# Workplace Diversity and Faculty Performance in a Higher Education Institution in the Philippines

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**Abstract: Workplace Diversity and Faculty Performance in a Higher Education Institution.** **Objectives:** This study aimed to identify the relationship between workplace diversity and faculty performance in Eastern Samar State University. **Methods:** The research employed a quantitative research design utilizing descriptive and correlational approaches. **Findings:** The results revealed a weak positive correlation between the level of workplace diversity and faculty performance, but the link between the two variables were not found to be significant. The findings of this study suggest that while workplace diversity may have an impact on employee performance, it may not be the only factor in determining performance. **Conclusion:** This research highlights the importance of organizations to focus on creating a diverse and inclusive workplace. While workplace diversity may have an impact on employee performance, it may not be the only factor in determining performance, therefore there is a need for further studies to explore the relationship between diversity and performance in different contexts.

**Keywords:** workplace diversity, faculty performance, higher education, correlation analysis.


*Abstrak: Keberagaman Tempat Kerja dan Kinerja Fakultas di Institusi Pendidikan Tinggi. Tujuan: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengidentifikasi hubungan antara keragaman tempat kerja dan kinerja fakultas di Eastern Samar State University. Metode: Penelitian ini menggunakan desain penelitian kuantitatif dengan pendekatan deskriptif dan korelasional. Temuan: Hasilnya mengungkapkan korelasi positif yang lemah antara tingkat keragaman tempat kerja dan kinerja fakultas, tetapi hubungan antara kedua variabel tersebut tidak ditemukan signifikan. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa sementara keragaman tempat kerja mungkin berdampak pada kinerja karyawan, itu mungkin bukan satu-satunya faktor dalam menentukan kinerja. Kesimpulan: Penelitian ini menyoroti pentingnya organisasi untuk fokus menciptakan tempat kerja yang beragam dan inklusif. Sementara keragaman di tempat kerja mungkin berdampak pada kinerja karyawan, itu mungkin bukan satu-satunya faktor dalam menentukan kinerja, oleh karena itu diperlukan studi lebih lanjut untuk mengeksplorasi hubungan antara keragaman dan kinerja dalam konteks yang berbeda.*

*Kata kunci: keberagaman tempat kerja, kinerja fakultas, pendidikan tinggi, analisis korelasi.*

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■ **INTRODUCTION**

The modern workforce is far more varied and diverse in composition than previous generations. The success of any organization is dependent on its employees or workforce because they carry out and execute the organization's goals and objectives. The term "diversity" refers to a wide range of human differences such as, but not limited to, age, race, gender, abilities, education, disabilities, culture, and religion (Srivastava & Agarwal, 2012). Over the last few years, it became clear that organizations pursued workforce diversity as a competitive necessity, recognizing and employing it as one of the most important factors. Any institution that wants to be successful must have a big picture and a strong commitment to making workforce diversity a part of their day-to-day operations. Workforce diversity can present both significant challenges and opportunities for the organization (Childs, 2005). Valuing diversity provides distinct advantages to organization and ignoring diversity has specific costs. Bedi et al., (2014) indicates some of the consequences of ignoring diversity in an organization is unhealthy tensions between individuals of different culture or race, loss of productivity as a result in increased conflict and inability to retain talented employees. He continues by saying that effective diversity management is not always ensured by competent management alone. Many managers in an organization have long believed that setting a good example as managers or bosses fosters camaraderie in the workplace. Due to management's ignorance of the primary issue, poor diversity management has been tolerated in the workplace, and as a result, no remedy has been developed. Studies show that organizations with high levels of well managed diversity are effective and steering ultimately producing corporate cultures that have new perspectives, pioneering capabilities, and fresh ideas which are necessary to survive (Childs Jr, 2005). Organizations with high levels of well managed diversity are effective and steering ultimately producing corporate cultures that have new perspectives, pioneering capabilities, and fresh ideas which are necessary to survive (Childs Jr, 2005).

