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Initiative for Gender Equality
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HIDDEN INCLUSION: THE REALITY OF SEXUAL AND GENDER DIVERSE COMMUNITIES IN THE CORPORATE WORLD.

RESEARCH ON DEI POLICIES OF EXISTING CORPORATIONS (NATIONAL AND
MULTINATIONALS) IN NIGERIA BY THE ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT WORKING
GROUPN(EEWG) NIGERIA

**PROJECT TITLE:
THRIVE NAIJA: EMPOWERING PRIDE,
BUILDING PROSPERITY**



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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

SSMPA: Same Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act 2014

LGBTIQ: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex and Queer

DE: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

EEWG: Economic Empowerment Working Group

IGE-SRH: Initiative for Gender Equality and Sexual and Reproductive Health

SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals

GDP: Gross Domestic Products

KPI: Key Performance Indicators

ESG: Environmental, Social and Governance Metrics

MNCs: Multinational Corporations

NCs: National Corporations

CAMA: Companies and Allied Matters Acts

NIPC: Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission

NCE: Nigeria Certificate in Education

B.Sc: Bachelors of Science

HND: Higher National Diploma

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This research, carried out by the Economic Empowerment Working Group (EEWG) Nigeria, critically examines the landscape of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policies within Nigeria's corporate sector specifically through the lens of LGBTIQ inclusion. In a context where global momentum for inclusive workplaces is growing, Nigeria remains constrained by a combination of discriminatory legal frameworks, entrenched cultural norms, and limited corporate accountability. These systemic challenges continue to marginalize LGBTIQ individuals, particularly in terms of access to stable employment, career progression, and financial security.

Despite Nigeria's position as Africa's largest economy and a host to numerous multinational corporations, the adaptation of global DEI commitments to the local context remains inconsistent. While many companies adopt inclusive values at the global level, their Nigerian operations often fall short, especially in addressing sexual and gender diversity. The Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act (SSMPA) and other discriminating laws continue to discourage open support for LGBTIQ rights, resulting in policies that are either silent or symbolic, offering little tangible protection or advancement for queer employees.

The research employed surveys, in-depth interviews, and comparative analysis to assess how DEI frameworks are implemented within select corporations and to what extent they respond to the lived realities of marginalized employees. The findings highlight a visible focus on gender and disability inclusion, but a near-total absence of LGBTIQ-specific considerations. Employees often lack access to safe reporting systems, equitable mentorship, or leadership that visibly champions inclusion. Even where policies exist, their implementation tends to be uneven, with significant gaps between intention and practice.

However, the study also identifies emerging opportunities. Younger professionals, urban-based teams, and certain progressive organizations are increasingly open to

inclusive practices. Civil society partnerships, confidential support mechanisms, and localized, culturally sensitive adaptations of DEI strategies offer a pathway for corporations to begin bridging the inclusion gap in a way that aligns with both Nigerian realities and international human rights standards.

Based on these insights, the report recommends actionable steps: embedding SOGIESC awareness into DEI training, establishing confidential feedback channels, fostering mentorship programs for marginalized staff, and adapting global policies to reflect local legal constraints while upholding principles of fairness and dignity. It also underscores the importance of corporate partnerships with community-based organizations to support broader economic empowerment for LGBTIQ individuals.

Ultimately, this research positions LGBTIQ inclusion not just as a human rights imperative, but as a strategic business opportunity, one that can drive innovation, strengthen workplace culture, and contribute meaningfully to Nigeria's social and economic development. By confronting uncomfortable truths and promoting context-specific solutions, this study aims to catalyze a more inclusive and equitable future for all employees in corporate Nigeria.

Grace Akpan Isong
EEWG Coordinator

PART ONE

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of the Research

In Nigeria, sexual and gender diverse communities continue to face systemic exclusion from economic opportunities, particularly within corporate environments. Despite the global shift towards Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policies, LGBTIQ individuals in Nigeria encounter significant barriers to employment, career advancement, and financial security. These challenges are rooted in a complex interplay of socio-cultural biases, discriminatory legal frameworks, and corporate policies that often fail to acknowledge or protect LGBTIQ workers. As a result, many LGBTIQ individuals are forced into informal or precarious employment, increasing financial vulnerabilities and limiting access to stable livelihoods.

Nigeria's economy, the largest in Africa, is heavily reliant on industries such as oil and gas, telecommunications, banking, and manufacturing, with multinational corporations playing a dominant role. However, while many of these corporations uphold inclusive policies in their global operations, the extent to which these commitments translate into meaningful inclusion within their Nigerian branches remains largely unexamined. The country's legal framework further complicates economic inclusion for LGBTIQ persons, with laws such as the Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act (SSMPA) criminalizing same-sex relationships and discouraging corporate entities from openly supporting LGBTIQ rights. These legal and social constraints contribute to workplace discrimination, job insecurity, and financial exclusion for many LGBTIQ individuals. [1]

This research, conducted by the Economic Empowerment Working Group (EEWG) Nigeria, seeks to bridge this critical knowledge gap by examining the DEI policies of multinational corporations operating in Nigeria. By assessing how these corporations navigate inclusion within the local context, this study aims to highlight best practices, identify areas for improvement, and provide data-driven recommendations for fostering economic participation among LGBTIQ individuals.

The findings will be instrumental for multiple stakeholders:

- For LGBTIQ communities, it offers insights into inclusive workplaces and strategies for navigating professional spaces.
- For multinational corporations, it provides an evidence-based roadmap for strengthening DEI commitments while aligning with both global human rights standards and local socio-economic realities.
- For researchers and advocates, it serves as a foundational resource for further studies and policy advocacy geared towards economic inclusion and corporate accountability.

Ultimately, this research underscores the urgency of integrating LGBTIQ-inclusive policies into corporate Nigeria, not only as a human rights imperative but also as a catalyst for economic growth, workplace diversity, and social equity. By shedding light on the hidden realities of inclusion, this study aims to spark meaningful conversations and actionable change in the corporate sector.

1.2 An Overview of LGBTIQ realities in Nigeria

In Nigeria, individuals identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, and queer (LGBTIQ) face profound socio-economic and legal challenges that significantly hinder their inclusion in various sectors, including the corporate environment. The intersection of entrenched societal biases, restrictive legal frameworks, and economic disparities creates a landscape of marginalization for these communities.

1.2.1 Legal and Social Context

The Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act (SSMPA) 2014

The **Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act (SSMPA)** is the most prominent legal instrument used to criminalize LGBTIQ existence in Nigeria. Signed into law in January 2014 by former President Goodluck Jonathan, the SSMPA goes beyond prohibiting same-sex marriage. It also criminalizes any form of association, support, or advocacy for LGBTIQ rights.

Key Provisions of the SSMPA

- Section 1: Outlaws same-sex marriage, imposing a penalty of 14 years imprisonment for individuals engaging in or attempting same-sex unions.
- Section 4: Criminalizes the registration and operation of LGBTIQ organizations, social clubs, and advocacy groups, with a 10-year prison sentence for persons who participate or support such activities.
- Section 5: Prohibits "public displays of same-sex affection," punishable by up to 10 years in prison.

The SSMPA has exacerbated discrimination, leading to increased violence, arbitrary arrests, and forced evictions of LGBTIQ individuals. Studies by Human Rights Watch (2016) and The Initiative for Equal Rights (TIERS) (2019) show a rise in homophobic attacks and blackmail since the law's enactment.

The legal environment in Nigeria is notably hostile toward LGBTIQ individuals. The Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act (SSMPA), enacted in 2014, criminalizes same-sex relationships and penalizes individuals who support or advocate for LGBTIQ rights. This legislation not only imposes severe restrictions on personal freedoms but also infringes upon the rights to freedom of expression, association, and assembly, as highlighted by the International Service for Human Rights.

Socially, negative perceptions are pervasive. A 2019 survey by The Initiative for Equal Rights (TIERS) revealed that 60% of Nigerians would not accept a family member who is LGBTIQ, and 75% support laws like the SSMPA. While these figures indicate a slight improvement from previous years, they underscore the deep-seated stigma and discrimination that persist within Nigerian society. [2]

1.2.2. Economic Implications and Workplace Discrimination

The economic ramifications of such societal and legal constraints are profound. LGBTIQ individuals often encounter significant barriers in employment, ranging from outright job denials to hostile work environments. A report by the Bisi Alimi Foundation found that 55% of LGBTIQ respondents had experienced physical

and sexual violence at home or in the workplace over the past decade. Additionally, 22% reported workplace discrimination, and 13% faced challenges during job searches.

These discriminatory practices contribute to higher unemployment rates within the LGBTIQ community, forcing many into informal or precarious employment situations. The broader national context exacerbates these challenges, with Nigeria grappling with a general unemployment rate of 27.1% and underemployment at 28.6%, as of recent reports . For LGBTIQ individuals, these economic hardships are intensified by the added layer of societal exclusion.

1.2.3 Media Representation and Public Perception

Media portrayal plays a crucial role in shaping public attitudes. Historically, Nigerian media has often perpetuate negative stereotypes about LGBTIQ individuals, contributing to their stigmatization. However, there have been gradual shifts toward more objective reporting and increased visibility of LGBTIQ narratives in films and literature. Despite these advancements, challenges persist, as evidenced by the censorship of films depicting same-sex relationships and the continued prevalence of derogatory media coverage.

The realities faced by LGBTIQ individuals in Nigeria are shaped by a confluence of legal restrictions, societal prejudices, and economic disparities. Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive legal reforms, targeted economic empowerment initiatives, and a concerted effort to shift public perceptions through education and inclusive media representation. Such measures are essential to foster a more inclusive society where all individuals, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, can participate fully and equally.

1.2.4 External Ripple Effects on Nigeria's LGBTIQ Community and Advocacy

In January 2025, President Donald Trump signed a series of executive orders that significantly altered the recognition and rights of LGBTQ+ individuals within the United States. These directives mandated federal agencies to define sex strictly as

male or female, based on biological characteristics at birth, effectively eliminating acknowledgment of transgender and non-binary identities in federal policies and documentation. [3]

The ramifications of these U.S. policy changes have extended beyond American borders, influencing socio-political dynamics in countries like Nigeria:

Nigeria, which already enforces stringent laws against same-sex relationships and non-conforming gender identities, has witnessed a bolstering of anti-LGBTIQ rhetoric. Conservative groups and policymakers have cited the U.S. policy shift as validation of their stance against LGBTIQ rights, potentially leading to heightened societal stigma and discrimination. Nigerian LGBTIQ advocacy groups, often reliant on international support and frameworks, now face increased resistance. The U.S. policy reversal undermines global advocacy efforts, making it more challenging for these organizations to lobby for legal reforms and societal acceptance.

With the U.S. government's withdrawal from promoting LGBTIQ rights, Nigerian organizations may experience reduced funding and support. This financial strain hampers initiatives aimed at protecting and empowering the LGBTIQ community, leading to potential cutbacks in essential services. The U.S. stance may embolden Nigerian authorities to implement more restrictive measures against LGBTIQ individuals, citing international precedence. This could result in intensified enforcement of existing laws or the introduction of new legislation further marginalizing the community. [4]

The global regression in LGBTIQ rights recognition can have adverse psychological effects on Nigerian LGBTIQ individuals, fostering feelings of isolation and hopelessness. This environment exacerbates mental health challenges within an already vulnerable population.

The January 2025 executive orders issued by President Trump have had a profound ripple effect on Nigeria's LGBTIQ community. By reinforcing conservative ideologies and undermining advocacy efforts, these policy changes contribute to the perpetuation of discrimination and marginalization of LGBTIQ individuals in Nigeria. Addressing these challenges requires renewed commitment from international allies

3. [Background On Trump Day One Executive Orders Impacting The LGBTQ+ Community.](#)

4. [Country policy and information note: sexual orientation and gender identity or expression, Nigeria, February 2022 \(accessible version\) - GOV.UK](#)

and local advocates to support and protect the rights of sexual and gender minorities.

1.3. Overview of Economic Inclusion of LGBTIQ in Nigeria

The economic inclusion of LGBTIQ individuals in Nigeria is significantly hindered by legal constraints, societal discrimination, and gaps in development initiatives. These challenges are evident when examining Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) projects, World Bank programs, and prevailing societal perceptions.

