JPB REVIEW
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF PROFESSIONAL BUSINESS REVIEW
ISSN: 2525-3654
OPEN ACCESS

MEASURING INEQUALITY IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA POST-PANDEMIC: CORRELATION RESULTS FOR WORKPLACE INEQUALITIES AND IMPLICATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL TEN

Timilehin Olasoji Olubiyi [A], Olumuyiwa Oluseun Adeoye [B], Bolaji Jubril [C], Grace Olubisi Makinde [D], Julius Paul Eyanuku [E]

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 31 January 2023

Accepted 10 April 2023

Keywords:

Discrimination;
Diversity;
Efficiency;
Equity;
Gender Disparity;
Sustainability.

ABSTRACT

Purpose: This paper aims to investigate the relationship between workplace inequalities and business effectiveness in selected and listed businesses in Nigeria. It includes an analysis of four independent sub-variables (gender segregation, incentive disparity, ethnic factors and professional disparity) for the variable workplace inequalities and four dependent sub-variables (creativity, service quality,productivity and business growth)for the variable business effectiveness.

Methodology: This study used a survey research approach to investigate the relationship between workplace inequalities and business effectiveness in selected and listed businesses in Nigeria. The survey research design was cross-sectional in this paper, and the technique was quantitative. The adoption of this design was influenced by the research problem and its related research questions. The unit of analysis for this study was the staff of consumer goods companies of Seven listed consumer goods companies in Nigeria that controlled 93.08% of the total market capitalization of the entire consumer goods sector as of October 31, 2022. The population comprised 491 employees of the selected consumer goods companies in Nigeria. A structured questionnaire with Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the constructs ranging from 0.77 to 0.88 was used for data collection.

Findings: The findings of this study are in consonance with the view of Bandura (2012), who insists that entrepreneurial self-efficacy is the level of confidence shown by an individual towards the undertaking of a task or position which favourably influences small business performance. The findings of this study are consistent with those of Ngek (2015); Dessyana and Riyanti (2017); Adolfina and Lumintang (2018); Budiman and Pangestu (2018); Cumberland, Meek, & Germain, (2015): Yusuff et al. (2019); Oyeku *et al.* (2020); Islam et al. (2020); Kale, (2020); Khalil *et al.* (2021); McGee & Peterson, (2019); Torres and Watson, (2013) which demonstrate that entrepreneurial self-efficacy positively and significantly affects business performance

Research limitation and implication: It recognized that the findings and implications of this paper are situated within Lagos, Nigeria, and primarily small businesses as the focus of its attention. The research can be expanded with similar

[A] *PhD. Department of Business Administration & Marketing, School of Management Sciences, Babcock University, Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria. E-mail: drtimiolubiyi@gmail.com*
Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0690-7722
[B] *Ph.D. Department of Business Administration, Adeleke University, Ede, Osun State, Nigeria.*
E-mail: muyiwa.adeoye@adelekeuniversity.edu.ng Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4935-4259
[C] *Department of Marketing and Sales. University of Portsmouth. Portsmouth, United Kingdom.*
E-mail: bolaji.jubril@gmail.com Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8878-5214
[D] *PhD. Department of Business Administration & Marketing, School of Management Sciences, Babcock University, Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State, Nigeria. E-mail: makindeo@babcock.edu.ng*
Orcid: https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0690-7722
[E] *Ph.D. Department of Business Administration. Faculty of Management Sciences. National Open University of Nigeria, Badagry study centre Lagos State, Nigeria. E-mail: jeyanuku@noun.edu.ng*

studies conducted across large businesses in Nigeria or other climes. To achieve more generalizability and trustworthiness, the sample size can be raised by considering more respondents with innovative data gathering techniques. In this research, the absence of data in the majority of small businesses in Lagos was the most significant challenge to obtaining objective performance measurements, for this reason, the non-financial performance indicators were adopted. According to Khalil, *et al.* (2021), subjective measurements may be produced without objective measures.

Practical implication: For every business to scale or survive there is a need to have a reliable configuration of strategies of which managerial capability is key, as such the findings of this study are expected to help create a reminder of the need to improve skill sets in the owner-managers of small businesses to beat the competition and remain viable

Social implication: This research will help society comprehend the need for managerial capabilities and entrepreneurial self-efficacy for harmonious business growth and performance in operations. Consequently, generating employment and boosting firm income.

Originality/value: The paper provides evidence of the performance of small business in Lagos State Nigeria. This paper extends understanding of entrepreneurial self-efficacy and managerial capabilities among owner-managers of small businesses, and should be of particular interest to entrepreneurs, policy-makers and academia. The paper provides a new interpretation of existing sources particularly the key indicators used for the purpose of determining managerial capabilities and performance of small businesses. This research contributes to the need for greater clarity and knowledge small business sector

Doi: https://doi.org/10.26668/businessreview/2023.v8i4.1405

MEDIR A DESIGUALDADE NA ÁFRICA SUBSAARIANA PÓS-PANDEMIA: CORRELAÇÃO DE RESULTADOS PARA DESIGUALDADES NO LOCAL DE TRABALHO E IMPLICAÇÃO PARA O DESENVOLVIMENTO SUSTENTÁVEL OBJETIVO DEZ

RESUMO

Objetivo: Este artigo tem como objetivo investigar a relação entre as desigualdades no local de trabalho e a eficácia dos negócios em empresas selecionadas e listadas na Nigéria. Inclui uma análise de quatro subvariáveis independentes (segregação de gênero, disparidade de incentivos, fatores étnicos e disparidade profissional) para a variável desigualdades no local de trabalho e quatro subvariáveis dependentes (criatividade, qualidade do serviço, produtividade e crescimento do negócio) para a variável eficácia empresarial.

Metodologia: Este estudo usou uma abordagem de pesquisa de levantamento para investigar a relação entre as desigualdades no local de trabalho e a eficácia dos negócios em empresas selecionadas e listadas na Nigéria. O desenho da pesquisa de levantamento foi transversal neste artigo, e a técnica foi quantitativa. A adoção desse design foi influenciada pelo problema de pesquisa e suas questões de pesquisa relacionadas. A unidade de análise para este estudo foi a equipe de empresas de bens de consumo de Sete empresas de bens de consumo listadas na Nigéria que controlavam 93,08% da capitalização de mercado total de todo o setor de bens de consumo em 31 de outubro de 2022. A população compreendia 491 funcionários de as empresas de bens de consumo selecionadas na Nigéria. Para a coleta de dados foi utilizado um questionário estruturado com coeficientes de confiabilidade alfa de Cronbach para os construtos variando de 0,77 a 0,88.

Resultados: Os achados deste estudo estão em consonância com a visão de Bandura (2012), que insiste que a autoeficácia empreendedora é o nível de confiança demonstrado por um indivíduo em relação ao desempenho de uma tarefa ou cargo que influencia favoravelmente o desempenho de pequenas empresas. Os achados deste estudo são consistentes com os de Ngek (2015); Dessyana e Riyanti (2017); Adolfina e Lumintang (2018); Budiman e Pangestu (2018); Cumberland, Meek, & Germain, (2015): Yusuff et al. (2019); Oyeku et ai. (2020); Islã e outros. (2020); Kale, (2020); Khalil et ai. (2021); McGee & Peterson, (2019); Torres e Watson, (2013) que demonstram que a autoeficácia empreendedora afeta positiva e significativamente o desempenho dos negócios.

Limitação e implicação da pesquisa: Reconheceu-se que as descobertas e implicações deste artigo estão situadas em Lagos, na Nigéria, e principalmente em pequenas empresas como foco de sua atenção. A pesquisa pode ser expandida com estudos semelhantes conduzidos em grandes empresas na Nigéria ou em outros climas. Para obter mais generalização e confiabilidade, o tamanho da amostra pode ser aumentado considerando mais respondentes com técnicas inovadoras de coleta de dados. Nesta pesquisa, a ausência de dados na maioria das pequenas empresas de Lagos foi o maior desafio para a obtenção de medidas objetivas de desempenho, por isso, foram adotados os indicadores de desempenho não financeiros. De acordo com Khalil, et al. (2021), medidas subjetivas podem ser produzidas sem medidas objetivas.

Implicação prática: para que todo negócio cresça ou sobreviva, é necessário ter uma configuração confiável de estratégias para as quais a capacidade gerencial é fundamental. os proprietários-gerentes de pequenas empresas para vencer a concorrência e permanecer viável.

Implicação social: Esta pesquisa ajudará a sociedade a compreender a necessidade de capacidades gerenciais e autoeficácia empreendedora para o crescimento harmonioso dos negócios e desempenho nas operações. Consequentemente, gerando emprego e potencializando a renda das empresas.

