Review

An analysis of western diversity management theories in a Nigerian context

Loliya Agbani Akobo

University of Manchester.

Research has shown that the philosophy behind diversity studies emerged from the Global North. This also strengthens the assumption that the current diversity management theorizing is mainly Anglo-centric which gives priority to the Global North, and reflects neoliberal structuring. In view of this critique on the implementation of Western theories in the Global South, this study examines two key Western theories within the diversity management discourse to critically examine Multinational Corporation's (MNCs') diversity management constructs in sub-Saharan Africa, focusing on Nigeria. This is to explore the relevance of Western theory in the Nigerian context, and to further identify and evaluate similarities and differences between MNCs diversity management processes in the Global North and Global South.

Key words: MNCs, western theories, Nigeria, global north, diversity management.

INTRODUCTION

Early recognition of the term 'Managing Diversity' emerged from the United States of America. This was as a result of the movement for equal opportunity rights and affirmative action (Klarsfeld, 2010); a product of the civil rights movement of the 1950s.

The civil rights movement was due to African-Americans seeking political equality as well as improved economic and social well-being (Klarsfeld, 2010). These movements aimed to eradicate the discrimination and injustice that were evident in society, and the workplace (Gilbert et al., 1999). It has, however, been argued (Gilbert et al., 1999) that these movements had some negative consequences because of the low job satisfaction recorded during their implementation.

Equal opportunity rights and affirmative action were later labelled as 'valuing differences', and this then became known as 'managing diversity' in the early 1990s.

Similarly, in the UK the term 'Managing Diversity' developed from the equal opportunities systems (Gold et al., 2010).

Metcalfe (2010) states that the diversity scenario in the UK has also evolved because of migration from Europe, Africa and Asia; this is also evident in the fact that there has been a significant rise in the number of Muslims employed within the workforce in the UK.

Additionally, it is recorded that more women are moving into the labour market in professional roles (Metcalfe, 2010). With regards to the difference between equal opportunities and diversity management as concepts, Metcalfe (2010) states that while managing diversity is internally driven and focuses on individual, there is a strong external drive for equal opportunity, which tends to focus on groups (Metcalfe, 2010). Managing diversity also embraces a broader range of differences exhibited

E-mail: loliyaa@yahoo.com.

among the workforce (Whitelaw, 2010), including, women, ethnic minorities and disabled people.

Whereas diversity management is concerned with all employees, especially managers, equal opportunity focuses mainly on the personnel department (Mavin and Girling, 2000). Metcalfe (2010) and Mavin and Girling (2000) agree that unlike equal opportunity, diversity management is concerned with not just dealing with discrimination in the workplace, but with developing the potential of the workforce (Gold et al., 2010). Consequently, the influence of globalisation on managing diversity has established a consistently evolving diversity management process, which informs the global perception of diversity management.

For instance, Canada does not consider diversity management a concern because of the perception that Canada accepts cultural differences (Polese and Stren, 2000). Miller and Rowney (1999) study of 180 companies in Calgary revealed that half of the organisations surveyed demonstrated little concern with issues around managing diversity, although they did show concern with adherence to regulatory pressures. Part of the observation was that many of these respondents did not feel that the lack of women and minorities in top management positions was a concern.

Of the 50% of organisations that did recognise the concept, 37.5% were beginning to work towards building diversity management in order to employ the most highly skilled workforce. Only about 12.5% had effective diversity programmes towards women, minorities, disabled and aboriginal people (Miller and Rowney, 1999). In contrast, in the French context, diversity has been gaining popularity since 2003 (Klarsfeld, 2009). Organisations practice diversity for various reasons (Mor-Barak, 2005) which include economic empowerment (Thomas, 1990), competitive advantage (Wentling and Palma-Rivas, 2000), creativity because of the increased pool of skills and experiences, as well as the society's expectation to accommodate all people (Klarsfeld, 2009).

In China, because of the open door policy, many privately owned enterprises, joint ventures; foreign investment firms and Western organisations including Multinational corporations Multinational Corporation's (MNCs') came into the country, leading to further cross-fertilisation and harmonisation of the human resource terminologies and practices of the Western world and the Republic of China (Yang et al., 2004). Meanwhile in Pakistan, according to Budhwar and Yaw (2001), the discourse on diversity takes a dimensional approach where gender is prevalent though not secluded.

Similarly, India practises a caste system, originally based on individual professions but that evolved into a hereditary structure where offspring were required to practise the same profession as their ancestors. Alongside the class structure, other diversity strata prevalent in India are gender and disability.

Likewise, African societies including Nigeria are recognised as diverse in nature (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011). The societal constructions of these nations are largely centred on its historical framework and on the social identities acknowledged within its geographical stretch (Singh, 2011). In spite of the awareness of the diverse nature of African States like Nigeria, it has to an extent proven difficult to clearly identify social categories within the Nigerian diaspora (Odiegwu et al., 2012).

However, with the influence of Western Societies and globalisation (Harzing and Pinnington, 2011), social identities recognised in Nigeria evolve firstly from social categories (Nyambegera, 2002) as documented within global or Western discourse on the concept of diversity (Sweetman, 2004). This paradigm of understanding diversity in Nigeria brings to light the existence of social categories like gender, ethnicity, religion, age, class and others like political partisan and geo-political zoning significantly obvious within the Nigerian society (Azolukwam and Perkins, 2009).

Nigeria which has over 200 ethnic groups consists of 36 States and a federal capital territory, and is further divided into 6 geo-political zones (Odiegwu et al., 2012). This ethnic driven character of the Nation plays out as the dominant drive for its political activities, national development and commitments. Another significant characteristic of the Nigerian social structure is the existence of religious intransigence between two major religions (Christianity and Islam) and to a large extent, has been known to influence national ethnic conflicts identified within the Nigerian diaspora especially within the North which is predominantly made up of the Muslims and the rest of Nigeria sometimes identified as the South and is predominantly Christian (Jibrin, 1991; Basedau et al, 2013).