The SDGs aim to "leave no one behind," promoting inclusive development globally. However, in Nigeria, LGBTIQ individuals often remain marginalized within these initiatives. Discriminatory laws and social stigmas exclude them from programs designed to alleviate poverty and promote equality. For instance, SDG 8 emphasizes inclusive economic growth and decent work for all, yet Nigeria's substantial informal economy—accounting for approximately 53% of the labor force and 65% of GDP—poses challenges for LGBTIQ individuals seeking secure employment. The combined unemployment and underemployment rate among youth stands at 55.4%, highlighting the precarious nature of employment opportunities, especially for marginalized groups. [5]

1.3.1 World Bank Programs and LGBTIQ Economic Inclusion

The World Bank has established frameworks to promote social inclusion, such as the Gender Strategy and Social Inclusion Platforms. However, the implementation of programs specifically addressing the economic empowerment of LGBTIQ individuals in Nigeria remains limited. While initiatives like the Nigeria for Women Program Scale-Up (NFWP-SU) have received significant funding to improve women's livelihoods, similar large-scale programs targeting LGBTIQ communities are notably absent. [6]

1.3.2 Societal Perceptions and Their Impact

Societal attitudes in Nigeria are predominantly conservative regarding sexual orientation and gender identity. Deep-rooted cultural and religious beliefs often lead

5. [RFSLSustainable Dev Knowledge Platform](#)

6. [World Bank Group+World Bank+World Bank Group](#)

to the exclusion of LGBTIQ individuals from economic opportunities. This societal bias manifests in various forms, including workplace discrimination, barriers to entrepreneurship, and limited access to financial services. Such exclusion not only affects individual livelihoods but also hampers broader economic development by not leveraging the full potential of a diverse workforce.

Identified Issues and Gaps

- **Legal Barriers:** The criminalization of same-sex relationships and lack of legal recognition for diverse gender identities deter LGBTIQ individuals from participating openly in the economy.
- **Discrimination in Employment:** Biases during hiring processes and within workplaces limit job opportunities and career advancement for LGBTIQ persons.
- **Limited Access to Financial Resources:** Discriminatory practices within financial institutions restrict LGBTIQ entrepreneurs from obtaining necessary capital and support.
- **Exclusion from Development Programs:** Mainstream development initiatives often overlook the specific needs of LGBTIQ communities, leading to their continued marginalization.

1.4 Research Scopes

The study will focus on:

- Identifying key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure marginalized individuals' inclusion within existing DEI policies.
- Conducting desk research to analyze current DEI policies and their implementation.
- Engaging the Human Resources of these corporations through qualitative research to assess the real-world impact of DEI policies on their employees with diverse identities.
- Identifying best practices from global and local perspectives to inform recommendations for strengthening marginalised group economic empowerment in Nigeria.

1.5 Objectives of this Research

- 1.Examine the presence, implementation, and effectiveness of DEI policies in 10 multinational/national corporations operating in Nigeria, identifying gaps that hinder economic inclusion for marginalized individuals.
- 2.Analyze the impact of DEI policies on marginalized employees' workplace experiences, perceptions of inclusivity across diverse identities (gender, sex, disability status), and their correlation with employee satisfaction, retention, and career progression.
- 3.Explore successful DEI strategies in multinational corporations and provide actionable recommendations to enhance corporate inclusivity and economic empowerment for marginalized individuals.

PART TWO

The Business Case for LGBTIQ-Inclusive Workplaces in Nigeria: A Literature Desk Review

In the evolving global economy, the role of inclusive workplaces has shifted from being solely a human rights agenda to a crucial determinant of organizational sustainability and competitiveness. The business case for LGBTIQ inclusion in the workplace is built on the premise that diversity in sexual orientation and gender identity is a source of innovation, resilience, and market relevance. Although this principle is gaining ground globally, its application in Nigeria remains complex due to restrictive legislation and prevailing socio-cultural norms. The Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act of 2013 (SSMPA) not only criminalizes same-sex relationships but also restricts advocacy and association rights, thereby perpetuating workplace exclusion and erasure (Human Rights Watch, 2016). Nonetheless, evidence continues to show that LGBTIQ-inclusive practices confer distinct advantages in terms of human capital, productivity, brand equity, and compliance with global investment standards.

1. Legal and Social Backdrop

The enactment of the SSMPA has entrenched systemic discrimination against LGBTIQ persons across multiple spheres, including employment, education, and healthcare. The law prohibits the registration of organizations that support the rights of LGBTIQ individuals and criminalizes public displays of affection between same-sex couples, punishable by up to 14 years in prison. [7] This legislative climate exacerbates societal hostility and emboldens employers and coworkers to discriminate without consequence.

In such a context, many queer employees remain closeted, leading to psychological distress, reduced productivity, and job insecurity. The Human Rights Campaign (2020) reports that in hostile environments like Nigeria, LGBTIQ workers often underperform or resign due to fear of exposure. This invisibility reinforces a cycle of economic

7. <https://www.hrc.org/resources/the-cost-of-the-closet-and-the-rewards-of-inclusion>

marginalization, limiting the ability of queer individuals to fully participate in the labor market. The SSMPA thus acts as both a legal and cultural barrier to workplace inclusion, despite Nigeria's participation in international economic systems that increasingly demand non-discrimination and inclusion. [8]

2. Why Inclusion Makes Business Sense in Nigeria

A. Talent Attraction and Retention

Workplace diversity is a significant factor in attracting and retaining top talent. Organizations that embrace LGBTIQ inclusion tend to cultivate environments where individuals feel valued and safe, which positively influences morale and reduces employee turnover. McKinsey & Company (2020) found that companies with diverse and inclusive cultures are 36% more likely to outperform their less inclusive peers in profitability. [9] In Nigeria, where brain drain and youth unemployment are persistent issues, creating inclusive workplaces can help attract high-caliber talent, especially among the growing number of professionals exposed to international values and work cultures.

Moreover, LGBTIQ-inclusive companies send a signal to potential recruits that merit, rather than identity, is the basis for growth. This sense of fairness and transparency not only appeals to queer professionals but also to allies and other marginalized groups, expanding the pool of motivated and qualified candidates.

B. Global Investment and Compliance

As global markets evolve, so too do the standards required for sustained international partnerships. Investors and development organizations increasingly use Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) metrics as part of their decision-making frameworks. A significant component of the "Social" dimension includes respect for human rights, workplace diversity, and inclusion. Nigerian companies, especially those in banking, oil and gas, telecommunications, and manufacturing, risk losing access to capital or contracts if they fail to align with these standards. [10]

Multinational corporations operating in Nigeria often import their global

8. <https://www.open-for-business.org/reports>

9. <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/diversity-and-inclusion/diversity-wins-how-inclusion-matters>

10. <https://www.open-for-business.org/reports>

non-discrimination policies, which include protections based on sexual orientation and gender identity. These companies tend to outperform their local counterparts in attracting foreign direct investment and international recognition, highlighting the strategic importance of inclusive practices in maintaining global business relevance. [11]

C. Brand Reputation and Market Access

In the era of digital transparency and social consciousness, brands are increasingly scrutinized for their stance on inclusion. Companies that adopt LGBTIQ-friendly policies tend to experience enhanced reputation among younger demographics, who value ethical business practices. Nigeria, with over 60% of its population under the age of 25, represents a youth-dominated consumer base that is more globally connected and socially progressive than previous generations.

Moreover, inclusive branding can unlock niche markets previously untapped due to societal stigma. When organizations are seen as affirming and respectful of diverse identities, they benefit from increased consumer loyalty and brand trust. Conversely, companies perceived as discriminatory may face boycotts, online backlash, or loss of urban market share, especially in cosmopolitan centers like Lagos and Abuja.

D. Productivity and Innovation

Psychological safety—a person's perception of being able to express themselves without fear of negative consequences—is a key ingredient for innovation and collaboration. LGBTIQ employees who feel accepted are more likely to engage with their teams, propose creative ideas, and demonstrate organizational commitment. [13] On the contrary, closeted employees often expend significant energy on concealing their identities, which diminishes job satisfaction and leads to high rates of absenteeism and burnout. [14]

The cumulative effect is a measurable decline in productivity and workplace morale. In contrast, companies that support diversity benefit from a wide range of perspectives, driving solutions that are inclusive and reflective of diverse clientele. In an economy as dynamic as Nigeria's, especially in sectors like fintech, creative industries, and healthcare, the ability to innovate is closely linked to the quality and

11. <https://www.weforum.org/reports>

12. <https://www.nigerianstat.gov.ng>

13. [How Diversity Can Drive Innovation](#)

14. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu>

diversity of human capital.

3. Current Gaps and Challenges

Despite the clear advantages of inclusion, several systemic barriers hinder the realization of LGBTIQ-friendly workplaces in Nigeria.

Lack of Legal Protections: Unlike jurisdictions that explicitly prohibit employment discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity, Nigeria lacks legal frameworks that safeguard LGBTIQ persons in the workplace. This legal vacuum leaves employees vulnerable to unjust dismissal, harassment, and exploitation.

Workplace Invisibility: Fear of retaliation or public outing forces most LGBTIQ individuals into invisibility at work. This not only stifles self-expression but also prevents access to internal support systems such as employee resource groups or mental health services.

Cultural and Religious Barriers: Nigeria is a deeply religious country where interpretations of faith often frame LGBTIQ identities as immoral or unnatural. These beliefs are frequently mirrored in workplace cultures, creating an environment of tacit hostility. As a result, even organizations with formal non-discrimination clauses may fail to enforce them due to prevailing biases among staff or leadership.

Limited DEI Training and Tools: Human resource departments in many Nigerian companies lack the training or resources needed to foster truly inclusive cultures. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives are often seen as foreign or irrelevant, resulting in superficial implementation. This gap is further exacerbated by a scarcity of local DEI consultants with expertise in LGBTIQ issues.

4. Case Examples and Emerging Trends

Several multinational firms with operations in Nigeria—such as Shell, Microsoft, and Unilever—are notable for their adherence to global DEI frameworks. These companies often include sexual orientation and gender identity in their corporate non-discrimination policies, establish internal LGBTIQ affinity groups, and promote safe reporting channels for workplace grievances.

In a 2021 report, Open For Business developed a Workplace Inclusion Index for African countries, concluding that inclusive employment environments are linked to economic competitiveness and innovation. While Nigeria ranked low due to its legal context, the report highlighted the resilience of LGBTIQ-led civil society organizations and the incremental progress being made through private-sector partnerships (Open For Business, 2021).

Civil society actors such as The Initiative for Equal Rights (TIERs), Access to Health and Rights Development Initiative (AHRDI), and Safe Hubs have played key roles in sensitizing employers and advocating for more inclusive workspaces. These organizations provide training, conduct research, and facilitate dialogue between employers and LGBTIQ employees to bridge understanding and reduce stigma.

NIGERIA ECONOMIC LANDSCAPE AND LGBTIQ

Nigeria's economic landscape is characterized by its vast natural resources, large population, and strategic position in Africa. Despite these advantages, the country grapples with challenges such as infrastructural deficits, policy inconsistency, and foreign exchange volatility (Adewale, 2020). Multinational corporations (MNCs) benefit from investment-friendly policies such as those outlined in the Companies and Allied Matters Act (CAMA, 2020) and the Nigerian Investment Promotion Commission (NIPC) Act, which support 100% foreign ownership in non-strategic sectors (NIPC, 2021). However, stringent local content regulations, particularly in the oil and gas sector under the Nigerian Oil & Gas Industry Content Development Act, shape how MNCs engage with local markets (Nwankwo & Dike, 2019). While the business environment offers potential for growth, the macroeconomic terrain remains unstable, influencing investor confidence and operational strategies.