Originalidade/valor: o documento fornece evidências do desempenho de pequenas empresas no estado de Lagos, na Nigéria. Este artigo amplia a compreensão da autoeficácia empreendedora e das capacidades gerenciais entre proprietários-gerentes de pequenas empresas e deve ser de particular interesse para empreendedores, formuladores de políticas e acadêmicos. O documento fornece uma nova interpretação das fontes existentes, particularmente os principais indicadores utilizados com a finalidade de determinar as capacidades gerenciais e o desempenho das pequenas empresas. Esta pesquisa contribui para a necessidade de maior clareza e conhecimento do setor de pequenas empresas

Palavras-chave: Discriminação, Diversidade, Eficiência, Equidade, Disparidade de Gênero, Sustentabilidade.

MEDICIÓN DE LA DESIGUALDAD EN EL ÁFRICA SUBSAHARIANA POST-PANDEMIA: RESULTADOS DE CORRELACIÓN PARA LAS DESIGUALDADES EN EL LUGAR DE TRABAJO E IMPLICACIÓN PARA EL OBJETIVO DIEZ DE DESARROLLO SOSTENIBLE

RESUMEN

Propósito: Este documento tiene como objetivo investigar la relación entre las desigualdades en el lugar de trabajo y la eficacia empresarial en empresas seleccionadas y cotizadas en Nigeria. Incluye un análisis de cuatro subvariables independientes (segregación de género, disparidad de incentivos, factores étnicos y disparidad profesional) para la variable desigualdades en el lugar de trabajo y cuatro subvariables dependientes (creatividad, calidad del servicio, productividad y crecimiento empresarial) para la variable eficacia empresarial. .

Metodología: Este estudio utilizó un enfoque de investigación de encuestas para investigar la relación entre las desigualdades en el lugar de trabajo y la eficacia empresarial en empresas seleccionadas y cotizadas en Nigeria. El diseño de investigación de la encuesta fue transversal en este documento, y la técnica fue cuantitativa. La adopción de este diseño estuvo influenciada por el problema de investigación y sus preguntas de investigación relacionadas. La unidad de análisis para este estudio fue el personal de las empresas de bienes de consumo de Siete empresas de bienes de consumo cotizadas en Nigeria que controlaban el 93,08% de la capitalización de mercado total de todo el sector de bienes de consumo al 31 de octubre de 2022. La población comprendía 491 empleados de las empresas de bienes de consumo seleccionadas en Nigeria. Para la recolección de datos se utilizó un cuestionario estructurado con coeficientes de confiabilidad alfa de Cronbach para los constructos que oscilan entre 0,77 y 0,88.

Hallazgos: Los hallazgos de este estudio están en consonancia con la visión de Bandura (2012), quien insiste en que la autoeficacia empresarial es el nivel de confianza que muestra un individuo hacia la realización de una tarea o puesto que influye favorablemente en el desempeño de la pequeña empresa. Los hallazgos de este estudio son consistentes con los de Ngek (2015); Dessyana y Riyanti (2017); Adolfina y Lumintang (2018); Budiman y Pangestu (2018); Cumberland, Meek y Germain, (2015): Yusuff et al. (2019); Oyeku et al. (2020); islam et al. (2020); col rizada, (2020); Khalil et al. (2021); McGee y Peterson, (2019); Torres y Watson, (2013) que demuestran que la autoeficacia emprendedora afecta positiva y significativamente el desempeño empresarial

Limitaciones e implicaciones de la investigación: reconoció que los hallazgos y las implicaciones de este documento se sitúan en Lagos, Nigeria, y principalmente en las pequeñas empresas como centro de atención. La investigación se puede ampliar con estudios similares realizados en grandes empresas en Nigeria u otros climas. Para lograr una mayor capacidad de generalización y confiabilidad, el tamaño de la muestra se puede aumentar considerando más encuestados con técnicas innovadoras de recopilación de datos. En esta investigación, la ausencia de datos en la mayoría de las pequeñas empresas de Lagos fue el desafío más importante para obtener medidas objetivas de desempeño, por lo que se adoptaron los indicadores de desempeño no financieros. Según Khalil, et al. (2021), se pueden producir mediciones subjetivas sin mediciones objetivas.

Implicación práctica: para que cada negocio crezca o sobreviva, es necesario tener una configuración confiable de estrategias en las que la capacidad gerencial es clave, como tal, se espera que los hallazgos de este estudio

ayuden a crear un recordatorio de la necesidad de mejorar los conjuntos de habilidades en los propietarios-gerentes de pequeñas empresas para vencer a la competencia y seguir siendo viables
Implicación social: esta investigación ayudará a la sociedad a comprender la necesidad de capacidades gerenciales y autoeficacia empresarial para el crecimiento empresarial armonioso y el desempeño en las operaciones. En consecuencia, generar empleo y potenciar los ingresos de las empresas.
Originalidad/valor: el documento proporciona evidencia del desempeño de las pequeñas empresas en el estado de Lagos, Nigeria. Este documento amplía la comprensión de la autoeficacia empresarial y las capacidades de gestión entre los propietarios-gerentes de pequeñas empresas, y debería ser de particular interés para los empresarios, los responsables políticos y el mundo académico. El documento proporciona una nueva interpretación de las fuentes existentes, en particular los indicadores clave utilizados con el fin de determinar las capacidades de gestión y el rendimiento de las pequeñas empresas. Esta investigación contribuye a la necesidad de una mayor claridad y conocimiento del sector de la pequeña empresa.

Palabras clave: Discriminación, Diversidad, Eficiencia, Equidad, Disparidad de Género, Sostenibilidad.

INTRODUCTION

Since its emergence, the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has had a tremendous impact on the world environment, both in terms of economic, social and human factors, significantly altering the way of life. Many African entrepreneurs and organisations in business continue to grapple with business ineffectiveness and non-performance post-pandemic due to disruptions and consequences of coronavirus (COVID-19). Though the COVID-19 outbreak has directly affected self-employed individuals more than full-time workers (Kritikos, Graeber, & Seebauer, 2020; Zager Kocjan, Kavčič, & Avsec, 2021) and small businesses more than large organisations (Digitally Driven, 2020, 2021), it has caused the significant economic downturn, erratic business outcomes such as poor market penetration, massive dislocation in supply chains, reduction in demands, low patronage, financial fragility, inflation, mass layoffs, business closures, ineffectiveness, and an increasing level of inequality in the workplace (Ivanov & Dolgui, 2020; Mushtaque, Waqas, & Awais-E-Yaz, Mushta, & Awais, & Awais,& Mushta, Mushta, 2020; Mush Workplace inequalities have been impacted by COVID-19 consequences, just as business, the economy, and social relationships did. Inequality is a significant international development obstacle; COVID-19 has caused a major economic shock, and businesses have witnessed sharp rises in inequality in the workplace globally, but the severity is higher in developing nations in Nigeria, South Africa, Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda, Ghana, and many other African countries. Goal 10 of the Sustainable Development Goals, which the United Nations General Assembly set in 2015, is to "reduce inequality within and between countries." These trends are significant to this goal. This objective of the United Nations is further highlighted by the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, which has reflected and exacerbated existing inequalities. According to the literature, inequality is unjust and detrimental to general well-being, social stability, employment, economic growth, and poverty.

Despite its damaging impacts, inequality appears to be on the rise, and measures to reduce it tend to be ineffective.

On average, the businesses continue to report reduced activities and active employment reduction and on the average by 39% since 2020 (Jankelová, Joniaková, & Procházková, 2022). The discriminatory attitude of some organisations against individual identity and the lack of cooperation amongst workers have been stretched beyond acceptable bounds in recent times. This continues to have a detrimental effect on organisational effectiveness and performance. Corporate performance and organisational effectiveness dwindle because the core values of workplace diversity are not properly harnessed, and there are increasing levels of inequality (Ingram, & Oh, 2022). In this globalisation era, inequality and diversity in the business environment are more than just gender, race, and ethnicity. It comprises employees with diverse religious and political beliefs, education, socioeconomic backgrounds, sexual orientation, cultures, and even disabilities. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), sometimes known as the 'Global Goals,' outline a plan to, among other things, end poverty, reduce inequality, and combat climate change (Ramos, Chen, Rabeeu, Abdul Rahim, 2022). Despite the importance of achieving a more sustainable world by 2030, empirical evidence indicates that only a small proportion of businesses adhere to a specific SDG strategy, particularly Goal 10. (Duric & Jasna, 2021; Lu, Mengshang, Chong, Dan, Hailing, Kristina, & Justas, 2021). Inequality is one of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 10: Reduce Inequalities). This is a good way to remind African business leaders to take the issue seriously. According to Khan, Johl, and Akhtar, (2021) the contribution to the United Nations' 17 SDGs can be measured through the organisation's reporting, initiatives, and investments. They further assert that the United Nations has set 17 agendas for sustainability for the world to be achieved by 2030. In the 17 SDGs, there are some economic goals (G17 & G9), social goals (G16, G15, G11, G10, G8, G5, G4, G3, G2, & G1), and environmental goals (G6, G7, G12, G13, & G14).

