



IJRACM

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS IN COMMERCE AND MANAGEMENTWeb: <https://www.iarj.in/index.php/ijracm/issue/archive>

21. It Professionals' Perception on Workforce Diversity and its Impact on Job Performance in Chennai City

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ABSTRACT

One of the most important and widespread issues that businesses are currently facing is adapting to people who are different. Workforce diversity is the term we use to characterize this issue.

Diversity in the workforce suggests that age, gender, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation are being increasingly represented in businesses. A diverse workforce includes people who are elderly, physically disabled, women, Black Americans, Indians, Colored people, and gays and lesbians.

Managing all of this diversity is now a global concern. The purpose of this study is to learn more about how IT employees in Tamil Nadu, especially in Chennai, perceive workforce diversity and how it affects their ability to do their jobs. The study examined how employees evaluated their job performance with respect to two key factors: diversity in work experience and educational background.

The study of both primary and secondary data forms the basis of this research article. For data analysis, the research employed simple percentage analysis, mean variance, and ANOVA. Additionally, this survey has revealed a number of recommendations made by IT professionals to enhance workforce diversity.

KEYWORDS

Educational qualification, Impact, Job performance, Perception, Work experience, Workforce diversity.

Introduction:

An entity that has cultivated an eclectic workforce is one that comprises a wide range of individuals. People of varying races, sexual orientations, financial backgrounds, ages, genders, faiths, and other intrinsic differences among individuals might be considered diverse in the workplace. It may also simply refer to persons with distinct personalities and ways of handling events. Incorporate introverts and extroverts, for instance. In order for a business to ideally create a workforce that consists of all of the aforementioned, it is critical that individuals understand what workforce diversity means. It is important to align the organization's diversity and inclusion plan with its overarching aims and values in order to foster a varied workforce. The research focuses on the idea of how workers perceive workforce diversity and the effects it would have on job performance in Tamil Nadu, especially in Chennai, IT companies. In order to examine employee views of workforce diversity and look into each diversity component that influences employee performance, a literature review and identification of workforce diversity factors will be conducted. This study is restricted to investigating how workers' views of workforce diversity affect job performance in relation to two diversity factors: diversity in work experience and diversity in educational background. The report also asks workers for their opinions on further diversity-enhancing initiatives.

Review of Literature:

According to Jaqueline Siwale and Crispin Kukano (2020), demonstrated that employee performance and, ultimately, organizational output were influenced by both age and gender diversity. Workers were observed to be at comfortable while cooperating with both younger and older colleagues. Some recognized the benefits of working in teams with people of all ages because it increased their production. Companies that provide a friendly atmosphere to all employees, regardless of gender, and regulations that prohibit workplace discrimination may benefit from gender diversity. There is a clear link between job performance, gender diversity, and employee satisfaction with their employment. Krithi and Pai, Ramesh (2020) confined their study to the concepts of diversity and inclusion, as well as the different elements of diversity and the approaches used by Wipro Ltd. In addition, the study makes recommendations on how to improve workplace inclusion and diversity. The ABCD analytical paradigm has been used by researchers to investigate diversity and inclusion. Richa Goel, (2019) According to the study's findings, the majority of the staff in the institution is young, and the institution maintains a combination of expertise and fresh abilities. The study's potential findings were sparked by how demographic, cultural; diversity administration initiatives and diversity governmental tasks relate to the execution of HRM practices. The analyst eventually justifies international companies to inform, equip, and provide counseling to future generations in order to overcome specific challenges for future CEOs and assert developing operates in the step of expansion and challenging technological advances as well as culture. Hubbard. E. E. (2005) he discusses how to determine diversity, independent of how it relates to recruitment, publicity, and retention. He distinguishes four categories of variety: labor diversity, behavioral diversity, trade diversity, and fundamental variation. M. Jayne, R. L. Dipboye, (2004) this article gives HR professionals tips on how to successfully manage diversity programs and improve their effectiveness, in addition to outlining the theoretical and empirical data supporting the link between workforce diversity and organizational performance.

Objectives of the Study:

- To determine how workers perceive workforce diversity by working in diverse educational background.
- To investigate how employees perceive workforce diversity by their work experience
- To determine the impact of workforce diversity on job performance as perceived by personnel.

Research Methodology:

In Chennai, Tamil Nadu, the current research was conducted. November 2023 saw the completion of the study. Both primary and secondary data sources were used in this study. A self-made, structured questionnaire was utilized in the study and was circulated using Google forms. Journals, internet, books, dissertations, and other sources provided secondary data. The convenience sampling technique was used to choose 100 individuals to participate from the IT organizations, making the sample size one hundred. ANOVA, mean variance, and simple percentage analysis were used as statistical methods for data interpretation.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

This section includes data analysis and interpretation based on questionnaire results. The following analysis relates to the study's several aims.

