The Effect of Workforce Diversity Management on Organizational Performance: The Case of Four Universities in Ethiopia

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Received: 10 April 2023
Revision: 19 May 2023
Accepted: 12 June 2023

ABSTRACT: The objective of this study was to explore the degree of association between workforce diversity dimensions and academic performance of four universities in Ethiopia. The diversity management attributes assessed were diversity Climate, values and organizational justice; and identity, schemas and communication with adaptation to the contexts of the higher education institutions in Ethiopia. The Full account of these diversity management dimensions is presented in detail in the methodology section of this paper. The sample universities were selected purposively, and stratified and systematic sampling techniques were further used to identify respondents. The number of respondents that took part in the study was 386. Quantitative and qualitative data were collected to test the various study hypotheses. Descriptive statistics and simple correlation analyses were used to analyze the data. The demographic features of the staff working in the four case study universities was found to be diverse with regard to gender, marital status, age and religion. The agreement level of the staff with regard to the prevalence of diversity management dimension in their university was found to above the ideal average. The mean values of the Likert scale response ranged from 3.72 (with standard deviation of 0.98) for ‘organizational justice’ to 4.12 (with standard deviation of 0.74) for diversity management dimension designated as ‘values.’ Results from Pearson correlation analysis revealed that there are statistically significant positive correlations between the dimensions of workforce diversity and organizational performance. This implies that organizational performance of higher education institutions can be significantly and positively influenced by extant diversity. The practical implication of this is that attention needs to be given to the fair distribution of resources to the teaching staff working in these universities in the future. The freedom to express one’s own identity in the university workforce landscape was also observed to be limited in the universities studied and this has to be also improved. A democratic work environment is critical for the productivity of the staff to be enhanced and an effort has to be towards the goal of creating such an environment. The relationship between diversity management attributes (diversity climate, organizational justice, identity, values, schemas and communication) and overall academic performance was also determined, and the result indicated that there is statistically significant (P<0.00) positive correlations between workforce diversity and academic performance.

Keywords: Workforce diversity, organizational performance, Diversity Climate, Value, Organizational Justice, Identity, Schemas, Communication
backgrounds are joining the work force of organizations, increasing the diversity of the workforce. Organizations have a diverse range of people, and as a result, diversity can impact many aspects of the organization (Swasto, 2016). Organizations must increase workforce diversity and hire personnel with diverse backgrounds. In addition, they must create a diversity strategy to avoid workplace discrimination (Carr, 2013).

Workforce diversity refers to the range of demographic traits, notably in terms of age, gender, color, origin, ethnicity and culture, among others that make up an organization’s workforce. Different people come with different viewpoints and provide a wide range of options to challenge obstacles. Therefore, it can be argued that having a diverse workforce and managing it properly is an important factor on improving organizational performance (Dessler, 2011). Workplace diversity is thought to foster innovation and creativity in organizations (Taylor, 2011). Thus, managing workforce diversity effectively is crucial strategy for organizations such as universities where the level of worker diversity is relatively high. To improve organizational performance and efficiency among the people recruited from a varied background, institutionalizing workforce diversity management is thus vital (Beytekin et al., 2010).

Workforce diversity and its management are supposed to affect organizational performance. Employee performance in turn is the action of the employee towards specific task which gives rise to positive or negative institutional performance outcomes. Pitts (2009) states that workforce diversity management is strongly linked to employee performance. Positive diversity climate, which is the outcome of a well-managed diversity, was reported to lead to higher job performance (Zhou, Liu and Liu, 2022). Moon and Christensen (2019) as well reported that diversity management reinforces employees’ performance, which in turn leads to better organizational outcome. Furthermore, diversity management is thought to help reconfigure employees in accordance with their expertise and specialization which eventually leads to higher employee performance. In this way, workforce diversity management maintains a favorable working environment by providing the employees merit-based job for effective utilization of skills owned by the workforce for better performance (Park and Liang, 2019). Also, diversity management was reported to result in an organizational environment where discrimination on the basis of once particular personal attributes would not transpire. Also, it was argued that diversity management creates a positive working environment (Madera, 2016), which is in turn believed to enhance employee and organizational performance. Other studies also indicated that well-managed diversity would lead to superior employees’ and workgroup performance (Munjuri and Maina, 2013). The above assertions thus led to the hypothesis that well-managed workforce diversity would lead to enhanced organizational performance.