In contrast, economic inclusion for LGBTIQ individuals in Nigeria is significantly constrained by sociopolitical and legal barriers. The Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act of 2014 criminalizes same-sex relationships and public expressions of queerness, fostering a hostile socio-economic environment (Human Rights Watch, 2016). [15] Studies reveal that many LGBTIQ individuals are excluded from formal employment, face workplace discrimination, and often resort to informal sectors for survival

15. <https://www.hrw.org>

[Adebayo & Ojo, 2022]. The absence of anti-discrimination protections exacerbates economic vulnerability and marginalization. Although some global corporations adopt diversity and inclusion policies, such practices are rarely implemented in Nigerian branches due to prevailing cultural and legal constraints (OutRight Action International, 2021). The lack of structural support limits LGBTIQ individuals' access to capital, business networks, and economic opportunities, underscoring a gap in inclusive economic development. Bridging this gap requires not only legislative reform but also strategic efforts to align economic policies with human rights frameworks. [16]

CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS OF ECONOMIC EXCLUSION OF LGBTIQ PERSONS IN NIGERIA

2.1 Workplace Discrimination and Economic Exclusion

The pervasive stigma extends into the workplace, where LGBTIQ individuals often face discrimination that hampers their economic participation. Research indicates that LGBTIQ individuals frequently encounter bias during recruitment processes and within the workplace. The fear of exposure and subsequent discrimination leads many to conceal their identities, resulting in psychological stress and reduced productivity. In some cases, individuals have reported being overlooked for promotions or terminated upon the discovery of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

"Employment Rights of Women and the Disabled: Curbing Workplace Discrimination" by Chinwe Patricia Iloka

Iloka (2022) examines the challenges faced by women and disabled individuals in securing equitable employment opportunities in Nigeria. The paper critiques the inadequacies of the Nigerian Labour Act in addressing workplace discrimination and advocates for legislative reforms to promote inclusivity. [17]

"Harassment and Discrimination in Nigerian Workplaces 2020" by Habiba Balogun

Balogun's (2020) research delves into the prevalence of harassment and

16. <https://www.nipc.gov.ng>

17. [Employment Rights of Women and the Disabled: Curbing Workplace Discrimination | Iloka | De JURISCOPE LAW JOURNAL](#)

discrimination within Nigerian workplaces, highlighting the lack of comprehensive data and the insufficiency of current labour laws to address such issues. The study provides insights into employee experiences and offers recommendations for fostering inclusive work environments. [18]

"Workplace Discrimination and Employment Practice in Delta State Judiciary, Nigeria" by Dr. Ogundare Justice Taiwo, Ughovero Brilliant Aforkoghene, and Bereprebofa Dudutari (2023)

This study investigates the impact of workplace discrimination on employment practices within the Delta State Judiciary. Through a structured survey, the authors reveal how perceived discrimination affects employee commitment and engagement, concluding with recommendations for promoting gender equality and equitable employment practices. [19]

Below are notable case studies and research that shed light on these issues:

1. Discrimination Against LGBTIQ Individuals:

- **Alliance Rights Nigeria (ARN), Abuja, Nigeria** in a study titled "An assessment of stigma and human right violations among men who have sex with men in Abuja, Nigeria" revealed that only 59% of the participants were employed, despite 95% having at least a secondary school education. This disparity suggests that stigma and discrimination contribute to economic exclusion within this community. [20]

2. Discriminatory Employment Practices in the Nigerian Police Force

- In the case of *Omolola Olajide v. The Nigerian Police Force & 2 others* (2023), the National Industrial Court of Nigeria annulled a regulation that led to the dismissal of an unmarried pregnant policewoman. The court deemed the regulation discriminatory, as it applied exclusively to women and not to their male counterparts, highlighting systemic gender-based discrimination within the institution. [21]

3. Workplace Discrimination Based on HIV Status

- In 2016, the National Industrial Court's Lagos Division ruled in favor of an employee whose employment was terminated upon the discovery of his HIV-

18. harassment and discrimination in nigerian workplaces 2020

19. [Workplace Discrimination and Employment Practice in Delta State Judiciary, Nigeria](#)

20. [An assessment of stigma and human right violations among men who have sex with men in Abuja, Nigeria](#)

21. ["Economic exclusion and the health and wellbeing impacts of the oil industry in the Niger Delta region: a qualitative study of Ogoni experiences" - PMC](#)

positive status. The court held that mandatory medical testing by employers violates employees' rights to privacy and contravenes the Protection of Persons Living with HIV and Affected by AIDS Law of Lagos State, 2007. [22]

4. Advocacy Against Unfair Labor Practices

- Kauna Malgwi, a Nigerian university student displaced by Boko Haram, became a content moderator for Facebook through a contractor. After facing unfair labor practices, including low pay and lack of support, she emerged as a leading advocate for content moderators' rights, highlighting the economic exclusion faced by workers in precarious employment situations.

2..2 Educational Institutions and Homophobic Bullying

Educational settings in Nigeria are often sites of significant discrimination against LGBTIQ students. A study by Kehinde Okanlawon revealed that LGBTIQ students experience rejection, bullying, and victimization from peers, teachers, and school administrators. In some instances, students have been expelled due to their sexual orientation or gender identity, leading to interrupted education and limited economic prospects. For example, a final-year student at Covenant University was expelled on grounds of alleged lesbianism, highlighting the severe consequences of institutional homophobia.

"Homophobic Bullying in Nigerian Schools: The Experiences of LGBT University Students" by Kehinde Okanlawon

Okanlawon (2017) highlights the severity of homophobic bullying in Nigerian universities, stating: "The findings reveal the severity of homophobic bullying in Nigerian schools fueled by several factors, coupled with nonexistent protective educational policies for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students."

"Bullying in Nigerian Schools: Prevalence Study and Implications for Counselling" by Elizabeth O. Egbochuku

Egbochuku (2007) discusses the prevalence of bullying in Nigerian schools, noting: "It was found that 78% of the children have been victims of bullying on at least one occasion and 71% have lashed out at others at least once."

22. (PDF) EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION: A COMPARATIVE AND CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE LAW IN NIGERIA

2.3 Violence and Safety Concerns

LGBTIQ individuals in Nigeria face significant threats to their safety, impacting their ability to participate fully in economic activities. A notable case involved the brutal murder of a popular trans woman, Chantell, whose body was discovered by a highway. Her death sparked controversy, with reactions ranging from condolences to overt homophobia, reflecting the hostile environment LGBTIQ individuals navigate.

Violence Linked to LGBTQ Policies: A recent incident in Taraba State, Nigeria, underscores the severe risks associated with LGBTQ identities. A church member was fatally shot, and two children lost their lives in violence stemming from disagreements over LGBTQ policies within religious communities. This tragic event highlights the extreme societal tensions and potential dangers faced by LGBTQ individuals in Nigeria.

Online Threats Amplifying Discrimination: Meta's Oversight Board reported a viral video on Facebook depicting two men being beaten for allegedly being homosexual. Despite multiple reports, the video remained online, amassing over 3.6 million views in two months. Such content not only perpetuates violence but also emboldens discrimination against LGBTQ individuals, creating a hostile environment.

2.4 Media Representation and Public Perception

Media portrayal of LGBTIQ individuals in Nigeria often exacerbates discrimination and violence. For instance, Meta's Oversight Board highlighted concerns over a viral video on Facebook depicting the assault of two men accused of homosexuality. Despite multiple reports, the video remained accessible, garnering over 3.6 million views in two months, underscoring the challenges in moderating harmful content and its potential to incite further violence against the LGBTIQ community.

PART THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology employed in the study, detailing the research design, population, sampling techniques, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques. The chapter also outlines the ethical considerations that guided the research process. Given the study's focus on assessing the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policies of multinational corporations (MNCs) operating in Nigeria, a mixed-methods approach was adopted to ensure a comprehensive analysis.

3.2 Research Design

This study adopts a mixed-methods research design, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research approaches to enable a comprehensive evaluation of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policies, their implementation, and their impact on the economic inclusion of marginalized groups in Nigeria. The qualitative component involves conducting key informant interviews with Human Resources managers of selected companies, providing rich, contextual insights into organizational practices and decision-making processes. The quantitative component utilizes structured questionnaires administered to both employers and employees to collect measurable data on the prevalence, effectiveness, and perception of DEI initiatives. This integrated approach ensures a robust analysis by capturing both statistical trends and in-depth stakeholder perspectives.

3.3 Population of the Study

The target population for this study comprises employees, Human Resources personnel/DEI officers, and senior executives from 10 selected national and multinational corporations operating in Nigeria. These individuals were chosen due to their direct involvement in, or substantial experience with, the formulation,

implementation, or oversight of DEI policies and practices within corporate structures.

3.4 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

A total of 100 respondents will be sampled through questionnaires, targeting employees and employers across selected national and multinational corporations in Nigeria. Additionally, 10 Human Resources managers from these companies will be engaged through key informant interviews to provide expert insights into the implementation and outcomes of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policies.

A purposive sampling technique was employed to identify and select corporations actively implementing DEI policies and programs. Within these organizations, a stratified random sampling method was used to ensure representation across different employee levels—from entry-level staff to senior management—reflecting diverse roles, experiences, and demographic backgrounds.

The final sample size was determined based on participant accessibility, willingness to engage, and the research objective of capturing a broad range of perspectives to support a comprehensive analysis of DEI practices in the Nigerian corporate sector.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

To achieve a comprehensive understanding of DEI policies and their implementation, the study utilized multiple data collection methods, including:

1. **Desk Research (Policy Analysis & Literature Review):** A review of existing DEI policies, corporate reports, and relevant academic literature was conducted to establish a contextual foundation for the study.
2. **Key Informant Interviews (Qualitative Approach):** Semi-structured interviews were conducted with HR personnel, DEI officers, and executives to gather insights on corporate DEI strategies and challenges.
3. **Employee Surveys (Quantitative Approach):** Structured questionnaires were administered to employees to collect data on their experiences and perceptions of DEI policies within their organizations.

4. Case Studies & Best Practices: A comparative analysis of successful DEI policies and their outcomes in multinational corporations was undertaken to highlight best practices.

3.6 Data Analysis Techniques

The collected data was analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative techniques:

- **Qualitative Data Analysis:** Thematic analysis was employed to identify patterns and themes from interviews, focus group discussions, and case studies. NVivo software was used for coding and organizing qualitative data.
- **Quantitative Data Analysis:** Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze survey responses. SPSS and Excel were utilized for statistical computations, including frequency distribution, cross-tabulation, and correlation analysis.
- **Policy Gap Analysis:** A comparative assessment was conducted to evaluate existing DEI policies against global best practices, highlighting areas for improvement.

3.7 Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity and reliability of the research findings:

- The research instruments were pre-tested through a pilot study with a small sample of employees.
- Data collection procedures were standardized to minimize bias and ensure consistency.
- Triangulation was employed by cross-verifying findings from multiple sources, including surveys, interviews, and policy analysis.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

This research on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policies among national and multinational companies in Nigeria was conducted in strict adherence to ethical standards to safeguard the rights, privacy, and confidentiality of all participants and

organizations involved. The following measures were taken:

- Informed consent was obtained from all participants including Human Resources managers, employers, and employees prior to data collection through both questionnaires and key informant interviews.
- The confidentiality policies of all mapped companies were respected. Special consideration was given to organizations that preferred not to be named or explicitly referenced in the research; their identities and any potentially identifying data were excluded from all public reports and analysis.
- Anonymity was ensured in the reporting of findings, with no personal or organizational identifiers disclosed without explicit permission.
- Participation was entirely voluntary, with measures in place to avoid any form of coercion or undue influence during recruitment.

PART FOUR

RESULTS ANALYSIS

The Economic Empowerment Working Group (EEWG) Nigeria's research on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policies in ten companies (multinational and national corporations) spanning Financial Services, Tech, Manufacturing, Telecoms, Consumer Goods, Oil & Gas, and Agriculture operating in Nigeria provides a critical lens into the economic inclusion of marginalized groups, particularly LGBTIQ individuals. The study's data results, presented offer quantitative insights into employee and employer perceptions of DEI policies, their implementation, and their impact on workplace inclusivity. This discusses and analyzes these results in detail, situating them within Nigeria's socio-legal context and comparing them with international studies on workplace inclusion from countries such as South Africa, the United States, and the United Kingdom. The analysis identifies key gaps, proposes actionable recommendations, and concludes with impacts of fostering inclusive workplaces in Nigeria. The discussion is structured around four key themes: awareness and implementation of DEI policies, workplace inclusivity and employee experience, DEI policies and career progression, and effectiveness and challenges in DEI implementation.