Additionally, the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern protectorate of Nigeria by colonial rulers which makes up the current day Nigeria has been argued to be a significant challenge towards the total eradication of religious and ethnic conflicts at a national level (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011; Ekande, 2012). Hence, the use of politics, commerce, religion and the bringing together of the North and South under the colonial rule for easy governorship, have remained a debate about the foundation of the formation of Nigeria-post independence (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2011).

A study on diversity in Nigeria shows that ethnicity is a principal social relation within the Nigerian context (Hino et al., (2012). Following this, Hino et al. (2012) also acknowledges that ethnic diversity is responsible for just below 40% of the impediments experienced within sub Saharan Africa that delays growth and development. Nonetheless, other dominant social relations identified within the Nigerian society include religion, gender, class age, marital status, political partisan. With the influence of globalisation, Western practices and conceptualisation of

diversity through social identities (Harzing and Pinnington, 2011), it is no surprise that African States including Nigeria, also address the concept of diversity through understanding the impact of primary social relations recognized within this society structure (Singh, 2011).

In addition, examining diversity as a global concept, some scholars (Oswick and Noon, 2014) argue that the increasing interest shown on the topic of 'diversity' is due to the changes experienced in the political, social and cultural systems in the world today. This is evident in the level of migration experienced around the world, and also the movement of production of goods and services to developing countries (Gold et al., 2010).

Therefore, this paper contributes to understanding the processes involved in using western 'diversity management' theories within the Nigerian context. This can be a major step to fostering the development of diversity management models and frameworks in the Nigerian context (Anakwe, 2002) that will help reduce social conflicts as a result of social differences in the scale (Olsen and Martins, 2012).

Overview of western diversity management theories in Nigeria

The decision to use Western diversity management theories (Akobo, 2016) reflects the absence or limited use of Nigerian established diversity management practices in indigenous or multinational contexts (Anakwe, 2002).

As stated by Adeleye et al. (2014), Nigeria ranks poorly on the overall diversity index SHRM (2009) as a result of its negligence toward engaging in this management practice (Adeleye et al., 2012). This justifies the choice of starting from an Anglo-centric position as pioneers of this practice (Klarsfeld, 2010), with the aim to understand the extent of impact of Western developed practices in the Nigerian context.

In addition, this analysis identifies similarities and differences between the Global North and South contexts. Consequently, using Western developed theories, addresses in the Nigerian context, the argument that the possible transfer of Western management polices to Africa can be unfavourable towards the development of 'African style' management practices (Anakwe, 2002). The selected theories are the Cox Taylor theory on organisational types and dimensions of integration, which explores the impact of organisational and national cultural influences in the integration of minority groups in the workplace. The second theory, the Ely and Thomas (2001) model of diversity management, explores diversity policies that address issues of social equality and development.

Cox (1991, 1994) characterises organisations in three types: monolithic, pluralistic and multicultural. He states that these types of organisations were developed according to a six factor framework inspired by Milton Gordon's 'seven point framework' on diversity (Cox, 1991) consisting of acculturation, structural assimilation, intergroup marriage, prejudice, discrimination, identification with dominant group of society and intergroup conflict, and it can be used to show the degree to which an organisation is receptive to the value of diversity (Cox, 1991).

Cox (1991) within his framework develops six factors to demonstrate the level of integration of minority groups in an organisation. For the purpose of this paper, the study divided integration into organisational structures into two categories, formal and informal structures. Following Cox (1991) analysis, acculturation shows organisational cultural integration with individual culture or culture exhibited by the minority social groups, while the degree of structural integration indicates the ability of the organisation to adapt to minority groups in its structure.

The integration into formal/informal organisations indicates organisational support for minority social groups beyond work operations, and the degree of cultural bias shows the level of discrimination due to social differences. The level of organisational identification examines the gap between the majority and minority group in the organisation, and the degree of intergroup conflict explores the impact of conflicts caused by social differences.

The major difference of all three types of organisations is the level of inclusion of women and minorities in the organisation (Stockdale and Crosby, 2004). In the Monolithic type, which is the major form within organisations in the Unites States (Gold et al., 2010), minorities are required to adapt to the already existing organisational culture. In addition, these organisations are made up of a high number of white males with a low number of women and minority men in managerial positions.

Cox (1991) acknowledges that this scenario occurs in organisations where an identity group is dominant. He states as instances a minority owned business, or foreign companies in operation within the United Sates (Cox, 1991). He further identifies that organisations who exhibit this structure argue that geographical location and size are major influences they experience towards change (Cox and Stacy, 1991).

Pluralistic organisations identify the impact of women and minorities within the workplace as significantly valuable; hence, they are able to achieve a level of structural integration although this doesn't change the organisational structure (Cox, 1991; Stockdale and Crosby, 2004). Areas affected include hiring, promotion, management training on equal opportunity rights and audits on compensation (Cox, 1991). This model is also dominant within organizations in the United States (Metcalfe, 2010), with Cox (1994) giving examples of companies within the United States practising this (Coca Cola, General Motors, Phillip Morris, and Chrysler).

Although these types of organisations achieve a level of integration, there is some limited evidence that they still have an integration approach to social control, which Cox (1994) identifies as a characteristic of a monolithic organisation. The third type of organisation, which is multicultural, not only values and allows contributions from women and minorities, but adjusts the organisational structure to utilize the diverse workforce represented (Cox, 1994).

Further, Cox (2001) stresses that an organisation has to be multicultural in practice to be able to manage its diverse workforce effectively (Stockdale and Crosby, 2004) Cox (2001) believes that for an organisation to handle diversity effectively, it should be a multicultural organisation.

