

Influence of Workplace Diversity on Organizational Performance

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Abstract

Diversity in the workplace is now a key organisational trait which can impact employee performance, innovation and sustainability of the business. Today's work environment is becoming more likely than ever to call on workers from diverse professional, education, demographic, and cultural backgrounds to help increase creativity and decision-making abilities. The effect workplace diversity has on an organization's performance, including employees productivity, teamwork, innovation, and organizational effectiveness is discussed in this research paper. The study covers the significance of diversity (gender, age, ethnicity, educational level and experiences) to problem solving skills and competitive advantage in organisations.

This paper is descriptive and analytical, which is based on literature review and empirical findings and organization practices pertaining to diversity management. It shows that inclusive workplaces increase employee engagement, motivation and knowledge sharing, and drive positive outcomes for organisational results. In addition, diversity contributes to creativity and innovation through the introduction of a variety of viewpoints in terms of strategy and operations. However, the research also highlights some of the problems that can develop from the presence of diversity within the workplace, including: Communication barriers, conflict, opposition to change and miscommunication about the culture that can affect the harmony of the organisation if not managed effectively.

The results suggest that good practices of diversity management, management support, equal opportunities and organisational policies are important factors to ensure that the workforce diversity is translated into organizational strength. The result of the study shows that organisations that have a good diversity management will have higher employee satisfaction levels, positive financial outcomes, positive organisational culture and sustainable growth. The study highlights the need for strategic diversity management measures to create an inclusive work environment which may contribute to the well-being of employees and the performance of organizations in a highly competitive global arena.

Keywords: Workplace Diversity, Organizational Performance, Diversity Management, Employee Productivity, Inclusive Workplace, Workforce Diversity, Organizational Effectiveness, Employee Engagement, Innovation, Sustainable Growth

Introduction

In the modern business climate workplace diversity has become an important part of the organization. In today's globalized, technologically advanced and diverse workforce, there is a growing need for organizations to hire people whose backgrounds are culturally, socially, educatively and professionally diverse. Workplace Diversity encompasses gender differences, age, ethnicity, religion, language, educational levels, experience and attitude. These distinctions have an impact on organizational culture, employee relationships, decision-making, and business performance.

Diversity is acknowledged by the organizations today as a legal and ethical responsibility and as a strategic asset for innovation, creativity and competitive advantage. Access to a diverse workforce adds different ideas, skills and problem-solving strategies that can enhance organizations' adaptability and responsiveness in a changing market. Diverse backgrounds bring different experiences and perspectives that help to make better decisions and improve the effectiveness of the organization.

In recent years, the focus on diversity and equal opportunity has prompted businesses to adopt a diversity management approach that promotes respect and cooperation among their employees. A positive work culture through effective diversity management is a culture in which workers feel that their work is valued by their employer, and they feel motivated to work. This results in an increase in their job satisfaction, productivity and organizational commitment. Also, diversity provides an improvement in team performance through knowledge sharing, creativity, and in the understanding of the market.

While there are benefits to workplace diversity, it can also bring communication difficulties, cultural differences, relationship conflict issues, and a challenge to change. Poor management of diversity can have a negative impact on teamwork and employee relationships, which can impact organizational performance. So, it is important for organisations to have suitable policies, leadership approaches and inclusive practices that optimize the use of the diverse workforce and reduce any potential conflict.

The factors affecting the organizational performance include human resource factors, which in turn include workplace diversity. There is a growing connection between effective diversity and inclusion practices and outcomes like productivity, innovation, employee engagement, customer satisfaction, and financial growth. A number of international companies and contemporary companies have shown that companies that are inclusive and diverse have a higher level of efficiency, creativity and sustainability.

With the growing workforce participation from various region, culture, gender and social groups, the concept of workplace diversity has caught attention in the Indian context. The growing importance of diversity management in organisations is further enhanced by the growth and expansion of multinational companies, the development of the service sector and the adoption of inclusive employment policies. Therefore, research, policy and management decisions must take workplace diversity into account for its effects on organizational performance.