Diversity in the workplace can benefit companies in several ways. Diverse teams tend to boost creativity and innovation as multiple perspectives and unique life experiences are brought to the table. This also leads to increased opportunities for professional growth as employees are exposed to new skills and approaches to work, and the company can attract a more diverse pool of talented and ambitious professionals. Diversity also leads to better decision-making as diverse teams are better at making decisions 87% of the time compared to non-diverse teams. They bring broader perspectives and more information to the table, and are better able to meet the needs of a diverse customer base. Despite these benefits, 57% of employees feel their company could do more to embrace diversity, and 41% of managers admit to being too busy to implement diversity inclusion programs (Stahl, 2021). The paper of Saxena (2014) analyzes the impact of workforce diversity on an organization's productivity. It concludes that while diversity can bring strength to the organization, managing a diverse workforce can be challenging. Despite this, a diversified workforce is a necessity in today's scenario. The research shows that people often hold on to their biases related to factors such as caste and religion, which can lead them to view diversity as a problem. However, proper management of diversity can lead to increased productivity.

Jayawardana and Priyashantha (2019) noted that studies on workforce diversity has not been paid enough attention and very few research correlates it to employee performance. This has

prompted the researcher to determine if there is a relationship between workplace diversity and faculty performance in a higher education institution setup. The study focused on identifying the relationship between workplace diversity and faculty performance in Eastern Samar State University. The research aimed to determine the level of workplace diversity in terms of diversity and inclusion, equal opportunities and inclusion, and discrimination in the workplace. The study also aimed to determine faculty performance for the last two evaluation periods and to determine if there was a significant relationship between workplace diversity and faculty performance. The research employed a quantitative research design utilizing descriptive and correlational approaches to gather and analyze data, in order to answer the research questions and achieve the study's objectives.

**Hypothesis:**

$H_0$: There is no significant relationship between workplace diversity and faculty performance.

■ **METHODS**

**Participants**

A total of 30 faculty members served as participants of the research. The participants were faculty members from three (3) colleges in Eastern Samar State University, specifically, the College of Computer Studies, College of Engineering and College of Technology. They were chosen using convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is a method of selecting participants for a study in which those who fit certain criteria, like being easily accessible or willing to participate, are chosen, regardless of their likelihood of being representative of the larger population. It is a non-random or nonprobability sampling technique, also referred to as Haphazard Sampling or Accidental Sampling.

**Research Design**

The study will employ a quantitative research design utilizing descriptive and correlational approaches. The descriptive-correlational approach approach described the level of workplace diversity and faculty performance. The steps in conducting a descriptive research design include formulating the research question, reviewing the literature, defining the population and sample, developing the research instrument, collecting the data, analyzing the data using descriptive statistics, reporting the results, drawing conclusions, and making recommendations based on the findings. The first step involves identifying the research question or problem and determining the scope and direction of the study. The literature review provides background information and helps to identify gaps in current knowledge. The population and sample are defined and the research instrument, such as a survey questionnaire, is developed, pilot tested or adapted when an existing questionnaire is utilized. The data is collected and analyzed, the results are reported, conclusions are drawn, and recommendations are made based on the findings.

**Instrumentation**

This research will utilize the questionnaire on workplace diversity developed by Agbontaen (2019). Although the questionnaire has been validated, it will be adapted to suit the specific context of Eastern Samar State University. The adapted questionnaire will be divided into three parts, namely, diversity and inclusion (12 items), equal opportunities and inclusion (8 items), and discrimination in the workplace (8 items). Each item in the questionnaire will be rated on a five-point Likert scale, with options ranging from "Strongly Agree" to "Strongly Disagree". The results of the pilot study indicated a high level of validity for the adapted questionnaire with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.81, which is

well above the acceptable level of 0.7. The final version of the questionnaire was the one used and administered to the faculty members to collect data for analysis.

**Data Analysis**

After the data collection, the first step in the analysis of the data is encoding the raw inputs into a spreadsheet software, such as Microsoft Excel or Google Sheets. This will allow for efficient calculation of descriptive statistics to determine the level of workplace diversity and the mean performance of the faculty members in the last two years. Once the data is organized in a spreadsheet, descriptive statistics can be calculated to summarize the data. For example, the mean, standard deviation, and frequency of the workplace diversity and faculty performance

scores can be calculated. This will provide a basic understanding of the distribution of the data and help identify any outliers or skewness in the data. After descriptive statistics, Pearson r correlation can be calculated to test the correlation coefficient of the two variables (workplace diversity and faculty performance). The Pearson *r* correlation coefficient ranges from -1 to 1 and indicates the strength and direction of the relationship between two variables. A value of 1 indicates a strong positive correlation, a value of -1 indicates a strong negative correlation, and a value of 0 indicates no correlation. The correlation results can be used to determine if there is a significant relationship between workplace diversity and faculty performance in Eastern Samar State University.