Cox (2001) further developed this theory as he identified five areas where change needs to occur in an organisational structure to qualify as a multicultural organisation; these include leadership components, research and measurement, education, alignment of management systems and follow-up. He further defined this as a model towards cultural change (Cox, 2001).

In an explanation of the model, Cox (2001) sees leadership as key for organisational change as leaders ensure organisational vision is well represented, motivate staff, and provide the required environment for the achievement of these organisational goals. This links to research and measurement, which can ensure that the data required to solve organisational problems (which include environmental factors) are gathered, and he explains that measurement is the process by which the data collected can be used to monitor progress within the organisation. He stresses that, for an organisation to be successful at change, they will need to be knowledgeable about the necessary data, and desired results must be precisely identified during the change process (Cox, 2001). Including education as another link, Cox (2001) explains this is to help the staff learn about any organisational change process. Most companies include education within their training programmes.

Alignment of management system is the fourth area, and relates to organisational policies and practices. These include the human resources practices such as recruitment, promotion, training and development. Cox (2001) recommends that these need to be in line with the company's goal to achieve diversity. Subsequent, Follow-up, which is the fifth area but not necessarily the last link, has to do with the implementation of action towards achieving cultural change within the organisation. It could intersect with other areas, but links most strongly with research and measurement (Cox, 2001).

Cox (1991) theory explains types of organizations based on their level of integration of diverse work groups within the organisation. The study uses this theory to assist in the assessment of empirical data in relation to identifying the level of organisational integration (Cox, 1991) in the Nigerian context. This theory will explore the level of integration of various social groups within the organisational structure. As any workforce is likely to reflect the culture of the society, it is significant to examine how organisational culture adapts in a society like Nigeria.

Cox (2001) theory was developed, and has been applied primarily within the United States (Cox, 2001) and has measured organisations' level of integration with the identifiable social categorisations and geographical location of the United States in mind. Hence, this can be a limitation concerning the use of this theory within the Nigerian context. This is because there is a possibility of identifying organisational types that do not fit into Cox (1991) organisational types, or that may have adopted characteristics from all three types.

The second theory the Ely and Thomas model, looks at social categorisation and identity (Gold et al., 2010), emerged from a qualitative research study they carried out within three culturally diverse organisations (Ely and Thomas, 2001). The theory was based on people's experiences within culturally diverse workgroups and in circumstances in which diversity 'enhances or detracts' from work group functioning (Ely and Thomas, 2001). They argue that diversity could be seen as a burden on organisations with the potential of high costs in terms of management and resolution of conflicts, therefore compromising the efficiency of these organisations (Choi and Rainey., 2010). This argument was based on the study of workgroups in three firms located in the United States (Gold et al., 2010). Ely and Thomas (2001) further stress that the perspective of diversity held by a workgroup influences how people in that workgroup 'express and manage tension that is related to diversity.

Metcalfe (2010) highlights that the results from the aforementioned study showed that workforce diversity had a high positive outcome on workgroup performance when the diversity perspective was focused on integration and learning. This focus was based on 'quality of intergroup relation, feelings of being valued and respected and the positivity of employees' racial identity at work' (Metcalfe, 2010). The three models of diversity management developed and then further refined were discrimination and fairness, access and legitimacy, and integration and learning (Ely and Thomas, 2001). Furthermore, Metcalfe (2010) explains that the discrimination and fairness perspective ensures fair and equal treatment while eliminating discrimination within an organisation's employment practices.

Subsequently, the access and legitimacy perspective uses diversity as a way of gaining 'access to legitimacy with a diverse market', and the integration and learning perspective proposes that the knowledge, skills and experiences of employees which have been developed as a result of their 'cultural identity groups are potentially valuable resources' (Gold et al., 2010). Similarly, Point and Singh (2003) categorise diversity in terms of four perceptions: resistance, discrimination and fairness,

access and legitimacy, and learning. Access and legitimacy frames diversity as establishing equal opportunities, whereas discrimination and fairness aims to ensure equality for people from minority groups (Ely and Thomas, 2001).

In contrast, the resistance approach ignores diversity while learning; it is more involved with valuing differences, offering a systematic process for all employees to learn about others, and the value of culture as well as demographic diversity (Fernando et al., 2012), leading to a multicultural organisation (Cox, 1991, 2001). Hence, Fernando et al. (2012) propound a multicultural approach to diversity, which includes demographic diversity and human capacity diversity. This is premised on their assumption that human capital diversity directly influences demographic differences, and demographic differences impact on group work because of other, less detectable, social identities that directly add value to group action, like knowledge and skills.

Although there have been arguments on the value of diversity management processes in relation to its cost, the results from Ely and Thomas (2001) study identify the advantage of effective diversity management within an organisation towards the eradication of discrimination or inequality (Gold et al., 2010). This model looks towards ensuring equal treatment and elimination of discrimination within the organisation's employment. This again is relevant within this context as the practice of diversity management looks to eradicate discrimination within the workplace and create equality amongst all social groups represented (Shen et al., 2009). This theory analyses diversity processes within the organisation with a view to exploring social equality and development in Nigeria; and, due to analysing a different context; this theory does not focus on group work.

These theories have been selected because they cover relevant areas required for the effective and efficient process of diversity management identified within organisations in Western societies (Klarsfeld, 2010). For instance, the Cox organisational types and dimensions of integration (Cox, 1991, 1994) show three levels of the integration of social groups in an organisation.

In the Nigerian context, this theory will explore integration of social groups – especially minority groups – within these organisations. Complementing this, the Ely and Thomas (2001) diversity model focuses on social categorisation and social identities. In the Nigerian context, this theory will examine diversity processes directed at social equality and development. In addition, these Western theories (Cox, 1991; Cox, 2001; Ely and Thomas, 2001) will explore relevant socio-cultural dimensions that influence individual and organisational culture in the Nigerian context.

