to a societal shift in demographics is intended to minimize if not eliminate the negative impact of generational diversity on a company's performance, because when everybody understood it there would be less resistance and everybody contributes. Primarily, understanding all its dimensions will help the managers implement measures necessary to boost the morale and productivity of employees thereby enhancing its performance. It is also necessary that any differences among employees should not be construed as an obstacle to integrate them regardless of their age bracket. Practically, generational differences exist in three areas namely: work ethics, managing change, and organizational hierarchy. Every manager must understand fully where their employees are coming from to identify things that need to be done to integrate them fully with the rest of the workforce. It is also essential that team leaders should allow every member to express his ideas and practice his values and try to understand every generational group's cultural orientation including systems of values to include knowledge and do a system of integration *(Scott Rood, A., 2011)*.

There is enough evidence to suggest that generational employees' practices relative to engagement and retention have more similarities than differences *(Basic, l., 2018)*. Various factors encourage employees of any generational group to continue engaging with the company and these are; work tools, clearly identified roles, enough resources in his job, and compensation. The mentor or supervisor plays a very significant role in establishing a continued employee engagement which allows the employee to establish a strong career and help him develop a strong engagement attribute.

Although graying workforce may provide relevant and valuable information in the company because of their enormous work experiences however this is not always the case because some practices which have been identified to be responsible for gathering information which is less useful thus less likely to be retained. There is a strong probability for old people in the company when wanting to seek new knowledge would rely on their network of friends or co-workers who know the job or issue thus neglecting information that may be obtained from the best sources. It is also noticeable that information they obtained especially if it is good to be shared with others, and any knowledge they gathered is used to finish the task rather than hone it for future use. Although there are some gray people in a company with truly credible expertise, unfortunately, it is quite sad to find that these good people already are close to retirement *(Katopol P., 2008)*. As workplaces continue to experience graying people in their workforce, the manager is burdened with issues like productivity and efficiency or their level of engagement. However contrary to popular belief older people have a higher level of engagement as they age *(Kim, N and Kang, S W., 2017)*. Anchoring on socioemotional selectivity theory and continuity theory from a lifespan perspective, it is argued that as employees gained more personal resources including emotional maturity and career development as they get older, they tend to affect their level of engagement with the company.

A lot of firms worldwide have been embroiled in the issue of the ageing workforce and its consequential affects both current and future. This problem has been theoretically addressed by improving organizational processes concerning human resources like training of new employees with emphasis on the development of new ideas which such should be learned by all employees' concern and the need to abandon

old knowledge. However, the firm may be confronted with the issue of tacit knowledge which is not transferrable and can only be acquired through experience *(Dumay, J., and Rooney J., 2006)*. The most problematic here would be the case of new workers leaving the company after achieving some learning and look for a job elsewhere thus the company should have trained younger employees to stay longer in the firm who would replace retiring employees. The best possible way to confront this issue is by initiating changes in processes concerning recruitment and compensation; younger employees should be prioritized and offered good compensation more so for those with the appropriate natural talent. In order to keep younger recruits, the HR department must anticipate possible causes or causes of discontent among this group and make the necessary adjustment in HR processes or policies that are considered the source of employees' dissatisfaction. The provision of owning shares of stocks can be a good strategy to prevent these people from leaving the company. It is also appropriate that management must ensure always that all knowledge shall be incessantly transferable, and no employee should have a monopoly of what he knows thus, must be shared with everybody especially among co-employees involved in similar nature of jobs

The workplace as ever before has been dominated by men however due to some pressure exerted by women's groups, the inequality in general sense between men and women in the workplace has been somehow narrowed and women gained more equality in rights with men. However, in the case of ethnic minority women, the trend moves differently, they continue to struggle to make themselves fit into a white western organization; they have to fit themselves into its cultural orientation in order to penetrate influential networks and be given opportunities for growth and career development and chances for advancements *(Kamenou-Aigbekaen, N. and Fearfull, A., 2006)*. This organizational acculturation is not something which women may move towards it; we can never expect that women from other culture and religious belief my embrace this male-dominated organization without a fight by pressuring management to initiate measures to reform it and make it acceptable to everybody without any group set aside or neglected. The role of HR is to make everybody for the achievement of the company's goals and objectives free from any obstacles especially culture.

