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The Impact of Linguistic Diversity on Intercultural Communication in Nigerian Organizations: A Review

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria stands out globally for its profound cultural and linguistic diversity, encompassing over 500 distinct languages. Among these, the Hausa, Yoruba, and Igbo languages serve as predominant, with several hundred others classified as minority languages. This diversity not only reflects the country's ethnic richness but also presents unique challenges and opportunities in organizational settings. However, this study examines deeply into the challenges and opportunities presented by Nigeria's linguistic diversity within organizational contexts. It explores how language barriers impact daily interactions, teamwork, and overall organizational effectiveness. Drawing from a thorough review of scholarly literature sourced from reputable databases like Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, Semantic Scholar, and ResearchGate, the study identifies prevalent issues and examines potential solutions. By addressing these complexities, the study aims to offer a comprehensive framework for understanding the elaborate dynamics of intercultural communication shaped by linguistic diversity in Nigeria. It emphasizes the critical need for proactive strategies that embrace diversity as a driver of innovation, collaboration, and sustainable organizational growth in today's interconnected global business landscape. The findings underline the importance of fostering inclusive communication practices, promoting cultural sensitivity, and enhancing language proficiency among employees to effectively navigate and leverage Nigeria's diverse cultural milieu for organizational success.

INTRODUCTION

According to Ethnologue (Lewis *et al.*, 2015) the number of living languages spoken in Nigeria is 526, of which 520 are classified as indigenous. This makes Nigeria the third most multilingual country in the world, after Papua New Guinea (with 839 living languages) and Indonesia (with 707 living languages). There are three major ethnic groups in Nigeria: the Hausa, the Yoruba, and the Ibo (Igbo). Oluwabamide and Jegede suggest that 'their languages are referred to as majority languages' (Oluwabamide & Jegede, 2008), which in this paper are called languages of wider communication. Individuals may or not be native in any of these languages, and they use them to communicate, albeit regionally, with other individuals. They further propose that 'other groups of people numbering more than three hundred whose population and influence are not as those three are altogether regarded as minority peoples and/or cultures and their languages as minority languages. Examples of minority languages spoken in Nigeria are Edo, Efik, Fulfulde, Igala, Izon, Kanuri, Nupe and Tiv. Size is relative, however, and minority languages must be seen in relation to the size of the population of the country. In a country with 173.6 million inhabitants, for example, the 11.5 million speakers of Fulfulde constitute indeed a

minority, but the size of the community of speakers is by no means small (Lewis *et al.*, 2015).

Nigeria has been widely acknowledged to be a culturally diverse society and it is one of the world's most culturally varied countries (Edewor *et al.*, 2014; Ugwuzor, 2014). It has a great cultural diversity, with over 250 ethnic groupings and 500 spoken languages. This provides a rich context for examining how human resources are modified to serve a diverse population. The issue of determining the exact number of languages in Nigeria has engaged researchers for several decades, yet it is not clear exactly how many languages coexist in Nigeria. Oyetayo (2006) posits that there are 510 living languages and 9 extinct ones. However, the globalization of markets, growth in information distribution, and international connectivity, together with demographic changes and the increased speed of population mobility, have created a situation where people from diverse cultural and language backgrounds work together to manage business and projects, resolve problems, and make decisions. Song (2017) noted that this trend would only continue as information and globalism continue to reshape our workplaces and make them more hybrid and multicultural. These companies operate independently as a tool of foreign policy inside the parent company's

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location which requires prudent managerial task (Vlad & Stad, 2018). To effectively manage this diversity, they need not only conventional production management, but also the hiring of people of diverse cultural backgrounds and values. As a result, managing a workforce with a diverse cultural context is unavoidable (Tutar *et al.*, 2014). Hence, the study seeks to investigate the intercultural communication challenges that arise due to linguistic diversity, and explore how language barriers impact daily interactions, teamwork, and effectiveness in Nigerian organization.

METHODOLOGY

This study reviews various sources to understand the challenges of intercultural communication caused by

linguistic diversity in Nigerian organizations. It looks at how language barriers affect daily interactions, teamwork, and overall effectiveness. The research draws from peer-reviewed papers found in reputable databases like Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, Semantic Scholar, and ResearchGate. Using specific keywords such as “intercultural communication challenges in Nigeria,” “linguistic diversity in Nigerian organizations,” and “intercultural and linguistic barriers in the workplace,” the study aims to identify common issues and possible solutions. By combining insights from scholarly articles and reports, this research seeks to suggest effective strategies for overcoming these communication barriers. Figure 1 shows the geographical distribution of Nigeria’s main linguistic groups.