METHODOLOGY

In order to understand social differences and how they are managed in Nigeria, it is applicable to study organisations that operate in Nigeria who as a result of the diverse workforce, are keen to manage these social differences. For instance, the diversity in Nigeria include dimensions like gender, age, class, religion also exists within the workforce.

Therefore, MNCs reflect the Nigerian society with evidence of dominant diverse groups identified in the Nigerian State. Likewise, as MNCs, there is a clear evidence of other social differences as these organisations employ staff from all over the world. The study took a qualitative case study research design approach. This is intended to provide an understanding, of how MNCs manage diversity in Nigeria. Therefore, the analysis in this study hinges on empirical data collected from two MNCs operating in Nigeria (anonymously referred in paper as MNCs' A and B). The home countries of these MNCs are the USA and Netherlands. The rationale for choosing this design was to allow for high level of conceptual validity (George and Bennett, 2004) in order to understand the effect of Western diversity management theories in the Nigerian context.

In addition, the research is subjective in nature; hence, this permits efficiency within this study. There is a need to create a method to allow participants to best express or present a social world view on the subject matter (Saunders et al., 2009). Primary data collection was used; a total of 34 participants were interviewed across these MNCs from a workforce of 1500 and 150 respectively. Semi- structured interviews were carried out, and the participants were selected through random, stratified sampling. Narrative approach was used for data analysis to expansively explore the diversity management processes and identify its relevance within the context.

Organisational types and dimensions of integration theory in the Nigerian context

Examining the structural integration, it was revealed that MNCs have been able to build structural integration through various means that include goals, objectives and sharing as part of the organisational culture, expertise and regionalisation, though in a partial state. It also showed that these processes established togetherness; ensuring that allocated work can contribute to organisational goals.

Participants from one of the MNCs acknowledged that some form of structural integration was achieved through promoting skill balance by focusing more on the merit system; while another described this as a feeling of involvement arising from the existence of platforms and opportunities to share views.

Furthermore, a respondent explained that the 360°-feedback system, comprising of the end of year review and a 2-way appraisal process (where the management and the team leaders appraise employees and where

employees appraise the management and the team leaders) is an impact of structural integration. These findings demonstrate a level of structural integration tailored to suit the operational systems in each MNC. However, arguably, the degree of structural integration within the MNCs can take a more proactive approach to create more perceptible process in the Nigerian context.

Subsequently, integration of informal organisational structures represents initiatives for networks in the organisation. For instance, participants from one of the MNC highlighted the formation of networks like women's organisations to help foster a mentoring and empowering process in the organisation. However, while the MNC sees this as a significant step towards valuing women in the organisation, some respondents argue that this can be portrayed as a form of discrimination against men seeking similar opportunities for mentorship and empowerment. Hence, this perception of devaluing one gender at the expense of the other presents a challenge to the organisation in the process of integrating informal structures in the company. Within another MNC, most participants did not identify any of such informal networks in the organisation.

However, some identified social networks outside the organisation that are recognised by the organisation, as supportive, motivating and effective mentoring groups. This recognition indicates organisational acceptance of social networks and structures outside the organisation that are likely to impact on individual behaviour (Hofstede, 2001).

Regarding the level of organisational identification, the findings revealed that there is a social gap; especially in comparison to what pertains within the MNCs subsidiaries located outside Nigeria. Participants rated this gap as 80 percent in favour of majority groups, however, some participants found it difficult to identify who makes up the 'majority groups'. Consequently, some participants identified the top management level as a majority group by stating that the people at this level appear to feel superior, which makes them the majority, while staff at the lower (mostly contract level) are the minority. Categorising further, it was added that there is quite a gap in expatriate income, especially in comparison to the income of locals (nationals). In addition, the findings acknowledged gaps in relation to the age factor as the MNCs restrain the negative perception of seniority, in relation to both age and position. This further indicates the existence of the cultural and economic influence of the host country and possibly transferred policies from the home country.

Similarly, it was revealed that there is a level of organisational identification generally as a social gap between the number of male and female staff. Despite the possibility that other identifiable differences recognised in the workplace could raise social related concerns between and at various levels of staff relations, the findings showed that the MNCs are gradually though

slowly closing these social gaps or concerns, especially in relation to gender issues. This has been a conscious effort at every level, as every department aims to ensure a balance in system to make sure that it is not in favour of a particular group. Likewise, it was revealed that within the MNCs, diversity management initiatives recognised there could be possible social gaps; hence, leading to the creation of these diversity policies as a mitigation process. Conversely, it's been argued that the social gaps between any identified minority and majority groups would always exist, especially in Nigeria (Abdulwahab, 2012). This argument is due to the significant and evolving level of social concerns regarding class, gender, ethnicity, religion and political partisanship at the national level (Abdulwahab, 2012; Ekanade, 2012).

Also, results derived supported the probability of existing social gaps and indicated how MNCs work to ensure there is no exploitation due to the existence of these gaps. This includes monitoring by the 'diversity and inclusion' team within the human resource (HR) department. This division comprise professionals who manage all diversity and inclusion concerns. Moreover, it cannot be over-emphasised that the respect culture built is a noteworthy tool for diversity management, as recognised within the MNCs. This culture allows everyone to refer to one another on a first-name basis, although this is not widely recognised in the Nigerian context as most cultural relations in Nigeria place a lot of significance on seniority with respect to age or position (Abdulwahab, 2012). Nonetheless, it is also creating a debate that the organisational cultural context confines the Nigerian cultural context in the MNC.

