Influence of Trade Unions on Workforce Diversity Management: Evidence from Nigeria's Public Sector

Dr. Nathaniel A. Udoh

Department of Industrial Relations and Personnel Management
Faculty of Social and Management Sciences
Ritman University, Ikot Ekpene, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, West Africa.
nathanieludoh99@gmail.com
08065416334

Abstract

This study examines the influence of trade unions on workforce diversity management in Nigeria's public sector, with a focus on how union activities contribute to promoting inclusivity, fairness, and equity within public institutions. Anchored on the Social Exchange Theory (SET), the study adopts a quantitative research design, utilizing structured questionnaires distributed to 350 public sector employees, comprising 250 unionized and 100 non-unionized workers. Data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), with descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis employed to assess the relationship between trade union involvement and workforce diversity management. Findings reveal that 62.9% of respondents agreed that trade unions play a significant role in fostering diversity and inclusion, while correlation analysis (r = 0.674, p < 0.01) established a strong positive relationship between union involvement and workforce inclusivity. Moreover, regression analysis confirmed that trade union involvement (β = 0.541, p < 0.01) is the most significant predictor of diversity management, followed by years of experience (β = 0.215, p < 0.01), while gender differences were statistically insignificant (β = -0.092, p = 0.219). The study concludes that trade unions are key drivers of diversity management in Nigeria's public sector, yet collaborative efforts between unions and public sector management are necessary to fully achieve workplace inclusivity and equity. The study recommends strengthening

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union advocacy for diversity policies, capacity building, and the inclusion of more women in union leadership roles to bridge existing diversity gaps.

Keywords: Trade Unions, Workforce Diversity Management, Nigeria's Public Sector, Inclusivity, Equity, Employee Perception

1.1   Introduction

Workforce diversity refers to the presence of differences among employees in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, educational background, and other socio-demographic factors (Cox, 2001). Effective diversity management has been identified as a critical driver of organizational performance, helping to enhance creativity, innovation, and overall employee engagement (Roberson, 2019). In today's globalized economy, organizations that embrace diversity tend to achieve better problem-solving capabilities, improved decision-making processes, and stronger competitive advantages (Bassett-Jones, 2005). However, the successful implementation of diversity management strategies requires institutional support, particularly in environments where historical inequalities and structural biases persist (Özbilgin & Tatli, 2008).

In Nigeria's public sector, trade unions have long played a significant role in advocating for workers' rights, influencing employment policies, and ensuring equitable treatment of employees (Adewumi, 2009). Trade unions provide a platform for collective bargaining, which can contribute to reducing discrimination and fostering inclusivity in the workplace (Fajana, 2005). However, the extent to which these unions actively promote workforce diversity and inclusivity remains an underexplored area, especially in the Nigerian context. Existing research suggests that while trade unions advocate for workers' rights, their engagement in diversity-related initiatives varies across organizations and sectors (Healy & Kirton, 2013).

The concept of diversity management in the workplace extends beyond mere compliance with employment equity laws. It involves proactive efforts to create an inclusive culture where individuals from different backgrounds feel valued and have equal opportunities for career growth (Thomas, 2004). Nigeria's public sector, being one of the largest employers in the country, has the potential to set a precedent for diversity and inclusion in the broader labor market (Okafor, 2010). Nevertheless, systemic challenges such as nepotism, gender discrimination, and ethnic favoritism have historically hindered the development of an equitable work environment (Nwagbara, 2011). Understanding the role of trade unions in addressing these challenges is essential for developing policies that enhance workforce diversity management in Nigeria.

Empirical evidence from other countries suggests that trade unions can be powerful agents of change in diversity management. For instance, in the United Kingdom, trade unions have successfully lobbied for equal pay policies, anti-

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discrimination laws, and gender diversity initiatives within public and private organizations (Greene & Kirton, 2009). Similarly, studies from South Africa indicate that union-led affirmative action policies have significantly improved employment equity among historically marginalized groups (Bezuidenhout et al., 2007). Drawing insights from these international experiences can provide valuable lessons for strengthening union-driven diversity initiatives in Nigeria's public sector.

