



GENDER, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP AS DRIVERS IN ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE: EVIDENCE FROM THE REGISTRARS GENERAL DEPARTMENT IN GHANA

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the influence of gender diversity and inclusive leadership on organizational performance within the Registrar General's Department (RGD) in Ghana. Using a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design, data were collected from 132 employees through structured questionnaires. The findings reveal that while gender diversity alone has a positive but statistically insignificant effect on performance, inclusive leadership demonstrates a strong, significant positive impact. Furthermore, inclusive leadership negatively moderates the relationship between gender diversity and performance, suggesting that in highly inclusive environments, the independent contribution of gender diversity diminishes. The results underscore the critical role of inclusive leadership characterized by openness, fairness, and participative decision-making in enhancing organizational outcomes. The study concludes that for public sector institutions like the RGD, leadership development focused on inclusivity is more impactful than diversity initiatives alone in driving performance, offering important implications for policy and practice in Ghana's public sector.

Keywords— Gender Diversity, Inclusive Leadership, Organizational Performance, Public Sector.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Gender equality, workforce diversity, and inclusive leadership are critical factors that drive organisational performance (Shore et al., 2018). The world of work is catching on to the fact that the need to embrace diversity is not just "the right thing to do" but is a strategic imperative and a measure of creativity, as well as one of problem-solving and sustained performance. Diversity and Inclusivity are grounds for most public sector organisations to serve the members of the broader society fairly, equitably, and accountably (Nishii, 2021). The Registrar General's Department (RGD) of Ghana is an important public agency that seeks to improve corporate governance, transparency, and service delivery. As it moved through the process of systemic reform, issues about gender diversity and inclusive leadership were seen to influence outcomes and the achievement of stakeholder expectations. Inclusive leadership can be defined as a type of leadership that encourages members to feel included, valued, and empowered to share their unique perspectives (Carmeli, Gittell et al., 2010). It emphasises fairness, giving everyone a place at the table, and collective decision-making. Inclusive leaders promote organisational learning and innovation by incorporating diverse perspectives and promoting employees' sense of psychological safety. Available evidence indicates that gender diverse organisations perform better than homogeneous organisations because they encourage diverse views and limit groupthink (Ali et al., 2021, Kwofie, 2023). In Ghana, however, public sector institutions are burdened with structural obstacles, cultural obstacles, and management approaches that impede the actualisation of diversity dividends (Dzansi & Molefi, 2022). This necessitates an enquiry into how inclusive leadership mediates diversity and performance in Ghana's RGD. Despite increased attention on diversity and inclusion in the workplace, empirical research on the Ghanaian public sector is scarce. Some studies had spotlighted gender representation in politics and corporate boardrooms, but scant studies have explored diversity and inclusive leadership within state organisations like the RGD (Ofori-Akuamoah et al., 2024). The study fills this gap by examining the collective influence of gender, diversity, and inclusive leadership on the performance of organisations.

The main research question is: What role do gender, diversity, and inclusive Leadership play in organisational Performance in the Registrar General's Department in Ghana? The goals of this research are to:

- (1) Investigate the impact of gender diversity on the effectiveness of the organisation.
- (2) Investigate the role of inclusive leadership on performance improvement; and
- (3) Examine how gender, diversity, and inclusive leadership impact organisational performance.

According to these goals, we propose the following hypothesis:

H1: gender diversity and organisational performance have a positive relationship.

H2, Inclusive leadership has a positive effect on performance.