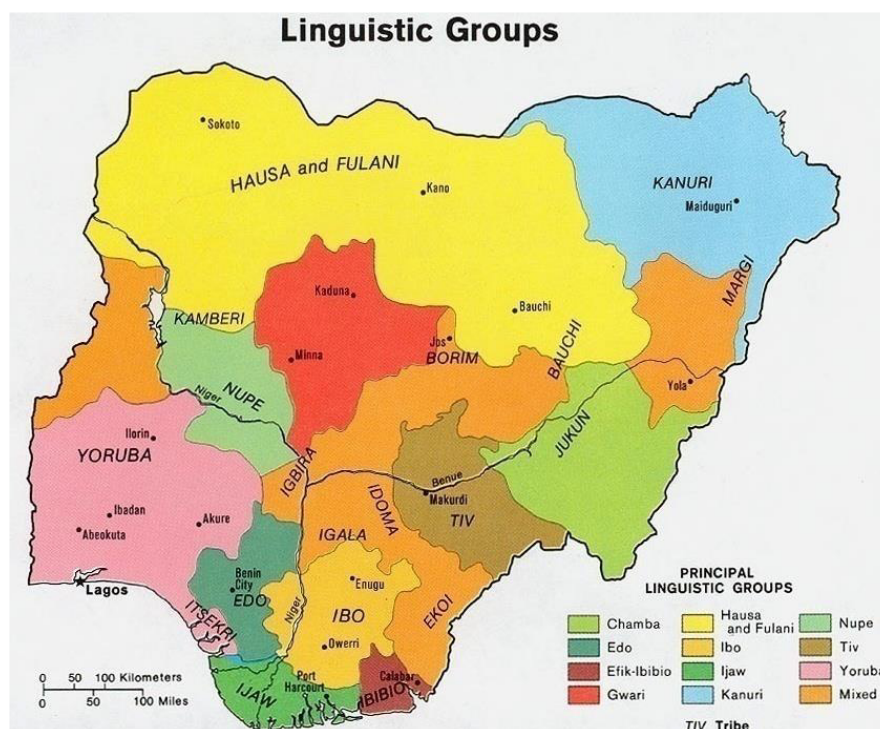


Figure 1: Linguistic groups of Nigeria (UNC, 2008)

DISCUSSION

Diversity in Nigeria

Higazi and Lar (2015) explain that Nigeria has a very diverse population. The country is diversified along different dimensions. Foremost, the country is religiously diverse, with Muslims and Christians making up a huge majority. While Islam is the biggest religion in Nigeria, Christianity makes up a significant minority, with other religions such as Hindu making up smaller percentages (Higazi and Lar, 2015). Nigerians belong to several different religions as well, with Islam and Christianity accounting for approximately 50 and 40 per cent of the population, respectively. Islam is dominant in the northern region while Christianity is the major religion in the south; indigenous African religions are also commonly practiced around the country. In terms of age, 41.5 per cent of the total population is in the

0–14 years bracket, 55.5 per cent in the 15–64 range and 3.1 per cent are aged 65 and over (Onyejeli, 2010). The intersection of ethnic and religious identities in Nigeria, and the circumstances in which the country was created, has been an incessant source of civil strife in the country several decades after the attainment of political independence (Sowell, 2004). These challenges have been compounded by blatant educational, economic and social horizontal inequalities among the ethnic/religious groups and regions (Mustapha, 2009). Additionally, the country’s diversity is seen in the different economic classes. With the varied economic capacities come varied educational capacities and classes. A large population of Nigeria and sub-Saharan Africa is poor and somewhat ignorant. This is despite the reality that Nigeria is among the leading African nations with a high population of educated, unemployed youths (Higazi & Lar, 2015).