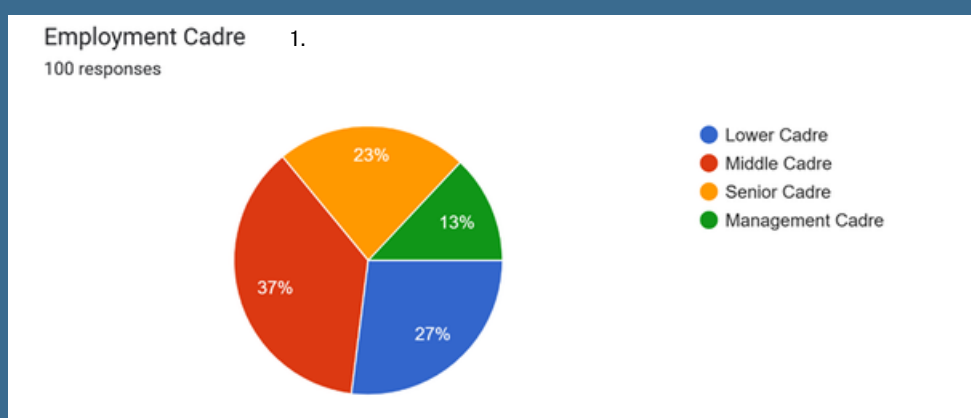


FIGURE 1: EMPLOYMENT CADRE

Figure 1 clearly shows that 27% of respondents are lower cadre, 37% are middle cadre, 23% belong to senior cadre while 13% are on management cadre. This could

This could infer a larger middle-class workforce and smaller management cadre.
#Define the cadre, and/or give examples.

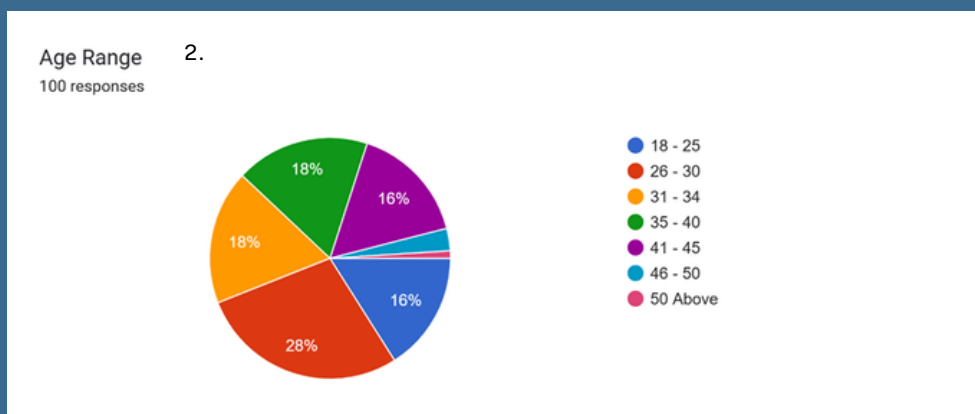


FIGURE 2: AGE RANGE OF RESPONDENTS

As seen above, 16% of the sampled respondents are between the ages of 18-25 years, 28% are 26-30 years, 18% are between 31-34 years, 18% are between 35-40 years, 16% are between the ages of 41-45 years, 3% are between the ages of 46-50 years while the remaining 1% are over 50 years. The sampled workforce showed that the majority are youths between ages 18-40 years, 80% in total. Millennials seem to hold a larger portion of the working youth population because a lot of Gen Zs are still in school.

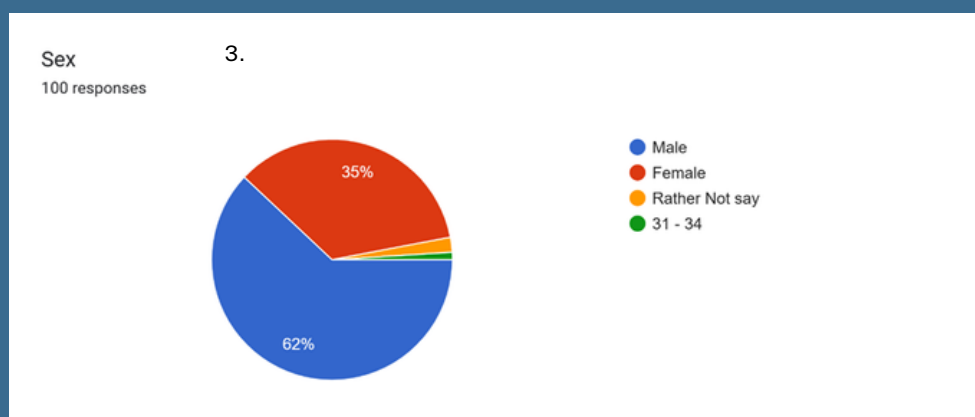


FIGURE 3: SEX OF RESPONDENTS

Of all respondents, persons who identify as men are 62%, 35% identify as women while 2% prefer not to disclose their gender.

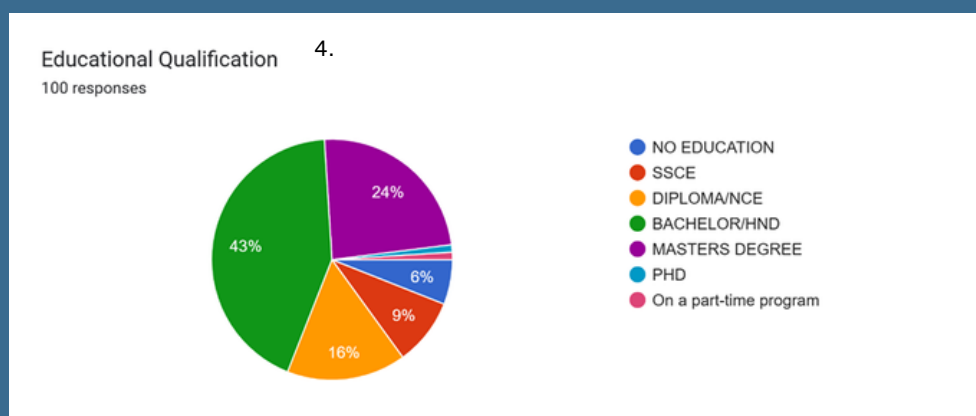


FIGURE 4: EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS

From the survey conducted, 43% of the respondents have a university degree (BSc) or higher national diploma (HND), 24% of respondents hold at least a master's degree (MSc), 16% hold ordinary diplomas (Dip/OND) or Nigerian certificate in education (NCE), 9% hold a senior secondary school leaving certificate (WAEC/NECO), 6% have no formal education, 1% hold a doctor of philosophy degree while the remaining 1% are still on an on-going part-time program in a tertiary institution. This shows how much Nigerians value tertiary education and how knowledge driven the Nigerian workforce is.

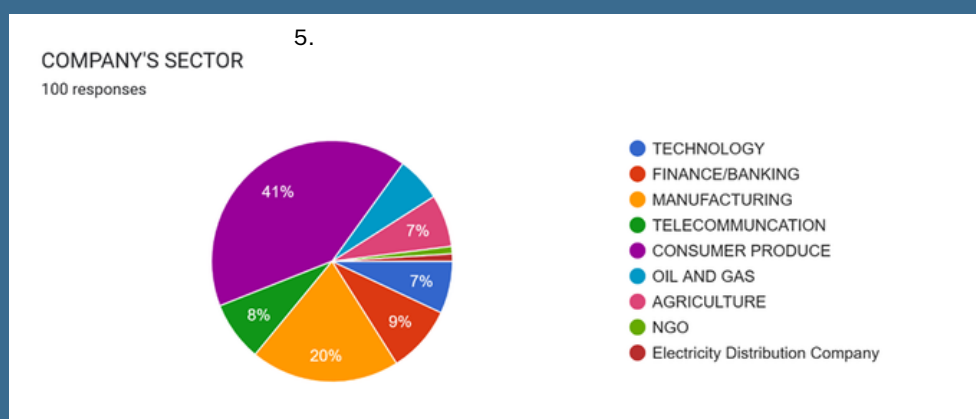


FIGURE 5: PARTICIPATION OF RESPONDENTS BY SECTORS IN THE ECONOMY

Judging by the sectoral distribution of respondents, the analysis shows that 41% (majority) of the employees that participated in the survey are from the consumer goods sectors. This sector houses Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCGs) and is one

of the highest employers of labour in the country. It is followed by the 20% participation of employees in the manufacturing sector. The financial services sector employees came third with 9% participation, telecommunications employees came fourth with 8% participation, agricultural and technological companies came fifth and sixth at 7% each, oil and gas sector at 5%, This result could infer that the largest employers of labor in Nigeria's private sector are consumer goods (FMCGs) and industrial goods with total of 61% .

AWARENESS AND IMPLEMENTATION OF DEI POLICIES

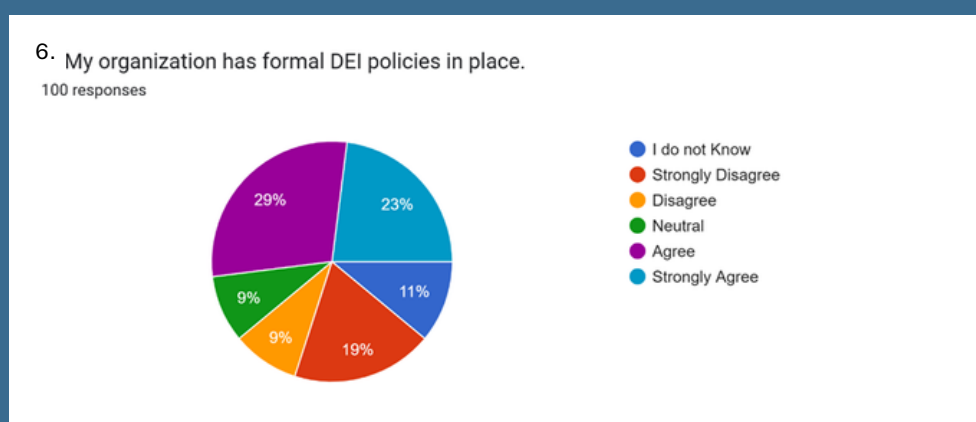


FIGURE 6: AWARENESS OF DEI POLICIES BY EMPLOYEES

The survey results reveal varied levels of awareness and implementation of DEI policies across the ten surveyed corporations in Nigeria. Responses to the question “My organization has formal DEI policies in place”. The chart above indicates that 23% of respondents strongly agree and 29% agree, suggesting that a majority of organizations have established formal DEI policies. However, 11% of respondents selected “I do not know,” 9% are neutral and 9% disagreed, pointing to a lack of awareness among some employees. This lack of awareness is concerning, as it suggests that DEI policies may not be effectively communicated or integrated into organizational culture. 19% of employees strongly disagree that their organizations have DEI policies. This carries significant implications for workplace inclusivity, organizational culture, and economic inclusion, particularly for marginalized groups such as LGBTIQ individuals in Nigeria. Some organizations may genuinely lack formal

DEI policies, reflecting a broader systemic issue in Nigeria's corporate sector, where DEI initiatives are often underdeveloped due to cultural, legal, and resource constraints (McKinsey & Company, 2020). The Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act (SSMPA) of 2014, which criminalizes same-sex relationships and advocacy, may deter companies from adopting explicit DEI policies, particularly those addressing sexual orientation and gender identity, to avoid legal risks. Alternatively, DEI policies may exist but are not effectively communicated to employees. The survey data shows that 23% of respondents selected "I do not know" regarding the existence of DEI policies suggesting that a combined 42% (19% strongly disagree + 23% do not know) are either unaware or skeptical of such policies. This lack of awareness undermines the potential impact of DEI initiatives, as employees cannot engage with or benefit from policies they do not know exist.

To LGBTIQ employees, this lack of awareness or absence of DEI policies is particularly concerning. Without clear policies, these individuals may face unchecked discrimination, harassment, or exclusion. The absence of visible DEI frameworks can perpetuate a culture of invisibility, forcing LGBTIQ employees to remain closeted, which, as the Human Rights Campaign (2020) notes, leads to psychological distress and reduced productivity.