This study mainly focuses on G10, which is a social goal and relates to reducing inequality. Available evidence suggests that Africa is the second most unequal continent in the world, next to Latin America, and some African nations are ranked among the most unequal in the world. Three of Africa's wealthiest billionaires have more money than the poorest 50 per cent of the continent's population, around 650 million people (Oxfam report, 2019; Ravallion & Chen, 2012). "the scale of inequality has reached extreme levels in Nigeria," reports Oxfam (2017). In Africa, inclusion and distribution of wealth are unequal, and the gap is even more prominent in the business environment with inequality such as gender segregation, incentive disparity, cultural context or ethnic factors and professional disparity. Businesses are faced with demographic shifts occasioned by the COVID-19 consequences. Therefore, businesses are increasingly held responsible for achieving societal objectives other than profit maximisation (sustainability & resilience). Resolving inequality in workplace and its challenges can assist in retaining more talent and employees in an organisation.

In Nigeria, for instance, inequality within the workplace has continued to grow with diverse impacts that also varied by industry, with businesses reporting employment decreases in excess of fifty per cent due to migration and changing perspectives. Inequality tends to increase in countries with weak institutions, high, persistent inflation, and weak consumer purchasing power. Very few scholars have studied the impact of workplace inequality, such as the impact of gender diversity on business effectiveness, and the findings vary, partly due to the use of different data specifications and estimation methods (Bourguignon, 2015; Jonsen, Point, Kelan, & Grieble, 2021; Knowles, 2005; Kollen, 2021; Van Dijk, Kooij, Karanika-Murray, De Vos, & Meyer, 2020; Neves, Silva, & Tavares However, Otaye-Ebede (2019) argues that despite numerous studies demonstrating the conclusive effects of workplace inequality on business effectiveness, there are ambiguous findings that make it an imperative area of study. Workplace inequalities have negative effects (Alesina & Rodrik, 1994; Cingano, 2014; Gründler & Scheuermeyer, 2018; Jäntti, Pirtillä Rönkkö, 2020; Ostry, Berg, & Tsangarides, 2014); positive effects (El-Shagi, & Shao, 2019; Forbes, 2000; Jonsen, Point, Kelan, & Grieble, 2021; Kollen, Therefore, a review of empirical studies on workplace inequality has contrasting findings.

Consequently, with the COVID-19 pandemic and the workplace trend in recent years, examining the conditions under which workplace inequalities could impact business effectiveness (positive or negative) is imperative. Further, empirical literature and evidence on the causal link between workplace inequalities and organisational effectiveness within the African context is sparse, particularly within consumer goods and multinational businesses still need to be researched. Based on the arguments above, this study intends to fill this significant research gap and create a deeper look into relationships and support mechanisms for workplace inequalities. Therefore, this study intends to evaluate the relationship between workplace inequalities and business effectiveness in selected listed companies in Nigeria. This serves as the motivation and gap of the study. This paper fills the gap by providing background information on workplace inequalities and business effectiveness in selected listed companies in Nigeria and also seeks to contribute to a greater understanding of the relationship between the dependent (workplace inequalities) and independent (business effectiveness) variables. Therefore, this study aims to fill this knowledge gap in the global workplace inequality literature and shed light on the essential challenges surrounding business effectiveness and workplace inequalities in consumer goods companies' post-pandemic era.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The idea of sustainable development is not new and has been defined numerous times. Mensah & Casadevall (2019). Sustainable development is described as "development that meets present demands without jeopardizing future generations' ability to meet their own needs." The United Nations (UN) approved 17 goals for sustainable development in 2015. The year 2030 is set to deliver the goals agenda for People, the Planet, and the Profit of businesses. According to Adams (2021), Sustainable Development Goals are a tool for maximizing and creating organizational value and improving business operations' impact on sustainable development. The SDGs are a potent action guide for ensuring a more sustainable planet. (Mukhi & Quental, 2019). The SDGs address many concerns by encouraging healthy living and well-being for all. Therefore, incorporating these SDG activities into businesses is essential for regulators, investors, governments, and millions of consumers since it helps achieve equitable and safe enterprises, future social development, and sustainable economic growth.

Table 1. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

SDG	Objectives
Goal 1	No poverty
Goal 2	Zero hunger
Goal 3	Good health and well-being
Goal 4	Quality education
Goal 5	Gender equality
Goal 6	Clean water and sanitation
Goal 7	Affordable and clean energy
Goal 8	Decent work and economic growth
Goal 9	Industry, innovation and infrastructure
Goal 10	Reduced inequalities
Goal 11	Sustainable cities and communities
Goal 12	Responsible consumption and production
Goal 13	Climate action
Goal 14	Life below water
Goal 15	Life on land
Goal 16	Peace, justice, and strong institutions
Goal 17	Partnership for the goals

Source: Researchers' computation from United Nation website (2023)

United Nations' adoption of the 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) has provided new opportunities for socially responsible businesses and large entities. The goal 10 is significant and the focus of this study because sustainable development cannot be achieved if any part of the world's population is excluded. Therefore, the reference of goal 10 objective in the workplace is ethically justifiable and for business effectiveness and variety of socioeconomic and political outcomes. Therefore, achieving the SDGs, particularly goal 10 requires global collaboration from all stakeholders, including governments, businesses, academic institutions, and the general public (Alabo, & Okwuchukwu, 2020; Ayandibu, & Khalida 2021).

Inequalities and Workplace Discrimination

Understanding the dimensions of inequality facilitates the identification of the dimensions that significantly impact employee behavior or can trigger conflicts at work. This makes the concept of workplace inequality significant for policymakers, particularly organisational strategic managers, as knowledge of the significant dimensions and the consequences of these dimensions improves diversity management (Côté, House, & Willer, 2015). According to Anderson and Metcalfe (2003), workplace inequality is described by social category, which includes differences in demographic characteristics such as age and race, informational diversity, which is the background of knowledge such as education and work experience, and value diversity, which consists of individual personality and attitudes.

Acker (2006) provides a highly thorough and multidimensional analysis of workplace inequalities in the study the introduction of the new concept of "inequality regimes" was birthed. Acker (2006), defines inequality regimes as "loosely connected practises, processes, acts, and meanings that result in and maintain class, gender, and racial discriminations inside specific organisations." Workplace inequalities could be related to some factors including: age, gender, culture, education, employee status, physical appearance, family status, regional origin, national origin, thinking style, religion, race and more (Agrawal, 2012). Leveraging each employee's strengths can add value to the workforce and create a competitive advantage in a volatile and dynamic business environment. Companies whose values are aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) contribute to the reduction of inequalities, improvement in social value, creation of wealth, and long-term economic (Lassala, Orero-Blat; Ribeiro-Navarrete, 2021)

Dimensions of Inequality

The dimensions of workforce inequality include demographic, economic, social and geographical background. A recent study by Blotevogel, Imamoglu, Moriyama, and Sarr. (2020) demonstrates that the choice of the inequality indicator has significant implications for the results obtained in empirical analysis, particularly when taking into account various transmission channels between inequality and effectiveness. According to empirical research, the major obstacles to workplace diversity are gender discrimination, communication barriers, ethnic marginalisation, disability discrimination, and age (Finn, 2015; Greenberg, 2015; Lyknis, Wiedemeier, Williams, Gill, & Keefe, 2014; Renee, 2014; Wengrzyn, 2015).

Shena, Chandaa, D'Nettob, and Mongaa, (2009) assert that the primary factors of inequalities include, among others, gender, age, race, colour, ethnicity, and physical ability. The broader definition of diversity may include "age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, values, ethnic culture, education, language, way of life, beliefs, physical appearance, and socioeconomic status" (Wentling, & Palma-Rivas, 2000). These dimensions were further elaborated upon by Rijamampianina and Carmichael, (2005), three categories of dimensions, primary, secondary and tertiary dimensions was formulated. The primary dimensions include age, disability, race, ethnicity, and gender. The secondary dimensions consist of culture, sexual orientation, thinking style, religion, lifestyle, economic status, education, nationality, geographic origin, political orientation, language, family status \sand work experience. The tertiary dimensions include assumptions, beliefs, feelings, values, group, norms, attitudes, and perceptions which are the nucleus of an individual's identity, presented in Table 1

Table 2. Dimensions of inequality

Primary Dimensions	Secondary Dimensions	Tertiary Dimensions
Race, Age, Ethnicity, Disability, Gender	Religion, Lifestyle, Education Economic status, Culture Sexual orientation, Political orientation, Family status, Thinking style, Geographic origin, Work experience, Language, Nationality	Beliefs, Group norms, Assumptions, Values, Perceptions, Feelings, Attitudes

Source: Rijamampianina and Carmichael (2005)

The University of Washington (2018) identified six dimensions of diversity: age, gender, ethnicity, race, cultural heritage, religions, and sexual orientation. In addition to personality, gender, race, age, ethnicity, and religion, certain factors relevant to diversity accompany employees from diverse backgrounds to their respective organisations, regardless of their classification. This study relies on measures such as gender segregation, incentive disparity cultural context or ethnic factors and professional disparity to measure workplace inequality due to its significance to workplace.