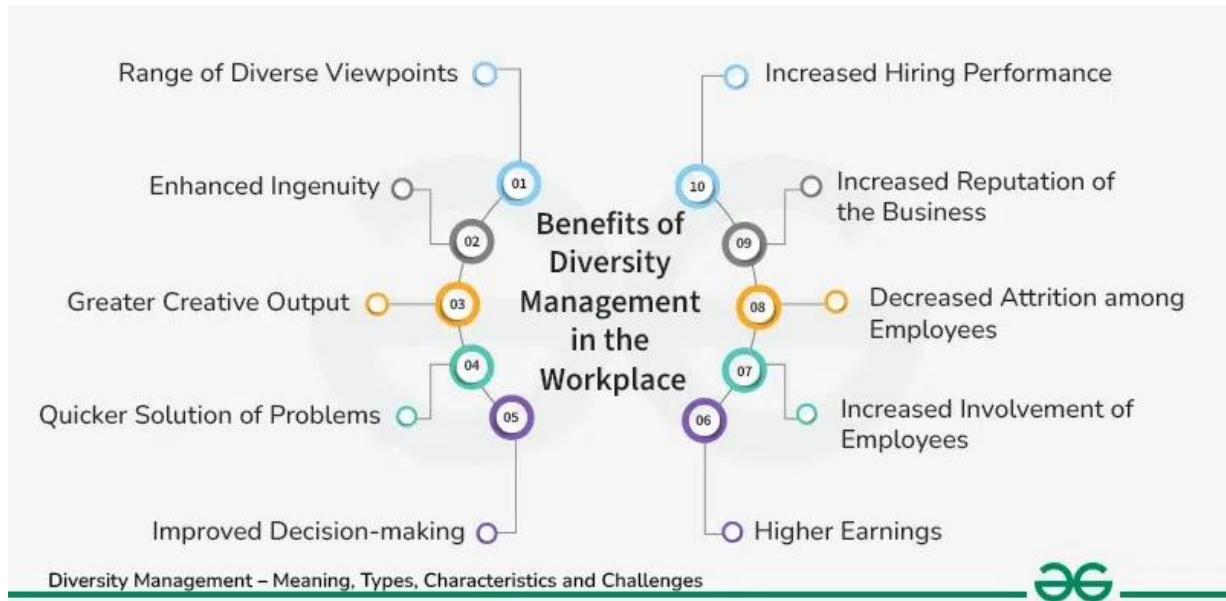
The current study seeks to understand the connection between workplace diversity and organizational performance by looking at how the various characteristics of diversity are related to organizational effectiveness, productivity, innovation and business success.

Background of the study

In today's business landscape, workplace diversity has become a crucial factor in the organization's growth and development, as well as in innovation and competitiveness. All over the world, organizations are hiring people from different cultural, educational, social, gender and professional backgrounds to develop an inclusive and dynamic working environment. With the increasing global nature of business activities, the technological developments and the changing demographics of the workforce, diversity management has become a key

consideration in contemporary business organizations.

Workplace diversity is the presence of people with different characteristics (age, gender, ethnicity, religion, education, skills, language, experiences) in the workplace. Diversity in the workforce provides a number of advantages for organizations, including having access to many different points of view, creative methods to tackle problems, and better decision-making. It also helps to improve flexibility in meeting the needs of a diverse set of customers and global markets.



Source: <https://www.geeksforgeeks.org/hr/diversity-management-meaning-types-characteristics-and-challenges/>

Over the past few years, organizations have taken the stance that diversity is not just a legal and moral responsibility, but a business asset. Diversity Management can positively impact employee satisfaction, organizational commitment, teamwork, and innovation, which in turn boosts the performance of an organization. Firms with inclusive workplace policies tend to have higher productivity, increased employee retention rates, better creativity, and greater corporate image.

But in the wrong hands, diversity in the workplace can also cause issues, ranging from communication problems, interpersonal conflict, cultural misunderstandings, to a lack of change. Thus, having the right diversity policies, leadership support and inclusive organizational cultures are essential for achieving the optimum gains of diversity.

In the Indian scenario, workplace diversity has become a growing concern because of the economic liberalization, expansion of multinational companies and the transformation of the social structure. To enhance organizational effectiveness, organizations are now emphasizing on gender diversity, integration of differently-abled employees, generational diversity and integration of multi-cultural workers. Even with these efforts, it is still difficult for many organisations to implement effective diversity management strategies.

The current study seeks to explore the impact of workplace diversity on organizational performance by examining the role of diversity in workforce characteristics and their impact on organizational productivity, innovation, employee engagement, and organizational success. The study will also attempt to gain insights into the opportunities and challenges of diversity management within organizations.