H3, Inclusive leadership moderates the relationship between gender diversity and organizational performance

The study contributes to broadening the theoretical underpinnings of inclusion leadership in the public sector of Ghana and practically offers an empirical and theoretical basis for effective organisational performance through diversity and inclusiveness.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The Gender, Diversity and Inclusive Leadership literature stresses their collective importance for organisational performance in the public and private firms. Three aspects are pertinent to this research: (a) theoretical underpinnings that motivate the belief that D&I should lead to better outcomes based on, for example Social Identity theory, Resource Based View and the Inclusion Framework (b) findings from the Ghanaian context (2020–2024); and finally (c) implications for public agencies, such as the Registrar General's Department (RGD). Theoretically, Social Identity Theory indicates that heterogeneous teams have a richer pool of information but need leadership to reduce ingroup biases and promote a superordinate identity (Gürbüz et al., 2024; Park, 2021). An inclusive leadership characterised by openness, accessibility, and availability nurtures psychological safety and fosters voice, learning and innovation (Fatoki, 2024). The Resource-Based View claims that gender and cultural diversity represent unique, rare and inimitable human resources that result in long-term performance differentials when leveraging inclusive processes. Meta-analytic and multi-study findings from the same period of 2020–2024 also provide growing support for inclusive leadership as predictively related to task performance, organisational citizenship behaviours, creativity, and lower turnover intention, primarily through psychological safety and perceived inclusion (Gürbüz et al., 2024; Park, 2021).

A University of Cape Coast study on Ghanaian mining companies concluded that effective workforce diversity management has a significant positive relationship with employees' in-role and extra-role performance. The relationship is partially mediated by duty orientation (Kwagyan, 2023). A 2023 study on public tertiary institutions in the Western Region of Ghana revealed that gender diversity significantly predicts institutional performance, reinforcing the case for gender-balanced teams within the public knowledge-intensive sector (Kwofie, 2023). At a macro-organisational level, a recent Ghanaian study of listed and unlisted firms shows that board gender diversity positively correlates with firm financial performance, especially when complemented by supportive



III. METHODS

The study adopted a quantitative, descriptive cross-sectional survey design to investigate the relationships between gender diversity, inclusive leadership, and organisational performance within the Registrar General's Department (RGD). The population consisted of approximately 200 staff across departments, from which a stratified random sample of 132 respondents was selected, ensuring proportional representation. The response rate was 132, which means all questionnaires were received. Data was collected through a structured questionnaire covering gender diversity (Ali, Kulik & Ng, 2021), inclusive leadership (Carmeli et al., 2010), and organisational performance (Kaplan & Norton's Balanced Scorecard). Questionnaires were distributed in both print and electronic formats, and a pilot test ($n=25$) was conducted to ensure reliability, with Cronbach's alpha of 0.70 or above deemed acceptable. Data was analysed using SPSS and SmartPLS. Analyses included data cleaning, reliability and validity checks (Cronbach's alpha, CR, AVE), confirmatory factor analysis, descriptive statistics, regression, and structural equation modelling (SEM) to test hypothesised relationships and moderation effects. Sensitivity analysis was conducted by controlling demographic factors. Ethical considerations included informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, anonymity, and institutional approval. Findings were presented in statistical tables and discussed using relevant theories and prior research, with emphasis on the mediating role of inclusive leadership and insights specific to the Ghanaian context.

IV. RESULTS

Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 4.1 depicts the demographic characteristics of respondents. In terms of role or grade, respondents were almost equally divided between junior staff (46.2%) and senior staff (49.2%), with hardly any (4.5%) being managers. Employment status indicates that most respondents were permanent employees (59.8%), 23.5% were national service personnel, and 14.4% were interns. Only 2.3% of them were contractual. Regarding years of service, a significant proportion had worked for less than one year (33.3%) or one to three years (33.3%), while only 4.5% had worked for more than ten years. This indicates a comparatively recent workforce with few long-term employees. Finally, regarding diversity and leadership development, 43.9% of the respondents received such training in the last 24 months, while 56.1% had not. This suggests some level of exposure to diversity and leadership development, but areas where institution-based training programs are falling behind.