Business Effectiveness

For profit-oriented organizations, business effectiveness means to gain market advantage and maximize profits (Inegbedion, Sunday, Asaleye, Lawal, & Adebanji, 2020). Business effectiveness entails achievement of the set targets and goals within a set time efficiently and effectively. The business effectiveness discourse is interwoven with the performance measurement discourse in literature. Studies show that business effectiveness depends on a multitude of factors and there is no consensus on the best possible method of measuring business effectiveness (Dalton & Dalton, 2011). According to Inegbedion, Sunday, Asaleye, Lawal, and Adebanji, (2020) the literature provides a variety of measures that can be classified into three categories: There are market metrics, accounting metrics, and perceptual metrics. So, for this study the business effectiveness will be measured from each of the metric, that is high profit margins, satisfied customers, production of quality products and increased market share according to Rainey, (2009). According to this definition, business effectiveness must incorporate the results obtained and the means used to achieve the results.

Business effectiveness emphasizes the means to reach the intended objective and doing things properly. It assesses the extent to which a company uses its assets to generate gross revenues, as well as the efficacy of its producing, acquiring, pricing, financing, and marketing operations (Inegbedion, Sunday, Asaleye, Lawal, & Adebanji, 2020; Ingram, & Oh, 2022). Business effectiveness helps to restrict borrowing and decreases cash usage. It helps implement an effective working capital management strategy.

Theoretical Review

Theory of Equity

John Stacey Adams, a workplace and behavioural psychologist, propounded equity theory in 1963 when he established his job incentive theory according to Davlembayeva, and Alamanos, (2022). The theory was developed against the lack of theoretical explanation of the psychological basis of inequity perception (Adams, 1963). Further, Adams (1963) contends that people engage in social comparison by relating their efforts and rewards to those of relevant individuals. Individuals' motivation is influenced by their perceptions of how equitable their rewards are compared to others (Duening, 2006). The inability to explain the perception of fairness was the top concern for employers and governments, as it revealed the behaviour and attitudes of employees towards organisations (Adams, 1963). Three social science and psychological theories, namely Social Exchange Theory, Social Comparison Theory, and the Theory of Cognitive Dissonance, served as the foundation for Equity Theory. (Davlembayeva, & Alamanos, 2022). People consider equity when they believe their effort-to-reward ratio is identical to those they associate with. When people perceive that their effort-to-reward ratio differs from those they compare themselves to (typically in a negative way), they experience inequality.

Equity theory was employed as the foundation for this study because it advocates the idea of developing a viable workforce based on equity and justice. According to theory, workers are less exploited, there is greater incentive, and there are better interrelationships amongst workers. This guarantees that the workforce remains viable and ready to improve performance in the future. According to equity theory, employees need to be treated equally and fairly compensated for their contributions to the bank's performance. The Equity Theory has been criticised for its oversimplification of the normative foundation of individuals' social exchange behaviour. Employees develop beliefs about what constitutes a fair and equitable return for their contributions to their jobs. Employees are said to equate what they receive from their employers in exchange for their contributions with what their counterparts obtain. According to the equity hypothesis, employees would be forced to do something about workplace inequity if they believe their care is not equal in comparison to what they believe others are making, resulting in negative outcomes such as job dissatisfaction, lack of interest, and difficulty communicating citizenship behaviours (Davlembayeva, & Alamanos, 2022).

Inequality and business effectiveness in Africa

Rising inequality is widespread in Africa and like the Asians, most African countries have different socio-cultural elements when compared to the developed world. For many years, the majority of Africans has been denied access to education, jobs, and opportunities as a result of a system of severe inequalities and discrimination. The measurement scale employed in the categorisation of inequality and organizational enterprises in Africa include the social, economic and environmental circumstances of Africa. This is a necessity to uncover the factors characterising inequality organizations in Africa. In this study, the collective workplace inequality dimensions that formed the study's thrust are gender disparity, board composition, incentive disparity, professional diversity, and ethnic diversity. In Africa, corruption, mismanagement, poor institutions, and inadequate financing have been identified as persistent obstacles in the African economic climate. However, opportunities and resources capable of generating high performance in Africa have been omitted or referenced in passing. For instance, according to De Waal (2012), developing countries are unable to build organisational performance management structures and systems due to a lack of necessary information, management skills, and competence.

Nonetheless, some studies (e.g., Bagorogoza *et al*., 2013; Van Heerden and Roodt, 2007) attempted to benchmark companies and, as a result, developed internal and external determinants of organisational performance in the African environment. According to the group of economists that published the UNDP report Income Inequality Trends in Sub-Saharan Africa: Divergence, Determinants and Consequences, several factors contribute to inequality in Africa. First, under Africa's two-track economic structure, growth happens frequently in sectors with limited absorption of unskilled labour, significant income inequality, and a large capital share of total income. The authors remark that growth in these industries may contribute to GDP growth, but will aggravate inequality. The rising tide does not raise all boats. Second, infrastructure, labour, and land are highly concentrated in the certain region the unequal distribution of essential facilities, such as schools, as one the drivers of wide inequality and income disparities. Thirdly, the authors of the paper mention the "curse of natural resources, an urban bias in public policy, and racial and gender inequities." Countries with abundant natural resources, such as Botswana and Zambia, appear to be among the most unequal. Inequality now threatens social cohesion on the continent. To achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, experts hope countries will embrace various policies that tackle inequalities, not just poverty.

Empirical Review

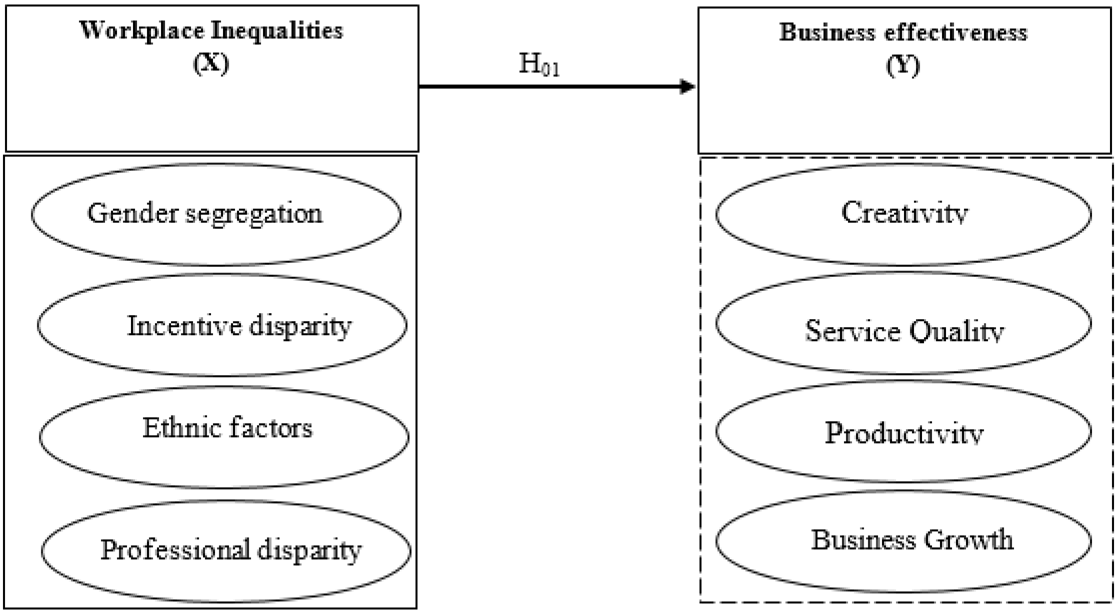
In their study, Kalev, Dobbin, and Kelly (2006) noted that the majority of empirical research indicates that inequalities in companies might be generated by managerial bias and inadequate network linkages, but efforts directed at changing individuals do not appear to provide the desired results. The researchers therefore established the concept of transformative potential. Transformative potential means the potential for diversity practices to diminish inequalities, defined as systematic disparities in power and control over goals, resources, and outcomes (Acker 2006), by changing organizational work practices, norms, routines, and interactions. Agarwal (2021) attempts to examine and critique the gender inequality and Covid-19 interaction in India. The researcher identifies several visible and immediate effects, such as job losses, food shortages, and greater domestic responsibilities, in addition to other effects that would appear over time. For instance, depletion of wealth and possessions, widowhood connected to the pandemic, and other factors that will make rehabilitation difficult, such as caregiving and domestic abuse. Another study with a sample size of 508 respondents in federal health institutions revealed that the increase in ethnic diversity led to disunity and a lack of cohesion among employees (Njide, Onodugo, & Agbeze, 2018).