Van Knippenberg and Shippers (2007) argued that effective management of workforce diversity would enable organizational members’ competitiveness, improved work performance, innovativeness, and creativity. The objectives the present studies thus were: (1) to examine how the Workforce Diversity Management is perceived in HEIs in Ethiopia; (2) examine the relationship of Workforce Diversity Management and organizational performance of the Ethiopia HEIs. It was endeavored to answer two research questions. (1) How is workplace diversity management perceived in the Ethiopian public HEIs; (2) what is the effect of workforce diversity management and organizational performance in selected universities in Ethiopia?

2. Conceptual Model

Research on workplace diversity in HEIs and on the effect of such diversity on organizational performance is very important. This is because the evidence generated from such works is used as input for informed decision-making that would help create viable organizational climate. In the same way, organizational leadership is vital in leveraging the benefits of workplace diversity. Effective leadership in diverse organizations leads to a number of organizational advantages, including better inclusiveness, increased creativity and innovation, better decision-making capabilities, which eventually leads to superior organizational performance gains. Organizational leadership has been
viewed as a transaction between a leader and his subordinates, and also as a process of influencing people towards a particular employee and organizational objectives. This study is aimed at determining the direct effect of workplace diversity management (DM) on organizational performance. The conceptual model of the study is depicted in the Figure 1.

3. Literature Review
3.1 Workforce Diversity and Diversity Management

Workforce diversity is defined in both narrow and broad senses. In the narrow sense, it is defined as the degree of heterogeneity among employees that is quite limited to particular demographic attributes such as age, gender and ethnicity (Lee and Gilbert, 2014). In the broader sense, workforce diversity is defined as acknowledgement, understanding, accepting, valuing and celebrating differences amongst employees with respect to differences in age, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability and spiritual practices, among others (Foma, 2014). According to Corporate Leadership Council (2012), workforce diversity is defined as “the collective mixture of differences and similarities that includes; individual and organizational characteristics, and associated values, beliefs, experiences, backgrounds, preferences and behavior.” Kreitz (2008) also opined that workforce diversity, in addition to being specific to each individual, is also contextual, as it is defined through societal constructs justifying the need for research on diversity issues under changing organizational settings.

Workforce diversity is one of the ingredients of institutional complexity in HEIs with implications for leadership and organizational performance. In spite of a presumed rising trend in the representation of employees of diverse background in Ethiopian HEIs, in part attributed to prevailing educational, economic and ethical policy frameworks, it is posited in this the present proposed study that exclusion of the workforce from circles of influence is what is normally assumed to keep the existing workforce away from contributing to realization of organizational goals. This forces one to put in place inclusive workforce management approaches, which necessitate respect for and appreciation of existing diversity in the workforce.

The issue of inclusive management of the extant workforce is also vital, as working towards proportional diversity in a workplace without inclusion cannot be considered as satisfactory. Inclusion encompasses the development of an organizational climate that enables the extant diversity to work in cooperation and fulfill its potential. Inclusion takes account of practices that ensure that attributes of different groups or individuals are culturally and socially accepted, welcomed and equally treated. For individuals within an organization, inclusion is a sense of belonging based on respect and being valued as member (Global Diversity Practice, 2017). Diversity when coupled with inclusion is termed diversity management, and well-managed diversity is hoped to realize the benefits of workplace diversity (Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), 2017).
To attain an inclusive workplace, the workforce must feel valued, listened to and respected (Wallace and Pillans, 2016). For this to occur and the planned organizational goal to be realized, it is essential that leaders with inclusive and inspiring leadership style, and determined to challenge perceived workplace biases are required. Such leaders are expected to shoulder the responsibility of creating an inclusive organizational climate and also hold employees to be responsible for enhanced inclusion (ENEL, 2017). Inclusion involves the continuous search for value and effective use of workforce diversity, which in turn empowers extant workforce to tirelessly work towards enhanced organizational performance (GDP, 2017).