From the empirical study, the reactions derived indicated that the first name basis adapted from the Western culture as a means of closing possible social gaps between minority and majority groups is definitely not ideal. This is because the cultural structure of the Nigerian society promotes seniority, although, arguably, creating possible imbalance, unfairness and abuse of human rights.

Concerning gender imbalance, it is also argued that the majority group is still predominantly male, especially in the engineering and technical industries which these MNCs are categorised under. In agreement with the views of most feminist discourse (Harding, 2004), participants remarked that minorities in the context of diversity happen to be the women. The respondent stated that the organisational workforce in Nigeria has a ratio of four men to one woman. Therefore, demographically, the women will be the minority. This demonstrates societal impact on the MNCs' procedures in relation to closing social gaps like gender and age. Therefore, it is necessary that the MNCs examine these external factors to resolve the gender imbalance and other social gaps likely to occur (Syed and Ozbilgin, 2009).

In addition, further findings support this argument regarding societal impact by indicating, though social

gaps between the minority and majority may not be distinct in the organisation, in the societal context it is almost impossible to say that there has been no instance where people feel disadvantaged because of their background. As a result, the MNCs argue that they have a good, unbiased policy. Therefore, there is seldom a situation regarding recruitment or promotion that is based on tribal nepotism which exists within the society (Odiegwu et al, 2012).

From the findings, it can be deduced that the majority and minority groups identified within the MNCs are apparently age, nationality and gender-focused. In addition, although it is evident that these MNCs are working to ensure closure of these social gaps, particularly through the respect culture built alongside other intervention processes, this is evidently still work in progress. Figures 1 and 2 shows an analysis of two multinationals using the Cox Taylor Theory on Organisational Types and Dimensions of Integration framework.

From the foregoing critical analysis, Figures 1 and 2 have been presented to summarise the findings. Figure 2 highlights the culture, policies and procedures in the MNCs. As earlier indicated, this is in correspondence to Cox (1991) 6-factor framework applied to indicate the integration processes in each MNC. Based on these policies and procedures,

Figure 1 presents the levels of integration in both MNCs within the 6-factor framework. It is evident that, based on the Cox-Taylor diversity model on organisational types and dimensions of integration, both MNCs are moving towards a pluralistic structure that recognises the impact of social groups in the organisation. Hence, they are working to achieve a level of structural integration (Cox and Blake, 1991).

However, as a progression towards a more effective diversity process, Cox (2001) stresses that a multicultural organisation is a necessity for any significant change to occur in an organisational structure. He further highlights key areas like leadership components, research and measurement, education, alignment of management systems and follow-up, and defines this as a model for cultural change (Cox, 2001).

Following the aforementioned illustration using Cox-Taylor's model on organisational integration further shows similarities with the practice of diversity management policies in Western states, as identified in Western studies (Cox 1991), and now in the Nigerian context. These similarities can be summarised as evidence of major social gaps between men and women workforce. However, a major difference in Nigerian society is that Nigeria is yet to build a national culture or follow through policies from government institutions that strongly promote equality between the men and women at the national and organisational level. When achieved this should empower more women to progress in the society. These areas for equality include social, political,

and educational, especially in academic courses predominantly seen as male dominated fields.

Comparing both the MNCs, both MNCs show existence of strong organisational culture. These cultures drive organisational practices, which includes diversity management. Furthermore, both MNCs display existence of strong Western founded philosophy that integrates with their organisational culture. This minimises social conflicts likely to occur in the organisations because of the Nigerian socio-cultural character. Nonetheless, the MNCs show evidence of social gaps between majority (top management) and minority (lower staff, especially contract staff). Other dominant social gaps include gender and age related gaps. This indicates that multinational (A) exhibits a high gap stratum while the outcome in multinational (B) is between the high and medium levels (Figures 1 and 2).

Arguably, this could be because of the size of the workforce, as MNC (A) has a smaller workforce than MNC (B) in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. This further indicates that a larger workforce can show a different result in relation to closing social gaps between the minority and majority staff represented and categorised in an organisation (Cox, 1991).

Additionally, MNC (B) shows significant support for internal social networks, while MNC (A) indicates organisational support for staff who are involved with external social networks.

The Ely and Thomas model on diversity management in Nigeria

The Ely and Thomas model explores experiences within culturally diverse workgroups. This model also explores circumstances in which differences 'enhance or detract' the functioning of people in work groups (Gold et al., 2010).

As earlier mentioned, the model focuses on three major paradigms: discrimination and fairness, access and legitimacy, and integration and learning. It highlights characteristics that elucidate the philosophy of these paradigms of diversity. Nonetheless, Kamal and Ferdousi (2009) argue that most organisations focus on two areas, which are discrimination and fairness, and access and legitimacy. This model will be used to explore the diversity process towards social equality and development in the selected MNCs in Nigeria.

In examining the paradigm on discrimination and fairness, the findings revealed that for instance, the policies and the compliance rule towards managing diversity on MNC (A) is an open policy, and the culture built in the organisation promotes equal opportunity and equal treatment among all staff, especially in the areas of organisational experience, education and knowledge sharing. Therefore, there is some form of fairness at various organisational levels with regard to experience,

Indicators	Multinational A	Multinational B
Form of Social Control	Strong Organisational Culture	Strong Organisational Culture
Degree of Structural Integration	-Expertise and Regionalisation -Sharing -Part of Organisational culture, goals and objectives	-Merit System -Feeling of Involvement -360 Feedback -2 way appraisal system
Degree of Formal/Informal Organisation	Involvement with social groups outside the organisation but recognised by the organisation	Formation of groups within the Organisations (e.g. Women Organisation)
Degree of cultural Bias	-Existing Western culture that downplays social related conflicts within the organisation though still in existence -Promoting a respect culture that helps reduce discrimination and social injustice within the organisation	Existing Western culture that downplays social related conflicts within the organisation though still in existence -Promoting a respect culture that helps reduce discrimination and social injustice within the organisation
Level of Organisation Identification	-Majority and minority in favour of majority (top management) -Gap in Expatriate income -Gap in relation to age and position -Gender related gaps	-Gender related gaps -Gaps relating to staff levels -Age related gaps
Degree of intergroup Conflict	Monitoring systems to downplay negative perceptions on age and position	Reduction of age related conflicts through existing Western culture

Figure 1. Analysis results using Cox Taylor organisational types, and dimensions of integration framework (Source: adapted from organisational types and dimensions of integration Cox, 1991).

education and exposure. Furthermore, the findings established that there is a non-discrimination policy which is not always apparent in practice.