Justification

Globalization, technology and shifting demographics have created an increasingly diverse

workforce and workplace, making workplace diversity an integral part of today's organizational management. In today's organizations, people come from diverse cultural, education, gender, age and social background and diversity management is a key component for the success of the organizations. The growing focus on diversity has led to the belief that diversity is a social issue and a business asset that can enhance an organization's performance.

This research paper is significant as the diverse workplace in an organization can help promote innovation and creativity, better decision making and satisfied employees. Work groups that consist of a diverse set of employees, who bring diverse ideas, experiences, backgrounds, and viewpoints to the group can create new ideas and solutions and enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the organization. On the other hand, if a diversity management is not carried out well, there may be a lack of communication, conflict and lesser teamwork which can hinder the results of the performance.

This study is necessary given the continued problems many organizations have with achieving diversity and an organization's harmony and productivity. Understanding the link between workplace diversity and organizational performance can help managers create policies for their organizations to encourage diversity, promote inclusive workplace cultures and improve employee engagement. The study also provides insights into the role played by diversity aspects such as gender, age, ethnicity, educational attainment and cultural differences in teamwork, leadership and operational efficiency.

Furthermore, the study may prove to be beneficial in the context of business today, where diversity and inclusion programs are a central issue to growth and global competitiveness. The findings of the study can be used to shape policies, HRM and business decision making processes that maximize and minimize the positive and negative aspects of workplace diversity. As such, the study is academically as well as practically significant in the fields of HRM and OB.

Objectives of the Study

1. To discuss the concept and value of diversity in the workplace today.
2. To examine the effects of diversity in the workplace on organizational performance and productivity.
3. To test the correlation between diversity and employee creativity, innovation and teamwork.
4. To explore how inclusive workplace policies and practices affect employee satisfaction and retention.
5. To define the problems of the organizations in the effective management of workplace diversity.

Literature Review

The increasing globalization, multicultural workforces, and changing organizational structures make workplace diversity an important field of organizational research. Workplace diversity is defined as the variety of people in the workplace based on gender, age, ethnicity, education, culture, religion and professional experience. The impact of workplace diversity on organisational performance, employee productivity, creativity, innovation and effectiveness of decision-making has been extensively explored.

Cox and Blake (1991) proposed that organizations gain competitive benefits from having a diverse working environment as it boosts creativity, problem-solving skills, and market insight. The authors also stressed the importance of having a diverse organisation as they have more people contributing with their different perspectives and experiences, which helps them adapt to changing business conditions. Also, Thomas (1990) wrote that diversity management has positive effects on the effectiveness of the organizations by encouraging employees' participation and inclusive workplace practices.

Richard (2000) discussed racial diversity and organizational performance and determined that diversity can have a positive effect on organizational productivity if it is accompanied by effective growth strategies and inclusive organizational cultures. The study revealed that there is a correlation between diverse workforces and innovation and responsiveness to customer needs. In another study, Richard, Barnett, Dwyer, and Chadwick (2004) noted that, when managed appropriately, gender and racial diversity play a significant role in the competitiveness and operational efficiency of an organization.

Phipps, Prieto, and Osiri (2009) found that the impact of workplace diversity on the organizational performance is positive or negative based on the organizational climate and leadership practices. They proposed that building diversity climates that are supportive of diversity would enhance decision making quality, innovation and employee satisfaction.

Based on information from Curtis and Dreachlin (2008), an integrative literature review was performed on diversity management interventions and organizational performance. They found that diversity training, mentoring relationships, and HR strategies that promote diversity have a positive impact on teamwork, communication, and employee engagement. They also explained that effective diversity management can result in interpersonal conflict and communication gaps arising from inappropriate or ill-conceived diversity policies.

McMahon (2011) compiled empirical research on the relationship between workplace diversity and firm performance and found that there are industry and organization specific differences in diversity outcomes. The research revealed that, without the effective management practices, employee engagement, and inclusive leadership, workplace diversity is not a sure path to high performance.

In a meta-analytic review, Joshi and Roh (2009) discovered that the relationship between diversity and performance is moderated by the team and organizational context, including organizational culture, industry characteristics, and team structure. Their research indicated that diversity has more beneficial impact in knowledge-based and innovative industries.

A systematic literature review was used to analyse team diversity and team performance by Patrício and Franco (2022). The study revealed that knowledge diversity, cultural diversity, and functional diversity are positively correlated with creativity, innovation and organizational learning. Positive outcomes of workplace diversity are also deepened by effective communication and collaborative working environments, the authors added.

