



Workforce Diversity in Higher Education for Sustainable Employee Performance: A case in Punjab

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Abstract

Purpose- The Purpose of the study on workforce diversity in higher education is to look into the connection between employee performance in private colleges and workforce diversity. The goal of the study is to comprehend the long-term effects of diversity initiatives on employee performance in university workforces. Through an analysis of worker performance dynamics at Punjabi private universities, this research aims to offer insightful information about the importance of staff performance in these establishments, as well as customized strategies for performance enhancement.

Methodology- The present study employs a research methodology that entails a comprehensive examination of extant literature and empirical research to investigate the relationship between employee diversity, organizational culture, and job performance in higher education institutions located in Punjab. The study highlights how crucial it is to promote learning, value accumulated expertise, and assemble a varied workforce in order to create productive teams.

Research Limitations- This study provides valuable insights into how diversity within university Workforces impacts employee performance. However, it's crucial to acknowledge some limitations that could affect how we interpret and apply these findings. Firstly, our study focused on only one university, so the results may not be applicable to other universities with different cultures and policies. To ensure the reliability of our findings across diverse educational settings, future research should consider data from various universities. Secondly, our data relied on self-reported experiences, which can be biased. People may give answers they think are socially acceptable or make them look good, skewing the results.

Managerial Implications- In Punjab's higher education institutions, it's super important for bosses to promote diversity. This means making sure everyone feels included, respected, and able to do their best work. To make this happen, managers need to actively break down barriers to diversity, tackle specific challenges, and come up with plans that fit the situation.

Value- The study on workforce diversity in higher education in Punjab provides valuable insights, practical recommendations, and a foundation for future research to advance knowledge and understanding of how diversity initiatives impact employee performance and organizational success in the higher education sector.

Keywords- Keywords: Workforce diversity, employee performance, higher education, Punjab, organizational sustainability, diversity initiatives, qualitative research, quantitative research, comparative examination, longitudinal viewpoint, employee perspectives, intersectionality.

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

The importance of workforce diversity is emphasized throughout the book, with particular attention paid to its wide range of dimensions, including age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and handicap status. Diversity enhances corporate perspectives and promotes innovation. This includes a range of life experiences, personality traits, and educational backgrounds. However, maintaining excellent staff performance and preventing conflicts require effective diversity management.

Employee performance, which includes motivation, engagement, productivity, and quality of work, is essential to the success of an organization. Maintaining high performance levels requires a supportive work environment, flexible work schedules, and a healthy work-life balance, especially in diverse settings.

Diversity in higher education is said to foster creativity and academic achievement. Punjab's private universities struggle to maximize worker performance because of bureaucratic roadblocks and difficulties keeping talented staff members. To overcome these obstacles and improve performance, we need strong leadership and encouraging surroundings.

The book emphasizes the significance of comprehending and managing diversity for corporate success and promotes proactive approaches to improve employee performance. It also emphasizes how important it is for educational institutions to be inclusive and offers tactics for fostering diversity to increase participation, retention, and productivity.

Optimizing employee performance is essential to meeting institutional objectives and maintaining competitiveness at Punjab's private universities. Effective leadership and encouraging cultures are required to solve issues like talent retention and bureaucratic roadblocks. The work highlights the significance of comprehending and managing diversity for organizational success and promotes proactive approaches to improve performance.

All things considered, the book emphasizes how crucial a diverse workforce is to encouraging creativity, teamwork, and academic success in both businesses and higher education. It emphasizes that to enhance worker performance and organizational success in diverse contexts, inclusive environments, strong leadership, and encouraging policies are essential.

Research Methodology-

Sample Selection

The present study employs a research methodology that entails a comprehensive examination of extant literature and empirical research to investigate the relationship between employee diversity, organizational culture, and job performance in higher education institutions located in Punjab. The study highlights how crucial it is to promote learning, value accumulated expertise, and assemble a varied workforce in order to create productive teams.

Reliability Test		
Variables	No. of Items	Cronbach Alpha
Age	4	0.752
Gender	4	0.764
Employee Educational Background	4	0.789
Employee Experience	4	0.786
Ethnicity	4	0.844
Employee Performance	8	0.903

Frequency of Demographic Variables

The frequency of demographic variables indicates how often a specific value for a variable has been observed, calculated by dividing the number of times this value appears by the total number of values in the population.

	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	176	58.50%
Female	125	41.50%
Age		
18-22	47	15.60%
22-27	131	43.50%
27-32	84	27.90%
Above 32	39	13%
Marital Status		
Married	134	44.50%
Single	167	55.50%
Education		
Diploma	8	2.70%
Degree	65	21.60%
Master's Degree	97	32.20%
Doctorate	131	43.50%
Work Experience		
0-5 Years	155	51.50%
6-10 Years	103	34.20%
11-15 Years	28	9.30%
More than 15		5%

Table: Frequency of Demographic Variables

CHAPTER 2

2.1 Review Literature

Multiple studies exploring the connection between employee performance and workforce diversity in various industries and circumstances are presented in the literature. These studies shed light on how several diversity variables, including age, gender, ethnicity, education level, and religion, affect worker performance.