This lapse in process also includes a lack of policy implementation due to subjective events that have occurred within the MNC. However, participants withheld details on these subjective events. In relation to this, it was highlighted that any discrimination and unfair treatment was more likely to occur amongst the contract staff. This is because contract staff members are more likely to be exempt from the privileges, support and benefits accorded to full-time or permanent staff members. Subsequently, the findings on MNC (B) recognised some level of equal treatment and non-discrimination procedures, which was attributed to the level of diversity awareness created by the company. This included instances of how unfair treatment are interpreted, describing a situation where a man feels a woman who has been away for maternity leave tends to get a better performance appraisal than her male counterpart. Although this may not be a significant concern, it provides evidence that the MNCs try to ensure women experience fair treatment.

From the aforementioned narratives, there is evidence

of mixed feelings, as respondents in both MNCs indicate that some levels of unfair treatment still exist. Both MNC (A) and (B) significantly rely on 'respect and value for all' as a culture to help promote equal opportunity and fair treatment amongst the workforce on various levels, including areas where unfairness may possibly be felt. However, the feeling of fair treatment experienced can be relative as this involves individual perceptions. This includes equal pay (with expatriates, colleagues in other subsidiaries and contract staff members) and gender-related initiatives. On the issue of equal pay, the challenge could sometime transcend 'respect for all' due to the form of organisational employment structure where employees could be full time, permanent, part time, top management, middle management, lower staff member, nationals or expatriates.

Nonetheless, the findings also highlight that recruitment is based on competency and merit, thereby reducing the chances of exhibiting favouritism, although not affecting payment systems as this is based on an individual's employment package. In relation to payment variance between nationals and expatriates, Mahajan (2011) argues that this is important for facilitating expatriate adjustment and for increasing the usefulness of MNCs

Type	Multinational A	Multinational B
Form of Social Control	Assimilation	Assimilation
Degree of Structural Integration	Partial	Partial
Integration of Formal/Informal Organisation	Limited	Limited
Degree of Cultural Bias	Progress on the elimination of prejudice and discrimination though still in existence	Progress on the elimination of prejudice and discrimination though still in existence
Level of Organisational Identification	Gap between majority to minority is towards a high level	Gap between majority to minority is between a high-medium level
Degree of Intergroup Conflict	Minimised	Minimised

Figure 2. Analysis result positioning multinationals within Cox Taylor theory on organisational types and dimensions of integration framework (Source: adapted from organisational types and dimensions of integration, Cox, 1991).

in the host nation.

However, in the Nigerian context, this disparity presents as unfair treatment and inequality between the foreign and local staff. This also captures the discussion on pay disparity that promotes inequality between MNC workers and other employees within various private and public organisations in Nigeria. However, there is no empirical proof concerning this perception of inequality as the class disparity discourse in Nigeria spans beyond a comparison of how well the MNC pays its employees compared to other employers.

In assessing recruitment and compliance with federal or other institutional regulations, both MNCs' employment policies suggests they employ staff on either a contract or a permanent basis. In light of this, the MNCs adhere to, and advise their agency recruiters that they have the right to resource and recruit the best people. This could mean, regardless of likely ethnic or regional recruitment quotas, the companies themselves do not adhere to the proposition of specifically recruiting from a particular region. They stick to their policy of recruiting based on merit and competency despite perceived views or instances where communities of operation could impose certain conditions on the MNCs by requesting they recruit locals (indigenes).

Hence, in relation to community quotas, most MNCs in

Nigeria recruit under service contract schemes. This is a different recruitment scheme, as the contract staff members employed under this scheme are not recognised as company staff and this does not usually affect corporate recruitment. Such roles usually include job types like cleaners, security staff and drivers; essentially, these are the non-graduate, non-technical or unskilled labour jobs. The corporation initiates these opportunities as a means of developing the communities where it operates. In agreement with the aforementioned narratives, another respondent stressed that employees within these job roles do not have the opportunity for career development or promotion in the MNC.

The findings as discussed earlier suggest that a significant number of the recruitment requirements for nationals issued to the MNCs are community driven. Nonetheless, the federal government also issues employment requirements in the form of quotas to these corporations. The detail of the quotas and legislation from the national level was, at the time of the interviews, unknown to most of the respondents. However, a respondent narrated that this quota largely relates to the number of nationals that an MNC is expected to recruit in its Nigerian subsidiaries in comparison with expatriates. Arguably, this employment requirement acts as a means of increasing national job opportunities and empowering

Nigerian nationals towards national development. This has been the case in other African and Western countries (Klasfeld, 2010).

Additionally, it is observably a means of increasing employed national labour capacity in the workforce and under the influence of foreign direct investment (Jensen, 2003). Furthermore, the underutilised equal employment policies developed by the federal government in relation to diversity management could be a missed opportunity and a reason for a significant social gap in the study and promotion of diversity management in a Nigerian national context.

The third paradigm from the Ely and Thomas (2001) model, the access and legitimacy paradigm seeks to create a level of acceptance and value amongst identified minority groups in the MNCs. This paradigm looked specifically at racial and gender concerns between black and white staff, and between female and male staff in the United States (Gold et al., 2010).