governance mechanisms (Ofosu Akuamoah et al., 2024). In addition to firm performance, Ghanaian educational institutions' human-centred approaches have also been found to promote sustainability and employee empowerment, supporting the role of human-centred approaches in achieving institutional outcomes (Nkansah Dwamena, 2024). However disparate the findings of these studies may be, their standard message is that inclusiveness and gender equilibrium deliver real performance advantages when integrated into the leadership repertoire and HR systems. Contemporary testimony across Africa bears witness to similar cycles. In South Africa, inclusive leadership enhanced employees' voice behaviour in SMEs through psychological safety and affective commitment specific to innovation and service quality (Fatoki, 2024). More macro-level reviews also associate inclusive climates with innovation and team effectiveness, especially in ethnically diverse teams, which are common in African contexts (see also regional synthesis, 2024). These results are consistent with international research confirming that inclusion enhances adaptive performance among younger age ranges and in knowledge-intensive contexts (Katsaros et al., 2024). Mechanistically, the 2020-2024 research highlights three complementary paths:

(i) Capability and diversity enhance the range of expertise resources.

(ii) motivation, inclusion signals fairness and respect that mobilises higher engagement and voice; and

(iii) Integration, inclusive leadership transforms diverse inputs to integrated actions by creating psychological safety and shared goals (Gürbüz et al., 2024; Fatoki, 2024). Research also cautions that support by systems (e.g., bias-aware recruitment, equitable career paths) is necessary if diversity is going to work; without it, conditions are seriously lacking, resulting in friction and non-cohesiveness when proliferation occurs in their place (Park, 2021). Consequences for the RGD are straightforward. Enhancing gender representation (particularly in positions of supervision and decision-making) will probably enhance the quality and responsiveness of processes, echoing evidence from Ghana of improvements to the quality of processes in higher education and corporations (Kwofie, 2023; Ofosu Akuamoah et al., 2024). Second, inclusive leadership behaviours (openness, fair conflict management, participative decision making), and a climate for inclusion in law. Ever-higher voice and continuous improvement are key drivers of public service performance (Fatoki, 2024). Third, RGD's governance and HRM practices must incorporate bias-aware recruitment and transparent advancement criteria to transform diversity into engagement and finally, organisational performance (Kwagyan, 2023; Nkansah Dwamena, 2024). Recent research on Africa and Ghana (2020–2024) suggests that gender diversity and inclusive leadership simultaneously predict organisational performance through psychological safety, voice, and coordinated problem solving (Park, 2021; Fatoki, 2024). Nonetheless, public sector evidence in Ghana is still relatively underdeveloped, where previous studies have mainly concentrated on education and corporate boards. This article bridges that gap by focusing on the RGD, a regulatory, service delivery agency, with inclusion, gender balance and leadership behaviours as critical drivers of citizen-facing performance.



Table 4.1 Demographic Statistics

	Category	Frequenc y	Per cent %
Division/Department	Account	11	8.30%
	Admin	3	2.30%
	Administration	6	4.50%
	Customer Service	24	18.20%
	Finance	21	15.90%
	HR	5	3.80%
	ICT	16	12.10%
	Marriage	3	2.30%
	Procurement	6	4.50%
	Records	6	4.50%
	Registration	20	15.20%
	Registry	2	1.50%
	Risk Management	5	3.80%
	Stores	4	3.00%
Current role/grade	Junior	61	46.20%
	Management	6	4.50%
	Senior	65	49.20%
Type of employment	Contract	3	2.30%
	Intern	19	14.40%
	National Service	31	23.50%
	Permanent	79	59.80%
Years of service		3	2.30%
	< 1 year	44	33.30%
	<1 Year	6	4.50%
	<1 Years	3	2.30%
	> 10 Years	6	4.50%
	1 - 3 years	44	33.30%
	1 - 3 Years	2	1.50%
	4 - 6 years	10	7.60%
	4 - 6 Years	9	6.80%
	7 - 10 years	5	3.80%
Highest education	Bachelor's	79	59.80%
	Diploma	7	5.30%
	Hnd	15	11.40%
	Master's	19	14.40%
	Shs	12	9.10%