Contemporary HEIs operate in a competitive environment typified by diversity. By implication, their success thus depends on the effectiveness with which their leaders manage the extant diversity. Indications from diversity management literature are that the effectiveness of leaders’ attempts to manage diversity tends to be affected, positively as well as negatively, by the culture and climate of their institutions. These determine the way in which the staff interact with one another (Watson, 2006), respond to, and/or influence, management decisions (Ashton, 2010).

According to Ashton (2010), the climate and culture of the institution, as well as the manner in which people working in there behave, are significantly influenced by the values and beliefs held by the parties concerned as well as by the nature and strength of what Watson (2006) refers to as the organizational culture of an institution. A sound understanding of cultural differences as well as of organizational types and cultures is, therefore, critical to the effective management of institutional diversity (O’Donnell and Boyle, 2008). Another critical factor, according to Schein (2004), is the flexibility of an organization, which reflects the extent to which it is aware of and willing to accommodate the cultural orientations of diverse groups of people who happen to be part of a single institution. By implication, the effectiveness of diversity management would be reflected in the behavior of all those associated with the institution regardless of the extent to which their values, beliefs, and/or cultural orientations differ.

A sound knowledge and understanding of the culture/s of institutional populations is critical to the breaking down of stereotypes, the reduction of bias, and the enablement of institutions to fulfill their integration mandate (Scheepers, 2010). To this purpose, diversity management strategies should address staff inequities in ways that are unique to particular circumstances. Every staff member should, for example, feel and be empowered to perform their functions to their full potential (Thomas, 2010). Differences in their cultures should, moreover, not only be acknowledged but also be utilized to the benefit of the institution. It is imperative, therefore, that institutional leaders strive to establish a climate that is harmonious and a culture in which acceptance and tolerance of diversity of whatever kind are the norm rather than the exception and are related to the institution’s vision and mission.

3.2 Workforce Diversity in Ethiopian Higher Education Institutions

Workforces of varying demographic and socio-cultural attributes work in Ethiopian HEIs. Leaders of HEIs need to create an environment where people with diverse characteristics work together to realize envisioned organizational performance. To create such an environment, empirical research, the output of which could be used as input to facilitate informed decision making is vital. This is the crux of workforce diversity management.

Because of the presence of workforce of diverse demographic and socio-cultural characteristics, diversity management in HEIs fascinates the attention of leaders and researchers (Ouellette, Frazier, Shernoff, Cappella, Mehta, Marinez-Lora, Grace Cua and Atkins. 2018). However, exploration of extant literature on issues of diversity management in Ethiopian HEIs revealed that a limited number of studies had hitherto been done (Adamu and Zellelew, 2007; Biru, 2019; Tariku and Latchanna, 2016; Mekonnen, 2013). Works reported thus far had largely focused on review of secondary information (Tariku and Latchana, 2016), non-academic corporate organizations (Amdemichael, 2018; Prasad, 2015), private HEIs (Biru, 2019), non-governmental entities (Kelali, 2018) and on limited number of
diversity dimensions that focus specifically on students (Adamu, 2013). The scope of generalizability to the entire public higher HEIs of works done thus far in Ethiopia is generally limited (Biru, 2019). Employees working in HEIs can vary in demographic variables such as age, gender, marital and educational status, and religion and ethnicity, among others (Shatrughan and Usha, 2020; Weber et al., 2018).

3.3 Diversity and Organizational Performance

3.3.1 Dimensions of Organizational Performance in HEIs

The overall performance of organizations, academic or otherwise, can partly be associated with the dimensions of diversity management. The performance of Ethiopian HEIs is the focus of this study with the aim of understanding the performance exhibited by HEIs as directly affected by diversity management. Performance is fundamental to HEIs as donors; both governmental and non-governmental organizations support these institutions because they are interested in the outcomes of these institutions. Donors of HEIs have generally been using market-type assessment approaches to inspire these organizations to excel with regard to student and financial performances (Dill and Soo, 2004). Governments deploy financial resources for HEIs where performance is manifested in the form of good research output and superior position in university rankings (Altbach and Balan, 2007). Institutions which demonstrate superior performance get more income than lesser performing ones which would provide better performers with a competitive advantage, which further inspires other less performing institutions (Herbst, 2007). The vital issue yet is lack of a feasible performance measurement scale for HEIs, suggesting the need for availing a valid performance measurement system for HEIs so that informed decisions would be made.