In the Nigerian context, both MNCs identify women as a minority due to the level of male dominance in the organisations (Berdahl and Moore, 2006). Hence, in relation to access and legitimacy, the organisation seeks to ensure that women feel valued and accepted in their various departments. Confirming the existence of this process, some respondents highlighted that the organisations take extra steps to promote women-focused initiatives like women's empowerment programmes, mentorship programmes (in and beyond the organisation), and fair appraisal processes for women who take maternity leave. This endorses the fact that there is an inter-relationship between discrimination and fairness paradigm and the access and legitimacy paradigm. This is the reason why most organisations, as identified by Kamal and Ferdousi (2009) and Gold et al. (2010), focus on the two areas (discrimination and fairness and access and legitimacy) demonstrated in the Ely and Thomas model on diversity. Another reason relates to the origin and evolution of diversity management (Gold et al., 2010).

Diversity management is an enhanced process of affirmative action and equal employment opportunity, which are products of an equal rights movement that focuses on core processes for achieving equal opportunity, ending injustice and discrimination (Gilbert et al., 1999). In relation to this, the discrimination and fairness, and access and legitimacy paradigms both interchangeably focus largely on equality, accepting and valuing staff, as well as eradicating discrimination (Kamal and Ferdousi, 2009).

Subsequently, the learning and effectiveness paradigm focuses on integration and, as highlighted by Kamal and Ferdousi (2009), this paradigm provides the organisation the opportunity to examine differences among employees, further creating an environment in which the organisation learns and grows due to previous outcomes. Similarly, Cox (2001) argues that most organisations are yet to develop a full integration process; which he identifies as multicultural.

In relation to this concern, Cox (2001) integration model also propounds the need for organisations to move towards integration; adapting a skill training and learning process to ensure a more effective diversity management system. In the Nigerian context, this is work in progress as most diversity interventions centre on awareness programmes with existing but limited skill, and learning processes in place. Following the foregoing critical analysis, the initiatives in each paradigm of diversity management process implemented by the MNCs indicates the challenges and policies within the corporations that centre on the social concerns identified.

Conclusion

Based on the need to understand the relevance of Western diversity management theories in the Global South, (Akobo, 2016) using Nigeria as case, this study examines diversity management processes in MNCs; the similarities and differences between Nigeria and the global North (Cox and Blake, 1991; Ely and Thomas, 2001; Syed and Ozbilgin, 2009).

This covers the development and implementation of diversity and equality, policies by the MNCs. The study highlights the opportunities and challenges with adopting Western theories in the Nigerian context. The Cox theory on Organisational Types and Dimensions of Integration looked at the level of organisations' openness to diversity management processes. The analysis hence, reveals some level of openness depicting similarities with the Global North. Following, Ely and Thomas model indicates again, similarities with the global North as it portrays more focus on discrimination and fairness with less established procedures for learning and effectiveness. This model also indicates significant focus on gender concerns, which can be argued to be a global concern.

As a result of this analysis, this study indicates a significant level of influence from the Global North on the Global South. Nonetheless, the paper also recognizes that these Western theories in the context of MNCs provide a solid foundation for assessing the concept of diversity management in Nigeria which is currently an emerging terminology. This includes, policies transferred from home to host countries. This critique also validates the relevance of a two-way process, that is, knowledge flows from the Global North to the Global South and vice–versa. This two-way adoption process further affirms the feasibility of Western corporations to promote, globally, both perspectives as well as localise diversity management approaches (Looise and Drucker, 2002).

Nonetheless, though this study indicates that diversity management in the Nigerian context shows an integration of both western and national approaches, it likewise, indicates mixed consequences that diversity

management has proven to be successful (Wentling and Palma-Rivas, 2000) due to increased employment of a diverse workforce and competitive advantage. However, it is a challenge for organisations in relation to conflict management (Jehn et al., 1999; Cox, 1991).

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author has not declared any conflict of interests.

REFERENCES

Abdulwahab T (2012). The challenges of individualism and nation-building in Nigeria - an analysis from social history. Glob. J. Hum. Soc. Sci. Hist. Anthropol. (online) Available at: http://socialscienceresearch.org/index.php/GJHSS/article/view/503/454

Adeleye I, Atewologun D, Matanmi O (2014). Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in Nigeria: Historical Context and Emerging Issues, in A. Klarsfeld L, Booysen E, Ng I, Roper A, Tatli (Eds.), International Handbook on Diversity Management at Work: Country Perspectives on Diversity and Equal Treatment (Second Edition). Cheltenham and Northampton: Edward Elgar, pp. 195-216.

Akobo LA (2016). A review of diversity management in Nigeria: Organizational and national perspective. J. Afr. Stud. Dev. 8(3):21-34.

Anakwe UP (2002). Human resource management practices in Nigeria: challenges and insights. Int. J. Hum. Resour. Manag. 13(7):1042-1050.

Azolukwam VA, Perkins SJ (2009). Managerial perspectives on HRM in Nigeria: evolving hybridization? Cross Cultural Management: Int. J. 16(1):62-82

Basedau M, Vüllers J, Körner P (2013). What drives inter-religious violence? Lessons from Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, and Tanzania. Stud. Conflict Terrorism 36(10):857-879.

Berdahl JL, Moore C (2006). Workplace harassment: double jeopardy for minority women. J. Appl. Psychol. 91(2):426-436.

Budhwar SP, Yaw AD (2001). Human Resource Management in Developing Countries. London: Routledge.

Choi S, Rainey HG (2010). Managing diversity in U.S. federal agencies: effects of diversity and diversity management on employee perceptions of organizational performance. Public Administration Review, January/February.

Cox T (1991). The Multicultural Organization. Admin. Sci. Quart. 40:423-443.