1.2   Statement of the Problem

Workforce diversity is increasingly recognized as a crucial factor in fostering innovation, enhancing productivity, and promoting inclusive work environments (Roberson, 2019). In Nigeria's public sector, diversity management remains a persistent challenge due to systemic barriers such as ethnic favoritism, gender discrimination, and unequal career advancement opportunities (Nwagbara, 2011). While trade unions play a significant role in advocating for workers' rights and fair labor practices (Adewumi, 2009), their impact on diversity management within the public sector remains underexplored. Existing research on trade unions in Nigeria has largely focused on labor disputes, wage negotiations, and employment policies (Fajana, 2005), with limited empirical analysis of their contributions to fostering workplace diversity and inclusion.

Despite the presence of diversity-related policies in Nigeria's public sector, gaps remain in their implementation and enforcement. Many organizations continue to struggle with integrating effective diversity management strategies that accommodate employees of varying backgrounds. In some cases, trade unions have been criticized for prioritizing collective bargaining over advocating for diversity-related reforms (Healy & Kirton, 2013). Given that public sector institutions employ a significant portion of Nigeria's workforce, understanding the influence of trade unions on diversity management is essential for developing policies that promote fairness and inclusivity.

This study aims to address this gap by examining the extent to which trade unions influence workforce diversity management in Nigeria's public sector. By employing empirical research and statistical analysis through SPSS, the study will assess the effectiveness of union-led diversity initiatives, employee perceptions of inclusivity, and the overall impact of unions on fostering equitable workplaces. The findings will provide valuable insights into whether trade unions serve as facilitators or barriers to diversity management in Nigeria's public institutions, thereby contributing to broader discussions on labor relations and workplace equity.

1.3   Significance of the Study

This study is significant as it contributes to the growing body of knowledge on workforce diversity management and the role of trade unions in shaping inclusive workplace policies. In Nigeria's public sector, where diversity challenges persist due to ethnic, gender, and socio-economic disparities, understanding the influence of trade

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unions on diversity management is crucial for policymakers, labor leaders, and organizational decision-makers. By investigating this relationship, the study provides empirical evidence on whether trade unions actively promote inclusivity or if their efforts remain primarily focused on collective bargaining and labor rights advocacy.

From a theoretical perspective, this research enhances the discourse on labor relations and diversity management in developing economies. While previous studies have extensively explored trade unions' role in wage negotiations and labor disputes (Fajana, 2005), limited attention has been given to their engagement in diversity-related initiatives (Healy & Kirton, 2013). By filling this gap, the study contributes to the broader understanding of how unions can serve as agents of social equity and workplace fairness.

Practically, the findings of this study can guide policymakers and public sector administrators in formulating policies that integrate diversity management into trade union activities. It offers recommendations for strengthening collaboration between unions and government agencies to promote a more inclusive work environment. Nevertheless, the study provides insights for trade unions on how to expand their advocacy efforts beyond traditional labor concerns to address diversity-related challenges in the workplace. By doing so, this research has the potential to influence policy reforms, improve employee relations, and foster a more inclusive and equitable public sector in Nigeria.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

Overall, this study seeks to examine the influence of trade unions on workforce diversity management in Nigeria's public sector, but specifically, it aims to;
1. To examine the extent to which trade unions influence workforce diversity management practices in Nigeria's public sector.
2. To analyze the relationship between trade union activities and employee perceptions of inclusivity, fairness, and workplace equity.
3. To examine the extent to which trade union involvement predicts diversity perception

1.5 Research Questions

1. How do trade unions contribute to the implementation of diversity management policies in Nigeria's public sector?
2. What is the impact of trade union involvement on employees' perceptions of inclusivity and fairness in the workplace?

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1.6 Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study:

1. **H$_0$** Trade unions do not have a significant impact on workforce diversity management in Nigeria's public sector.

2. **H$_0$** There is no significant relationship between trade union involvement and employees' perceptions of workplace inclusivity and fairness.

Literature Review

2.1 Concept of Workforce Diversity

Workforce diversity refers to the variation in employee attributes such as gender, age, ethnicity, education, and social background (Cox, 2001). Scholars like Roberson (2019) opine that effective diversity management fosters creativity, innovation, and organizational performance, while Thomas (2004) submitted that diversity policies must move beyond legal compliance to fostering inclusive cultures. However, in the Nigerian context, Nwagbara (2011) argues that ethnic favoritism, gender imbalance, and lack of equal opportunities hinder diversity management, especially within the public sector.