**Table 1.** Range level of workplace diversity

| Level of Workplace Diversity | |
|---|---|
| 4.20-5.00 | Very High Level of Diversity |
| 3.40-4.19 | High Level of Diversity |
| 2.60-3.39 | Moderate Level of Diversity |
| 1.80-2.59 | Low Level of Diversity |
| 1.00-1.79 | Very Low Level of Diversity |

**Table 2.** Range for level of faculty performance

| Level of Faculty Performance | |
|---|---|
| 4.20-5.00 | Outstanding (O) |
| 3.40-4.19 | Very Satisfactory (VS) |
| 2.60-3.39 | Satisfactory (S) |
| 1.80-2.59 | Fair (F) |
| 1.00-1.79 | Poor  (P) |

■ **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

After conducting a comprehensive analysis of the data, the following results were obtained: The grand mean for Diversity and Inclusion is 3.81, interpreted as high level of diversity. It can be noted that the scores are high in items where employees experiences diversity the most. Some of these items are the conduct of activities that

promote diversity, the offering of equal opportunities for projects and tasks, the ability of employees to rise from the ranks. Cox & Blake (1991) stressed the need of a heterogeneous workplace. In an experiment they conducted, where a homogenous group was compared to a heterogeneous group was compared, results indicated that as long as the

team members had similar ability levels, the heterogeneous teams were more creative than the homogeneous ones. Furthermore, Holiday et al. (2003) mentioned that conducting activities related to diversity is important to achieve competitive advantage. Bezrukova et al. (2016), conducted a study that looked into 40 years of research on diversity and inclusion training, and mentioned that diversity and inclusion programs have the potential to effectively tackle biases and prejudices within organizations. According to Wong (2020), when employees feel included, their engagement increases. As a result, they are more likely to go above and beyond for the organization, leading to improvements in profitability, team morale, and employee retention. Additionally, people in inclusive workplaces tend to have better physical and mental health and take fewer leaves for health-related reasons.

Analysis of the Equal Opportunities and Inclusion part of the instrument revealed a grand mean of 3.49, interpreted as high level of diversity. Items such as guarantee for employee promotion and the implementation of equal opportunity policy got the highest score. This implies that employees believe that there is a policy in place for promotion and that the institution is not biased in terms of other attributes in hiring employees. This policy is in compliance with RA 10524 Sec 5 which states that "*No person with disability shall be denied access to opportunities for suitable employment. A qualified employee with disability shall be subject to the same terms and conditions of employment and the same compensation*, privileges, benefits, fringe benefits, incentives or allowances as a qualified able bodied person". Raghavi and Gopinathan (2013), mentioned that for institutions to have competitive advantage they must show that they foster the equal employment opportunities by recognizing the importance of sustaining an Equal Opportunity culture. Patry (2022) mentioned that

by being recognized as an equal opportunity employer, you show your dedication to promoting fair and impartial practices in hiring and managing employees. This designation communicates to both current employees and job seekers the importance you place on equality and fairness. Having an equal opportunity policy can also enhance your organization's reputation, building trust with employees, clients, and investors.

Discrimination in workplace resulted to grand mean of 3.79, interpreted as high level of diversity. Scores in items that focus on the participation of women in various activities and the ability of employees to participate in decision making got the highest score. This implies that women are free to participate in any academic and non-academic activity in the university. Furthermore, all employees are part in the conduct of annual strategic planning, where they can provide inputs to improve their workplace. It is important for employers to manage discrimination because according to Elei (2016), discrimination affects the cohesion and reduces creativity in the organization while Clark et al. (2021) stressed that discrimination has been linked to a range of negative health outcomes, including psychological distress, depression and anxiety, as well as physical health problems like cardiometabolic diseases. It also leads to lower job satisfaction, decreased organizational commitment, and decreased work efficiency, resulting in significant costs for both individuals and society.

Table 3.0 shows that most of the employees obtained a rating of very satisfactory (grand mean 4.2). This means that employees specifically faculty members were able to hit their targets in terms of their 3-fold core functions in instruction research and extension. The need to perform better is driven by the mandate of the Department of Budget and Management to achieve certain targets to qualify for the performance based bonus.