Cox T (1994). A Comment on the Language of Diversity. Organization (Online) 1(1): 51-7.

Cox T (2001). Creating the Multicultural Organization: A Strategy for Capturing the Power of Diversity. San Francisco, CA. Jossey- Bass.

Cox TH, Stacy B (1991). Managing Cultural Diversity: Implications for Organizational Competitiveness: Executive. (Aug., 1991), 5(3):45-56

Ekanade O (2012). The interface of ethnicity and revenue allocation in Nigeria's first republic. Afr. Identities. 10(1):95-110.

Ely RJ, Thomas DA (2001). Cultural diversity at work: The effects of diversity perspectives on workgroup processes and outcomes. Admin. Sci. Q. 46(2):229-273.

Fernando A, Fernandez P, Gardey G (2013). Workforce Diversity in Strategic Human Resources Management Models. Cross. Cult. Manage. 20(1):39-49.

Gilbert JA, Stead BA, Ivancevich JM (1999). Diversity management: A new organizational paradigm. J. Bus. Ethics 21:61-76.

Gold J, Thorpe R, Mumford A (2010). Gower Handbook of Leadership and Management Development (5th Edn). England: Gower Publishing.

Harding S (2004). The Feminist Standpoint Theory Reader: Intellectual and Political Controversies. New York: Routledge.

Harzing A, Pinnington AH (2011). International Human Resource Management (3rd Edn). London: Sage Publications

Hino H, Lonsdale J, Rantis G, Stewart F (2012). Ethnic Diversity and Economic Instability in Africa: Interdisciplinary Perspectives. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

Hofstede G (2001). Culture's Consequences: Comparing Values, Behaviours, Institutions and Organisations across Nations (2nd Edn). London: Sage

Jehn K, Northcraft G, Neale M (1999). Why differences make a difference: a field study of diversity, conflict, and performance in workgroups. Admin. Sci. Q. 44: 741-763.

Jensen NM (2003). Democratic Governance and Multinational Corporations: Political Regimes and Inflows of Foreign Direct Investment. Int. Organ. 57(3):587-616.

Kamal Y, Ferdousi MM (2009). Managing diversity at workplace: a case study of HP. ASA University Review 3(2). Available at: http://www.asaub.edu.bd/data/asaubreview/v3n2sl13.pdf

Klarsfeld A (2010). International Handbook on Diversity Management at Work: Country Perspectives on Diversity and Equal Treatment. (ed) Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Looise K J, Drucker M (2002). Employee participation in multinational enterprises: the effects of globalisation on Dutch works councils. Employee Relat. 24(1):29-52.

Mahajan A (2011). Host country nationals' reactions to expatriate pay policies: making a case for a cultural alignment pay model. Int. J. Hum. Resour. Manage. 22(1):121-137.

Mavin S, Girling G (2000). What is managing diversity and why does it matter? Hum. Resour. Dev. Int. 3(4): 419-433

Metcalfe BD (2010) Diversity, Management and Leadership Development. In J. Gold, R. Thorpe and A. Mumford (2010) (Eds), Gower Handbook of Leadership and Management Development (5th Edn). England: Gower Publishing.

Metcalfe BD, Rees C (2005). Theorizing advances in International Human Resource Development. Human Resour. Dev. Intel. 8(4):449-465.

Miller GE, Rowney JIA (1999). Workplace diversity management in a multicultural society. Women In Manage. Rev. 14(8):307-315.

Nyambegera SM (2002). Ethnicity and human resource management practice in sub-Saharan Africa: the relevance of the managing diversity discourse. Int. J. Hum. Resour. Manage. 13(7):1077-1090.

Odiegwu M, Ubabukoh O, Baiyewu L, Okpi A (2012). Constitution: Six geopolitical zones divide North, South. Punch (August 12). (Online). Available at: http://www.punchng.com/news/constitution-six-geopolitical-zones-divide-north-south/

Olsen JE, Martins LL (2012). Understanding organizational diversity management programs: A theoretical framework and directions for future research. J. Organ. Behav. 33(8):1168-1187.

Oswick C, Noon M (2014). Discourses of Diversity, Equality and Inclusion: Trenchant Formulations or Transient Fashions? Brit J. Manage. 25:23-39.

Point S, Singh V (2003). Defining and dimensionalising diversity: evidence from corporate websites across Europe. Eur. Manage. J. 21(6):750-761

Polese. M, Stren (2000). The Social Sustainability of Cities; Diversity and the Management of Change. Canada: University of Toronto Press

Shen J, Chanda A, D'Netto B, Monga M (2009). Managing diversity through human resource management: an international perspective and conceptual framework. Int. J. Hum. Resour. Manag. 20(2):235-251.

Singh N (2011) Nigeria's elusive quest for democracy: Multinational Corporations and sustenance of authoritarianism. Afr. Asian Stud. 10(2-3):209-233.

Stockdale MS, Crosby JF (2004).The Psychology and Management of Workplace Diversity. Boston: Blackwell Publishing.

Sweetman C (2004). Gender, Development and Diversity. Oxford: Oxfam Publication.

Syed J, Ozbilgin M (2009). A relational framework for international transfer of diversity management practices. Int. J. Hum. Resour. Manage. 20(12):2435-2453.

United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (2011). Diversity Management in Africa: Findings from the African Peer Review Mechanism and a Framework for Analysis and Policy-Making.: http://www.uneca.org/sites/default/files/publications/3-

diversitymanagement.pdf

Wentling RM, Palma-Rivas N (2000). Current status of diversity initiatives in selected multinational organisations. Hum. Resour. Dev. Q. Spring. 35-60.

Yang B, Zhang De, Zhang M (2004). National Human Resource Development in the People's Republic of China. Available at: http://adh.sagepub.com/content/6/3/297.