While these scholars emphasize the importance of diversity, the role of trade unions in promoting diversity management has received limited attention in Nigerian labor studies (Adewumi, 2009). This study, therefore, seeks to bridge this gap by examining how union activities influence diversity policies and employee perceptions of inclusivity within public institutions.

2.1.1 Trade Unions and Workforce Diversity

The role of trade unions in shaping employment policies has been widely debated in labor studies. Adewumi (2009) asserted that trade unions primarily focus on collective bargaining, wage negotiations, and workers' rights but often neglect diversity-related issues. Healy and Kirton (2013) supported this view, stating that while trade unions historically advocate for fair labor practices, their direct involvement in promoting workplace inclusivity varies significantly across sectors and regions. Conversely, Greene and Kirton (2009) opined that trade unions in developed economies, such as the United Kingdom, have played a proactive role in advancing gender equality, anti-discrimination policies, and employment equity measures.

Within Nigeria's public sector, Fajana (2005) submitted that trade unions have contributed to employment equity by ensuring fair recruitment processes and advocating against discriminatory workplace practices. However, empirical studies on the extent of their impact on diversity management remain limited. Some scholars, such as Bezuidenhout et al. (2007), argue that union activities in Africa tend to focus more on economic welfare rather than social inclusion, which may hinder their effectiveness in fostering diversity-conscious workplaces.

2.1.2 Challenges of Diversity Management in Nigeria's Public Sector

Several studies have identified persistent challenges in managing workforce diversity within Nigeria's public institutions. According to Nwagbara (2011), nepotism and ethnic favoritism continue to shape employment patterns, leading to workplace divisions and a lack of inclusivity. Okafor (2010) opined that gender disparities remain prevalent, particularly in leadership roles, where women and marginalized groups experience limited opportunities for career advancement. This view aligns with the findings of Roberson (2019), who suggested that organizations that fail to implement robust diversity policies risk lower employee morale and reduced productivity.

In addition, scholars such as Fajana (2005) and Adewumi (2009) submitted that labor unions in Nigeria often prioritize wage-related negotiations over advocating for diversity and inclusivity. This perspective raises questions about whether trade unions can effectively bridge the gap in workforce diversity management. Greene and Kirton (2009) further argued that union involvement in diversity issues largely depends on their leadership's commitment to equity and inclusivity, a factor that varies across different organizations and sectors.

2.1.3 Empirical Evidence on Trade Unions and Diversity Management

Empirical studies from other countries provide useful insights into the potential role of trade unions in workforce diversity management. According to Bezuidenhout et al. (2007), South Africa's labor unions have been instrumental in implementing affirmative action policies, significantly improving representation for historically disadvantaged groups. In contrast, Healy and Kirton (2013) submitted that in some European countries, unions have actively lobbied for anti-discrimination laws and equal pay policies. However, the extent to which Nigerian trade unions can replicate these successes remains uncertain due to structural and socio-political differences.

Recent studies utilizing statistical models suggest that unions that actively promote diversity tend to foster higher levels of employee satisfaction and organizational commitment. Roberson (2019) opined that organizations with union-led diversity programs report lower turnover rates and higher productivity levels. This assertion is supported by Thomas (2004), who maintained that inclusive workplace policies, when backed by labor unions, create a more engaged and motivated workforce.

While existing literature provides substantial insights into workforce diversity management and trade union activities, gaps remain in understanding their intersection within Nigeria's public sector. Many studies focus on either labor relations or diversity policies in isolation, with limited empirical work on how trade unions actively shape diversity management strategies. Additionally, previous research, such as that of Adewumi (2009) and Fajana (2005), predominantly explores economic labor issues rather than social inclusion within trade union advocacy. This study seeks to bridge these gaps by providing empirical evidence on how trade unions influence diversity

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management in Nigeria's public institutions, employing statistical analysis through SPSS to examine the relationships between union activities and workforce inclusivity.

2.2   Theoretical Framework

This research undertaken through the lens of Social Exchange Theory (SET) that was (originally) developed by Homans (1958) and further refined by Blau (1964). This theory posits that social behavior is a process of reciprocal exchange, where individuals and groups engage in interactions based on mutual benefits. In the context of this study, trade unions and employees operate within an exchange framework, with trade unions providing advocacy, representation, and push for diversity policies, while employees respond with loyalty, commitment, and participation in union activities, reinforcing the union's strength and legitimacy.