Descriptive Statistics of Constructs

The results in Table 4.2 determine that Gender Diversity (GD) scored a mean of 3.50 with a standard deviation of 0.94. This signifies that the respondents' perceptions towards gender diversity were moderate and close to the midpoint, and perceptions were quite mixed. The relatively higher standard deviation signifies that the respondents possessed different perceptions towards gender diversity being present or efficiently managed in the organisation. In addition, the average score on Inclusive Leadership (IL) was 4.25 with a standard deviation of 0.64. This reflects a comparatively positive leadership practices attitude in that leaders were seen to be open, participative, and supportive. The lower variance around the mean implies higher consistency, with the respondents agreeing on inclusive leadership in the organisation. Finally, Organisational Performance (OP) scored 4.00 with a standard deviation 0.64. This indicates that, on average, respondents found performance positive, specifically in service quality, efficiency, and innovation dimensions. Standard deviation reflects moderate consensus among respondents and implies relatively stable perceptions for performance levels.

Table 4.2 Descriptives

	Mean	Std. Deviation
GD	3.5038	0.93795
IL	4.248485	0.641145
OP	4.005	0.638

Feld Study (2025)

Correlation Analysis

Table 4.3 shows correlations of Gender Diversity (GD), Inclusive Leadership (IL) and Organisational Performance (OP). Based on the findings, gender diversity shows a moderate and positive relationship with inclusive leadership ($r = 0.448$), which suggests that gains in gender balance can be linked to inclusive leadership. Despite the moderate relationship, the relationship implies that efforts to be diverse can promote leadership behaviour that embraces fairness, participation, and openness. A weak positive relationship between gender diversity and organisational performance is also observed ($r = 0.388$): gender diversity alone leads to performance, although not strongly. This implies that although representation is important, diversity may not necessarily result in increased organisational performance unless the systems surrounding it are favourable. Inclusive leadership and organisational performance ($r = 0.616$) had the highest level of relationship and were found to be strongly correlated. What this means is that the organisations that have inclusive leaders tend to have increased rates of performance because those leaders who develop psychological safety and facilitate employee voice directly improve the level of service quality and innovation.

Table 4.3 Correlation Matrix

	Gender Diversity	Inclusive Leadership	Organisational Performance
Gender Diversity	1		
Inclusive Leadership	0.448	1	
Organisational Performance	0.388	0.616	1

Feld Study (2025)

Measurement Issues

The constructs of the study are revealed as very reliable and internally consistent. Each of the three reported Cronbach's Alpha (CA) values was higher than the minimal cut-off point of 0.70, thus verifying that the items consistently measure their respective latent variables with reliability. In particular, Gender Diversity recorded CA = 0.818 and Composite Reliability (CR) = 0.866, Inclusive Leadership reported CA = 0.831 and CR = 0.888, and Organizational performance recorded CA = 0.810 and CR = 0.867. These results illustrate that the constructs are psychometrically good and their measurement items satisfactorily reflect the conceptual content they are designed to reflect. The convergent validity of the constructs is also confirmed because all the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values are higher than the suggested cut-off point of 0.50. For example, Gender Diversity reported AVE = 0.631, Inclusive Leadership AVE = 0.595, and Organisational Performance

AVE = 0.567. This reveals that the entirety of each construct accounts for more than half the variance of its corresponding indicators, thus verifying the suitability of the items as proxies for their latent variables. In addition, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values ranging from 1.57 to 2.22 are minimal and below the conservative cut-off point of 5. This implies there are no serious multicollinearity issues among the items of measurement. The indicators are related as anticipated within reflective constructs, but not too highly, because the stability of the estimates suffers.

Table 4.4 Reliability and Validity of Constructs

Construct	Items	Loadings	CA	CR	AVE	VIF
Gender Diversity	GD1	0.756	0.818	0.866	0.631	2.219
	GD2	0.711				2.148
	GD4	0.834				1.687
	GD5	0.867				1.876
	GD6	0.800				1.687
Inclusive Leadership	IL1	0.761	0.831	0.888	0.595	1.846
	IL2	0.824				2.146
	IL3	0.719				1.599
	IL4	0.765				1.709
	IL9	0.784				1.655
Organisational Commitment	OP3	0.728	0.81	0.867	0.567	1.569
	OP4	0.748				1.571
	OP5	0.776				1.702
	OP6	0.709				1.64
	OP7	0.8				1.879