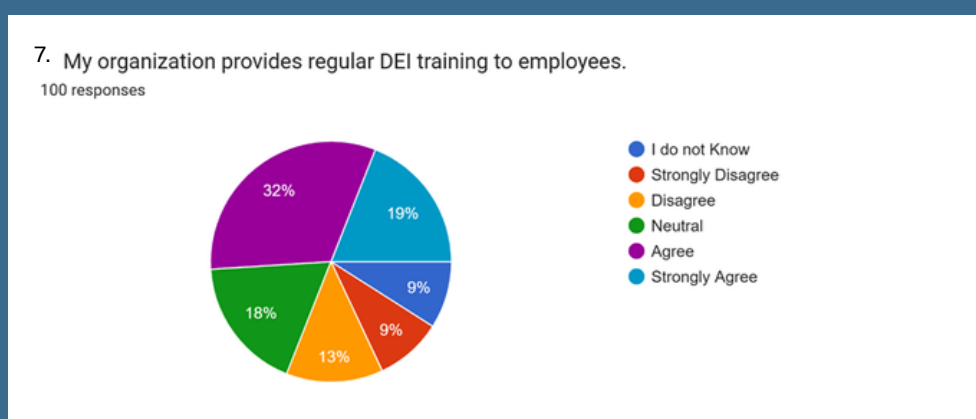


FIGURE 7: AWARENESS OF EMPLOYEES ON DEI TRAINING

Responses to "My organization provides regular DEI training to employees" show that only 19% strongly agree and 32% agree, 18% are neutral, 9% are not aware of such trainings while 13% disagree and 9% strongly disagree. This indicates that DEI training

is inconsistent or absent in many organizations, limiting employees' understanding of inclusion principles.

The survey data showing only 19% of employees strongly agree and 32% agree that their organizations provide regular DEI training reveals a significant gap in awareness-building efforts. The 18% neutral, 9% unaware, and combined 22% disagreeing responses reflect a critical underinvestment in DEI learning infrastructure. For LGBTQIA+ individuals often navigating layers of cultural and institutional bias, this inconsistency limits colleagues' understanding of inclusive behaviors and reduces sensitivity to identity-based challenges. Without consistent training, unconscious bias may persist, discrimination may go unchecked, and policies risk becoming performative. DEI training is a foundational tool; its absence signals organizational indifference and hampers long-term culture change. Effective inclusion begins with informed awareness. [23]

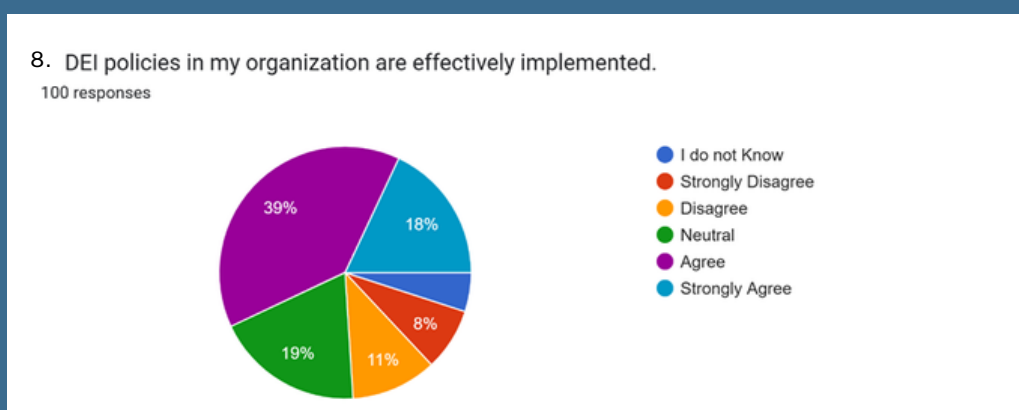


FIGURE 8: AWARENESS ABOUT DEI IMPLEMENTATION AMONG EMPLOYEES

The question “DEI policies in my organization are effectively implemented” further underscores implementation challenges, with only 18% strongly agreeing and 39% agreeing, while 11% either disagree and 8% strongly disagree. This 19% disagreement underscores gaps in translating formal DEI policies into meaningful action, likely influenced by Nigeria’s restrictive legal framework, notably the Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act (SSMPA) of 2014, which criminalizes LGBTIQ identities and advocacy, and pervasive cultural stigma. Such ineffective implementation risks eroding employee trust, particularly among marginalized groups like LGBTIQ individuals,

leading to reduced job satisfaction, productivity, and retention, as noted by the Human Rights Campaign (2020). [24]

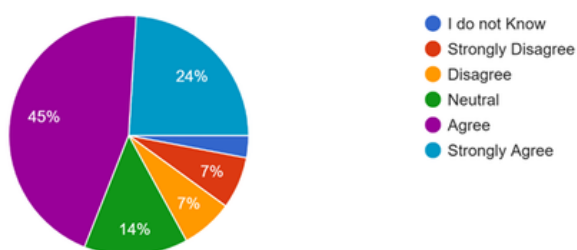
Comparative studies from other countries highlight similar challenges but also offer insights into potential solutions. In South Africa, where legal protections for LGBTIQ individuals are enshrined in the Constitution, a study by OUT LGBT Well-being (2016) found that 60% of employees in inclusive workplaces reported awareness of DEI policies, compared to Nigeria's 52% as shown in figure 4. However, South African companies benefit from mandatory anti-discrimination laws, which Nigeria lacks, making implementation more feasible (Barron & Hebl, 2013). In the United States, the Human Rights Campaign's (2020) Corporate Equality Index notes that 93% of Fortune 500 companies have LGBTIQ-inclusive policies, supported by regular training, contrasting sharply with Nigeria's 41% positive response rate for training in figure 5. These comparisons suggest that legal frameworks and cultural acceptance significantly influence DEI policy awareness and implementation.

The Nigerian context, marked by societal stigma and legal barriers, likely contributes to the observed gaps. For instance, the SSMPA discourages explicit LGBTIQ inclusion, forcing companies to adopt vague or generalized DEI policies to avoid legal repercussions. This aligns with McKinsey & Company's (2020) observation that cultural barriers can undermine DEI effectiveness, particularly in conservative environments. [25] The lack of local DEI expertise, as noted in the EEWG study, further aggravates these challenges, as human resource departments may lack the tools to tailor global DEI frameworks to Nigeria's context.

WORKPLACE INCLUSIVITY AND EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

9. My workplace fosters an inclusive and respectful environment.

100 responses



24. World Report 2021: Nigeria | Human Rights Watch

25. How diversity, equity, and inclusion (DE&I) matter | McKinsey

FIGURE 9: INCLUSIVE AND RESPECTFUL WORK SPACE AMONG EMPLOYEES

The survey finding that 24% strongly agree and 45% agree that “My workplace fosters an inclusive and respectful environment,” yet 7% disagree, 7% strongly disagree, and 3% are unaware, highlights a polarized workplace environment in Nigerian corporations with significant implications for DEI policies. While 69% perceive inclusivity positively, the 14% disagreement and 3% unawareness indicate that a notable minority, particularly LGBTIQ individuals, experience exclusion due to Nigeria’s hostile socio-legal climate. This undermines DEI policy effectiveness, risking reduced trust, morale, and productivity among marginalized groups, as noted by the Human Rights Campaign (2020). In contrast, Stonewall’s (2018) UK study reports 80% positive perceptions in legally protected environments, emphasizing Nigeria’s gap. Inconsistent inclusivity can deter talent retention and limit economic contributions from diverse employees (Badgett et al., 2013). According to a report by the Open For Business coalition (2021), inclusive corporate cultures not only improve employee morale and retention but are essential for innovation and productivity. The dissenting minority in the survey implies that DEI policies may lack comprehensive implementation or monitoring mechanisms. Organizations must therefore go beyond performative commitments by embedding accountability, inclusive leadership training, and safe reporting channels. These are critical to bridging the gap between majority satisfaction and minority marginalization, especially in contexts with broader societal stigma.

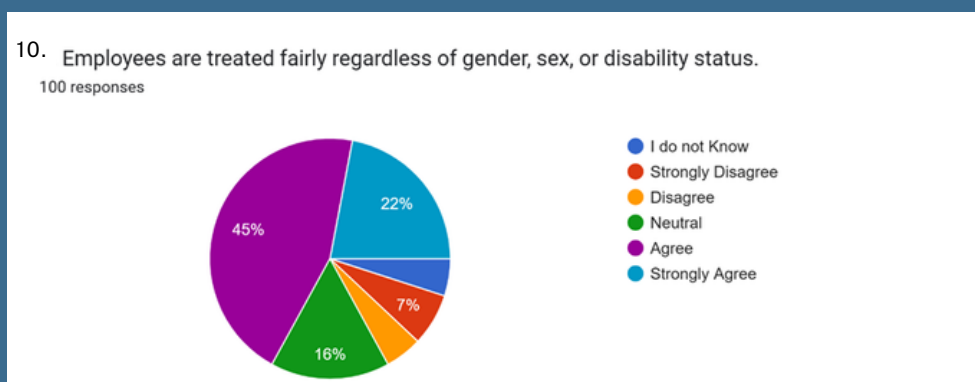


FIGURE 10: EQUAL TREATMENT AMONG EMPLOYEES

Responses to “Employees are treated fairly regardless of gender, sex, or disability

indicate that 22% strongly agree and 45% agree, but 16% are neutral, 7% strongly disagree, 5% disagree and 5% are not aware of equal treatment in their workspace, highlighting persistent biases in treatment. The survey results show that while 67% of respondents perceive fairness across gender, sex, and disability status in their workplace, a significant 33% are either neutral, disagree, strongly disagree, or unaware—highlighting a credibility gap in the implementation of DEI policies. Neutrality and unawareness suggest a lack of visibility or clarity around equity initiatives, while the 12% in active disagreement reflect tangible experiences of bias or exclusion. This misalignment can erode trust and psychological safety, key components of inclusive cultures. Research by Catalyst (2022) emphasizes that perceived fairness in the workplace enhances employee engagement, innovation, and retention, particularly among historically marginalized groups. The findings imply that current DEI policies may not be sufficiently intersectional or inclusive in practice. For meaningful impact, organizations must increase transparency, conduct regular equity audits, and ensure marginalized voices are not only heard but embedded in policy formulation and evaluation processes.

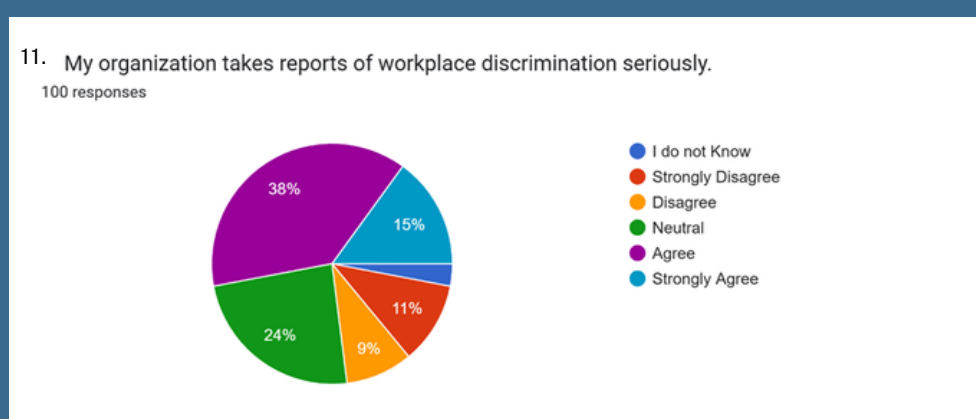


FIGURE 11: DISCRIMINATION COMPLAINTS IN WORKPLACE BY EMPLOYEES

The handling of discrimination complaints is another area of concern. Only 15% strongly agree and 38% agree that “My organization takes reports of workplace discrimination seriously”, while 24% are neutral, 9% disagree and 11% strongly

disagree. The data reveals a concerning trust gap in how discrimination complaints are managed in the workplace. While 53% believe their organization takes reports seriously, a significant 44% are either neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree. This signals a lack of confidence in internal grievance mechanisms, which can discourage employees, especially from marginalized groups, from reporting incidents of bias or harassment. Apathy or fear of retaliation often grows in environments where complaints are perceived as overlooked. According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Trust (EEO Trust, 2021), transparent and responsive complaint-handling systems are essential for fostering a culture of accountability and safety. The high neutrality rate also points to possible opacity in how these reports are addressed or communicated. For DEI policies to be effective, organizations must not only have robust reporting channels but also regularly communicate outcomes and reinforce non-retaliation policies. Trust is earned when employees see that discriminatory behavior is addressed swiftly and fairly.