Mwatumwa (2012) examined the impact of diversity on worker productivity in her study of the County Government of Mombasa. It highlights racial, gender, and educational disparities as critical determinants of work performance. Like this, Ahmad & Rahman (2019) investigate how age, gender, ethnicity, and experience affect employee performance in the workplace at Allama Iqbal Open University. To increase production, both studies stress the importance of managing and comprehending variety.

Okoro and Washington (2012), researchers at Howard University, look at the relationship between organizational communication, productivity, human capital performance, and diversity in the workforce. They emphasize how crucial effective communication techniques are to enhancing organizational success in diverse workplaces. In their investigation of the connection between worker diversity and the sustainability of small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in Southwest Nigeria, Salau Odunayo & Paul (2023) emphasize the importance of variety in terms of gender, age, and ethnicity.

Diversity and organizational success are positively correlated, according to Geringer et al. (1989), especially in multinational corporations. They contend that diversity fosters creativity and better decision-making, which improves corporate performance. In their discussion of age variety, Kunze et al. (2009) highlight both the benefits in terms of perspectives and experience as well as the difficulties in communicating and resolving disagreement.

A classification of variety according to task-related knowledge, demographic characteristics, organizational position, and personal, cognitive, and attitudinal styles is put out by McGrath et al. (1995). Their research looks on how employee performance is affected by a diverse workforce, with a particular emphasis on education, gender, and ethnicity.

The social categorization theory, first presented by Turner (1987), divides laborers into groups according to their age, gender, and ethnicity. This results in stereotyping and affects the workers' conduct and output. To combat prejudice and promote diversity, Oishi (2019) looks at diversity in Australian institutions, specifically among Asian Australian academics. She recommends programs such as mentorships.

Mande and Awiti (2021) examine how worker performance is impacted by factors such as age, gender, ethnicity, and education, highlighting the vital role that diversity plays in the success of organizations. In his investigation of the connection between diversity management and worker performance in Pakistan's textile sectors, Khan (2019) emphasizes the impact of age, gender, education, and religion on output.

In her investigation into gender and ethnic diversity in a South African higher education setting, Mampane (2019) discovers a link between better performance and greater diversity. Lastly, Solomon (2023) looks at how diversity management affects worker performance in Nigerian public companies and suggests that good diversity management might increase output and job satisfaction.

The body of research emphasizes how crucial it is to comprehend and manage workplace diversity to improve worker productivity and organizational success. Age, gender, ethnicity, education, and religion are just a few of the variables that have a big impact on how well employees perform. For businesses to maximize the advantages of diversity while minimizing its drawbacks, they need to implement inclusive practices and regulations.

CHAPTER 3

3.1 Research Methodology

A research methodology delineates the methods and approaches employed in order to locate and evaluate data pertaining to a certain study subject. It's a method by which scientists plan their investigation to enable them to use the chosen research tools to accomplish their goals.

3.2 Need for the study

The growing need for workforce diversity in higher education and its effect on long-term employee performance is what made this study necessary. Knowing how diversity programs impact worker performance is critical for organizations hoping to foster inclusive cultures and increase output. The purpose of this study is to better understand this link to help higher education institutions create diversity initiatives that will enhance employee well-being and organizational sustainability. This study will close a knowledge gap and provide useful suggestions for promoting diversity and raising worker productivity in the higher education industry.

3.3 Research Gap

The study has several areas that need more research. It does not have enough numerical data to back up its findings from interviews and surveys. It also does not compare its results to other universities, whether public or in different regions. The research only looks at a short period of time, so it cannot show the long-term effects of diversity programs. Additionally, the views of employees themselves are not included, only the perspectives of leaders and organizational processes. Finally, the study does not examine how different aspects of diversity, such as gender, age, and culture, may interact and impact employee experiences. Filling these gaps by using more numerical measures, making comparisons, studying long-term changes, getting employee feedback, and looking at intersecting diversity factors would provide better insight into how a diverse workforce influences long-term employee performance in universities.

3.3 Objectives of the Study

1. To determine the effect of workplace diversity on the performance of the employee in higher education

3.4 Sample Size

We have taken the top 3 private universities of Punjab because most of the employees work in these universities.

Slovin's Formula

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

n= Sample Size

N= Population Size

e= Acceptable Margin of Error

We took Slovin's Formula to calculate the sample size required to find out the result. And after the calculation we found that the sample size is 300 employees.