Business Language and Cross-Cultural Communication in Nigerian Organization

In the contemporary world, numbers of intercultural projects, immigration, and inter-nation approvals have been repeatedly increasing, which interacts with various cultures. In this relationship, there are still some worries in cross-cultural controlling including negotiation style, work ethics compliance, management style and conflict resolution at workplace or organization. Consequently, many authors believe that cross-cultural difficulties can be solved or avoided through awareness of the components of intercultural communication. Thus, in this study, the term “intercultural communication and linguistic diversity” refers to the interaction and exchange of information between people from different cultural backgrounds who speak different languages or dialects. Also, intercultural communication is the discourse between two or more speakers from different cultures or co-cultures exchanging verbal and nonverbal messages” (James, 2006; Wiggins, 2012).

Nonetheless, communication is crucial in business and management, and improving it leads to greater business efficiency. Therefore, communication skills are essential for successful business professionals. Numerous studies have examined the interactions that occur when people from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds come together in organization or workplace. Khanus (2007) explains that there is a connection between cultural diversity and organizational performance. In his work, Khanus (2007) explains that the constructive side of cultural diversity does not come without challenges and heavy costs. While cultural diversity has enhanced competitiveness and performance in many Nigerian organizations, such costs as the expense associated with education and training are inevitable. Salvi and Bamford (2007) highlight that the connection between language and business extends beyond trade and influences all aspects of the workplace. According to the authors, one of the consequences of globalization is that skills in other languages have come to play an important part at all levels of the business hierarchy, no longer merely at the top. English as lingua franca is acknowledged to be means of communication of the globalized economy. However, there is significant interest in studying language use in Nigerian business settings.

Alo and Soneye (2014) examine haggling as a socio-pragmatic strategy in urban markets. Their research reveals how different languages interact during market transactions in Lagos and Ibadan. Using Dell Hymes’ ethnography of communication as their theoretical framework, they identify socio-pragmatic patterns in language use within Nigeria’s multilingual and multicultural market environments. Aluko (2003) notes that as an organization becomes diverse, its budget keeps on expanding because the management and leadership must educate their employees on such matters as cultural sensitivity and awareness. A good number of Nigerian organizations have resorted to the use of interpreters

as a solution to the communication problem – language barrier. Nigeria’s workforce is linguistically varied, with people from different ethnic groups and races. For instance, the southern half of Nigeria is known for its heavy oil mining industry – one that has attracted investors and expatriates from many nations.

Positive Effects of Linguistic Diversity on Intercultural Communication in Nigeria Organization

Azolukwam and Perkins (2009) explain that cultural and linguistic diversity in Nigerian organizations brings a range of managerial perspectives. This diversity introduces different political viewpoints, leading to varied management styles. For instance, Nigerian organizations benefit from both Eastern managerial techniques and liberal Western approaches. Also, cultural diversity boosts competitiveness (Obono, 2016). A workforce and management team composed of diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds are more likely to make high-quality and competitive decisions. Moreover, employees from various backgrounds and talents enable Nigerian organizations to find innovative solutions to problems (Aluko, 2003). More so, Obono (2016) and Aluko (2003) highlight that cultural diversity creates a rich pool of talents, skills, and experiences. As a result, organizations with diverse teams perform better than those with a more uniform culture. The corporate sector in Nigeria benefits the most from this diverse talent pool, which includes people of different races, genders, ages, backgrounds, lingua franca, academic qualifications, and religions. However, Fajana and Ige (2009) also observe that cultural diversity – a result of globalization and international interdependence – has enabled Nigerian organizations gain from international labor mobility. While the country’s global image has been affected by such atrocities as the terror activities associated with such groups as terrorist groups and bandits, its organizations are beneficiaries of the highly liberalized international policies and structures, which have facilitated the geographical mobility of employees. With international mobility of labor, the organizations in Nigeria have had the opportunity to employ new ideas and richly experienced personnel. Fajana and Ige (2009) observe that globalization and international labor mobility have been constructive forces in Nigerian institutions as they come with increased adaptability and competitiveness. In straightforward terms, the organizations in the country are exposed to a wider variety of solutions to different problems and situations.

Cultural diversity eradicates the kind of difficulties associated with outsourcing, service delivery and the allocation of the organizations’ limited resources (Fajana and Ige, 2009). In another point of view, Rasul and Rogger (2015) observe that in recent years, the organizations in the country benefits from the diverse workplace. People from different backgrounds and with different capabilities and competencies widen the scope of the organization’s services and products. The service

range is widened by the reality that cultural diversity introduces varied viewpoints and perspectives. The staffs of different organizations across the country subscribe to different political and ideological views.