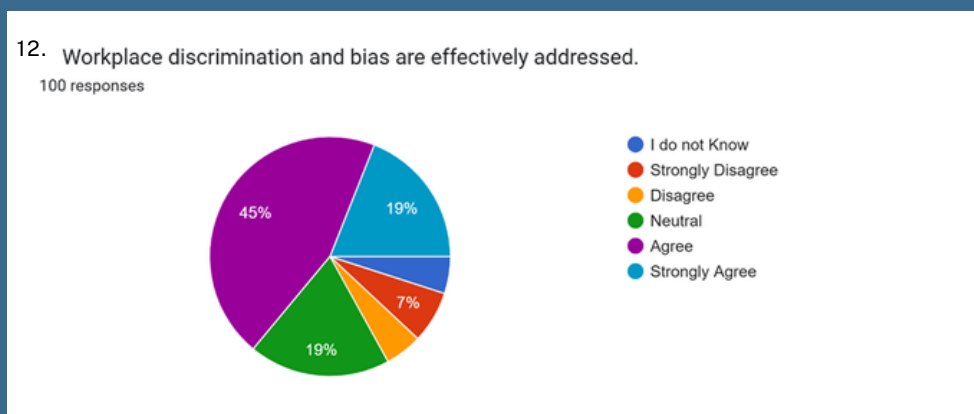


FIGURE 12: PROMPT REDRESS ON DISCRIMINATION BIAS IN WORKPLACE BY EMPLOYEES

Similarly, “Workplace discrimination and bias are effectively addressed” shows 19% strongly agreeing and 55% agreeing while 19% are neutral, 7% strongly disagree workplace discrimination are effectively addressed. While 74% of respondents agree that workplace discrimination and bias are effectively addressed, the remaining 26%,

including those neutral, in disagreement, or unaware, it signals potential risk zones, especially for LGBTQIA employees in Nigeria. In a society where sexual and gender minorities often face heightened stigma, perceived or actual inaction on bias can deter individuals from reporting incidents or fully participating at work. According to the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2021), effective anti-discrimination measures must include visibility, accessibility, and trust in redress mechanisms. The sizable neutral and unaware group suggests that procedures may not be well-communicated or inclusive.

International comparisons provide context for these findings. In the United Kingdom, a study by Stonewall (2018) found that 68% of employees in LGBTIQ-inclusive workplaces felt their organizations handled discrimination effectively, compared to Nigeria's 35% positive response rate (image6.png). The UK's Equality Act 2010 mandates protections against discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity, enabling robust grievance mechanisms. In contrast, Nigeria's lack of legal protections leaves LGBTIQ employees vulnerable, as employers may avoid addressing discrimination to comply with the SSMPA. A study by the Williams Institute (2013) in the United States notes that LGBTIQ employees in hostile environments experience psychological distress and reduced productivity, a pattern likely worsened in Nigeria, where 22% of LGBTIQ individuals reported workplace discrimination (EEWG study).

The Nigerian data also aligns with Balogun's (2020) research, which highlights the insufficiency of current labor laws in addressing workplace harassment. The survey's indication of persistent discrimination as shown in figure 8 and inadequate grievance handling (figure 9) underscores the need for stronger internal policies to protect marginalized groups, particularly LGBTIQ employees, who may remain closeted to avoid retaliation, as noted by the Human Rights Campaign (2020). For DEI policies to support LGBTQIA inclusion meaningfully, organizations must actively bridge the perception gap by ensuring confidential, inclusive reporting systems, training leaders to recognize intersectional bias, and regularly reviewing policy impact across diverse employee identities.

DEI POLICIES AND CAREER PROGRESSION

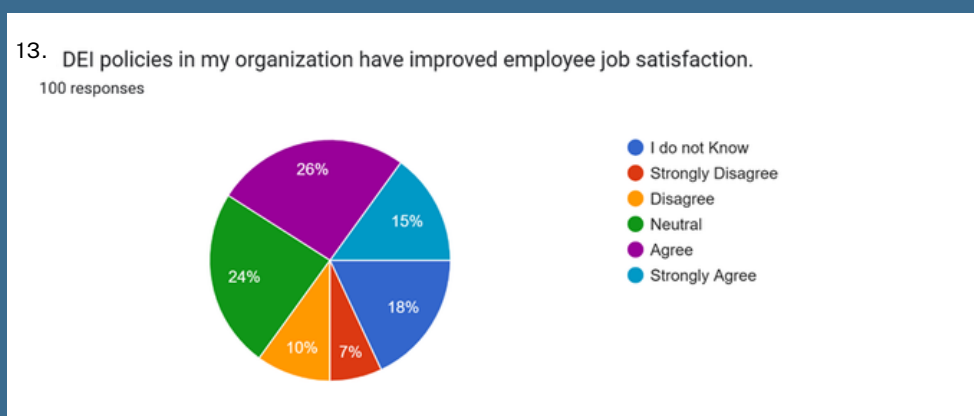


FIGURE 13: JOB SATISFACTION BY EMPLOYEES DUE TO DEI POLICIES

The impact of DEI policies on career progression and employee satisfaction is a critical area of analysis. Responses to “DEI policies in my organization have improved employee job satisfaction” show that 15% strongly agree and 26% agree, but 24% are neutral, 10% disagree, 7% strongly disagree and 18% do not know if DEI policies have improved employee job satisfaction in their place of work.

The data indicates a fragmented perception of DEI policy impact, with only 41% affirming improved job satisfaction, while 59% are either unsure, neutral, or disagree. For LGBTQIA employees in Nigeria—where visibility often comes with personal risk—this uncertainty may reflect performative policies that lack meaningful implementation. The 18% who “do not know” underscores a communication and engagement gap, suggesting DEI initiatives may be poorly promoted or disconnected from lived experiences. According to the Centre for Talent Innovation (2021), marginalized employees thrive when DEI efforts are transparent, measurable, and championed by leadership. For LGBTQIA persons, real impact means seeing DEI translate into safer, affirming, and empowering work environments. Organizations must prioritize awareness, track outcomes, and embed LGBTQIA voices into policy design to close the credibility gap and ensure inclusion drives genuine job satisfaction.

14. Employees from diverse backgrounds receive equal mentorship and career advancement opportunities.
100 responses

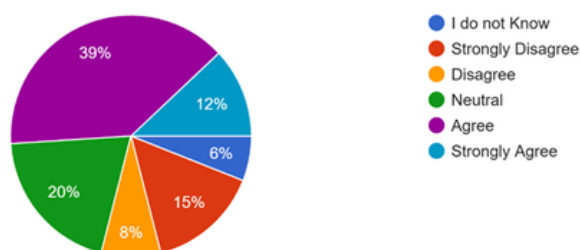


FIGURE 14: PERCEPTION ON EQUALITY IN MENTORSHIP AND CAREER ADVANCEMENT BY EMPLOYEES

Responses to “Employees from diverse backgrounds receive equal mentorship and career advancement opportunities” are particularly concerning, with 12% strongly agreeing, 39% agreeing, 30% are neutral, 8% disagreeing, 15% strongly disagreeing and 12% are not aware if employees from diverse backgrounds in their workplace receive equal mentorship and career advancement opportunities.

The data reveals a troubling gap in equitable career development, with only 51% affirming equal mentorship and advancement for diverse employees, while a significant 30% remain neutral and 27% express disagreement or lack of awareness. For LGBTQIA persons in Nigeria, this suggests that DEI policies may be surface-level, lacking targeted support for growth and inclusion. According to Boston Consulting Group (2023), equitable mentorship is a critical lever for retaining underrepresented talent. The high neutrality and disagreement rates imply limited access to developmental opportunities, potentially due to bias, lack of representation, or unstructured programs. This aligns with Iloka’s (2022) critique of the Nigerian Labour Act’s failure to address discrimination, which leaves marginalized groups vulnerable to biased hiring and promotion practices.

Comparatively, a South African study by the Other Foundation (2016) found that 45% of LGBTIQ employees in inclusive workplaces reported equal access to career advancement, significantly higher than Nigeria’s 39%. South Africa’s legal protections

and active civil society advocacy create a more enabling environment for DEI impact. In the United States, Badgett et al. (2013) report that LGBTIQ-supportive policies enhance retention by 20%, a benefit Nigerian corporations may miss due to limited DEI effectiveness. Organizations must design intentional, identity-aware mentorship frameworks that empower LGBTQIA professionals and visibly champion diversity in leadership pipelines.

EFFECTIVENESS AND CHALLENGES IN DEI IMPLEMENTATION

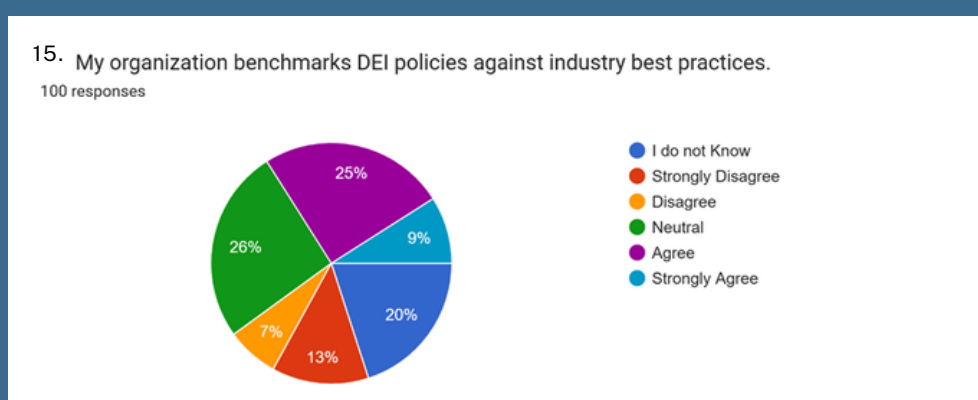


FIGURE 15: DEI POLICIES COMPLIANCE WITH INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICES BY EMPLOYEES

The effectiveness of DEI policies is hindered by significant challenges. Responses to “My organization benchmarks DEI policies against industry best practices” show that only 9% strongly agree and 25% agree, with 26% being neutral, 7% disagreeing, 13% strongly disagreeing and 20% not aware if their organization benchmarks their DEI policies against industry best practices indicating that many Nigerian corporations do not align with global standards.

The data suggests that DEI benchmarking remains a weak spot in many organizations, with only 34% affirming alignment with industry best practices, while a concerning 46% are neutral, unaware, or in disagreement. For LGBTQIA persons in Nigeria, this signals a lack of accountability and strategic intent in DEI implementation. Without benchmarking, policies risk being outdated, misaligned, or or tokenistic. In a publication by PwC (2023), benchmarking against global standards

measurable progress, transparency, and inclusive innovation. The high rates of neutrality and unawareness highlight the need for organizations to communicate DEI efforts clearly and actively engage marginalized groups in evaluating effectiveness. Benchmarking is essential for translating policy into progress.