Generation Z. There is a big difference between millennials and the old generation of employees. They cannot be treated the way we treat generation Zen and others if we want the best of them, managers must be able to understand their basis of motivation, their values and adopt management styles that can be more prolific to their needs which may inspire them and produce goods results *(Kevin P., 2018)*. The millennials later may spin-off to another generation group called generation z. This group includes those born between 1990 and 2000. They have a strong taste for entrepreneurship, devolve customization of rules, and with great expectations. They like exploring things are technology-oriented, diverse in doing things, and passionate about learning normally by themselves *(Bersin, 2007)*. Moreover, this generational group is noted for their desirable behavior, good temperament, and has low regard for risk and are digital-lites, independent-minded, good communicator, more competitive, security conscious, and primarily instigated by their financial goals/carriers. This group considers salary as their top motivator and equally put relevance to health insurance. They are hardworking but are willing to take extra hours of work if there is enough compensation for it. They give importance to skill development and self-development and give value to an independent style of working. They are more sociable than the millennials and encourage a face-to-face interaction and can be more adapted to work in a diverse work environment.

In a study conducted in the banking industry by *(Mondres, T., 2019)* concerning the possible benefit which banks may accrue from the employment of Gen Z employees. The probable change in the systems of operations that banks may undertake to initiate is the introduction of digitalization processes. If ever this will be pursued, it would coincide with the entry of most gen z workers in the employment sector as most may have finished college by that time. Since most from this group have been working during their college, accordingly with their college diploma they are now more prepared technically and morally to assume bigger responsibilities and tasks in their respective place of work. Since this group is also known for their resourcefulness and eagerness to learn, they access every possible venue just to learn and acquire new skills and ideas through YouTube and other media platforms.

Millennials. The perspectives of Millennials through plain observations and surveys reveal purported unique personalities that potentially affect their behavior. The characteristics and traits could have some negative and positive implications in the performance of their work. If we are to assess them of their value to their company and based on such assessment the company can decide on the strategy that will make this group more meaningful to the course of the firm's business. These generational cohorts work well in groups and perform well when they have realized that what they are doing can have an enormous effect on their organization, they want also easy access and open communication with their supervisors and work well with gadgets and other forms of technologies relevant to their jobs *(Mayers K. and Kamyab Sadaghiani, 2012)*. Moreover, millennials have more appetite to be fun at work than their previous generation *(Lamm & Meeks, 2009; Lester et al.,2012)*. The employees' engagement in some work fun can have a positive effect in their work engagement *(Plaster and Hutchison, 2016)* but not for some organizations which managed organic fun and may potentially result only to disharmonize, and disruption thus can make workers disengage from their work due to distraction or disturbances *(Plester et. al., 2015)*. These generational

cohorts consider diversity essential in the accomplishment of tasks through the formation of teams in which this group excels, they can easily adapt to changes and high work standards and are liberal-minded *(Lower, 2008).* These generational cohorts can easily provide Gen Y value diversity in organizations more than their previous generations and are less likely to hold outdated prejudices *(Mencl & Lester, 2014).* Although some studies found no differences, however, one study found Generation Y valued recognition more than any other generation, particularly immediate recognition and feedback *(Yu and Miller, 2003; Busch et al., 2008; Lester et al., 2012; Gursoy et al 2013; Mencl and Lester, 2014;)* Although some studies found Gen Y to value social interaction less than previous generations, others say that younger generations highly valued social connection at work *(Cennamo and Gardner, 2008; Twenge et al., 2010; Hansen and Leuty, 2011).*

Generally, millennials in the workplace can have some attitudes which are not productive to business. According to a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center (2007), millennials are overly self-confident and self-centered. Moreover, they are found to be lacking in loyalty and are poor in work ethics *(Marston, 2009).* As Millennials get hired and start working, managers should be worried about their attitudes and predispositions which may create negative implications on their cohorts especially the late Boomers and the Gen X-cohorts. Although this is problematic for the manager but cannot despise them due to their expertise hence millennials are well educated *Pew Research Center (2019*) and technically more equipped with new ideas and relevant work experience because they work earlier in life than any of their cohorts and they hoop from one company to the other acquiring more perspectives and trends about their job. They are more to perform productively in their job because of their extensive use of technology which makes the job much simpler, fast and accurate. Additionally, they value more the production per unit of time than the amount of time spent in the office. The recent survey undertaken on millennials' dedication to their work found that indeed they are "work martyrs" *(Carmichael S., 2016).*