Prior study Odita and Egbule (2015) investigated workforce diversity and organisational effectiveness in the Nigerian brewing industry to evaluate workforce diversity's effects on the effectiveness of selected Nigerian breweries. They employed the survey design and selected respondents through stratified random sampling. Using linear regression and correlation, the collected data was analysed. They discovered that workforce diversity and organisational effectiveness had a positive and statistically significant relationship. In particular, cultural diversity was found to be more effective, and team building and group training were found to mediate the relationship between workforce diversity and organisational effectiveness. Despite the fact that workplace inequality appears to be gaining traction in modern large organisations, few researchers have examined its relevance to organisational strategy and business effectiveness particularly post COVID pandemic era. Consequently, this study sought to bridge the gap and hypothesized thus:

H_0: There is no significant relationship between workplace inequality and business effectiveness of selected listed companies in Nigeria post pandemic.

Conceptual Model

Figure 1: Authors' Conceptual Model (2023)



Model Specification

The model sheds light on the relationship between workplace inequalities and business effectiveness which is the research framework. Given, the mathematical derivative function which gives the value of the slope at any value(x-------$x_{n)}$ since intuition explains that as $\Delta x \rightarrow 0$, then $\Delta y \rightarrow 0$. This can be deduced mathematically since a firm's business effectiveness is a function of workplace inequalities; $Y=f(x_1$-----------$x_n)$.

The model specification is given as follows: work place inequalities as it relates to Gender Segregation (GS), Incentive disparity (ID), Ethnic Factors (EF), and Professional Disparity (PD). This can be expressed in a functional relationship as BE=*f* (GS, ID, EF, PD). The functional relationship was tested using the Pearson product moment correlation. The functionally relationship is therefore stated;

$$BE = f(GS, ID, EF, PD) \quad \text{(eq.i)}$$

Where:
BE = Business Effectiveness
GS = Gender Segregation

ID = Incentive Disparity
EF = Ethnic Factors
PD= Professional Disparity

METHODOLOGY

The research context is the consumer goods companies listed and the study adopted the survey research design. The justification for adopting the survey is due to its usefulness in assessing the thoughts, opinions and feelings of different groups of individuals and allowing them to give more valid and honest feedback on the area of study. Researchers such as Agulanna (2017), Babarinde and Ohikhena (2019), George and Zakkariya (2015), Kabuoh, Moibi, Ademilua and Sunmola, (2020), Olubiyi, Egwakhe, and Akinlabi (2019), Olubiyi, Egwakhe, Amos, and Ajayi (2019), Olubiyi, (2019), Olubiyi, Lawal, and Adeoye, (2022), Olubiyi, (2022) and Olubiyi, Jubril, Sojinu, and Ngari, (2022), Olubiyi, (2022), Uwem, Oyedele, and Olubiyi, (2021) with cross-sectional have adopted this method in their respective studies and found it useful. For the study population the regular employees, top and middle level managers in the listed consumer goods companies on the Nigerian Stock Exchange which is now referred to as Nigeria Exchange Group (NGX) was considered. The study was contextualized to the consumer goods companies in Nigeria due to the fierceness of competition within the country, multinational operations, large population, and more because of data availability. Nigeria is also the continent's largest economy; the country's population accounts for twenty percent of Sub-Saharan Africa's overall population. Nigeria is one of the world’s most unequal countries, with inequality levels comparable only with those in Brazil, where the richest 5% have the same amount of income as the remaining 95%.

Data Analysis, Results and Discussion of Findings

The main aim was to analyze and clarify the link between workplace inequalities and business effectiveness in selected listed companies in Nigeria. Copies of questionnaire were distributed to the respondents 491 in total by the researcher and with the help of three research assistances. 480 completed copies of questionnaire were returned and were found suitable for the study. This corresponds to a response rate of approximately rate of 97.76%. The rest were either unreturned or had missing responses, the detail of the responses is shown in Table 1.1

Table 3: Response Rate

Response Rate	Frequency	Percentage
Fully filled and returned	480	97.76%
Incomplete or unreturned	11	2.24%
Total	491	100%

Source: Researchers' computation (2023)

Model Summary of Descriptive Statistics of workplace inequality on business effectiveness of selected listed consume goods companies in Nigeria

The majority of respondents (27.71%) reported length of service of between 11 and 15 years, with 80% of these respondents married with just 14.58% single and 2.08% are either devoiced or widowed in the field. This is an indication of having responsible and family-oriented workforce. The majority of respondents were middle level management, as shown by the fact that 66.67% of respondents identified themselves as such. The sample mean and sample standard deviation were the sample metrics most relevant to the objectives of this investigation.

4: Descriptive Statistics on workplace inequalities and business effectiveness

Description	**Level of Agreement in scale of 1-6**							
Gender Segregation	**Very High**	**High**	**Moderately High**	**Moderately Low**	**Low**	**Very Low**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Discrimination of individuals with disability in the workplace	20.5%	44.0%	23.1%	5.9%	2.3%	4.1%	4.613	1.157
Sex or gender discrimination	10.0%	29.8%	47.4%	6.1%	2.0%	0.6%	4.369	0.901
Women biasness	8.4%	30.3%	43.1%	7.3%	2.3%	0.6%	4.375	0.871
Networks for female leadership roles	9.3%	31.1%	39.2%	16.9%	1.7%	1.7%	4.241	1.011
Age discrimination amongst women	7.3%	34.9%	42.7%	11.0%	4.1%	0.0%	4.302	0.907
Average							4.440	0.992
Description	**Level of Agreement in scale of 1-6**						**ea n**	**ta nd ar**

Incentive Disparity	**Very High**	**High**	**Moderately High**	**Moderately Low**	**Low**	**Very Low**		
Level of pay gap	12.2%	54.4%	29.7%	3.8%	0.0%	0.0%	4.750	0.713
Difference in workplace benefits	8.7%	49.1%	35.2%	5.8%	1.2%	0.0%	4.584	0.778
Quota of income inequality	9.6%	33.1%	48.8%	8.1%	0.3%	0.0%	4.436	0.787
Adequacy of fringe benefits	6.4%	32.8%	43.0%	16.9%	0.9%	0.0%	4.270	0.847
Unequal distribution of resources	12.8%	29.7%	43.0%	11.6%	2.6%	0.0%	4.561	3.400
Systematic development for roles	9.9%	33.7%	43.6%	10.5%	2.3%	0.0%	4.384	0.886
Average							4.498	1.235
Description	**Level of Agreement in scale of 1-6**							
Ethnic Factors	**Very High**	**High**	**Moderately High**	**Moderately Low**	**Low**	**Very Low**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Cultural differences	16.9%	50.9%	31.4%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	4.837	0.701
Discrimination of views of the minorities	11.9%	48.0%	37.8%	2.3%	0.0%	0.0%	4.694	0.705
Enactment of class based on ethnicity	10.5%	32.3%	50.6%	5.8%	0.9%	0.0%	4.456	0.792
Ethnic sectionalization	12.2%	39.0%	37.2%	10.5%	1.2%	0.0%	4.505	0.880
Religion discrimination	12.8%	25.6%	49.7%	9.9%	2.0%	0.0%	4.372	0.900
Language discrimination	13.4%	32.6%	43.3%	8.1%	2.6%	0.0%	4.459	0.915
Average							4.554	0.816
Description	**Level of Agreement in scale of 1-6**							
Professional Disparity	**Very High**	**High**	**Moderately High**	**Moderately Low**	**Low**	**Very Low**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Qualification discrimination	18.3%	44.5%	36.6%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	4.805	0.732
Targeted recruiting of Professional qualified individuals	16.9%	45.3%	36.9%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	4.782	0.725
Depth/breadth of members' qualifications	11.3%	37.2%	47.1%	4.4%	0.0%	0.0%	4.555	0.750

Superiority	8.4%	36.6%	42.4%	10.8%	1.7%	0.0%	4.392	0.853
Stereotypes against older employees	14.5%	34.6%	37.8%	11.9%	1.2%	0.0%	4.494	0.922
Age diversity discrimination	16.3%	36.9%	37.2%	6.7%	2.3%	0.6%	4.564	0.957
Average							4.598	0.823
Description	**Level of Agreement in scale of 1-6**							
Business effectiveness	**Very High**	**High**	**Moderately High**	**Moderately Low**	**Low**	**Very Low**	**Mean**	**Standard Deviation**
Creativity	10.5%	48.8%	36.3%	3.8%	0.3%	0.3%	4.645	0.753
Business growth	11.0%	48.0%	37.2%	2.6%	0.6%	0.6%	4.645	0.780
productivity	10.2%	35.5%	50.9%	3.2%	0.3%	0.0%	4.520	0.732
SDG coverage in the organization	7.3%	34.3%	50.3%	6.7%	1.5%	0.0%	4.392	0.778
Competitive advantage	11.0%	35.5%	40.1%	9.9%	3.2%	0.3%	4.404	0.942
Service quality and achievement	9.9%	32.0%	45.6%	9.6%	2.0%	0.9%	4.354	0.920
Average							4.490	0.817

Source: Researchers' computation (2023)