Demographic Profile:

The respondents' profiles were assessed in terms of age, gender, educational qualification, monthly salary, and job experience.

Table 5.1: Demographic factors of the respondents

Demographic Factors	Classification	No. of. Respondents (N=100)	Percentage
Age	20-30	35	35%
	31-40	40	40%
	41-50	18	18%
	above 50 years	7	7%
Gender	Male	54	54%
	Female	46	46%
	Others	0	0
Educational Qualification	School level	5	5%
	Under graduate	48	48%
	Post graduate	35	35%
	Others	12	12%
Monthly Income	Below 10000	2	2%
	10000-21000	38	38%
	21000-30000	47	47%

Demographic Factors	Classification	No. of Respondents (N=100)	Percentage
	31000-40000	10	10%
	Above 40000	3	3%
Work Experience	Less than 5 years	33	33%
	5-10	50	50%
	11-20	8	8%
	Above 20 years	9	9%
Position in the organization	Senior manager	14	14%
	Manager	25	25%
	Senior executive	10	10%
	Executive	21	21%
	Fresher	30	30%

Source: Computed data

Interpretation: For this research, respondents were classified based on their different demographic traits. Based on this, it can be deduced that the majority of responders (40%) were between the ages of 31 and 40. Males outnumbered females 54% to 46%. According to their educational qualifications, 48% of them were undergraduates. In terms of monthly income, 47% of respondents earn between Rs.21, 000 and 30,000. According to the data, the majority of respondents had 5 to 10 years of work experience. According to employment status, 30% of respondents were freshers.

5.2 The study's initial goal is to evaluate how workers' educational backgrounds impact their view of workforce diversity. The data based on the stated objective is shown in the table below.

Table: 5.2.1: Positive factors as perceived by employees working in adverse educational background

Factors	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Reduced conflicts	18	18%
Combating prejudice	16	16%
Overcome inferiority or superiority complex	27	27%
Develop tolerance	22	22%
None	17	17%
Total	100	100%

Source: Computed data

Interpretation: According to the above analysis, the majority of respondents 27% said they can get over feelings of inferiority or superiority complex; 22% that they can learn to tolerate; 18% that they can choose to reduce conflicts; 17% that they can do none of the aforementioned things; and, at the very least, 16% that they can fight prejudice.

Table: 5.2.2: Challenges as perceived by employees working in adverse educational background

Factors	No. of. respondents	Percentage
Lack of confidence	19	19%
Biased pay-scale	16	16%
Conflicts & ego issues with colleagues	31	36%
Opinions aren't valued	19	14%
None	15	15%
Total	100	100%

Source: Computed data

Interpretation: According to the research, 36% of workers reported conflicts and ego issues with coworkers, while 19% reported a lack of confidence, 14% claimed that their opinions are not appreciated, 16% claimed a biased pay-scale, and the other 15% reported none of the above difficulties.

5.3 Analyzing the ways in which workers' experiences on the workplace affect their opinions on workforce diversity was the second goal. The data gathered from the respondents is shown in the following table.

Table: 5.3.1: Preference given to experience as perceived by employees in decision making and problem solving

Factors	No. of. Respondents	Percentage
Freshers	15	15%
Experienced employees	48	48%
Both are given equal preference	37	37%
Total	100	100%

Source: Computed data

Interpretation: According to the aforementioned data, 48% of respondents claimed experienced workers are given more preference, 37% said both are given equal preference, and just 15% said freshers are given more preference.

Table: 5.3.2: Challenges as perceived by employees that persist between freshers and experienced

Factors	No. of. respondents	Percentage
Communication barrier	20	20%
Work delay due to experience gap	17	17%

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Factors	No. of respondents	Percentage
Seniority is given more importance	19	19%
Freshers aren't included in decision-making	18	18%
Experienced employees feel inferior when freshers are more talented	16	16%
No issues at all	10	10%
Total	100	100%

Source: Computed data

Interpretation: Based on the aforementioned analysis, the majority of respondents (20%) chose a communication barrier; 19% said seniority is given more weight; 18% said freshers aren't included in decision-making;

17% said work is delayed because of experience gap; 16% said experienced employees feel inferior when freshers are more talented; and the least number of respondents 16% said there is no problem at all.

5.4 The third goal is to determine the impact of workforce diversity on job performance as perceived by personnel.

The information gathered through a questionnaire based on this goal is shown in the following table.

Table: 5.4.1: Perceived impact of workforce diversity on job performance

Factors	No. of respondents	Percentage
Positive impact	66	66%
Negative impact	15	15%
No impact	19	19%
Total	100	100%

Source: Computed data

Interpretation: Based on the aforementioned study, it was determined that a majority of 66% of the respondents reported a positive influence, while 15% indicated a negative impact, and the remaining 19% said that it had no effect on their work performance.