While this may seem like a set-back, Rasul and Rogger (2015) explain that it equips the organizations' policy makers with the ability to handle such matters as communication, change and adaptability more easily. The authors emphasize the critical role of cultural diversity

in organizational success. They highlight that cultural diversity enables organizations to effectively pursue long-term goals by enhancing the execution of various duties and operations. This effectiveness stems from the wealth of experience found within a culturally diverse workforce. The ability to perform duties and operations effectively is the primary benefit of cultural diversity, pushing organizational staff to reach their highest potential (Rasul and Rogger, 2015).

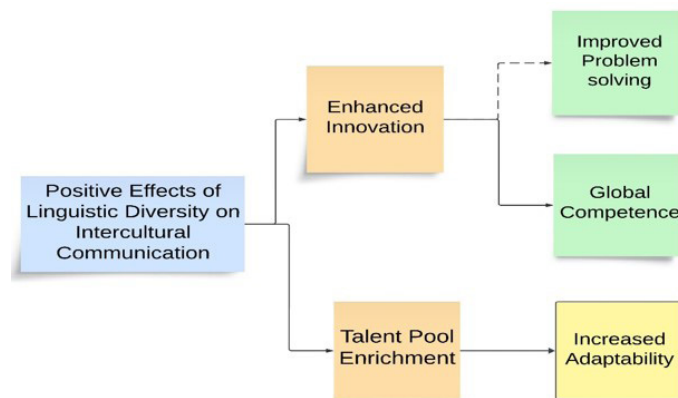


Figure 2: Positive effects of Linguistic Diversity on Intercultural Communication

Source: Author's Creation

Linguistic diversity strengthens communication and teamwork efforts through workplace interactions. This pursuit of excellence leads to outcomes such as increased productivity, improved return on investment, and higher profitability. Thus, cultural, and linguistic diversity not only enrich organizational dynamics but also drive performance and the achievement of strategic objectives. For instance, In Nigerian organizations, where employees may come from various linguistic backgrounds, pidgin English often serves as a common language of communication. This allows individuals who are not fluent in the local languages of certain regions, such as Hausa in the northern part of Nigeria, to effectively work and communicate with colleagues and clients. The ability to adapt and communicate in pidgin English or other common languages helps bridge linguistic barriers and fosters collaboration and understanding among diverse teams. It reflects the practical application of linguistic diversity in enhancing workplace efficiency and inclusivity, as pointed out earlier in the context of Nigerian organizational dynamic.

Negative Effects of Linguistic Diversity on Intercultural Communication in Nigeria Organization

Intercultural business transactions require the use of understandable language as a medium of communication between the business entities and their potential

customers/clients (Bodomo and Che, 2020). Language, therefore, is a critical means of smooth business transactions (Adanlawo, 2020). Despite the positive effects of linguistic diversity and intercultural communication in Nigerian organizations, these organizations have had to deal with several challenges that accompanies the benefits of cultural, and linguistic diversity. Nkwoka (2003) observes that cultural diversity has exposed Nigerian organizations to a highly stratified workforce. The various strata make some processes difficult. For instance, the ethno-linguistic strata make the organizations exposed to troubled communication. Neil (1996) observes that communication differences arise between languages as governing different cultural understanding of when to talk, what to say, conversation control like turn taking, verbal and nonverbal cues, cohesion and coherence. However, communication, as Nkwoka (2003) would define, is one of the wheels on which the organizations run. However, he notes that in a culturally diverse organization, language barrier, and many other aspects of communication pose communication challenges. The author further explains that the communication challenges call for costly resolutions, such as outsourcing interpreters, and having to incur unforeseen expenses in training both new and the existing members of staff on the importance of peaceful coexistence, cultural awareness and sensitivity.