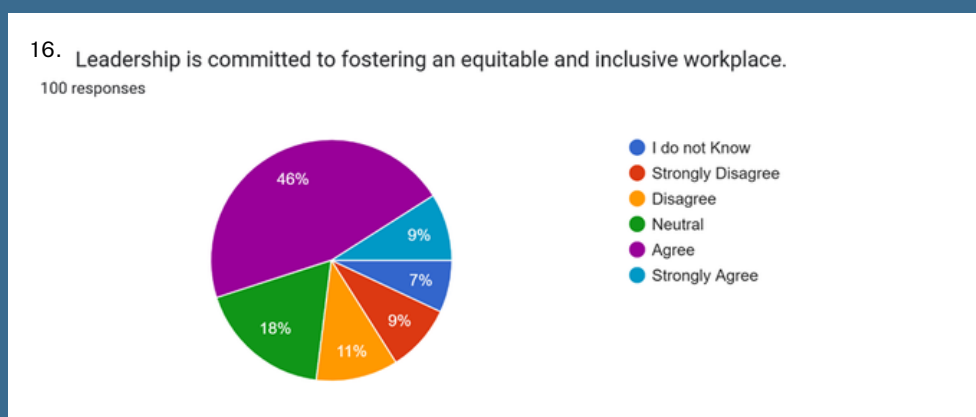


FIGURE 16: PERCEPTION ON LEADERSHIP'S COMMITMENT TO FOSTERING EQUITABLE AND INCLUSIVE WORKPLACE BY EMPLOYEES

Leadership commitment, assessed by **“Leadership is committed to fostering an equitable and inclusive workplace”** is perceived positively by 9% who strongly agree and 46% who agree, but 18% are neutral, 11% disagree, 9% strongly disagree and 7% do not know if their leaders are committed to an equitable and inclusive work environment. While 55% of respondents perceive leadership as committed to equity and inclusion, the remaining 45% including those neutral, unaware, or in disagreement highlight a significant trust and visibility gap. For LGBTQIA persons in Nigeria, leadership commitment is not just symbolic; it is critical to setting inclusive cultural norms and driving systemic change. The 18% neutrality and 7% unawareness suggest that leadership efforts may be poorly communicated or lack tangible impact. Visible and consistent leadership advocacy is a cornerstone of effective DEI. To build credibility, leaders must actively champion LGBTQIA inclusion through policy, visibility, and accountability mechanisms that demonstrate genuine commitment.

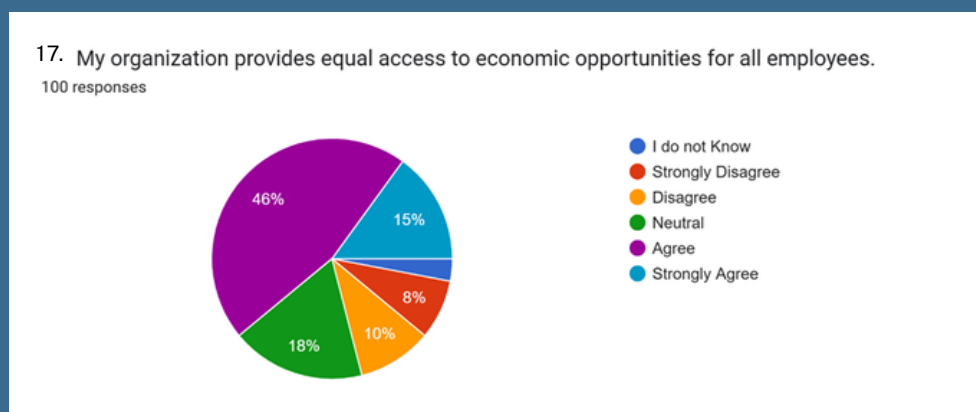


FIGURE 17: PROVISION OF EQUAL ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES FOR EMPLOYEES

Responses to “My organization provides equal access to economic opportunities for all employees” show 15% strongly agreeing and 46% agreeing, but 18% being neutral, 10% disagreeing, 8% strongly disagreeing while 3% are no aware if equal economic opportunities are provided for all employee reflecting limited economic inclusion.

The survey indicates that while 61% of respondents perceive their organizations as providing equal economic opportunities, a significant 39% remain neutral, disagree, or are unaware. For LGBTQIA individuals in Nigeria, this suggests that despite formal policies, systemic barriers persist. Discrimination based on sexual orientation continues to affect hiring, promotion, and workplace inclusion, often compelling LGBTQIA employees to conceal their identities to avoid prejudice. This lack of genuine inclusivity can lead to decreased job satisfaction and hinder career progression. To address these challenges, organizations must move beyond tokenistic DEI policies and implement comprehensive strategies that actively promote inclusivity, such as bias training, inclusive leadership, and transparent advancement pathways. Creating a truly equitable workplace requires acknowledging and dismantling the systemic biases that hinder equal economic opportunities for all employees (LGBTQ Nation, 2023).

18. There are significant challenges in implementing DEI policies in my organization.

100 responses

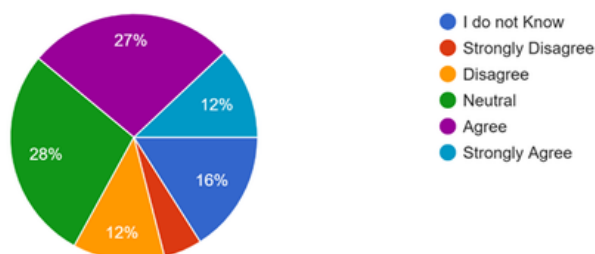


FIGURE 18: CHALLENGES IN DEI POLICIES IMPLEMENTATION AS IDENTIFIED BY EMPLOYEES

The question “There are significant challenges in implementing DEI policies in my organization” confirms these barriers, with 27% agreeing and 12% strongly agreeing, 28% neutral, 12% disagreeing, 5% disagreeing and 16% not knowing about the challenges facing DEI policies implementation in their organization.

The survey indicates that 39% of respondents acknowledge significant challenges in implementing DEI policies within their organizations, while 28% remain neutral and 16% are unaware of such challenges. This suggests a fragmented understanding and potential underreporting of obstacles, particularly affecting LGBTQIA individuals in Nigeria. Cultural biases, structural barriers, and resistance to change are prevalent issues that hinder effective DEI implementation. Moreover, the lack of inclusive leadership and lip service can lead to acclimatization pressures, where LGBTQIA employees feel compelled to conform, thereby suppressing their identities. To address these challenges, organizations must foster inclusive leadership, provide comprehensive DEI training, and establish clear communication channels to ensure that DEI policies are effectively implemented and embraced by all employees.

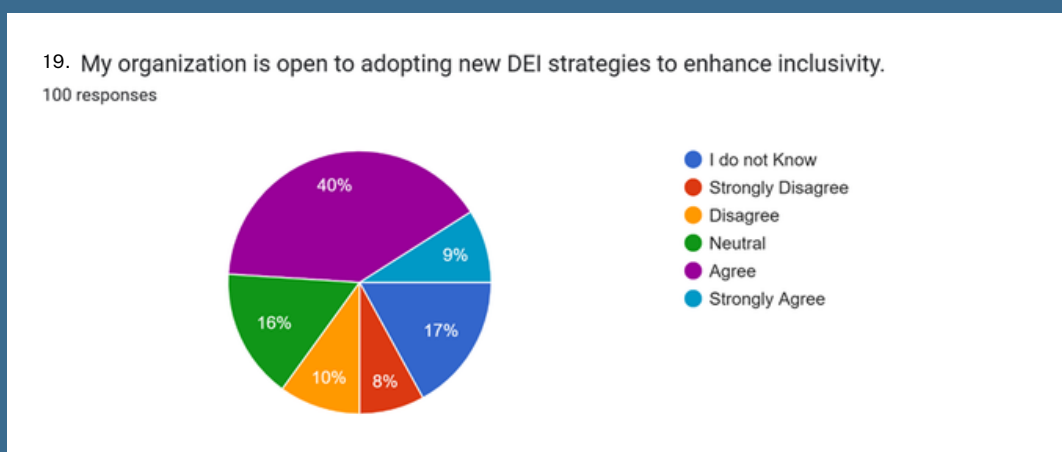


FIGURE 19: ORGANIZATION'S OPENNESS TO ADOPT NEW DEI STRATEGIES AS PERCEIVED BY EMPLOYEES

Though, optimism is evident in “My organization is open to adopting new DEI strategies to enhance inclusivity” with 40% agreeing and 9% strongly agreeing, 16% are still neutral, 10% disagree, 8% strongly disagree and 17% do not know.

The survey indicates that while 49% of employees perceive their organizations as open to adopting new DEI strategies, a significant 34% remain neutral, disagree, or are unaware. This ambivalence suggests that, for LGBTQIA individuals in Nigeria, organizational openness may not translate into tangible inclusivity. Cultural biases and a lack of inclusive leadership often result in tokenistic efforts, where LGBTQIA employees feel compelled to assimilate, suppressing their identities and perspectives. Such environments hinder genuine inclusion and can lead to decreased job satisfaction and productivity. To address these challenges, organizations must move beyond declarative support and implement comprehensive DEI strategies, including leadership training, inclusive policies, and open dialogues, ensuring that all employees, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity, feel valued and supported.

PART FIVE

KEY FINDINGS ON DEI AND LGBTIQ INCLUSION IN NIGERIAN WORKPLACES

1. Invisibility of LGBTIQ Identities in DEI Frameworks

While many organizations have robust DEI policies, LGBTIQ inclusion is often absent or vaguely referenced. This reflects a cautious approach driven by Nigeria's legal and socio-cultural context. The lack of explicit language and targeted programs renders queer employees invisible and unsupported.

2. Legal and Cultural Constraints

Punitive laws such as; The Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act of 2014, along with prevailing cultural and religious norms, severely limits the scope of LGBTIQ-inclusive practices. Organizations avoid open advocacy or protection mechanisms, relying instead on indirect or "silent" inclusivity measures.

3. Tokenistic Implementation

Even in workplaces with visible DEI activities, actual support for marginalized groups, particularly LGBTIQ individuals, is often symbolic. Events like Pride Month or general anti-discrimination clauses exist without deeper institutional backing or structural change.

4. Trust Deficits in Internal Systems

Employees expressed low confidence in grievance redress mechanisms and reporting channels. Marginalized groups, especially LGBTIQ employees, fear retaliation or inaction, which discourages reporting of discrimination or harassment.

5. Unequal Access to Opportunities

Mentorship, promotion, and leadership pathways remain uneven. LGBTIQ employees often lack visibility, representation, or tailored development programs—making their inclusion performative rather than transformative.

6. Disconnect Between Global Standards and Local Practice

Multinational companies with progressive global DEI policies often fail to implement these fully at the Nigerian level due to local resistance. This gap creates inconsistency in employee experience and weakens the intended impact of inclusion efforts.

DISCUSSION

EVALUATING DEI POLICIES IN NIGERIAN WORKPLACES WITH EMPHASIS ON LGBTQIA+ INCLUSION

Looking across the data, it's clear that while Nigerian workplaces are beginning to engage with Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI), the journey toward meaningful inclusivity—particularly for LGBTQIA+ employees—remains complex and uneven. While some organizations have started adopting DEI frameworks, the practical implementation is patchy, leaving many employees unsure or unconvinced about the policies' effectiveness (Human Rights Watch, 2021).

Take DEI training, for example. Just over half of the respondents report that their workplaces offer such training, but 18% remain neutral, and another 22% either disagree or are unaware of these efforts. This signals a concerning inconsistency. According to Dobbin and Kalev (2016), successful diversity initiatives hinge on sustained, high-quality education programs. When these are missing or treated as a one-time exercise, biases persist, especially toward marginalized groups like the LGBTQIA+ community.

There's also a noticeable gap between perception and lived experience. While 69% agree their workplaces are generally respectful and inclusive, a sizable minority experience the opposite. Shore et al. (2011) stated that inclusive cultures must go beyond slogans. They need to be felt, experienced, and reinforced through everyday behaviors. In the Nigerian context, where societal norms often marginalize LGBTQIA+ individuals, the stakes for authentic inclusion are even higher.

On equal treatment around gender, sex, and disability, the numbers again show optimism shadowed by uncertainty. Two-thirds of respondents think their organizations are fair, but a significant percentage either disagrees or remains unsure. This ambiguity weakens psychological safety, a concept crucial for employee engagement and retention. As Nishii (2013) notes, when equity isn't clearly demonstrated, minority employees are less likely to feel they belong.

Another red flag is the lukewarm belief that DEI initiatives improve job satisfaction or enhance career opportunities. Less than half of employees feel DEI has improved retention, promotion, or mentorship access. For LGBTQIA+ staff often operating in environments that don't acknowledge their identities, this suggests a failure of policies to create tangible change. As Roberson (2019) argues, DEI work must move beyond symbolism toward measurable outcomes. Organizational benchmarking and leadership commitment show similar patterns. Only 34% believe their organizations compare their DEI policies to industry best practices, suggesting many companies are operating in isolation. And although over half feel their leaders are committed to inclusion, nearly as many are unsure or disagree. Leadership, as Shore et al. (2011) stressed, is instrumental in shaping culture. Without visible, consistent leadership support, DEI efforts risk stalling.