Many authors have dealt with attributes of organizational performance and a number of performance measures have thus been developed (Kaplan and Norton, 2005). Some of these works are based on financial (Kamyabi and Devi, 2012) and non-financial (Gronum, Verreynne and Kastelle, 2012) indicators, and others are based on the combination of both financial and non-financial measures (Kaplan and Norton, 2005). These indicators were mainly developed to serve profit-oriented organizations, and are therefore not suitable for HEIs where teaching, research, community service and peer reviewed scientific publications are the main functions.

A number of performance measurement studies were also done for HEIs using indicators that measure research and teaching related performances (Badri and Abdulla, 2004). Other reports that focus on income generation related indicators of research and consultancy projects are also available (Asif, Raouf and Searcy, 2013). Though some research results that focus on satisfaction of students and other institutional stakeholders are also available (Asif and Searcy, 2014), little attention has generally been given to academic performance indicators. In the present study, academic performance-oriented indicators will be measured employing diversity management and leadership styles as influencing factors, the former directly and the latter indirectly.

Likewise, leadership outcome is a subject that has been inspiring and continues to inspire both popular and scholarly works. According to Abujarad (2011), various types of leadership outcomes have been used to assess leadership effectiveness. According to FRLM, leadership effectiveness is evaluated through three variables: extra effort exerted by the follower, job satisfaction of the follower and the effectiveness of the leader (Bass, Avolio, Jung and Berson (2003).

The present study is thought to facilitate development of effective interventions on issues of diversity management by analyzing individual perceptions on diversity climate using selected public HEIs as objects of study. The work will also explore the extant leadership styles in public HEIs in Ethiopia as perceived by leaders and followers. The work will as well endeavor to look at the moderating role of leadership styles on the relationships of diversity management and organizational performance. It is
supposed that if leaders are to employ evidence-based leadership approaches, the vitality of the target HEIs would apparently be improved.

With the foregoing sections aimed at setting the scene for the present study, in the next section, a concise expression of the research problem will be described. The section will specifically focus on a definite account of the main research areas that the proposed study is to deal with: diversity management related issues in the Ethiopian public HEIs, existing leadership challenges that are supposed to trouble the same and the moderating role of leadership style on the effect of diversity management on organizational performance. An effort will also be made to introduce the importance of the planned research, anchor the research questions and hypothesis, place the research topic into context and finally depict the conceptual framework for the study.

3.3.2 Effects of Diversity on HEIs Performance

There are numerous effects of workforce diversity on the performance of HEIs and any other corporate organizations (Ellison and Eatman, 2008). These effects can be positive or negative. Positive effects, among others, include: increased organizational flexibility and adaptability, enabling HEIs to respond vigilantly to the dynamics in organizational landscape compared to homogeneous organizations, leading to improved productivity (Barabino, M.C., Jacobs, B., Maggio, M.A. 2001; Barabino et al., 2001); improved problem-solving, increased creativity and innovation, improved skill and improved organizational reputation leading to enhanced competitiveness (Ozbilgin, 2007). Diverse workforce has as well been viewed as a pillar for the achievement of organizational mission through stimulating team spirit in the workgroup (Ozbilgin, 2007).

Leadership is considered to be an important variable for enhancing our understanding of the relationship between workplace diversity and its effect on organizational performance (Joshi, Liao and Roh, 2011). Leadership has commonly been reported to positively moderate the effects of workplace diversity on social integration, wellbeing, and performance-related variables when it fosters identification with the work group or organization and facilitates elaboration and integration of differences in expertise and perspectives (Kearney and Gebert, 2009).