Generation X.   These are those demographic cohorts born between 1966-1980 presumably in the age range between 36-41 years old. This group is known for their being self-reliant, flexible in terms of their willingness to change rules, they adhere to some basic tribal tradition which to a certain extent may impact their job and performance. They would like to resort to a decision of a group to overcome the bias of a small group. This cohorts also would like to see activities to be initiated by a team, can work well by collaborative effort, believes in the strength of crowds to pursue an objective, and more comfortable to work with computers through sharing of files directly without the use of a server that restricts the availability of files. This group always desires to be connected with everybody especially those people whom they think could have an impact on themselves at whatever aspect. There is one relevant about this cohort; they grew up and live independently with minimal supervision from their parents and value a work-life balance.

When managers decide to recruit people to fill up some vacant positions in their company some criteria need to be considered as a basis for the suitability of the applicants for the position and their motivational factors. for the applicants, this demographic cohort places more importance on satisfier. For both Gen X and Gen Y, the most important factor seems to be 'the job itself' (having a job that is interesting, challenging, and providing a variety and stimulation, opportunity to contribute *(Leschinsky and Michael, 2004; Sullivan et al., 2009; Bristow et al., 2011)* Gen X is less likely to work overtime in comparison with Baby Boomers and Gen Y. But younger generations are more willing to do voluntary work *(Becton et al., 2014).*

Baby Boomers.   The baby boomer is categorized as generational cohorts born between 1946 and 1964. This group made up a sizable portion of the world's population, particularly in industrialized nations. In the US for instance, they represent almost 20% of the country's entire population. These generational cohorts are known for their being respectful, want recognition, and can provide long-term value to their organization. Their communication style values personal touch and does handwritten notes instead of email. They believed that obedience is more important than individualism and that seniority should be anchored on age and promotion should follow the hierarchical model. Among generational cohorts, baby boomers appear to provide stronger value on professionalism *(Wils et al., 2011; Lester et al., 2012).* The working conditions and the social environment is known to be significant to younger generations but surprisingly Baby boomers in one study conducted give enormous value to this issue *(Westerman and Yamamura, 2007; Wong et al., 2008; Takase et al., 2009; Real et al., 2010).* They also give essence to working with others especially favored teams with which they are comfortable and can develop a sense of camaraderie *(Jurkiewicz & Brown, 1998; Yrle et al., 2005; Gursoy et al., 2008; Cogin, 2012; Lub et al., 2012);* There are some traits which we can observe from Baby Boomers essential in the promotion of organizational objectives like discipline, attendance, appearance, and fewer terminations *(Becton et al., 2014*). Baby boomers found benefits to be a more important aspect of job satisfaction than did Millennials and prefer to work longer in an organization than the younger generational cohorts.

Traditionalists.   The Collins dictionary defines *traditionalists* as a group of people that cling to established customs and beliefs in a society or group, and normally refuse a change in them. The Traditional demographic cohorts who are popularly called the Veterans, the Silent Generation, and the Greatest Generation are employees and retirees born between 1922 and 1943 who at their age continue to

provide leadership, are contributing to the organization by re-entering the workforce. In the US this group holds one-third of the nation's wealth and some of them occupy sensitive positions in various political and influential corporate organizations. This group is a known survivor of the Great Depression of the 1930s and primarily was responsible for the shaping of the economic and political policies of the US which enabled it to attain the status as a world economic and military power. They are notified of their avowed Patriotism, teamwork, "doing more with less" attitude, task-orientated, Rules of conduct, respect for authority, and following directions. This group occupies posts in various corporate organizations as CEOs' president, chairman of the board of directors thus they set the tone of the culture and essentially are responsible for the strategic direction of the business.

The need for a change in the attitude towards older people regarding their appropriateness as regular employees must be changed. They must not be belittled, and we should not think the way that employing them is risky. We must not put a distinction between them and the younger ones as far as employment opportunities are a concern. Employers should make a decision on the sustainability of employing older people based on selected criteria which may help companies devise a good decision on the issue *(Griffin T. and Francesca Beddie, 2011)*. The company must be realistic and open-minded about older workers that these human resource cohorts have their diversity, some of them may have low literacy rates especially on issues about numerical literacy. They are victims of the discriminatory belief that they are slow mentally and physically hence to employ them is extremely unproductive, management should therefore carry the notion that lifelong learning is a core concept in modern careers and develop a symbiotic relationship with active aging. But it must not translate to developing an idea that older people must be regarded as continuous employees. We need to assign them jobs fitted to their level of expertise, mental and physical capacities. These should be regarded as critical issues to focus on vis-à-vis employment of older people is a concern.