Feld Study (2025)

Structural Model

The outcomes of path analysis are presented in Table 4.6 and Figure 4.1, showing the hypothesised relationship of Gender Diversity (GD), Inclusive Leadership (IL), and Organisational Performance (OP). Under Hypothesis 1 (H1) that posited a positive relationship between gender diversity and organisational performance, the path coefficient was $\beta = 0.149$ with t-value 1.63 and p-value 0.103. Although the coefficient is positive, the relationship is statistically insignificant at 0.05. This shows that gender diversity is not statistically significant in forecasting organisational performance in the Registrar General Department. Hypothesis 2 (H2) investigated the impact of inclusive leadership on the performance of an organisation. The result indicated that path coefficient $b = 0.448$, $t = 5.402$, and $p = 0.000$, which is a statistically significant, highly positive effect. This means that inclusive leadership significantly impacts performance within organisations, implying that the behaviours of an inclusive leader, like openness, fairness and participation, directly affect improving performance. In the case of H3, where all-inclusive leadership moderates the relationship between gender diversity and organisational performance, the interaction term (IL x GD) had $b = -0.128$, $t = 2.039$ and $p = 0.041$. It has a statistically significant but negative value and indicates that inclusive leadership is a weakening, not a strengthening, effect of gender

diversity on performance. With such circumstances of inclusive leadership, the independent effect of gender diversity on performance is reduced.

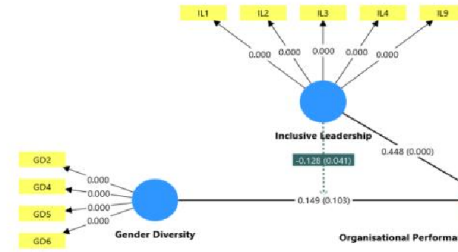


Figure 4.2 Measurement Model

Table 4.6 Path Analysis

Path Relationship	H	β	ST.DEV	T statistics	P values	Decision
GD \rightarrow OP	H1	0.149	0.091	1.63	0.103	Rejected
IL \rightarrow OP	H2	0.448	0.083	5.402	0	Accepted
IL x GD \rightarrow OP	H3	-0.128	0.063	2.039	0.041	Rejected

Feld Study (2025)

V. DISCUSSION

a) The research aimed to investigate the impact of gender diversity and inclusive leadership on organisational performance in Ghana's Registrar General Department (RGD). The results provided mixed conclusions, some of which are as expected already. In contrast, others vary in a way that is characteristic of the Ghanaian public sector's peculiar institutional and cultural environment.

b) The first hypothesis showed a positive link between gender diversity and organisational performance. The findings showed a positive but statistically insignificant effect, which implies that gender balance is not a potent predictor of organisational performance in the RGD. This contradicts previous evidence in banking and corporate environments where gender diversity enhanced decision-making and firm performance (Nithyanantham et al., 2021; Martinez-Jimenez et al., 2020). Obeng et al. (2025) and Asare Obeng et al. (2025) discovered that gender diversity would improve performance in the healthcare sector in Ghana, but primarily when the organisational structure, such as stress management systems and strategic diversity policies, is in place. This limited impact at the RGD can be attributed to bureaucratic inertia, cultural norms, and ineffective diversity management practices, which limit the potential of diverse teams to convert representation into outcomes (Dzansi & Molefi, 2022). Conversely, the result is in line with the Social Categorisation and Identity Theory, which warns that unless diversity is managed inclusively, subgrouping can be underpinned by diversity, and the Resource-Based View (RBV), which emphasises that diversity needs to be supplemented by systems if it is to bring performance gains.