3.5 Research Tool

We prepared a questionnaire and took the responses with help of Likert scale from all 3 universities. And the questionnaire consists of 5 independent variables (Gender, Age, Education, Experience, Ethnicity) all consisting of 4 questions each.

Whereas dependent variable (Employee Performance) consists of 12 questions.

3.4 Research Variables

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE	SUPPORTING LITERATURE
AGE	(Kunze et.al,2009), (Mulenga M.& Siwale 2020), (Kamran Khan's,2019), (Mande & Awiti,2021), (Salalu Odunayo paul,2023)
GENDER	(Sharon,2019), (Srivastava, 2012), (Mande & Awiti,2021), (Usulor Solomon,2023), (Sharon Thabo Mam pane,2019)
ETHNICITY	(Taylor & Francis,2023), (Jama cardiol,2024), (Makhdoomi and Nika 2018),
EDUCATION	(Professor Nana Oishi,2017), (Mande & Awiti,2021), (Kamran Khan,2019), (Robbins, 2009)
EXPERIENCE	(Makudza & Muchoncwe,2020), (Smith & Daryl G,2020)

Table : Independent Variable & Supporting Literature

DEPENDENT VARIABLE	SUPPORTING LITERATURE
EMPLOYEE PROFROMANCE	(Abdallah S. Mwatumwa,2012), (Tinofirei, 2011), (Ahmad & Rhman,2019), (Sharon Thabo Mam pane,2019)

Table : Dependent Variable & Supporting Literature

Details of the Variables

Building a diverse workforce requires considering different factors like age, gender, ethnicity, educational background, and professional experience. Age diversity helps prevent discrimination against younger or older employees based on assumptions about their work ethic or skills. Promoting gender diversity means actively welcoming and advancing both men and women at all levels, from entry roles to leadership positions. Ethnic diversity celebrates the various cultural, social, religious, and linguistic backgrounds that employees bring. Having a mix of educational backgrounds, from Ivy League to state universities to vocational training, prevents hiring biases and allows for diverse perspectives. Finally, diversity of experience ensures a range of prior roles, specialties, and viewpoints are represented, fostering innovation through multidisciplinary collaboration. Embracing these multiple facets of diversity creates an inclusive environment that avoids discrimination, leverages different strengths, and promotes well-rounded thinking for overall organizational effectiveness.

Dependent variables

Employee Performance

Employee performance in the workplace Diversity is the degree to which workers from different backgrounds and experiences successfully advance the objectives of a company. It entails creating a welcoming atmosphere where different viewpoints are respected, encouraging innovation and creativity, adjusting to various surroundings, supporting ongoing learning and development, and strengthening bonds with stakeholders and consumers. Leveraging the distinct characteristics of a varied workforce, diversity and inclusion efforts can promote long-term success and performance.

CHAPTER 4

4.1 Results and Discussion

Reliability Analysis

The reliability analysis conducted using Cronbach's alpha revealed satisfactory to excellent internal consistency for the different constructs in the questionnaire, with alpha coefficients ranging from 0.752 to 0.903. These values exceed the generally accepted threshold of 0.7, providing confidence in the reliability of the scales for measuring the intended concepts.

Mean Scores

The mean scores for the various items related to age, gender, educational background, experience, ethnicity, and employee performance suggest the following:

Age: Respondents generally agree that age and experience contribute to organizational performance, and there is a belief that younger employees can bring success.

Gender: Responses indicate a perception of some gender discrimination during recruitment, but also a tendency towards agreement that the organization promotes gender diversity and inclusion. There is a general belief that women can cope with stressful situations effectively.

Educational Background: Respondents somewhat agree that the recruitment process considers educational backgrounds, and opportunities for professional development and advancement are linked to educational qualifications. Fair treatment is perceived to be given to all employees, regardless of their educational backgrounds.

Experience: Respondents somewhat agree that mentorship or coaching programs support employees with varying levels of experience. They tend to agree that fair treatment is given to all employees, regardless of experience, and that decision-making roles are assigned based on demonstrated competencies and experience.

Ethnicity: Respondents somewhat agree that different languages used for communication do not pose significant problems among employees. There is a tendency to agree that they sometimes feel low due to their ethnicity, but also a perception that ethnicity can play a positive role in organizational performance and that employees are not discriminated against based on their ethnicity.

Employee Performance: Respondents generally agree that employees actively engage in activities impacting their performance evaluations, meet the formal performance requirements, perform expected tasks, have flexibility in organizing their tasks, communicate and collaborate effectively with colleagues, demonstrate alignment with the organization's values and goals, are receptive to training and development opportunities, and can prioritize tasks and manage their time efficiently.