The problem with Traditionalists is their conservatism which runs in conflict with younger generations especially the millennials. They may have hard times coping with organizations program on ethics that allows openness to previously restrictive behavior. It is not only in an ethical matter where they display incoherence but also for some issues that relate to change. This attitude has propagated weak and bad leadership in an organization because of their being accommodating to managerial incompetence because it is in their nature to respect authority and strict obedience to managerial decisions. Moreover, this group is noted for their loyalty and diligence and separate work life from family life, stable job and normally spend a longer period in their job and committed extremely to their work. They also dressed formally while at work and most stay in the office for the duration of their work for a day, they want to prove to the management they are worth which is their motivation and work without mentoring. Their loyalty lasts until they retire and most wanted to build a legacy in the company *(Ritter. N., 2014)*. However, in some studies, older generations aspire for more influence and power in the organization especially those whose retirement is still quite far, and it has been found that no generational difference in this respect *(Yu and Miller, 2003; Wong et al., 2008; Gursoy et al., 2013)*. There is also a strong belief that older generations would want to work independently, and they want autonomy in what they are doing to the extent of going against some advice of younger supervisors however there is inconclusive evidence on this and some researchers are divided on this issue. Some studies confirmed the presumption that older people work independently while other studies found no generational difference *(Jurkiewicz and Brown, 1998; Takase et al., 2009; Yu and Miller, 2003; Lub et al., 2012)*.

CONCLUSION

The relevance of fully understanding your employees in many respects is as essential as managing your workforce itself this is the backbone of our human resource strategy which is significant in making our employees stay and achieve greater labor productivity *(Flowers V. and Charles H.,1973)*. There is a need for managers to be familiar with employees' cultural background because this may have bearing on the kind of working atmosphere especially for minorities and ultimately performance and productivity *(Bakare S and Huang, 2013; Yildiz, E., 2014; Rawat, P. and Prema Basergekar, 2016; Greenhaus, Jeffrey et al., 2017)*. Thus, attaining greater leverage in achieving organizational objectives through the formation of an organizational culture that embodies all cultures in the organization where the interest of all concerns is taken care of, the firm can expect harmony, greater efficiency, and a high level of performance among all employees in the pursuit of its objectives *(Shahzad, F. et al., 2014)*. The age factor is as crucial as a culture when it comes to achieving greater efficiency and productivity *(Van O., Jan and Lenny S., 2010; Chung J., et al., 2015; Von B., et al., 2016; Bukit, I, et al., 2018)*. The physical aspect of a worker when he ages in most cases recede and so with his performance however this is just a generalization some studies find no hard evidence of a credible relationship among age, pay, and productivity *(Oursvan, J., 2010)*. It has also been found that age and experience are great contributors to increasing productivity *(INM Bukit, 2018)* and work experience is a great predictor of performance than age *(Bruce A., et al., 1990)*. The age factor has no credible impact on performance and may have to bear only when there are not enough opportunities such as promotion which can decimate work commitments and motivation *(Sparrow, P.,1986)*. For older people to catch up and become more competitive especially those assigned in technical or managerial jobs appropriate advanced training and graduate education are most to sonsider enabling them to sharpen their cognitive ability *(Chung J., et al., 2015)*. The appropriateness of employing a much older generational cohort for a managerial job may be seen from the following areas of concern for an effective and efficient method of running an enterprise. Older managers (typically in ages from the '50s to '60s) have emphasized the relevance of relying on a more inclusive and collaborative approach

of management which may be characterized as intuitive, holistic, and reflective as against younger managers (normally in their 20's to '30s) who are more self-centered in an approach that prefers concrete management techniques and emphasized self-motivation and self-discipline *(Razak, Abdul; Sarpan, Sarpan; Ramlan, Ramlan., 2018)*. Moreover, deciding on the old generational cohorts for a managerial position is further fortified by the kind of traits they have essential in addressing organizational and environmental problems due to unstable business conditions *(Dane, E. and Pratt, M., 2007)*.