Implementation barriers are also significant. Almost 40% of employees agree their organizations face challenges in rolling out DEI strategies. Whether due to lack of resources, cultural pushback, or policy ambiguity, the barriers are real. Dobbin and Kalev (2016) note that change requires long-term vision, clear communication, and authentic buy-in across all levels.

Finally, access to economic opportunities remains unequal in the eyes of many employees. Only 61% believe all employees have equal economic access, and a full 21% disagree or aren't sure. This points to structural inequities that DEI policies must directly address.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the survey results and comparative analysis, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance LGBTIQ inclusion in Nigerian corporate workplaces:

- Companies must offer continuous DEI training that is interactive and rooted in the inclusive ideology. This helps employees challenge unconscious bias and gradually normalize inclusive thinking across teams.
- Build and maintain confidential channels for reporting discrimination or harassment. These should be anonymous, safe, and backed by real action to rebuild employee trust and accountability.
- Introduce simple metrics—like tracking promotion and retention rates for marginalized groups—to help organizations understand if their DEI efforts are actually making a difference.
- For multinational companies, it's important to adapt global DEI frameworks in a way that aligns with Nigerian law. Emphasizing general non-discrimination and dignity-based language can help foster inclusion without creating legal risk.
- Test new inclusion efforts in urban areas like Lagos, where societal attitudes may be more progressive and where change may be more readily accepted.
- Get top leadership involved by having them speak openly about inclusion, participate in DEI activities, and visibly support fairness and equity in the workplace.
- Create executive-led DEI task forces to ensure policies are not only written but practiced, monitored, and adjusted based on what's working and what's not.
- Partner with local civil society groups already working on LGBTIQ inclusion. These organizations have valuable knowledge and can provide training, support, and cultural insight.
- Support community-based organizations with resources and funding to sustain their work, especially in light of potential global policy shifts that could reduce international aid.
- Establish mentorship and career support systems for marginalized employees, including LGBTIQ staff, to ensure everyone has equal access to growth and leadership opportunities.

- Work with financial institutions to improve access to funding for queer entrepreneurs, helping to reduce economic exclusion and boost self-sufficiency within the community.
- Add SOGIESC awareness—sexual orientation, gender identity, expression, and sex characteristics—into training and policy discussions, always centered on dignity and safety.
- Use anonymous staff surveys to hear directly from employees about their lived experiences, including those who may not feel safe being openly queer at work.
- Quietly create internal support groups or safe spaces for LGBTIQ employees, even if they aren't formally recognized. A sense of belonging and community matters deeply.
- Review DEI policies with an intersectional lens—ensuring that gender, disability, ethnicity, and queerness are all recognized and supported without leaving anyone behind.
- Encourage inclusive business practices like fair procurement processes that welcome queer-owned or minority-led businesses into the supply chain.
- Identify and support inclusive leaders within the company who can quietly but effectively champion diversity in ways that are respectful of the local context.

CONCLUSION

In line with the objective of this research, to assess the effectiveness and inclusivity of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policies for LGBTIQ individuals in Nigeria workplaces, the findings reveal a significant gap between policy commitments and lived experiences. While many organizations publicly promote fairness and inclusion, LGBTIQ employees often remain excluded in practice due to legal constraints, cultural norms, and institutional hesitation. This has led to an environment where inclusion is quietly implied but not actively enforced or visibly supported.

The existence of DEI frameworks has helped to improve awareness, especially around gender and disability, but efforts to meaningfully include LGBTIQ individuals are often hindered by fear of backlash, reputational risks, and restrictive laws such as the Same-Sex Marriage (Prohibition) Act. As a result,

queer employees continue to face marginalization, invisibility, and limited access to workplace protections or advancement opportunities.

These findings align with Open For Business's (2021) report, which ranks Nigeria low on workplace inclusion due to its legal environment but notes progress through private-sector partnerships. In contrast, countries like Canada, where the Employment Equity Act mandates diversity initiatives, report higher DEI effectiveness, with 70% of employees perceiving strong leadership commitment (Catalyst, 2020). Nigeria's legal barriers, particularly the SSMPA, create a cautious approach among corporations, limiting explicit LGBTIQ inclusion. The survey's indication of openness to new strategies suggests potential for progress, particularly through partnerships with civil society organizations.

Despite these challenges, there are signs of progress. Increased interest in DEI among younger employees, as well as growing partnerships between companies and civil society organizations, signal a readiness for more inclusive strategies. However, meaningful change will require organizations to move beyond symbolic gestures. Deliberate, context-sensitive, and intersectional approaches rooted in evidence and human dignity are essential.

Ultimately, transforming Nigeria's workplaces into truly inclusive spaces will depend on courageous leadership, locally adapted solutions, and sustained commitment to ensuring that all employees, regardless of identity, can thrive in safe and equitable environments.

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APPENDIX 1

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

INTRODUCTION

This questionnaire is designed to support an in-depth mapping, research, and analysis of Multinational Companies operating in Nigeria that have established Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) policies. The primary objective is to critically examine the scope, implementation, and impact of these DEI policies, with a specific focus on their role in promoting the economic inclusion of marginalized persons within the Nigerian workforce.

Your responses will provide valuable insights into how DEI commitments are being translated into practice, highlight existing gaps, and inform strategies for fostering more inclusive and equitable workplace environments across sectors.

All information provided will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality and used solely for research purposes. Thank you for your participation.

SECTION A

Demographic Information

Employment Cadre: (Tick as applicable)

Lower Cadre: _____ Middle Cadre: _____ Senior Cadre: _____

Management Cadre: _____

Age: 18-25: _____ 26-30: _____ 31-34: _____ 35-40: _____ 41-45: _____ 46-50: _____

Above 50: _____

Sex: Male: _____ Female: _____ Rather Not Say: _____

Educational Level:

SSCE: _____ DIPLOMA/NCE: _____ Bachelors Degree/HND _____

Master's Degree: _____ Other (Specify): _____

Company's Sector

Technology:_____

Finance/Banking:_____

Manufacturing:_____ Telecommunication: _____ Consumer

Produce:_____ Oil and Gas:_____ Agriculture:_____

Others(Specify):_____

SECTION B

Question on Diversity and Inclusion at Workplace

Instructions

Please mark the box as appropriate based on your experience and perception. Use the scale below:

0 - I do not know **1** - Strongly Disagree **2** - Disagree **3** - Neutral **4** - Agree **5** - Strongly Agree

Awareness and Implementation of DEI Policies

1. My organization has formal DEI policies in place.

RATE		TICK
0	I do not know	
1	Strongly Disagree	
2	Disagree	
3	Neutral	
4	Agree	
5	Strongly Agree	

2. My organization provides regular DEI training to employees.

RATE		TICK
0	I do not know	
1	Strongly Disagree	
2	Disagree	
3	Neutral	
4	Agree	
5	Strongly Agree	

3. DEI policies in my organization are effectively implemented.

RATE		TICK
0	I do not know	
1	Strongly Disagree	
2	Disagree	
3	Neutral	
4	Agree	
5	Strongly Agree	

Workplace Inclusivity & Employee Experience

4. My workplace fosters an inclusive and respectful environment.

RATE		TICK
0	I do not know	
1	Strongly Disagree	
2	Disagree	
3	Neutral	
4	Agree	
5	Strongly Agree	

5. Employees are treated fairly regardless of gender, sex, or disability status.

RATE		TICK
0	I do not know	
1	Strongly Disagree	
2	Disagree	
3	Neutral	
4	Agree	
5	Strongly Agree	

6. My organization takes reports of workplace discrimination seriously.

RATE		TICK
0	I do not know	
1	Strongly Disagree	
2	Disagree	
3	Neutral	
4	Agree	
5	Strongly Agree	

7. Workplace discrimination and bias are effectively addressed.

RATE		TICK
0	I do not know	
1	Strongly Disagree	
2	Disagree	
3	Neutral	
4	Agree	
5	Strongly Agree	

DEI Policies & Career Progression

8. DEI policies in my organization have improved employee job satisfaction.

RATE		TICK
0	I do not know	
1	Strongly Disagree	
2	Disagree	
3	Neutral	
4	Agree	
5	Strongly Agree	

9. DEI initiatives have contributed to better retention and promotion opportunities for marginalized employees.

RATE		TICK
0	I do not know	
1	Strongly Disagree	
2	Disagree	
3	Neutral	
4	Agree	
5	Strongly Agree	

10. Employees from diverse backgrounds receive equal mentorship and career advancement opportunities.

RATE		TICK
0	I do not know	
1	Strongly Disagree	
2	Disagree	
3	Neutral	
4	Agree	
5	Strongly Agree	

Effectiveness & Challenges in DEI Implementation

11. My organization benchmarks DEI policies against industry best practices.

RATE		TICK
0	I do not know	
1	Strongly Disagree	
2	Disagree	
3	Neutral	
4	Agree	
5	Strongly Agree	

12. Leadership is committed to fostering an equitable and inclusive workplace.

RATE		TICK
0	I do not know	
1	Strongly Disagree	
2	Disagree	
3	Neutral	
4	Agree	
5	Strongly Agree	

13. My organization provides equal access to economic opportunities for all employees.

RATE		TICK
0	I do not know	
1	Strongly Disagree	
2	Disagree	
3	Neutral	
4	Agree	
5	Strongly Agree	

14. There are significant challenges in implementing DEI policies in my organization.

RATE		TICK
0	I do not know	
1	Strongly Disagree	
2	Disagree	
3	Neutral	
4	Agree	
5	Strongly Agree	

15. My organization is open to adopting new DEI strategies to enhance inclusivity.

RATE		TICK
0	I do not know	
1	Strongly Disagree	
2	Disagree	
3	Neutral	
4	Agree	
5	Strongly Agree	

Final Open-Ended Questions

What are the biggest challenges your organization faces in implementing DEI policies? (This question is only applicable for Management and Executive Officers Only)

What suggestions do you have for improving DEI policies and fostering a more inclusive workplace?

Key Informant Interview (KII) Guide:

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in Multinational Corporations

Introduction: Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. The purpose of this discussion is to assess the presence, implementation, and impact of DEI policies in multinational corporations operating in Nigeria. Your insights will help identify best practices, challenges, and areas for improvement in fostering workplace inclusivity. Your responses will be kept confidential and used solely for research purposes.

Section 1: Introduction of the Interview with the following.

- * Name of the Corporation
- * Role
- * Sector
- * Title
- * Years of Service

Section 2: Organizational DEI Policies and Implementation

1. Can you describe your company's DEI policies and initiatives?
2. How does your organization implement DEI strategies in recruitment, promotions, and retention for marginalized individuals of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity, and disabilities.
3. What structures are in place to ensure accountability in enforcing DEI policies?
4. How does your company engage employees in DEI initiatives and foster an inclusive workplace culture?
5. Are there specific programs for marginalized groups, such as women, persons with disabilities, and LGBTQ+ employees?

Section 3: Perceptions of Workplace Inclusivity

1. How do employees generally perceive the inclusivity of the workplace?
2. Have you observed any improvements or resistance to DEI efforts in your company especially with the recent United State Government Executive Order on DEI

- How does your company address concerns or complaints regarding discrimination or bias?
- Are there mentorship or support systems for employees from marginalized backgrounds?
- How do leadership and management demonstrate commitment to DEI values?

Section 4: Impact of DEI Policies

- What impact have DEI policies had on employee satisfaction and retention?
- Have these policies influenced productivity and overall company performance? If so, how?
- How does your company measure the effectiveness of its DEI policies?
- Can you share any success stories related to DEI initiatives in your organization?

Section 5: Challenges and Gaps in DEI Implementation

- What are the biggest challenges your company faces in implementing DEI policies?
- Are there gaps in policy execution that hinder economic inclusion for marginalized employees?
- How does your company address unconscious bias and systemic inequalities?
- What external or internal factors limit DEI progress in your industry?

Section 6: Best Practices and Recommendations

- What successful strategies has your company employed to foster inclusivity?
- Are there industry-wide practices that you believe should be adopted more broadly?
- What recommendations would you give to improve DEI efforts in multinational corporations?
- How can policies be enhanced to promote economic empowerment for marginalized individuals?