The findings revealed that ratio of male to female in the listed consumer goods companies is high. Majority of the respondents were male (70.83%) while female respondents made up 29.17% of the response rate. The finding of the study revealed that there is no gender balance within the workforce of the consumer goods companies in Nigeria and also gender segregation is very high. This large gap between the number of male and female within the workforce indicate continued gender inequality (Babarinde, Ojo, Omoyele, & Aigbedion, 2022). Gender equity and women inclusiveness are part of the core value of sustainable development goals particularly goal five and goal ten. The reduction of gender inequality and gender segregation and largely the effective management of workplace inequalities in an organization will reduce friction and conflicts among workers and thus enhance business effectiveness (Babarinde, Ojo, Omoyele, & Aigbedion, 2022). Therefore, continuous and effective management of workplace inequalities through effective management of employees' diversity management can give employees a feeling of inclusion and enhance teamwork. This will enable the organization to reduce conflicts and pave way for business cohesion and ultimately result in effectiveness of businesses in Sub Saharan Africa. This is consistent with Ivanov and Dolgui, (2020); Kundu and Mor (2017) Mushtaque, Waqas, and Awais-E-Yazdan, (2022); and Odita and Egbule (2015). The results demonstrated a significant association between professional disparity and business effectiveness of the selected listed companies in Nigeria (r=0.196, p=0.001). Though the finding reveals that educational and professional qualifications of the staff surveyed in the selected listed companies is high, the level of professional disparity is equally high, suggesting more emphasis on reducing workplace inequalities. The parameters to measure business effectiveness in the selected listed companies are creativity, service quality, productivity, business growth.

Table 5: Correlation results for workplace inequalities and business effectiveness

Variables	BE	GS	ID	EF	PD
BE	1				
GS	0.416^{**}	1			
ID	0.366^{**}	0.315^{**}	1		
EF	0.337^{**}	0.459^{**}	0.364^{**}	1	
PD	0.196^{**}	0.161^{**}	0.268^{**}	0.606^{**}	1

Source: Researchers' computation (2023)
***. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)*
Key: BE= Business Effectiveness; GS= Gender Segregation; ID= Incentive Disparity; EF= Ethnic Factors; PD= Professional Disparity

The Correlations between analyzed individual variables are shown in the matrix presented in Table 5. From the findings it can be inferred that workplace inequality could negatively impact the business effectiveness of selected listed companies. This study used the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient technique to test the hypothesis formulated. Data for workplace inequalities were created by adding responses of all items for Gender Segregation (GS), Incentive disparity (ID), Ethnic Factors (EF), and Professional Disparity (PD) while that of Business Effectiveness (BE) of selected listed companies was created by adding responses of all items for the variable. The correlation results between workplace inequalities and business effectiveness of selected listed companies in Nigeria are presented in Table 5. The results indicated a positive association (r=0.416, p=0.001) between gender segregation and the business effectiveness of selected listed consumer goods companies in Nigeria. In addition, the study indicates a favourable association between incentive disparity and the business effectiveness of selected listed companies (r=0.366, p=0.001). This suggests that increased incentives and working environment will boost the effectiveness of selected listed companies in Nigeria. In addition, the results indicate that ethnic factors correlate positively) with business effectiveness of selected listed companies in Nigeria (r=0.337, p=0.001. The null hypothesis that there is no significant association between workplace inequalities and the business effectiveness of selected listed companies in Nigeria was refuted based on these presented data. This study provides practitioners and policymakers with insights on the need to enshrine workplace inequality management in strategic plan of the businesses to reduce inequalities as stipulated by United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 10.

Policy Implication and Recommendations

The findings from the research have shown key implication in area of a direct impact of workplace inequalities on business effectiveness in Nigeria. Consequently, contributing to a broad spectrum of existing research and clarifies its findings. The study has both practical and theoretical implications for businesses in Sub-Saharan Africa. The study shows that despite the relevance attached to the sustainable development goals and goal ten in particular which is reducing inequalities, in almost all the organizations, the awareness within the respondents is low. The organizations' sustainable development goals (SDGs) coverage is very low. The results confirm that SDG awareness levels are low within the consumer goods companies because many African businesses are yet to realize the relevance and government regulations are only persuasive. Drawing on supporting evidence by the equity theory, and prior studies (Akpoviroro, Owotutu, & Kadiri, 2018; Anyango, & Florah, 2019; Luksyte, Avery, Parker, Wang, Johnson, & Crepeau, 2022; Szatmari, 2021) this study recommends that reducing inequalities requires collaboration from all stakeholders, including governments, businesses, academic institutions, and civil society. Because inequalities in the workplace have the potential to cause conflicts within the organisations and beyond, posing difficulties to business and economic effectiveness. This study further recommends that companies consider and revise their missions, strategies, and management methods to include workplace inequalities management and emphasize sustainability (Kitsios, Kamariotou, & Talias, 2020; Woschkowiak, 2018).

Furthermore, applying best practices in the workplace is necessary to reduce inequalities. This research will aid investors and government agencies comprehend the relationship between workplace inequality (gender segregation, incentive disparity cultural context or ethnic factors and professional disparity) and business effectiveness in various industries, especially in determining the efficacy of goal ten (10) sustainable decisions. SDGs may boost business effectiveness and corporate reputation over the medium to long term.

This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge regarding the significance of incorporating SDGs into corporate plans for enhanced business effectiveness. Therefore, this study theoretically provides sufficient insight into the major factors that influence workplace inequalities in Nigeria firms from the employees' perspective of selected consumer goods companies. It also provides insight into the impact of workplace inequalities on business effectiveness. In this way, it contributes significantly to management research in Nigeria. Thus, its significance to management practitioners, strategic managers, and other stakeholders is substantial. Successfully managed workplace inequalities can bring notable benefits to companies, such as business effectiveness, increased customer numbers, revenue growth, and increased profits.

CONCLUSION

This study determined the relationship between workplace inequalities and business effectiveness of selected listed consumer goods companies in Nigeria. Workplace inequalities above its natural value is perceived as a negative factor, reflecting many management issues. The study established a significant relationship between workplace inequalities and business effectiveness of selected listed companies in Nigeria. The results are consistent with these studies Kundu and Mor (2017); Njide, Onodugo, and Agbeze, (2018); Odita and Egbule (2015) as well as Suri and Sharma (2011). A large body of evidence suggests that inequalities in the workplace clearly have negative outcomes such as lower salary, poorer mental and physical health, lower well-being, diminished empowerment and autonomy, lack of organisational mobility, and decreased organisational attachment (Greenhaus, Parasuraman, & Wormley, 1990; Ingram, & Oh, 2022; Packard, & Bylund, 2018; Stiglitz, 2012). Managers should be able to handle this situation in a way that benefits both the individual and the organisation. Organizations in Sub Saharan Africa should adopt strategic managerial actions, corporate policies, and human resource practices that can decrease inequalities, improve the shift to sustainable actions, and awareness of sustainable development goal ten to prevent inequality-related issues and business ineffectiveness.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The study encountered some methodological restrictions which therefore pose some limitations to the findings. These limitations thus suggest the need for further studies. The first limitation is that, despite the proposed model providing insight into the factors that influence inequalities in the workplace and how workplace inequalities affect business effectiveness in Nigeria, the proposed model should be replicated in other countries to determine whether it is locationsensitive or not. Therefore, researchers should undertake cross-country comparative studies to compare and contrast the societal context. The second limitation relates to the sample selection and data considered. There may be additional factors influencing workplace inequalities and business effectiveness in other sectors or industries that this study did not account for or previous research. In addition, similar studies may be conducted qualitatively in other nations to provide useful insights into the factors that may significantly impact workplace inequality and business effectiveness.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization, O.T.O., and A.O.O.; questionnaire development, O.T.O. J.B and A.O.S.; data collection, J.B, E.J.P.; software, A.O.S.; model design and validation, O.TO.; formal data analysis, J.B and O.T.O investigation J.B.; writing—original draft preparation and review O.T.O,A.O.O and J.B: Introduction, O.T.O., literature review: O.T.O., O.T.O and A.O.O., methodology: O.T.O., data analysis results: J.B, A.O.S and O.T.O., discussion: O.T.O., A.O.O A.O.S and J.B., conclusions, limitations, and future research directions: O.T.O., writing—editing, E.J.P. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

FUNDING

No funding was received for this study

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors thank the two anonymous referees for useful insights and comments.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors. The authors further declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that might have influenced the work disclosed in this study

REFERENCES

Acker, J. (2006). Inequality Regimes. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891243206289499 Gender & Society, 20(4), 441–464.

Adams, C. (2021). The Sustainable Development Goals. Retrieved from Integrated Thinking and the Integrated Report. Available online: http://integratedreporting.org/resource/sdgs-integrated-thinking-and-the-integrated-report/ (accessed on 15 November 2022).