Developing a deeper understanding of diversity leadership is important specifically in HEIs where employees with diverse attributes work together and leaders are confronted with the challenge of managing these employees of diverse values and interests. Leadership is the most important factor in HEIs but it is getting tougher on account of the growing trends of globalization, technological improvement and diversity management. Effective leaders must know what is expected from leadership and how to deliver it so. As the demand for knowledge-based organizations rises, it is the responsibility of leaders and employees to enhance the success of workplace learning and workforce development (Gentry, Eckert, Stawiski and Zhao, 2014).

4. Methodology

In the present study, the HEIs organizational phenomenon evaluated were diversity management and the effect of the diversity management on academic performance attributes. The study explored the dimensions of workforce diversity as perceived by the academic staff employed in the public HEIs selected for the present study. The work will make use of a combination of qualitative and quantitative data. The dimensions of diversity management were quantitatively evaluated using the perceptual response of respondents employing Likert-scale of five points. The dimensions of workforce diversity in Ethiopian public HEIs were interpreted using the perceptions of respondents who have experience of their organizational contexts. The assumption thus was that the participants who are to respond to the Likert-Scale questionnaires are informed of attributes characterizing their organizational context.

4.1 Type and source of Data and the study population

Both qualitative and quantitative data were gathered for the study. The data were sourced from four purposively selected Ethiopian public HEIs. These are Addis Ababa University (AAU), Bahirdar
University (BDU), Jimma University (JU) and Hawassa University (HU). The study focused on the teaching staff population of the four universities.

4.2 Sampling Technique

The study employed a combination of purposive, stratified and systematic sampling techniques. The four universities used as objects of the research are purposively selected. The study population in the four universities was further stratified by gender, age, religion and other diversity dimensions as appropriate as the measurement of interest is believed to vary between these dimensions. The study sample was then chosen proportionately by taking a non-equal sample sizes from each stratum, ensuring a more realistic responses to the questionnaire survey. Such stratified sampling approach is thought to enhance the precision and representativeness of the study results by reducing a sampling bias. As detailed features of the study population cannot always be evidently understood at the outset of the study, further stratification was considered during the actual implementation of the research work. After list of respondents from each cluster are prepared, individual respondents were selected at regular intervals systematically, with the intervals chosen aimed at ensuring an adequate sample size.

4.3 Sample Size Determination

Determination of the sample size for the present study required the definition of margin of error. A margin of error of 5% was thus used. By inserting the study population (N) and margin of error of 5% (e) in sample size determination formula of Yamane (1967), the required sample size was determined. The sample size for the study is then was determined using Yamane’s formula (Yamane, 1967). The necessary sample size required for the present study was thus be 386.

\[ n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} \quad \text{(Yamane, 1967)} \]

Responses to the diversity management dimensions were classified on a 5-point Likert-type scale; (1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=neither agree nor disagree; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree).

4.4 Variables and Measurement Instruments

4.4.1 Workplace Diversity

To characterize the workplace diversity climate of the selected HEIs, the workplace diversity inventory instrument (normally termed as WDI-24) developed by Taylor (2011) was used. The WDI-24 was suggested to help organizations manage their workplace diversity more effectively and develop interventions that better fit to their contexts. It was also witnessed that the tool contributes to building diverse workforce that is inclusive and fair. The WPD-24 was designed to measure the perception of diversity in the workplace, using six workplace diversity dimensions having a total of 24 manifest items. The purpose of the WDI-24 is to measure all of the psychological dimensions of workplace diversity. List of the workplace diversity dimensions and their description is given in Table 1.

Using such an existing instrument to analyze workplace diversity climate of an organization is advantageous as it reduces the mistakes that can be made when using an untested questionnaire. The WDI-24 instrument can rely on previous research, statistical validation and experiences with previous diversity assessment tools, and this is why it was chosen for the present study.