They are known to display collaborative, self-discipline, and self-motivated traits which can enormously exact good outcomes for the firm because such can stimulate productivity and good camaraderie and enhances cooperative effort in pursuing organizational objectives. However, in such areas that require enormous technical knowledge and expertise, it would be more appropriate if younger generational cohorts are assigned managerial jobs because they are known to wield greater expertise by knowledge and experience about such jobs. This group is known to value more professional and material growth and have that habit to stay short in a work if they can't be satisfied with things, they want thus top management should always be aware of this group especially for highly valued ones to refrain them from leaving their jobs. Since younger generational cohorts have a strong bond of unity among themselves, the aspiration of one is most likely to contaminate easily other cohorts of their generation which may pose collective effort detrimental to the business.

When we deal with the old generational cohorts personally and professionally, we always have to bear in mind that this group is practically conservative in behavior and to some extent their work methods. They are not flexible with regards to accepting ethical dilemmas, and mostly cater to self-aggrandizement and they also have a higher sense of entitlement, they don't appreciate feedback and may not be happy with mentoring due to their in-appreciative to feedbacks and have a strong career goal. However, this group is known for their long-term commitment to their organization, hardworking, and has a strong commitment to developing harmony in their place of work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Managers and business owners cannot generalize who should be employed, promoted removed, or retain relying solely on generational theories because whatever is written in the theory about peoples' work attitudes, abilities, leadership styles, and ethical behavior all of which are just theoretical discourse, therefore, cannot be made as to the basis for decisions. This issue of the gap between theory and practice is affected by the manager's failure to completely understand the theory as he puts it into practice thus there is a knowledge transfer problem Van *(De Ven, A. and Paul E. Johnson, 2006)*. It is also vital to understand that theory and practice are two distinct types of knowledge. The theories, therefore, is a knowledge that is used as a marginal reference in human resource decision, there is no best way to categorize an employee's accomplishment but his actual work performance. A good manager must be effective at managing people, foremost is by evaluating their performance regularly through individual assessments or evaluations. As employees start their long record of employment, an evaluation of their performance is extremely necessary, there is a need to scrutinize their character/values, leadership capabilities, and some other cognitive abilities, and the progress of their education.

Undertaking a good policy to enhance labor productivity requires management to make a virtuous decision on hiring, promotion assigning of tasks, and retention. The generational theories may provide a background in the crafting of a human resource strategy together with the record of performance and character of its workers. Thus, in making human resource decisions covering a wide range of issues especially on hiring, promotion, retention termination among others need to include the factor of generational theories. The generational theories may at some instance thwart any impending problem or take advantage of any opportunity caused by the presence of different generational cohorts among its staff. A company with a higher incidence of generational cohorts may be introduced to much daunting HR-oriented problems of various nature and magnitude causing the firm to initiate force learning about such problems thus enhancing the firm's competencies and readiness.

The firm can benefit productively if managerial staff is selected based on loyalty, length of service at the supervisory level, strong family ties, and a strong sense of camaraderie and support for subordinates especially morally and technically, strongly motivated, and must be open-minded with regards to learning new stuff in management and is interested to pursue graduate schooling and can work well with millennials and the rest of the young generational cohorts

The firm should strongly craft strategies designed to keep distinctive new generational cohorts by adhering to their aspirations for greater opportunity for professional advancements, more use of technologies, and provide greater independence in job-related decisions. They should also be provided with competitive compensation which must be skilled-based and quality of work experience and education.

It is as well necessary to fully address the concern of new generational cohorts and keep them stay longer in your organization, problems brought by them to your attention must be immediately and fully addressed especially on matters relating to compensation, promotion, and training programs, and new technologies. It would be best for the firm's best interest if criticism directed against managerial lapses, abuses, and incompetence are entertained and heard and make those people responsible castigated and sanctioned!

There should be a positive attitude towards older generational cohorts especially from the side of management. They must be viewed of their capabilities as something similar if not more than what younger generations can do. Due to their longer work experiences in dealing

with the company's operational problems and systems, they are more qualified to take leadership in the company's operational and administrative functions. If ever there is lack of knowledge about academic theories and systems which to my view can be easily satisfied by appropriate technical and school-based training.

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