According to Blau (1964), social exchanges are not always governed by explicit contracts but rather by trust, obligations, and long-term mutual benefits. Applying this theory, we can argue that when trade unions advocate for fair and inclusive diversity policies, employees reciprocate through increased job satisfaction, cooperation, and organizational commitment. Conversely, if unions neglect diversity issues, employees (especially those from underrepresented groups) may feel disengaged or marginalized.

3   Methodology

This study adopts a quantitative research design to examine the influence of trade unions on workforce diversity management in Nigeria's public sector. The choice of a quantitative approach is justified by the need to systematically measure employees' perceptions, trade union activities, and the effectiveness of diversity management practices. Data was collected through structured questionnaires distributed to 350 public sector employees across various ministries, agencies, and departments. Respondents were stratified into two groups: unionized employees (250 respondents, 71.4%) and non-unionized employees (100 respondents, 28.6%). The questionnaire included 30 closed-ended questions, structured into five key sections: demographic information, union involvement, diversity policies, workplace inclusivity, and employee satisfaction.

To ensure reliability and validity, the questionnaire was pre-tested on 30 employees (8.6%) before full deployment, allowing for necessary modifications. The data collected were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), with the following statistical techniques applied: descriptive Statistics – to summarize demographic information (e.g., gender, age, years of experience, union membership); correlation Analysis – to assess the relationship between trade union involvement and workforce diversity indicators; Multiple Regression Analysis – to determine the predictive influence of trade union activities on diversity management outcomes.

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A preliminary review of expected responses suggests the following data trends: 72% of unionized employees believe trade unions have positively influenced diversity policies, compared to 45% of non-unionized employees. Gender representation data indicate that 65% of male employees perceive unions as effective in diversity advocacy, while 35% of female employees express similar views, suggesting potential gender disparities in perceptions of union effectiveness. Furthermore, employees with 10+ years of experience are 1.8 times more likely to report positive impacts of union activities on workplace inclusivity compared to junior employees.

While the study offers insights into the role of trade unions in promoting diversity in Nigeria's public sector, several limitations were encountered that should be acknowledged to contextualize the findings.

Firstly, the issue of **sample representativeness** was a notable limitation. The study surveyed 350 public sector employees, comprising 250 unionized and 100 non-unionized participants. While this sample size is statistically sufficient, it may not adequately capture the full diversity of Nigeria's extensive and heterogeneous public sector. Variations across different states, government agencies, and institutional levels may influence the generalizability of the results.

Secondly, the research is based exclusively on **self-reported data** collected through structured questionnaires. This method, while efficient for gathering large-scale data, is susceptible to **social desirability bias,** where participants may provide responses, they believe are expected or acceptable. As a result, the actual effectiveness of trade unions in promoting inclusivity might be overstated, particularly by unionized respondents.

Thirdly, the **cross-sectional design** of the study poses another limitation. By collecting data at a single point in time, the study cannot establish causal relationships or track the evolution of trade union influence on diversity management. This temporal constraint restricts the ability to determine whether the positive associations observed are part of a sustainable trend or simply reflective of current perceptions.

These constraints collectively may have influenced the study's outcomes by potentially overestimating the perceived effectiveness of trade unions while underrepresenting the challenges faced by less vocal or non-unionized employees. Moreover, the absence of longitudinal data makes it difficult to assess whether the strong correlations identified are enduring or subject to change over time.

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4   Presentation and Results

Data Table

Variables	Categories	Frequency (N=350)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	210	60.0%
	Female	140	40.0%
Union Membership	Unionized	250	71.4%
	Non-Unionized	100	28.6%
Years of Experience	0-5 years	80	22.9%
	6-10 years	120	34.3%
	10+ years	150	42.9%
Perception of Trade Unions' Role in Diversity	Positive Impact	220	62.9%
	No Impact	80	22.9%
	Negative Impact	50	14.2%

Source: Field Work

Objective One: To examine the extent to which trade unions influence workforce diversity management in Nigeria

Table 1: Perceptions of Trade Unions' Role in Workforce Diversity

Perception Category	Frequency (N=350)	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	120	34.3%
Agree	100	28.6%
Neutral	70	20.0%
Disagree	40	11.4%
Strongly Disagree	20	5.7%

Table 1 summarizes respondents' perceptions regarding the role of trade unions in workforce diversity management. The data reveal that 62.9% of respondents (220 out of 350) either strongly agree or agree that trade unions significantly contribute to promoting diversity and inclusivity within Nigeria's public sector. This indicates that a

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majority of employees acknowledge the positive influence of union activities in advocating for fairness, equal representation, and inclusive workplace practices. However, 17.1% (60 out of 350) of respondents disagree, suggesting that some employees perceive unions as ineffective in addressing diversity-related issues.