Adams, J.S. (1963). Towards an understanding of inequity. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 675, 422-436

Agarwal, B. (2021). Reflections on the Less Visible and Less Measured: Gender and COVID-19 in India. Gender & Society, 089124322110012. https://doi.org/10.1177/08912432211001299

Agrawal, V. (2012). Managing the diversified team: challenges and strategies for improving performance", Team Performance Management: *An International Journal of Management,18*(7/8), 89-97.

Alabo, R. L., & Okwuchukwu M. A. (2020). Green Marketing and Sustainability of Breweries in Nigeria. *European Journal of Business and Innovation Research* 8: 19–48

Alesina Alberto, Perotti Roberto. 1996. "Income Distribution, Political Instability, and Investment." *European Economic Review 40* (6): 1203–28.

Akpoviroro, K. S., Owotutu, S. O. & Kadiri, B. (2018). The impact of cultural diversity on organizational performance of selected frozen fish companies in Nigeria. *IJARIIE, 4*(3), 420-428.

Anyango, O. M. & Florah, O. M. (2019). Workforce Diversity and Performance of Kisumu Law Courts, Kenya. *International Journal of Business and Social Science, 10*(12), 24-34.

Ayandibu, A. O., & Khalida, A. (2021). Green Marketing, Green Management, and Sustainability. In *Handbook of Research on Climate Change and the Sustainable Financial Sector*. Hershey: IGI Global, 316–30.

Babarinde, S.A., Ojo, A.A., Omoyele, O.S., & Aigbedion, T.I. (2022). Impact of gender balance practices on employee performance in selected governmental organisations: Nigerian experience. *Academy of Strategic Management Journal, 21*(S3), 1-13.

Bagorogoza, J., De Waal, A., Van den Herik, H. J. & Van de Walle, B. A. (2013). A critical assessment of the high-performance framework in the Ugandan financial sector. *Botswana Journal of Business, 6*(1): 1-16.

Blotevogel, R., Imamoglu E., Moriyama K., & Sarr B. (2020). Measuring Income Inequality and Implications for Economic Transmission Channels." IMF Working Paper WP/20/164. Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund.

Bourguignon, F. (2015). Revisiting the Debate on Inequality and Economic Development." *Revue d'économie politique 5*: 633–63.

Cingano F. (2014). Trends in Income Inequality and Its Impact on Economic Growth." OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers 163. Paris: OECD Publishing.

Côté, S., House, J., & Willer, R. (2015). High economic inequality leads higher-income individuals to be less generous. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, 112*(52), 15838-15843

Davlembayeva, D. & Alamanos, E. (2022). Equity Theory: A review. In S. Papagiannidis (Ed), TheoryHub Book. http://open.ncl.ac.uk

De Waal, A. A. (2012). Characteristics of high-performance organizations. Journal of Management Research, 8(3): 39-71.

De Waal, A. & Chipeta, K. 2015. Influence of culture on priority-setting of high-performance activities. Journal of Strategy and Management, 8(1): 64-86.

De Winne, S., Marescaux, E., Sels, L., Van Beveren, I., & Vanormelingen, S. (2019). The impact of employee turnover and turnover volatility on labor productivity: A flexible non-linear approach. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 30*(21), 3049–3079. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2018.1449129

Digitally Driven (2020). U.S. small businesses find a digital safety net during COVID-19. Report. Connected Commerce. Available at: https://connectedcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Digitally-Driven-Report.pdf. Accessed 20 November, 2022

Digitally Driven (2021). European Small businesses find a digital safety net during Covid-19. Report. Connected Commerce. Available at: https://digitallydriven.connectedcouncil.org/europe/. Accessed. Accessed 21 November, 2022

Duric, Z., & Jasna P. T. (2021). The Role of Performance and Environmental Sustainability Indicators in Hotel Competitiveness. *Sustainability* 13: 6574.

El-Shagi M., & Shao L. (2019). The Impact of Inequality and Redistribution on Growth. *Review of Income and Wealth 65* (2): 239–63.

Fernandez, J. P, (1998). Slaying the Diversity Dinosaur, Executive Excellence, New Delhi: Sage, Dec. pg.15.

Finn, L. (2015). Examples of diversity issues in the workplace.

http://oureverydaylife.com/examples-diversity-issues-workplace-3884.html

Forbes, K. J. (2000) A Reassessment of the Relationship between Inequality and Growth." *American Economic Review 90* (4): 869–87.

Green, K., López, M., Wysocki, A., Kepner, K., Farnsworth, D., & Clark, J. L. (2015). Diversity in the workplace: Benefits, challenges, and the required managerial tools. UF/IAFS Extension, University of Florida

Greenhaus, J. H., Parasuraman, S., & Wormley, W. M. (1990). Effects of race on organizational experiences, job performance evaluations, and career outcomes. *Academy of Management Journal, 33,* 64-86

Gründler K., & Scheuermeyer P. (2018). Growth Effects of Inequality and Redistribution: What Are the Transmission Channels*?" Journal of Macroeconomics 55*: 293–313.

Inegbedion, H., Sunday, E., Asaleye, A., Lawal, A; & Adebanji., A. (2020). Managing Diversity for Organizational Efficiency. *SAGE Open*, *10*(1), 215824401990017–. doi:10.1177/2158244019900173

Ingram, P. & Oh, J.J. (2022). Mapping the class ceiling: the social class disadvantage for attaining management positions, *Academy of Management Discoveries*, 8(1),56-76.

Islam, J., & Hu, H. (2012). A review of literature on contingency theory in managerial accounting. *African Journal of Business Management 6 (*15), 5159-5164.

Ivanov, D., & Dolgui, A. (2020). Viability of intertwined supply networks: Extending the supply chain resilience angles towards survivability. A position paper motivated by the COVID-19 outbreak. International Journal of Production Research, 58(10), 29042915. https://doi.org/10.1080/0020 7543.2020.1750727

Jankelová, N., Joniaková, Z., & Procházková, K. (2022). The way to business competitiveness: the importance of diversity management and teamwork climate in stabilizing of employees. *Journal of Business Economics and Management*, *23*(3), 606–625. https://doi.org/10.3846/jbem.2022.16199

Jäntti M., Pirtillä J., & Rönkkö R.. (2020). Redistribution, Inequality, and Growth Revisited: Comment on 'Redistribution, Inequality, and Growth: New Evidence'." WIDER Working Paper 2020/117. Helsinki: UNU-WIDER.

Jonsen, K., Point, S., Kelan, E.K. & Grieble, A. (2021). Diversity and inclusion branding: a five-country comparison of corporate websites, *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *32*(3), 616-649.

Kalev, A., Dobbin, F., & Kelly, E. (2006). Best Practices or Best Guesses? Assessing the Efficacy of Corporate Affirmative Action and Diversity Policies. American Sociological Review, 71(4), 589–617. https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240607100404

Khan, P. A., Johl, S. K., & Akhtar, S. (2021). Firm Sustainable Development Goals and Firm Financial Performance through the Lens of Green Innovation Practices and Reporting: A Proactive Approach. *Journal of Risk and Financial Management*, *14*(12), 605. MDPI AG. Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/jrfm14120605

Kitsios, F., Kamariotou, M., & Talias, M. A. (2020). Corporate Sustainability Strategies and Decision Support Methods: A Bibliometric Analysis. *Sustainability, 12(2),* 521. doi:10.3390/su12020521

Knowles, S., (2005). Inequality and Economic Growth: The Empirical Relationship Reconsidered in the Light of Comparable Data, *Journal of Development Studies 41* (1): 135–59.

Kollen, T. (2021). Diversity management: a critical review and agenda for the future", *Journal of Management Inquiry*, *30*(3), 259-272.

Kritikos, A.S., Graeber, D., & Seebauer, J. (2020). Pandemie wird zur Krise für Selbständige. DIW aktuell 47.

Kundu, S. C., & Mor, A. (2017). Workforce diversity and organizational performance: A study of IT industry in India. *Employee Relations, 39*(2), 160–183. https://doi.org/10.1108/ER-06-2015-0114

Labucay, I. (2015). Diversity management and performance: paving the way for a revised business case, *European Journal of International Management*,9(4)425–441.

Lassala, C., Orero-Blat, M., Ribeiro-Navarrete, S. (2021). The financial performance of listed companies in pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). Economic Research-Ekonomska Istraživanja, doi:10.1080/1331677x.2021.1877167

Lawal, B. (2012). Board dynamics and corporate performance: Review of literature, and empirical challenges. *International Journal of Economics and Finance, 4*(1), 1 – 14.

Lengfelder, C. (2019). "Exploring Dynamics of Inequality in Human Development." 2019 UNDP Human Development Report, Background Paper NO. 3-2019. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Accessed 22 November, 2022. http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/exploring-dynamics-inequality-human-development.

Lu, J., Mengshang L., Chong Z., Dan R., Hailing G., Kristina M., & Justas S. (2021). Assessment of corporate social responsibility by addressing sustainable development goals. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management* 28: 686–703.