Table 1. Description of the dimensions of workplace diversity inventory instrument to be used for the present study and their description

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension of workplace diversity</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Table 1. Description of the dimensions of workplace diversity inventory instrument to be used for the present study and their description
4.4.2 Organizational performance

The measurement of academic performance in HEIs normally uses indicators that measure research and teaching related performance indicators (Asif and Searcy, 2014). New scales for measuring academic performance have recently been developed (Ahmed Abubeker, Haim Hilman, and Narentheren Kaliappen, 2018). These scales were reported to have high reliability and assess a single construct of performance measures for HEIs. The adequate level of validity and reliability reported for this scale indicates the appropriateness of the instrument for measuring academic performance in HEIs (Ahmed et al., 2018). This instrument was used to determine performance of the case study HEIs in the present study. In addition to data generated through this survey instrument, demographic information of the respondents was also be gathered.

4.5 Data Analysis

Different data analysis techniques were used in accordance with the study objectives. Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were calculated to summarize the respondents’ demographic features and information collected using Likert-Scale questionnaires for all dimensions of diversity management and academic performance indicators. To assess the degree of association between dimensions of diversity management and academic performance indicators, Pearson correlation coefficient was used. In both the descriptive and correlation analyses, the Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS) software was used. To test the validity of the manifest items, Cronbach’s $\alpha$ was calculated.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1 Demographic characteristics of the respondents
Summary of the survey data collected on the respondents’ demographic features (gender, marital status, age and religion) from the four universities is depicted in Figures 2 (for AAU and BDU) and 3 (for JU and HU). Pooled over the four universities, 250 (64.8%) of the respondents were male, while 136 (35.2%) of them were female (Figure 4). Regarding the marital status of the respondents, 282 (73.1%) of the respondents were married and 104 (26.9%) were unmarried. With regard to age, 10 (2.6%) of the respondents fell within the ages of 20-30 years, 158 (40.9%) within the age range of 31-40 years, 184 (47.7%) fell in the range of 41-50, and 24 (6.2%) fell within the age of 51-50 years, and those with above 60 years of age were 20 (2.6%). With regard to religious diversity, 335 (86.8%) of the respondents follow Christianity, while 51 (13.2%) of them reported to be Muslims.

Figure 2, Demographic characteristics (N and %) of the respondents of Addis Ababa (AAU) and Bahir Dar (BDU) Universities

Figure 3. Demographic characteristics (N and %) of the respondents of Jimma (JU) and Hawassa (HU) Universities
Figure 4. Overall demographic characteristics (gender, marital status, age and religion) of the respondents (N and %)

5.2 Teaching staff perception on the diversity management dimensions being practiced by the study universities (n = 386)

Table 4. Overall mean (n=386) and standard deviation (SD) of Likert-type values (5-point Likert scale) regarding how the staff perceive the existing diversity management practices being exercise.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diversity Climate</td>
<td>The extent to which employees share the perception that a diverse organization’s policies, practices, and procedures communicate a strong priority given to fostering &amp; maintaining diversity and inclusion</td>
<td>3.84</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Justice</td>
<td>The extent to which employees perceive moral propriety of the distribution of resources, procedures, and interactions within a diverse organization</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>The extent to which one perceives, feels, and behaves as if they are included or excluded in a diverse work setting</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>0.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>The extent to which one’s central guides influence his/her perceptions of appropriate identity, preferences, beliefs and behaviors in a diverse workplace</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schemas</td>
<td>The extent to which cognitive guides lead to the organization of information and the perceived patterns of behaviors, including stereotypes and behavioral scripts, in diverse work settings</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>The extent to which language barriers, differences in communication styles, nonverbal communication, language fluency, and cultural fluency manifest in diverse work settings.</td>
<td>3.76</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The overall level of agreement of the staff regarding the presence of the diversity management dimension assessed was found to be more than average. The mean values (n =5) ranged from 3.72 (with standard deviation of 0.98) for ‘organizational justice’ to 4.12 (with standard deviation o 0.74) for the dimension of ‘values.’ This implies that in the future, attention needs to be given to the fair distribution of resources to the teaching staff working in these universities. The freedom to express...
one’s own identity was also observed to limited in the universities studied and this has to be improved in the future as a democratic work environment is critical for the productivity of the staff to be enhanced. The overall percentage (n = 386) of the staff who responded to the various diversity management dimensions is presented in Figure 4. These percentage values further revealed patterns that were described in the foregoing paragraph.