Table: 5.4.2: Suggestions made by employees to improve workforce diversity Mean value of suggestions to improve workforce diversity

	Provide diversity training programs	Celebrate employee difference	Incorporate diversification policies	Adopt diversity and inclusion technology	Reward diverse referrals
Valid	100	100	100	100	100
Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	3.90	3.79	3.84	3.83	3.95
Std. Deviation	1.115	1.175	1.187	1.120	1.158

Source: Computed data

Interpretation: Based on the data presented in the table above, it can be deduced that the recommendation to reward diverse referrals garners the maximum level of agreement with mean value 3.95 regarding ways to enhance workforce diversity. Then, diversity training programs with a mean value of 3.90, which is between 3 and 4, are provided, indicating neutral and significant. In contrast, the mean value of 3.84 ranks third among policies that incorporate diversification. Adopt diversity and inclusion technology is ranked second with a mean value of 3.83, and celebrate employee difference is ranked third with a mean value of 3.79 to hold the final spot.

(H0): There is no significant difference between work experience and suggestions to improve workforce diversity amongst employees.

Table 5.4.3: ANOVA between work experience and suggestions to improve workforce diversity

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Provide diversity training programs	Between Groups	8.532	3	2.844	2.385	.074
	Within Groups	114.468	96	1.192		
	Total	123.000	99			
Celebrate employee difference	Between Groups	3.685	3	1.228	.887	.451
	Within Groups	132.905	96	1.384		
	Total	136.590	99			
Incorporate diversification policies	Between Groups	11.440	3	3.813	2.860	.041

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		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Within Groups	128.000	96	1.333		
	Total	139.440	99			
Adopt diversity and inclusion technology	Between Groups	2.495	3	.832	.657	.581
	Within Groups	121.615	96	1.267		
	Total	124.110	99			
Reward diverse referrals	Between Groups	2.917	3	.972	.719	.543
	Within Groups	129.833	96	1.352		
	Total	132.750	99			

Source: Computed data

Interpretation: Based on the data in the table above, it can be deduced that the p-values of 0.543, 0.07, 0.451, and 0.581 are all greater than 0.05. Therefore, there is no discernible difference between work experience and providing diversity training programs, celebrate employee diversity, adopting diversity and inclusion technology, and rewarding diverse referrals.

Since the p-value associated with the inclusion of diversification policies is 0.041, which is below the significance level of 0.05, this hypothesis is supported: there is a single significant difference between recommendations to enhance workforce diversity and work experience. As a result, the null hypothesis is supported.

Scope For Further Research:

The purpose of this perception-based study was to ascertain how employees viewed a limited number of diversity-related factors that have an impact on workplace job performance. While the study primarily examined two criteria for workforce diversity: education and work experience it could have been further extended to encompass a wide range of additional work force diversity parameters that provide a more comprehensive assessment of the firm's work performance. The research for this study was quantitative in nature, as it solely relied on questionnaires to ascertain the study's findings. In the future, researchers may choose to conduct qualitative research studies. This may result in a variety of outcomes.

The research study exclusively focused on IT companies located in the city of Chennai, and a subset of seven companies was chosen for inclusion in the research. To increase the dissemination of this discovery, studies should be conducted in additional sectors, including manufacturing, service, and so forth.

Suggestions and Conclusion:

The researcher examined the perception of IT professionals regarding workforce diversity and its influence on employee job performance in this study. Determining the perspectives of employees within business organizations regarding "others" is of utmost importance in the current era of rapid multicultural and multinational IT industry developments. Educational attainment and professional experience were variables that were assessed in research. The analysis performed has provided answers to the research questions and accomplished the study's objectives. As perceived by the employees, workforce diversity positively impacted job performance, according to the findings of the study. By fostering an environment that values and accommodates differences, the workplace can be strengthened more effectively, resulting in increased productivity.

Diversity management promotes a secure and equitable environment wherein all individuals are afforded equal access to challenges and opportunities, thereby benefiting the workforce. Management techniques should be employed to educate all members of an adverse workforce regarding diversity and its associated challenges, including legal and regulatory aspects. Organizations that wish to achieve success must acquire the ability to adapt, given that the majority of employees come from diverse backgrounds.

As a whole, the impact of employee performance was marginally positive and statistically significant with regard to the two dimensions of workforce diversity: work experience diversity and educational background diversity.

As a result, the study's findings indicate that employees' job performance is enhanced as a result of the positive influence that employees have on the development of the organization regarding workforce diversity. In order to increase workforce diversity, the research examined a variety of suggestions made by the workers, including offering diversity training programs, including diversification policies, celebrating employee differences, implementing diversity and inclusion technologies, and rewarding diverse referrals.

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