Handayani et al. (2017) analysed workplace diversity through the lens of achieving a competitive advantage. They considered that diversity enhances employee job performance, organizational flexibility and problem-solving ability. The authors underlined that the organizations which have effective diversity management practices have high employee retention and customer satisfaction.

Recent studies have also been on diversity climate and inclusion. A meta-analysis published in *Human Resource Management Review* (2026) reported that positive diversity climates enhance employee attitudes, workplace well-being, and organizational outcomes. The study pointed to the importance of leadership and HR policies to enhance the diversity-performance linkage.

Research also confirms the significance of workplace diversity for innovation performance, as it can lead to innovation capability and creativity due to the diverse knowledge and perspectives contributed by the employees (Østergaard and Timmermans, 2023).

The literature, overall, suggests that workplace diversity has significant positive impacts on organization performance such as creativity, innovation, decision-making, employee satisfaction and competitive advantage. The power of diversity relies primarily on the culture, inclusive leadership, communication, and diversity management within the organization. Current research indicates that strategic diversity effort is the key for organizations to reap the maximum benefits from a diverse workforce and avoid potential conflicts and miscommunications.

Material and Methodology

Research Design:

The study used descriptive and analytical research design in order to investigate the effect of diversity in the work organization on the performance of the organization. The key research areas were on the impact of diversity on employee productivity, teamwork, innovation, and organizational effectiveness in general in terms of gender, age, culture, education, and work experience. The analysis of the employee perceptions and organizational outcomes associated with diversity practices was a quantitative research approach. The purpose of this study was to analyze the link between the diversity management initiatives and the organizational performance indicators in different sectors.

Data Collection Methods:

Study used both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data was gathered using structured questionnaires which were sent to employees, HR professionals and managerial staff of different organizations. The questions in the questionnaire were close-ended and focused on work place diversity practices, employee engagement, communication effectiveness and organizational productivity. The secondary data were collected from research journals, books, company reports, government publications and online academic databases to assist with the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study. For interpretation of the collected data, statistical tools were used like percentage analysis, mean score, correlation and regression analysis.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria:

The study was conducted with workers and managers of companies that have an active workplace diversity and inclusion program. To gather diverse responses, respondents of varied ages, gender, education levels and work experience were taken. The study included organizations from a variety of industries, including IT, banking, education, healthcare, and manufacturing. But organisations without formal diversity policy and temporary workers and interns were not part of the study. To ensure reliability of the findings, questionnaires with incomplete data and inconsistent responses were not included in the data analysis process.

Ethical Considerations:

Ethical issues were taken care of during the research process. The survey was voluntary and informed the respondents about the study before the survey was conducted. The participant's confidentiality and anonymity were maintained, and personal information was not shared throughout the research. The information gathered was for academic research and participants were free to opt out of the study at any point. To ensure academic integrity and avoid plagiarism, appropriate reference to all other secondary data sources is provided.

Results and Discussion

Results:

This study focused on the effects of workplace diversity on organizational performance by measuring the employees' perceptions of diversity practices, inclusiveness, teamwork, communication, innovation, and productivity. Results from the data gathered from employees from various organizational segments indicated that workplace diversity has great impact on overall organizational effectiveness.

The results suggested that organizations with diverse workforces had enhanced creativity and innovations because of their multicultural, multiple-educational and multiple-professional workforce. More than half of the respondents felt that diversity fosters the sharing of ideas and enhances team problem solving.

The study also revealed that there was a positive correlation between workplace diversity and employee satisfaction. The employees working in the inclusive environment reported higher levels of motivation, interpersonal relationships and organizational commitment. Among the factors found to improve the collaboration and understanding among employees, gender

diversity and cultural diversity were specified.

Another significant finding of the study was the effect of diversity on the quality of decision making. The organizations that facilitated a diverse set of participants in managerial and operational activities had better strategic decisions and adaptability to market shifts. Participants believed that multi-national teams provide a broader lens and support the companies to be more responsive to customer needs and business challenges. It was also found that diversity is advantageous to the productivity and performance of the organization. Diversity and inclusion efforts led to higher employee engagement, lower turnover intent and better operational efficiency. The statistical analysis result showed that there was a significant positive correlation between the practices of workplace diversity and organizational performance indicators. The study also uncovered some impediments to diversity in the workplace. Communication barriers, cultural misunderstandings and resistance to change were observed among some of the organizations. Some of the respondents indicated that if there is a lack of effective diversity management, then interpersonal conflict and less coordination among employees was possible.