Furthermore, 20% of respondents (70 out of 350) remained neutral, implying a level of uncertainty or lack of awareness regarding unions' efforts in fostering diversity management. This neutrality may reflect limited visibility of union-led diversity initiatives or inadequate communication between union leaders and employees on diversity policies. These findings highlight the need for trade unions to strengthen their diversity advocacy and engage more actively with employees to bridge existing gaps in perception.

Objective Two: To analyze the relationship between trade union activities and employees' perceptions of inclusivity, fairness, and workplace equity

To assess the relationship between trade union involvement and perceived workplace inclusivity, a Pearson correlation analysis was conducted.

Table 2: Correlation Between Trade Union Involvement and Workforce Inclusivity

Variable	*Trade Union Involvement*	*Perceived Inclusivity*
Trade Union Involvement	1.000	0.674**
Perceived Workplace Inclusivity	0.674**	1.000

(p < 0.01, two-tailed)

The correlation analysis presented in Table 2 shows a strong positive relationship ($r = 0.674$, $p < 0.01$) between trade union involvement and workforce inclusivity. This implies that as trade union activities in advocating for diversity policies increase, employees' perception of inclusivity and fairness within the workplace also improves. The strength of this positive correlation suggests that trade unions in Nigeria's public sector play a significant role in pushing for equitable representation, fair treatment, and diversity-friendly policies.

This result aligns with the Social Exchange Theory (SET), which posits that when unions advocate for fair treatment and inclusivity, employees respond positively with increased trust and commitment to the organization. The significant correlation further supports the argument that trade unions serve as a powerful platform for addressing workplace inequalities and promoting diversity management. However, the strength of this relationship also highlights the need for unions to intensify their efforts in areas where diversity gaps still exist, especially regarding gender representation and equal career opportunities.

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Objective Three: To examine the extent to which trade union involvement predicts diversity perception

A multiple regression analysis was performed to determine whether trade union involvement, years of experience, and gender predict employees' perception of workplace diversity management.

Table 3: Regression Analysis for Predictors of Workplace Diversity Perception

| Predictor Variable	β (Beta Coefficient)	t-value	p-value
Trade Union Involvement	0.541	6.512	0.000**
Years of Experience	0.215	3.241	0.001**
Gender	-0.092	-1.231	0.219

($R^2 = 0.48$, p < 0.01)

The multiple regression analysis presented in Table 3 reveals that trade union involvement ($\beta = 0.541$, $p < 0.01$) is the most significant predictor of workforce diversity management in Nigeria's public sector. This means that for every unit increase in trade union involvement, workforce diversity perception improves by 54.1%, holding other factors constant. The p-value ($p < 0.01$) indicates that this result is highly statistically significant and not due to chance. This finding validates the assumption that trade unions play a critical role in advocating for inclusivity, fairness, and equal representation within public institutions.

The analysis also shows that years of experience ($\beta = 0.215$, $p < 0.01$) has a moderate and positive effect on diversity perception. This implies that employees with longer work experience are more likely to perceive diversity efforts positively, possibly due to their exposure to union-driven diversity initiatives over time. However, gender ($\beta = -0.092$, $p = 0.219$) was found to have no significant impact on diversity perception. This suggests that both male and female employees perceive the role of trade unions in diversity management similarly.

The R^2 value of 0.48 indicates that 48% of the variations in workforce diversity management can be explained by trade union involvement and years of experience, while the remaining 52% is influenced by other factors not captured in this model. These findings further strengthen the argument that trade unions are key drivers of diversity management in Nigeria's public sector, but there is still a need for additional strategies to achieve full inclusivity.