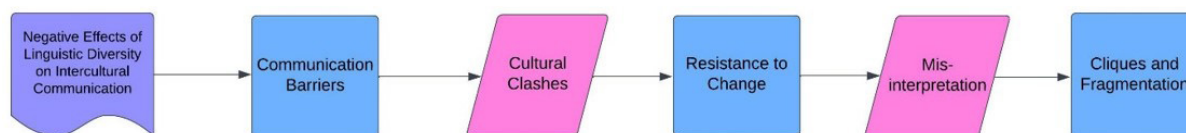


Figure 3: Negative Effects of Linguistic Diversity on Intercultural Communication

Source: Author's Creation

With various cultural strata come such other challenges as lack of effective teamwork (Beardwell and Holden, 2001). With poor communication, people cannot work effectively in groups – both formal and informal. Nigerian organizations have had to spend a lot of money and other resources in creating cemented teams in the advent of globalization and cultural diversity. In contrast to the earlier posited instance, in some Nigerian organizations, linguistic diversity can present challenges rather than opportunities. When employees come from various linguistic backgrounds without a common language like pidgin English, communication barriers may hinder effective collaboration. For example, individuals who do not speak the local languages prevalent in specific regions, such as Hausa in northern Nigeria, may struggle to communicate effectively with their colleagues and clients. This lack of a shared language can lead to misunderstandings, reduced teamwork, and difficulties in achieving organizational goals. Without a unifying language or effective communication strategies in place, linguistic diversity may pose obstacles to workplace efficiency and inclusivity, contrasting with the potential benefits discussed earlier in Nigerian organizational dynamics. Beardwell and Holden (2001) helpfully explain that poor communication causes confusion and impairs the organizations' capacity to have informal teams. Highlighting the many challenges that the human resources management functions must deal with; the authors elucidate that informal team and groups are more productive than the formally selected teams. Such teams, however, cannot be formed where the employees cannot communicate effectively. Different people come from different places, with different native languages. While this is the case, Beardwell and Holden (2001) observe that low morale is a likely result of a stratified workforce. With low morale come low productivity, low profitability, and ineffective decision systems.

Furthermore, Nkwoka (2003) insists that, with a culturally diverse workforce, it is likely that there will be problems such as resistance to change. It is important to point out that according to the author, resistance to change is one of the most prominent problems facing Nigerian organizations, particularly because it is not an easy task getting such a diverse work force to accept change, particularly considering that communication is a problem. Foremost, the management of an organization must elaborately explain to the employees and other stakeholders the need for some changes. Friday (2007) also noted that one of the most problematic issues in Nigerian organizations is the burden of having to deal with complicated human resource policies and structures. The author just like many other researchers, including those focusing on organizations outside of Nigeria, explains that in a culturally diverse organization, the human resource department must come up with new structures and guidelines that are unique to the organization's setting. More so, Obono (2016) explains that cultural diversity forms a basis for the formation

of policy guidelines. While this paper focuses on the case of Nigerian firms only, it is important to point out that cultural diversity is the factor underlying such important guidelines as the internationally recognized Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO). Such guidelines are based on the essence of diversity because they are informed by such factors as workplace bullying, sexual harassment, and gender equality. Rich diversity, therefore, informs the formation of various company rules and regulations in Nigeria and across the world. Fundamentally, what many researchers (Aluko, 2003; Bada, 2002) discover is the reality that cultural diversity is the link through which local adaptations are made to global trends.

Impacts of Diversity and Cross-Cultural Management on Organizational Growth

Diversity management involves using human resources practices to manage and celebrate differences within the workforce, ensuring these differences do not hinder the achievement of organizational goals. Ohunakin *et al.* (2019) found that diversity management positively impacts the outcomes of multinational corporations. Ensari *et al.* (2017) also noted that diversity management enhances competitive strategies, highlighting that a diverse workforce is a key asset and capability for organizations. This approach allows employers to leverage workforce diversity into strategies that enrich the organization and provide competitive advantages. According to Tozkoparan and Vatanzever (2011), valuing diversity helps employees work without feeling pressured, boosting efficiency and productivity, and fostering a positive, inclusive work environment.

Cross-cultural communication, on the other hand, involves understanding and interacting with different communication styles and cultural values. Aburge (2017) emphasized that effective cross-cultural communication is essential for competitive advantage, as noted by several authors (Aburge, 2017; Bako *et al.*, 2019; Aburge & Debrah, 2019). It helps bridge communication gaps caused by cultural differences, especially for expatriates. Aburge (2017) suggested that for successful operations in countries like Nigeria, organizations must manage cross-cultural communication to help expatriates adapt to their new environment. This management enhances organizational image and relationships between host and parent companies. Effective cross-cultural communication is thus a significant competitive advantage globally, including in Nigeria (Bako *et al.*, 2019). Additionally, Aburge and Debrah (2019) found a positive relationship between cross-cultural communication competence and expatriates' business success in Ghana. Training expatriates in the host culture is crucial for their interaction with local staff and community members. Rajpal and Onyusheva (2018) also found that cross-cultural communication contributes to multinational firms' competitive positioning by fostering diverse experiences and advanced thinking.