Figure 4. Percent of respondents who responded to prevalence of the dimensions of diversity management

4.3 The relationship between diversity management and organizational performance

The correlation coefficient values for the relationships between workforce diversity management dimensions (diversity climate, organizational justice, identity, values, schemas and communication) and overall organizational performance of the four Ethiopian universities are presented in Table 5. Results from the correlation analysis revealed that there are statistically significant positive correlations between the dimensions of workforce diversity management studies and the organizational performance. This implies that organizational performance of higher education institutions Ethiopia and elsewhere can be significantly influenced by the dimensions of diversity management. Brief summary of the analytical outputs are sketched here under.

- There was a strong, positive correlation between diversity climate and organizational performance of the Ethiopian Public HEIs (r=0.63, N=386, p<0.00).

- There was also a strong, positive correlation between Organizational Justice and academic performance of the Ethiopian Public HEIs (r=0.59, N=386, p<0.00).

- A strong positive correlation was exhibited between Identity and the academic performance of the Ethiopian Public HEIs (r=0.55, N=386, p<0.00)
- There was a medium and positive correlation between the values dimensions of diversity management and the measured academic performance of the studied universities (r=0.36, N=386, p<0.05)

- There was also a strong, positive correlation between Schemas and performance of the Ethiopian Public HEIs (r=0.503, N=386, p<0.05)

- There was also a strong, positive correlation between communication and performance of the Ethiopian Public HEIs (r=0.506, N=386, p<0.05)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Workforce Diversity Management Diminutions</th>
<th>Correlation coefficient values</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diversity Climate</td>
<td>0.63**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizational Justice</td>
<td>0.59**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>0.55**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Values</td>
<td>0.36**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schemas</td>
<td>0.50**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>0.51**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** denotes highly significant Pearson product-moment correlation values (P<0.00) using 2-tailed test

5. Conclusions and Implications
The study indicated that the teaching staffs of the sample universities are diverse in terms of their demographic features. The staff agreed those diversity management dimensions are prevalent in their universities but opined that the presences of some of the dimensions need to be ensured. The mean values of the Likert-scale response ranged from 3.72±0.98 for ‘organizational justice’ to 4.12±0.74 for diversity management dimension designated as ‘values.’ Results from Pearson correlation analysis further revealed that there are statistically significant positive correlations between the dimensions of workforce diversity and organizational performance indicators. This implies that organizational performance of higher education institutions can be significantly and positively influenced by extant workforce diversity. The dimension ‘Values’ signifies the extent to which one’s central guides influence the perceptions of that staff with regard to identity, preference, beliefs and behaviors in a diverse workplace. The practical implication of this is that attention needs to be given to the creation of a democratic work environment where the staff is capable of expressing his/her identity freely. The freedom to express one’s own identity in the university landscape was observed to be limited in the universities studied and this has to thus be also improved. A democratic work environment is critical
for enhanced staff productivity and an effort has to be done towards the goal of creating such an environment. The relationship between diversity management and academic performance also indicated that there is a statistically significant (P<0.00) positive correlations between all workforce diversity dimensions and overall academic performance.

6. Limitations and way forward
The present study analyzed the relationship between workforce diversity dimensions in relation to organizational performance using only four universities in Ethiopia. The scope of the work is thus limited in coverage with regard to the population of Ethiopian universities which are more in number with diverse background and maturity. Future studies need to also endeavor to cover organizations other than academic ones for comparative purposes.

7. Recommendations
Two key recommendations can emerge from this study. One, though the work widely indicated that diversity prevails in the Ethiopian HEIs, much has remained to be done to create fairness with regard to resource allocation and staff freedom to express their identity without worry. Second, all workforce diversity dimensions evaluated in this study correlated positively and significantly with the academic performance of the study universities. Therefore, policymakers and higher education leaders need to enable workforce diversity management to improve organizational performance that will help the overall success of these institutions.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST
There are no conflicts to declare.

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