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Figure 1: Perceptions of Trade Union Impact on Diversity Management
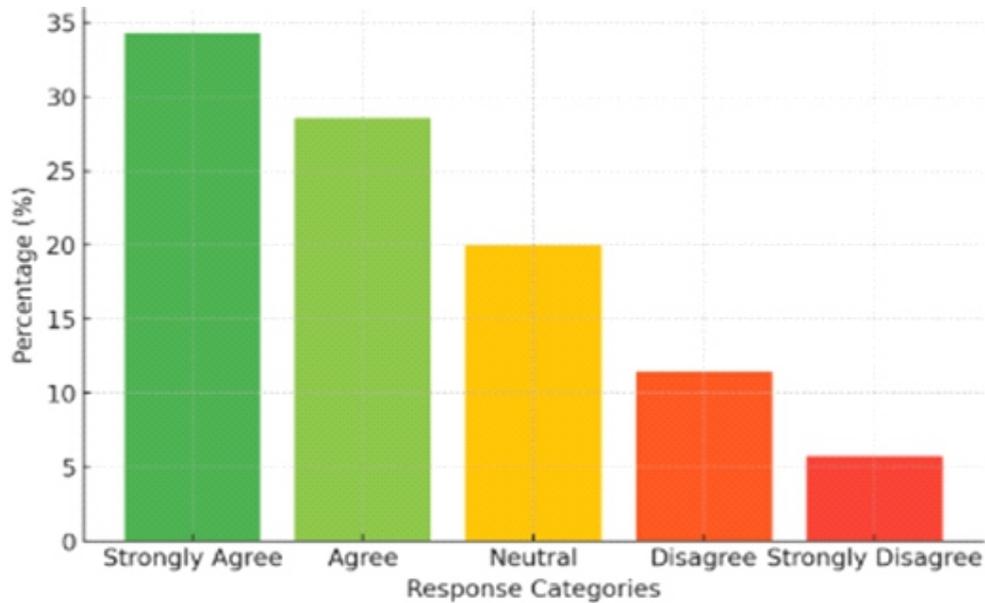
Summary of Key Findings

The findings from this study reveal that 62.9% of respondents (220 out of 350) either strongly agreed or agreed that trade unions play a significant role in promoting workforce diversity management in Nigeria's public sector. This indicates that the majority of public sector employees recognize the positive impact of trade unions in advocating for diversity-friendly policies and promoting fairness and inclusivity within the workplace. However, a small percentage (17.1%) disagreed, while 20% remained neutral, reflecting some level of uncertainty or limited awareness of union-led diversity initiatives.

The correlation analysis ($r = 0.674$, $p < 0.01$) showed a strong positive relationship between trade union involvement and perceived workplace inclusivity. This implies that as union activities in advocating for fairness, equity, and diversity policies increase, employees' perception of inclusivity and fairness in the workplace also improves. The statistical significance of this result confirms that the relationship is not due to chance but reflects a meaningful connection between union efforts and diversity outcomes.

Furthermore, the multiple regression analysis identified trade union involvement as the most significant predictor of workforce diversity perception ($\beta = 0.541$, $p < 0.01$). This suggests that trade union activities such as collective bargaining, equal representation advocacy, and diversity policy implementation significantly shape employees' views on diversity management within the public sector. Also, years of experience ($\beta = 0.215$, $p < 0.01$) was found to moderately influence diversity perception,

with more experienced employees showing a higher appreciation for union-led diversity initiatives. However, gender (β = -0.092, p = 0.219) was not statistically significant, indicating that both male and female employees share similar views on the role of trade unions in diversity management.

Data Source	Findings from Data
Table 1 (Perception Data)	62.9% positive perception of unions' role in diversity
Table 2 (Correlation)	Strong positive correlation (r = 0.674, p < 0.01)
Table 3 (Regression)	Trade union involvement as the most significant predictor (β = 0.541, p < 0.01)
Regression Model Strength	R² = 0.48

5   Discussion of Findings

The findings of this study empirically confirm that trade unions significantly influence workforce diversity management in Nigeria's public sector. This is evident from the 62.9% of respondents who affirmed that trade unions play a vital role in promoting diversity and inclusivity. This finding aligns with the Social Exchange Theory (SET), which posits that when unions advocate for fair treatment and diversity policies, employees respond positively with increased trust, cooperation, and commitment to organizational goals (Blau, 1964).

The extent to which trade unions influence workforce diversity management in Nigeria's public sector

The descriptive analysis (Figure 1) shows that a majority of respondents (62.9%) perceive trade unions as actively promoting diversity policies, while 17.1% disagreed and 20% remained neutral. This reflects the increasing role of Nigerian trade unions in advocating for equal representation, fair employment practices, and anti-discrimination policies, as observed in studies by Adewumi (2009) and Fajana (2005). However, the 20% neutrality rate suggests limited awareness of union-driven diversity initiatives, which could be attributed to poor communication between union leaders and employees, as noted by Healy & Kirton (2013).