Frequency of Demographic Variables

The frequency analysis of demographic variables revealed a diverse sample with a substantial representation of young professionals (43.5% aged 22-27 years), mid-career professionals (27.9% aged 27-32 years), and a balanced distribution of married (44.5%) and single (55.5%) individuals. The sample was highly educated, with a significant proportion holding doctorate (43.5%) and master's degrees (32.2%). The majority of respondents had work experience ranging from 0-5 years (51.5%) and 6-10 years (34.2%), indicating a relatively young workforce or individuals in the early and mid-stages of their careers.

Multiple Regression Analysis

The multiple regression analysis examined the impact of workforce diversity factors (gender, education, experience, age, and ethnicity) on employee performance. The key findings are as follows:

Gender: A positive influence on employee performance, with being male associated with higher employee performance ($\beta = 0.384$, $p = 0.037$). Gender, along with other variables, explained 78.9% of the variation in employee performance ($R^2 = 0.789$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.748$).

Education: A positive influence on employee performance, with higher levels of education associated with better employee performance ($\beta = 0.586$, $p = 0.043$). Education, along with other predictors, accounted for 78.9% of the variation in employee performance ($R^2 = 0.789$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.748$).

Experience: A positive influence on employee performance, with more years of experience leading to higher employee performance ($\beta = 0.324$, $p = 0.024$). Experience, combined with other variables, explained 78.9% of the variation in employee performance ($R^2 = 0.789$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.748$).

Age: A positive influence on employee performance, with older employees tending to have better performance ($\beta = 0.389$, $p = 0.018$). Age, along with other predictors, accounted for 78.9% of the variance in employee performance ($R^2 = 0.789$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.748$).

Ethnicity: A positive influence on employee performance, with greater ethnic diversity related to improved employee performance ($\beta = 0.177$, $p = 0.001$). Ethnicity, combined with other diversity factors, explained 78.9% of the variation in employee performance ($R^2 = 0.789$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.748$).

The adjusted R-squared value of 0.748 indicates that 74.8% of the variation in employee performance is explained by the model after adjusting for the number of predictors.

Findings and Conclusion

The study findings highlight the positive impact of workforce diversity on employee performance in higher education institutions. Specifically:

The research demonstrated that workforce diversity positively impacted employee performance within the higher education institutions studied. Teams with a larger proportion of male members exhibited elevated performance levels, with gender accounting for a substantial amount of the variation observed. Employees holding higher academic degrees, such as master's or doctorates, also tended to perform better compared to those with lower educational attainments. Work experience emerged as another significant factor, wherein employees with more years under their belt outperformed their less experienced counterparts. Additionally, older employees displayed better performance outcomes in comparison to their younger colleagues. Furthermore, greater ethnic and cultural diversity within teams was associated with improved overall performance. The study concluded that teams comprising a mix of genders, educational qualifications, experience levels, age groups, and ethnic backgrounds fostered an environment conducive to enhanced employee performance in these academic settings.

Limitations and Further Scope of Study

While the study provides valuable insights, certain limitations should be acknowledged:

The research had some limitations that should be considered. First, it only looked at one university, so the findings may not apply to other universities with different environments and policies. Second, the data came from self-reported responses by employees, and people may not always give fully accurate responses about themselves. Third, the study only captured information at one point in time, so it could not show how workforce diversity and employee performance might change over longer periods. Fourth, there may be other important factors that were not measured in this study that could also impact how well employees perform. Addressing these limitations in future research would provide a more complete understanding of the connections between workforce diversity and employee performance in university settings.

To address these limitations, future research should:

To strengthen the understanding of how workforce diversity impacts employee performance in universities, future studies should take a broader approach. Researchers could collect data from multiple universities across different regions to see if the findings hold true in diverse educational settings. Getting feedback from various sources like managers and co-workers, rather than just self-reports, could improve the accuracy of the data. Longitudinal studies that follow the same groups over longer periods would allow researchers to track how diversity and performance levels may change over time. Looking at additional factors beyond just diversity, such as the overall organizational environment or employee job satisfaction levels, may uncover other important influences on performance. Aiming for more diverse and representative samples of employees across many universities and geographical areas would make the findings more widely applicable. Finally, combining quantitative survey data with qualitative methods like interviews could provide richer insights into employees' personal experiences and perspectives related to diversity and performance in their workplaces.

Managerial Implications

Managers in higher education institutions, promoting diversity and inclusion should be a top priority. They need to actively identify and remove any barriers that are preventing a diverse workforce and address specific challenges related to diversity. This includes implementing initiatives like hiring people from diverse backgrounds, providing training to raise awareness about different cultures, and ensuring equal opportunities for all employees. Investing in the professional development and continuous learning of employees is also crucial. Managers should embrace diversity as an asset and develop smart strategies that leverage the unique perspectives and talents of a diverse team to drive innovation and productivity. Ultimately, the goal should be creating an environment where every employee feels respected, valued, included, and motivated to perform at their highest level. By making diversity and inclusion a core focus, institutional leaders can pave the way for long-term organizational success.

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