Discussion:

The research results show the importance of workplace diversity in today's work environment. The strong linkage between diversity and organizational performance is being leveraged to claim that diverse workforces can result in innovation and creativity, as well as a competitive advantage. Workforce diversity adds to the organisation's adaptability and learning from each person's experience and perspective. The findings are in line with current management theories, which emphasize on organizational culture as a tool to develop employee engagement and productivity. This, in addition, has advantages within the organization as well as in knowing the likes and dislikes of different customers and the trends in the global market. The study also highlights the importance of leadership and organizational policies for the effective management of workplace diversity. Organizations that hold inclusive communication and diversity training programs and have an equal opportunity policy are more likely to result in higher employee satisfaction and organizational success. An effective strategy for diversity management will help to minimize conflict and create a positive work environment. Further, the research confirms the relation between workplace diversity and enhanced decision making and innovation. Organic teams can create several answers to organization problems, thus leading to better strategic performance. This is a testament to the fact that diversity should be viewed as a business asset, and not as a business requirement.

The positive outcomes were achieved, but the issues raised in this study suggest that some of the key issues in the organization require appropriate diversity management strategies. Failure to create inclusive practices can hinder teamwork due to communication barriers and cultural differences. Thus, the management needs to be focused on increasing awareness among its employees, intercultural training, and communication system should be transparent to improve harmony at the workplace.

In conclusion, the study highlights that diversity in the workplace, with proper leadership, culture and policies, significantly positively impacts on organizational performance. The organizations that actively foster diversity will benefit in sustainable growth, better employee relations and competitive advantage in the long term.

Limitations of the study

There are some limitations to the study of the impact of diversity in the workplace on organizational performance. The research might have faced limitations due to the primary and secondary data received from the respondents and organizational sources that are available and reliable. The results may not be transferable to all sectors because of varied organizational culture, industry and workforce. Some dimensions of workplace diversity may not be fully explored, and the study is primarily concerned with selected dimensions of workplace diversity (gender, age, cultural diversity, and education diversity). Data could also be influenced by

respondents' personal opinion and perception. The consistency of the findings is also likely to be affected by any changes in organizational policies, economic conditions and practices over time that might impact employee perceptions and organizational outcomes. The generalizability of the results of this study may also be limited by the geographical scope and number of samples.

Future Scope

The scope of the study on “Influence of Workplace Diversity on Organizational Performance” is very broad and rich in the era of changing business environment and globalization. Future research could involve the implications of diversity in terms of cultural diversity, gender identity, age diversity, disability inclusion and multicultural team working on organizational innovation and long-term sustainability. Comparisons between companies, nationally and across the industry may provide a better understanding of the relationships between diversity initiatives and employee engagement, leadership and productivity. Artificial Intelligence, remote working and digital solutions for collaborative working can also be discussed to explore how these can aid the management of workplace Diversity. Future research might examine the relationship between diversity-based organisational policies, inclusive leadership practices and employee turnover, and organisational competitiveness. In tandem with this, longitudinal studies can help understand the lasting effects of diversity initiatives in organization development, ethical behavior and corporate visibility in the dynamic global market.

Conclusion

Workplace diversity is a significant factor in an organization's success in today's business world. The results of the study support the conclusion that gender, age, culture, educational background and professional experiences diversity can positively contribute to the creativity, innovativeness, decision-making and problem-solving skills of an organization. A diverse workforce helps organisations to better meet the market, improve employee engagement and increase the organisation's adaptability and agility in a global competitive market. The results also indicate that the inclusive practices in the workplace boost employee satisfaction, cooperation, and performance, which further boosts organizational effectiveness. However, a positive organisational culture, an effective communication, equal opportunities and leadership are essential to successful diversity management. Without adequate diversity management, companies could find themselves with issues like communication problems, decreased coordination, and interpersonal conflict. The report also reminds companies that those that proactively embrace diversity and inclusion experience long-term strategic benefits, such as greater innovation and better talent retention and reputation. Therefore it is important that workplace diversity becomes, besides a legal and ethical duty, an asset that contributes to the sustainable growth and performance of the organisation. Last but not least, it is an essential feature for any company's long-term success, competitiveness and overall performance in today's fast-changing business landscape to have a diverse and inclusive workforce.

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