Identified Challenges of Linguistic Diversity on Intercultural Communication in Nigeria

Cultural Misalignment and Miscommunication

With a multitude of languages spoken, there is a higher risk of misunderstandings. Employees may misinterpret messages due to language barriers or cultural differences in communication styles. Different cultural backgrounds can lead to varying expectations and norms regarding workplace behavior, hierarchy, and decision-making processes. This can create friction and hinder collaboration if not managed properly.

Language Dominance

Language dominance refers to the situation where certain languages hold more power or influence within a workplace or society than others. This dominance can marginalize employees who do not speak or are not proficient in the dominant language, resulting in feelings of exclusion and lower morale among those individuals. For example, in Lagos State, Nigeria, Yoruba is widely spoken and holds significant cultural and linguistic influence. In workplaces where Yoruba is the dominant language used for communication and interaction, employees who are not fluent in Yoruba may face challenges in fully participating in discussions, understanding instructions, or bonding socially with colleagues. This language barrier can create a sense of isolation and hinder their ability to perform effectively in their roles. Furthermore, the prevalence of language dominance can reinforce social hierarchies and power dynamics within organizations, as those proficient in the dominant language may have greater access to information, opportunities for advancement, and inclusion in decision-making processes.

Communication Barriers

In some Nigerian organizations, the reliance on pidgin English or other common languages may not be universally effective, as discussed earlier. Linguistic diversity can lead to communication challenges, especially when there is no standardized language for all employees. Misunderstandings due to language differences may delay projects, hinder teamwork, and impact overall productivity. This can perpetuate inequalities and limit the potential contributions of diverse linguistic backgrounds to the organization.

Cultural Clashes and Resistance to Change

Rasul and Rogger (2015) note that cultural diversity may introduce conflicting norms and values, which can lead to resistance to new ideas or initiatives. However, differences in cultural practices and values may create tensions within the organization. Employees from different cultural backgrounds may perceive organizational changes differently, leading to resistance or reluctance to adapt, which can affect organizational harmony and efficiency. Misinterpretation and Fragmentation: Aluko (2003) suggests that cultural diversity can sometimes lead to misinterpretation of intentions or messages. Variations in

communication styles and cultural contexts may result in misinterpretations of verbal and nonverbal cues. This can contribute to misunderstandings, interpersonal conflicts, and the formation of cliques based on linguistic or cultural affinity, potentially fragmenting the organizational culture.

Identified Opportunities of Linguistic Diversity on Intercultural Communication in Nigeria

Enhanced Innovation and Problem-Solving

According to Aluko (2003), diverse teams in Nigerian organizations bring varied perspectives and ideas, which foster innovative solutions to complex problems. A diverse linguistic and cultural workforce brings multiple perspectives to the table. This can foster innovative solutions and creative problem-solving, as employees draw from a wide range of experiences and viewpoints. i.e., when employees from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds collaborate, they bring unique insights and approaches to problem-solving. This diversity of thought stimulates creativity and innovation, enabling organizations to develop more effective strategies and products tailored to diverse customer needs.

Global Competence

Fajana and Ige (2009) highlight that globalization has enabled Nigerian organizations to benefit from international labor mobility, enhancing their adaptability to global markets. Cultural diversity equips organizations with the cultural competence needed to navigate international markets effectively. Employees who understand cultural nuances can build stronger relationships with international clients and adapt products and services to meet diverse cultural preferences, thereby enhancing competitiveness and market reach.

Competitive Advantage and Increased Adaptability

There will be effective ability to adapt to diverse customer needs and market dynamics i.e., organizations that effectively harness linguistic diversity can better serve a diverse customer base, both locally and internationally. This can lead to improved customer satisfaction and expanded market reach.

Cultural Competence

Exposure to various languages and cultures enhances employees' cultural competence, making them more adaptable and empathetic in both domestic and global business environments.

Talent Pool Enrichment

Rasul and Rogger (2015) emphasize that cultural diversity creates a rich pool of talents, skills, and experiences within organizations. This can be done by drawing from a diverse talent pool, Nigerian organizations can leverage a wide range of skills and expertise. This diversity not only enhances the organization's capabilities but also fosters a dynamic and inclusive work environment where employees feel valued for their unique contributions.