**Table 3.** Employee average performance from last 2 rating periods

| Employee | Score | Interpretation | Employee | Score | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 4.8 | Outstanding | 16 | 3.5 | Very Satisfactory |
| 2 | 4.6 | Outstanding | 17 | 3.5 | Very Satisfactory |
| 3 | 4.1 | Very Satisfactory | 18 | 4.1 | Very Satisfactory |
| 4 | 4.4 | Outstanding | 19 | 4.1 | Very Satisfactory |
| 5 | 4.4 | Outstanding | 20 | 3.9 | Very Satisfactory |
| 6 | 4.4 | Outstanding | 21 | 4.0 | Very Satisfactory |
| 7 | 4.3 | Outstanding | 22 | 4.4 | Outstanding |
| 8 | 4.8 | Outstanding | 23 | 4.1 | Very Satisfactory |
| 9 | 4.7 | Outstanding | 24 | 3.9 | Very Satisfactory |
| 10 | 4.1 | Very Satisfactory | 25 | 4.0 | Very Satisfactory |
| 11 | 4.8 | Outstanding | 26 | 4.1 | Very Satisfactory |
| 12 | 4.7 | Outstanding | 27 | 4.1 | Very Satisfactory |
| 13 | 4.1 | Very Satisfactory | 28 | 4.5 | Outstanding |
| 14 | 3.1 | Satisfactory | 29 | 4.0 | Very Satisfactory |
| 15 | 4.4 | Very Satisfactory | 30 | 4.0 | Very Satisfactory |
| **Grand Mean** | **4.2** | | | | **VS** |

The table below shows the result of the Pearson r correlation. The test of relationship resulted to an r score of 0.4131 which according to Moore et al (2013) can be interpreted as weak positive correlation. However, all the p-value of all variables resulted to a score of which is higher than 0.05 level of significance. This result means that the H0 cannot be rejected. Therefore, there is no significant relationship between workplace diversity and faculty performance. This result is consistent with the research of Jayne and Diboye (2004). They claimed that simply having a diverse workforce does not always result in the positive outcomes that are frequently claimed by some of the more optimistic proponents, and they identified four major gaps between diversity rhetoric and research findings: 1) increased diversity does not always improve the talent pool; 2) increased diversity does not always foster commitment, increase motivation, and decrease conscientiousness; and 3) increased diversity does not always lead to better organizational performance. A study conducted by Gallego, Garcia, and Rodriguez in 2010 found that institutions with higher gender and ethnic diversity did not perform better than organizations with lower levels of ethnic and gender diversity based on the results of a survey. Furthermore, Martin (2014) noted that one unfavorable consequence of cultural diversity at work is that employees are more likely to engage in interpersonal confrontations. The perspectives, attitudes, beliefs, norms, conventions, values, trends, and practices of culturally diverse employees vary. The same results were also noted in the research of Ahmad and Rahman (2019) that found out that having a diverse workforce in terms of age, gender, and ethnicity has a negative relationship on employee performance.

**Table 4.** Pearson correlation result

| | Coefficients | Standard Error | t Stat | P-value | r | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Intercept | 2.7381 | 0.7417 | 3.6918 | 0.00104 | 0.4131 | Not significant |
| Diversity and Inclusion | 0.2441 | 0.3709 | 0.6582 | 0.5162 | | |
| Equal Opportunities and Inclusion | 0.1383 | 0.2532 | 0.5460 | 0.5897 | | |
| Discrimination in the Workplace | -0.0262 | 0.4682 | -0.0561 | 0.9557 | | |

## CONCLUSIONS

This research primarily aimed at determining the level of diversity and faculty performance of employees in Eastern Samar State University. The research also aimed at determining whether level of diversity is correlated to the faculty performance. Results revealed that there is a weak positive correlation (r=0.4131) between the two variables. However, the test of relationship revealed all variables on work diversity and faculty performance are not significant. Indeed, a plethora of research has proven that organizations with diverse employees are better suited to serve diverse external customers in an increasingly global market. However, homogeneity of skills, knowledge and attitudes is also beneficial in different workplaces specifically in the academe. For the most part, the effects of diversity in the workplace depend upon how well they are being managed by the organizational leaders. With proper strategic planning, top management can enhance the positive effects and reduce the negative effects of diversity in the workplace.

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