Luksyte, A., Avery, D. R., Parker, S. K., Wang, Y., Johnson, L. U. & Crepeau, L. (2022). Age diversity in teams: Examining the impact of the least agreeable member. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *43*(3), 546-565.

Lyknis, T., Wiedemeier, S., Williams, V., Gill, M., & Keefe, S. (2014). Challenges and benefits of diversity. http://www.multiculturaladvantage.com

Malik, M. (2015). Value-enhancing capabilities of CSR: A brief review of contemporary literature. *Journal of Business Ethics, 127*(2), 419–438. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-014-2051-9

Mensah, J.& Casadevall, S. (2019) Sustainable development: Meaning, history, principles, pillars, and implications for human action: Literature review. *Cogent Social Science, 5*(1): 1653531

Mukhi, U., & Quental, C. (2019). Exploring the challenges and opportunities of the United Nations sustainable development goals: a dialogue between a climate scientist and management scholars. Corporate Governance: *The International Journal of Business in Society, 19*(3), 552–564. https://doi.org/10.1108/CG-01-2018-0028

Mushtaque, I., Waqas, H., & Awais-E-Yazdan, M. (2022). The effect of technostress on the teachers' willingness to use online teaching modes and the moderating role of job insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic in Pakistan. *International Journal of Educational Management, 36*(1), 63-80. https://doi.org/10.1108/ IJEM-07-2021-0291

Njide, M. M., Onodugo, V. A. & Agbeze, E. K. (2018). Impact of ethnic diversity on team performance in federal Health institutions in South East Nigeria. *International Journal of Business and Entrepreneurship Research, 11*(4), 13-28

Neves P. C., Silva S., & Tavares, M. (2014). Inequality and Growth; Uncovering the Main Conclusions from the Empirics. *The Journal of Development Studies 50* (1): 1–21.

Nolan, B., & Valenzuela, L. (2019). Inequality and Its Discontents." *Oxford Review of Economic Policy 35* (3): 396–430.

Odhong, E. A.,Were, S., & Omolo, J. (2014). Effect of Human Capital Management Drivers on Organizational Performance in Kenya. A Case of Investment and Mortgages Bank Ltd. *European Journal of Business Management*, *2*(1),341-356.

Odhong, E. A. (2018). Influence of Human Capital Practices on Employee Performance in the Private Security Industry in Kenya.

Odita, A. O., & Egbule, S. (2015). Workforce diversity and organizational effectiveness in Nigerian brewery industry. https:// pdfs.semanticscholar.org/3ef1/934b3bb5a83862bbeb51c161d 5b96bb0d94b.pdf

Olubiyi, T.O.,(2022). An investigation of sustainable innovative strategy and customer satisfaction in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) IN Nigeria, *Covenant Journal of Business and Social Sciences,13*(2),1-24.

Olubiyi, T. O. (2022). An investigation of sustainable innovative strategy and customer

satisfaction in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria. *covenant journal of business and social sciences, 13*(2). Retrieved from https://journals.covenantuniversity.edu.ng/index.php/cjbss/article/view/3274

Olubiyi, T.O. (2020). Knowledge management practices and family business profitability: Evidence from Lagos state, Nigeria, Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review (Nigerian Chapter),6(1) 23-32.

Olubiyi, T. O., Egwakhe, J., & Akinlabi, B. H, (2019). Knowledge Management and Family Business Continuity: The Moderating Effect of Length of Time in Existence. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research,19(5).29-35.*

Olubiyi, T. O. (2019). Knowledge Management Practices and Family Business Profitability: Evidence from Lagos State, Nigeria. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research*, *19*(A11), 21–31. Retrieved from https://journalofbusiness.org/index.php/GJMBR/article/view/2872

Olubiyi, O.T., Lawal, A, T., & Adeoye, O.O. (2022). Succession Planning and Family Business Continuity: Perspectives from Lagos State, Nigeria. *Organization and Human Capital Development*, *1*(1), 40–52. https://doi.org/10.31098/orcadev.v1i1.865

Olubiyi, T.O., (2022). Measuring technological capability and business performance Post-COVID Era: Evidence from Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in Nigeria, *Management & Marketing Journal, vol xx (2),234- 248*

Olubiyi, T.O., Jubril, B., Sojinu, O.S., & Ngari, R. (2022). Strengthening Gender Equality in Small Business and Achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), Comparative Analysis of Kenya and Nigeria, *Sawala Jurnal Administrasi Negara*, *10*(2) 168-186.

Omoluabi, E. T. (2016). Contingency approach in Nigeria management system. *Information and Knowledge Management,6* (7), 1-7

Otaye-Ebede, L. (2019). Antecedents and outcomes of managing diversity in a UK context: Test of a mediation model. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *30*(18), 2605–2627. https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2016.1253031

Ostry J. D., Berg, A., & Tsangarides C. G. (2014). Redistribution, Inequality, and Growth." IMF Staff Discussion Note SDN/14/02. Washington, DC: International Monetary Fund.

Oxfam calculation based on Credit Suisse Global Wealth Report and Forbes 2019 Billionaires List. Data for wealth of the bottom 50% is taken from Credit Suisse, and this is based on estimates using data that is poor for many countries in Africa. Wealth of the bottom 50% of the African population is 22.98 billion dollars. Wealth for the three richest billionaires in Africa is 28.8 billion dollars (Aliko Dangote 14.1 billion, Nicky Oppenheimer 7.7 billion and Johann Rupert 7 billion dollars according to Forbes 2019 billionaires list). African population estimated at 1.3 billion people in 2019

Packard, M. D., & Bylund, P. L. (2018). On the relationship between inequality and entrepreneurship. *Strategic Entrepreneurship Journal*, *12*(1), 3-22.

Perrons, D. (2017). Gender and inequality: Austerity and alternatives. *Intereconomics*, *52*(1), 28-33

Ramos, D.L., Chen, S., Rabeeu, A., Abdul Rahim, A.B. (2022). Does SDG Coverage Influence Firm Performance? Sustainability, 14,4870. https://doi.org/10.3390/su14094870

Renee, M. (2014). Top 10 diversity issues at work. https://smallbusiness.chron.com/top-10-diversity-issues-work-24939.html

Rijamampianina, R., & Carmichael, T. (2005). A pragmatic and holistic approach to managing diversity. *Problems and perspectives in management, 1*, 109-117.

Rivera, L.A., & Tilcsik, A. (2019). Scaling down inequality: Rating scales, gender bias, and the architecture of evaluation. *American Sociological Review*, *84*(2), 248-274

Shena, J., Chandaa, A., D'Nettob, B., & Mongaa, M. (2009). Managing diversity through human resource management: An international perspective and conceptual framework. International Journal of Human Resource Management, 20(2), 235–251.

Stiglitz, J., (2012). The Price of Inequality: How Today's Divided Society Endangers Our Future. 2nd ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Szatmari, B. (2021). Young stars and red giants: The moderating effect of age diversity on the relationship between the proportion of high performers and team performance. Journal of Applied Psychology.

University of Washington (2018). Dimensions of diversity (online). https://www.tacoma.uw.edu/equity/dimensions-diversity

Uwem, E. I., Oyedele, O. O., & Olubiyi, O. T. (2021). Workplace Green Behavior for Sustainable Competitive Advantage. In Human Resource Management Practices for Promoting *Sustainability IGI Global.* (248–263).

Woschkowiak, A. (2018). *Board diversity and firm financial performance: Gender, nationality and age diversity in European boardrooms.* (Unpublished master thesis). Radboud University, Nijmegen.

UNDP. (2019). trade development goals. report. Retrieved Retrieved from from UNDP Africa human development report. Retrieved 15 October 2019, from https://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/librarypage/hdr/2019-africa-human-development-report.html.

van Dijk, H., Kooij, D., Karanika-Murray, M., De Vos, A. & Meyer, B. (2020). Meritocracy a myth? A multilevel perspective of how social inequality accumulates through work, *Organizational Psychology Review*, *10*(4),240-269.

Van Heerden, W. & Roodt, G. (2007). The development of a measuring instrument for assessing a culture. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 33(1): 18-28.

Wengrzyn, R. (2015). Diversity issues in the workplace: Discrimination, sexism, ageism and more. http://study.com/ academy/lesson/diversity-in-the-workplace.html

Wentling, R. M., & Palma-Rivas, N. (2000). Current status of diversity initiatives in selected multinational corporations. Human Resource Development Quarterly, 11(1), 35–60.

Zager Kocjan, G., Kavčič, T., & Avsec, A. (2021). Resilience matters: Explaining the association between personality and psychological functioning during the COVID-19 pandemic. *International Journal of Clinical and Health Psychology*, *21*(1), 100198. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijchp.2020.08.002

Zaki Dajani, M. A., & Mostafa, B. A. (2021). The Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Egyptian Women Psychological Empowerment and Work-Life Balance. *Journal of Business Administration Research*, *10*(1), 20. https://doi.org/10.5430/jbar.v10n1p20