c) The second hypothesis was to test the effect of inclusive leadership on organisational performance. These results were strongly supported and showed that inclusive



leadership is crucial for enhancing organisational performance at the RGD. This is similar to other research, such as Rehman (2020), who has credited inclusive leadership for project success, and Bataineh et al. (2022), who mentioned that adaptive and innovation-driven performance result from it. The point is that inclusive leadership is what Anane-Simon and Atiku (2023) identified as necessary to ensure sustainable development in the African context shift. Theoretically, it feeds the Inclusion Framework (Shore et al., 2018), according to which leaders who promote fairness, openness, and voice build climates of belonging that facilitate collaboration and innovation. It reinforces the RBV as inclusive leadership allows organisations to use human capital to its maximum extent when employee diversity becomes a durable competence for building a lasting hard and soft competitive advantage. In practice, the result means that the RGD has to concentrate on the leadership development agendas that include inclusivity on every level to render public services efficient and citizen-centred.

d) The third hypothesis addressed the relationship between gender diversity and organisational performance, with inclusive leadership moderating the relationship. The findings showed that gender diversity has a significant adverse moderating effect through strong inclusive leadership, meaning that a good inclusive leader minimises the independent performance contribution of gender diversity. The finding contradicts the argument of the diversity dividend (Celestin & Vanitha, 2020) and other studies, including Ahmed and Sadiq (2025), who found that inclusivity increased the benefits of diversity. Nevertheless, it conforms to the evidence provided in Ghana (Asare Obeng et al., 2025), which stressed that the benefits of diversity can only be achieved when it is actively maintained via a set of properly established policies. This would theoretically imply that inclusive leadership can buffer the salience of gender as a social category because employees are perceived to be important regardless of demographic origin. According to RBV terms, leadership is the key process by which human resources are transformed into organisational performance, which sometimes takes precedence over the fringe benefits of gender balance.

Hence, the results emphasise that inclusive leadership is the most important factor of organisational performance at the RGD. Gender diversity did not play a significant role in the results, and its effect declined in the case of strong inclusive leadership. The findings add to the theory by revising assumptions in the Social Identity Theory, the Inclusion Framework, and the RBV by revealing that the benefits of diversity are conditional depending on leadership and organisational environment. In a practical sense, evidence highlights that though gender balance programs are still valuable in representation and accountability, their performance benefits will be weak without a culture of inclusiveness in leadership. In the case of the RGD, it implies that the institutional reforms should focus on leadership practices that entrench fairness, openness, and participation and be supplemented with diversity management models, including bias-conscious hiring and promotion systems and transparent promotion systems.

VI. CONCLUSION

The research aim was also a test of gender diversity and inclusive leadership impact on organisational performance using the case of the Registrar General's Department (RGD) of Ghana. The findings are that gender diversity is connected to fairness, equity, and representation, but the actual impact on performance results is low for the Ghanaian public sector context. This suggests that diversity initiatives, although vital to creating inclusive institutions, do not naturally mean increases in efficiency, innovativeness, or service delivery unless accompanied by organisational enabling arrangements.

In contrast, the most powerful predictor of organisational effectiveness was inclusive leadership. Leaders who were empathic, fair, and participatory in decision-making were directly and significantly associated with performance, increasing employees' engagement, innovation capacity, and overall quality of service. Notably, the moderating analysis was such that the diversity–performance association was redefined by inclusive leadership, reducing the gender balance independent contribution where inclusivity was high. This underscores the point that diversity cannot be framed as an add-on goal; its payoff is only complete within cultures where leadership creates a sense of belonging, voice, and psychological safety. Theoretically, the results augment our understanding of the Social Identity Theory, the Resource-Based View, and the Inclusion Framework since they show that leadership is the very lever that unlocks or can disable the performance dividends of diversity. In practice, the findings possess considerable practical value for the public sector of Ghana: gender representation policies must be followed up by leadership development, recruitment that is sensitive to bias, and transparent career development systems for unlocking the diversity into tangible organisational outcomes. The route towards stronger organisational performance runs less through diversity itself and more through how the leadership treats diversity. In the case of the RGD and the like public entities, it points toward making inclusive leadership both an engine of performance and an instrument through which diversity can be more readily leveraged toward the support of Ghana's broader governance and reform program.

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