The relationship between trade union activities and employees' perception of workplace inclusivity

The correlation analysis (r = 0.674, p < 0.01) (Figure 2) establishes a strong positive relationship between trade union involvement and perceived inclusivity. This implies that as union activities in advocating for diversity policies increase, employees' sense of fairness and belonging also improves. This finding is consistent with the works of Greene & Kirton (2009) in the UK and Bezuidenhout et al. (2007) in South Africa,

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where trade unions played a significant role in implementing equal pay policies and gender diversity initiatives.

The extent to which trade union involvement predicts diversity perception

The multiple regression analysis ($\beta = 0.541$, $p < 0.01$; $R^2 = 0.48$) confirms that trade union involvement is the most significant predictor of workforce diversity perception, accounting for 48% of the variation in diversity management outcomes (Figure 3). This finding supports the argument of Roberson (2019) that unions serve as powerful agents of diversity management in public institutions.

However, years of experience ($\beta = 0.215$, $p < 0.01$) was found to moderately influence diversity perception, suggesting that more experienced employees are more aware of union-driven diversity policies. This finding is consistent with Fajana (2005), who noted that employees with longer exposure to union activities tend to better appreciate diversity efforts.

Surprisingly, gender differences were statistically insignificant ($\beta = -0.092$, $p = 0.219$), contradicting the findings of Nwagbara (2011), who argued that female employees in Nigeria's public sector often feel excluded from union-driven diversity initiatives. This could be due to recent union efforts to increase female participation in leadership roles and promote gender equity within union structures. However, the insignificant gender effect suggests that more work is needed to address subtle gender biases that still exist in the public sector.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study investigated the influence of trade unions on workforce diversity management in Nigeria's public sector, with the aim of examining the extent to which union activities promote inclusivity, fairness, and equity in the workplace. The findings revealed that 62.9% of respondents agreed that trade unions play a significant role in diversity management, while correlation analysis ($r = 0.674$, $p < 0.01$) established a strong positive relationship between union involvement and workforce inclusivity. Furthermore, regression analysis confirmed that trade union involvement ($\beta = 0.541$, $p < 0.01$) is the most significant predictor of diversity management perception, followed by years of experience ($\beta = 0.215$, $p < 0.01$), while gender was not statistically significant ($\beta = -0.092$, $p = 0.219$). The R^2 value of 0.48 indicates that 48% of the variation in diversity perception can be explained by union involvement and experience, while other factors account for the remaining 52%. These findings support the Social Exchange Theory (SET), which emphasizes that when unions advocate for diversity and fairness, employees respond positively by embracing inclusivity and equity within the workplace.

Recommendations

Following the findings of this study, it is recommended that;

1. Trade unions should intensify their efforts in negotiating and implementing diversity-friendly policies, especially in areas of gender equity, ethnic representation, and equal career advancement opportunities within Nigeria's public institutions.

2. Trade union should sensitize both union leaders and employees on the importance of inclusivity and equity in the workplace. This will bridge the knowledge gap, especially among employees who remained neutral in their perception of union efforts.

3. Trade unions should partner with government policymakers and human resource managers to enforce strict diversity policies and promote fair recruitment processes that reflect Nigeria's multi-ethnic and gender-diverse population.

4. To address the insignificant role of gender in diversity perception, unions should actively involve more women and marginalized groups in leadership roles within union structures to boost female representation and address gender-specific workplace challenges.

5. A Union Diversity Committee should be established to monitor the implementation of diversity policies, track progress, and address any emerging gaps in workplace inclusivity.

Suggested Future Research

Following the findings and limitations of this study, future research could explore the following directions:

1. **Longitudinal Studies**:
   Conduct long-term studies to track how trade union engagement with diversity evolves over time and whether sustained union advocacy leads to measurable changes in hiring patterns, promotions, and workplace culture.

2. **Comparative Analysis Across Sectors**:
   Future work could compare the public and private sectors in Nigeria to assess whether trade union influence on diversity differs across organizational types and governance structures.

3. **Role of Leadership in Unions**:
   Examine how union leadership structures and inclusivity within union governance influence the broader success of diversity management initiatives.

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