Strategies for Effective Management of Linguistic Diversity on Intercultural Communication

Cultural Sensitivity Training

This plays a crucial role in organizational settings by educating employees about cultural differences and promoting respect for diversity. This proactive approach can significantly reduce cultural clashes and foster greater team cohesion. By enhancing awareness and understanding of diverse cultural norms, values, and communication styles, organizations create an environment where employees feel respected and valued for their unique backgrounds. As a result, teams are better equipped to collaborate effectively, leveraging their diverse perspectives to achieve shared goals and enhance overall organizational performance. According to Ehwarieme *et al.* (2024), a trained staff or employee has the tendency to improve on their non-friendly attitudes towards people.

Promote Inclusive Communication Practices

Implementing policies that promote inclusivity, such as using multiple languages in official communications and encouraging diverse cultural expressions, can create a more welcoming environment for all employees. Furthermore, establishing policies that encourage open communication and respect for diverse viewpoints foster an environment where all employees feel comfortable expressing their ideas and concerns, regardless of their linguistic or cultural background. Using inclusive language and avoid jargon or terms that may be unfamiliar to certain groups can also be very productive.

Provide Language and Cultural Training

Offer language classes or workshops to improve communication skills across different languages spoken within the organization. Ehwarieme *et al.* (2024) noted that training leads to the eradication of staff lousy attitudes towards performance and productivity. Therefore, provide cultural sensitivity training to educate employees about cultural differences, norms, and practices. More so, equip managers and team leaders with the knowledge and skills to effectively manage diverse teams and resolve cultural conflicts.

Establish Clear Expectations and Goals

Ensure that all employees, regardless of their background, understand organizational goals, objectives, and expectations. Communicate job responsibilities and performance metrics clearly to promote transparency and accountability. Set realistic and achievable goals that consider the strengths and capabilities of diverse teams.

Encourage Collaboration and Team Building

Facilitate team-building activities that promote trust, cooperation, and mutual respect among team members. Create cross-functional teams that leverage diverse skills and perspectives to tackle complex challenges and drive innovation. Encourage knowledge sharing and mentorship programs to foster learning and professional

development across different cultural and linguistic groups.

Implement Flexible Work Practices

Offer flexible work hours or remote work options to accommodate employees' diverse cultural and personal needs. Create a supportive work environment that values work-life balance and accommodates cultural practices or religious observances. Use technology to facilitate virtual collaboration and communication among geographically dispersed teams.

Promote Diversity in Leadership and Decision-Making

Foster a diverse leadership team that reflects the cultural and linguistic diversity of the organization. Encourage diverse perspectives in decision-making processes to ensure that decisions consider a broad range of viewpoints and potential impacts. Empower employees from diverse backgrounds to take on leadership roles and contribute to strategic planning and decision-making processes.

Monitor and Address Issues Proactively

Regularly assess the effectiveness of diversity and inclusion initiatives through employee feedback, surveys, and performance evaluations. Address issues related to cultural sensitivity, language barriers, or discrimination promptly and transparently. Continuously improve diversity management strategies based on feedback and evolving organizational needs.

CONCLUSION

The study highlights both the challenges and opportunities presented by linguistic diversity and intercultural communication in Nigerian organizations. While diverse linguistic backgrounds enrich organizational perspectives and enhance innovation, they also introduce complexities such as cultural misalignment, communication barriers, and potential resistance to change. The dominance of certain languages within workplaces, can marginalize employees not proficient in these languages, leading to exclusion and reduced morale. Misunderstandings arising from cultural differences in communication styles and norms can hinder effective collaboration and organizational cohesion. However, Nigerian organizations can harness the benefits of linguistic diversity by adopting proactive measures. Strategies such as cultural sensitivity training, inclusive communication practices, and language proficiency programs can mitigate these challenges. By fostering an inclusive environment where diverse perspectives are valued, organizations can enhance teamwork, innovation, and overall performance. It is imperative for Nigerian organizations to prioritize diversity management strategies that promote understanding, respect, and inclusivity. By embracing linguistic diversity and intercultural competence, organizations can leverage their diverse workforce to navigate global markets effectively and achieve sustainable growth in Nigeria's dynamic business landscape.

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