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Research Article

Multicultural and Diversity Management in Higher Education Institutions in the Philippines

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ABSTRACT

The multicultural and diversity management (MDM) encompasses acceptance and respect, recognition and valuing of individual differences of the university stakeholders. This study determined the perceptions of the academic managers/ leaders towards multicultural and diversity management in a higher education institutions. This quantitative descriptive research determined the perceptions of 100 purposively selected academic managers/ leaders of selected higher education institutions in the Philippines. The researcher-designed questionnaire was administered online using Google Form. Data were analysed using frequency, percentage distribution, mean, and rank. The majority of the respondents belonged to the age group of 41- 50 years old. The respondents were dominated by males and were single. In terms of highest educational attainment, the majority of the respondents have a master's degree with 1- 10 years of work experience. The majority of the respondents were Coordinators/Program Chairs who were Regular/Permanent employees. On the basis of the findings of the study, it can be gleaned that the majority of the respondents believed that multiculturalism and diversity management (MDM) in higher education institutions should be integrated with the human resources programs to improve the lenses of equality in the universities and colleges as a workplace. Most of them believe that the MDM program prepares employees for higher diversity in their team, as such; it helps in welcoming recruits with diverse backgrounds into the academic community and promotes a positive organizational culture. Respondents also believed that multicultural and diversity management in Higher Education Institution is one of the best ways that university employees and students can become accustomed to other cultures, nonjudgmental, respectful, and accepting of differences, receptive to different ways of thinking.

Keywords: *Multiculturalism, diversity management, multicultural university, multicultural and diversity management*

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Background

The breadth and depth of the body of knowledge in school administration are tied with the principal theories and practices of management in educational organizations (Okumbe, 1998; Austria et al., 2015). Educational management is a field of study and practice on the successful management and operations of higher education institutions and other academic and educational institutions (Bush, 2006; Cuyugan et al, 2017), fairly, a classical educational domain that has significantly grown in Western, developed, and English-speaking countries and shifted over the years to self-management to serve and enhance the importance of effective leadership within the organization. (Bush, 1999). According to the Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education, alongside educational administration and the educational leadership domain, educational management underpins the theoretical, conceptual, and empirical lenses (Lynch, 2021). The National Institute of Education (NIE), Singapore defined educational management as the management of an educational organization including its human capital, resources, stakeholders, and processes to successfully design, develop and implement educational goals and objectives to support the local and national education system. Further, the education system supports the national goals as instructional engineering from the very fabric of the DNA composed of educationists, professionals, academicians, researchers and scholars, government boards, associations, agencies, and other like-minded organizations. ([https://learn.org/articles/What is Educational Management.html](https://learn.org/articles/What%20is%20Educational%20Management.html), 2021) . In the Philippines, the higher education institution consists of President, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, College Dean or Directors, Program Heads or Coordinators, faculty, support and administrative personnel to deliver the program curriculum successfully.

Over the years, globalization has reshaped the landscape of workplace diversity. Higher education institutions have faced challenges in the administration and management aspects as such; it hampers the achievement of the academic and institutional goals (Balderston, 1995; González-Zamar et al, 2020), other

educational discourse (Wissema, 2009), and persistent disparity in a more austere climate such as mass higher education, accelerated knowledge growth, reduction in the public funding provided to educational institutions, with greater emphasis put in developing employable skills, and gravity that were put forward for more accountability (Ramsden, 1998; Gatpandan, 2017). In the work of (Lynch, 2021), ethical standards, cultural orientations, and diversity of educational system make educational management a complex educational domain (Dasig et al., 2017). Purposely, educational management is rooted in effective and efficient approaches to creating conducive learning space, maintaining secure, safe and supportive teaching and learning environment (Valderama et al., 2019), and how the educational intents were set forth and achieved. These educational outcomes are attained according to the significant factors upon the education system, education level, and across cultures. Globalization and increasing admission of international students have increased issues in ethnic diversity and gender diversity made employers to devise programs to curtail issues of cultural misunderstandings due to individual differences and unique work attitudes. Aside from the students' mobility, the seamless ASEAN integration provided opportunities for ASEAN member countries citizen to practice their profession and secure working opportunities in any ASEAN member countries made the labor force also becomes more diverse, and that there are both opportunities and challenges to managing employees in a diverse work climate (Valderama, 2018)

A multicultural organization is an organization where people of diverse cultures work together in order to achieve certain common goals (Hussain, 2018). With greater visibility, educational institutions were becoming more culturally diverse by facilitating open and selective admission and selections mechanism using socio-economic characteristics such as gender, ethnicity, race, etc (Cox Jr, 1991) such that, these brings substantial competitive advantage towards inclusive, equitable, responsive, innovative and adaptive HEIs (Cuyugan, 2017). The concept of multicultural and diversity management comprises reception and

respect, recognition and valuing of individual differences (Miller, & Rowney, 1999). Accordingly, (Jackson, & Holvino, 1988) a multicultural organization has diverse knowledge and views, experiences, and context that help the stakeholder to acculture or enculture. These operating modes brought about by social interaction shapes the organization's strategy, value system, and norms for a successful organization. Secondly, a multicultural organization treats all stakeholders fairly (Pope, 1993; Dasid et al, -). While diversity encompasses the spectrum of infinite dissimilarities that distinguish individuals from one another (Butler, & Desole, 1994) such that, race, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation, nationality, and class structure were the most common characteristics of socially defined clusters. These attributes help build the organization's strategy and determine the type of organization's culture ahead (Jackson, 2006) would need good educational management skills and knowledge in diversity management. Cultural diversity management in educational institutions has posed numerous challenges and was touted primarily as a tool in a social and organizational approach to re-engineering. Literature suggests mutual respect, recognition of employees regardless of their demographic and socio-economic characteristics (Fine, 1995; Pahayahay et al., 2017; Mojica, & Daniel, 2017).

The business case for diversity was introduced by Taylor Cox and Stacy Blake which exemplified that the espousal of workplace diversity will mark as an organization's competitive advantage (Cox & Blake, 1991). Accordingly, companies with vibrant and highly-visible diversity experience have lower attrition among women and minorities (Waite, 2021; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998) such that, the Whites who have strong ethnic identity are attracted to diverse organizations similarly to non-Whites as exemplified by (Kim & Gelfand, 2003). In any organization, Consequently, human capital is considered the most important resource in any organization, such that, this can be honed, improved, and acquired by recalibrating, reinforcing human capital's knowledge, skills, and abilities (Perkins et al., 2000; Gatpandan et al., 2017; Dasig Jr, 2017). Further, organizations perceived to value diversity attract more

women and minority job applicants to hire as employees as shown by studies that women and minorities have greater job-pursuit intentions and higher attraction toward organizations that promote workplace diversity in their recruitment materials compared to organizations that do not.

The number of factors that define diversity is truly unlimited. In the study of (Janis, 1972) it was posited that apart from the more inclusive and participative way of discussing and addressing problems and challenges, it also facilitates communications and more efficient ways of doing things, group thinking and it accelerates team successes. Similarly, (Richard et al, 2004) emphasized that diversity helps organizations perform best when it is aligned with a specific business strategy. Corollary to its goals and objectives, an organization can integrate cultural diversity programs in its strategic human resources management portfolio design (McMahan et al, 1998), hence, employees must be engaged to be able to successfully enculture and contribute to successful commitment to the organization's strategy. Apart from employing diverse employees, diverse leadership management must also be advocated. This is to bring more diverse ideas and more opportunities for the dynamic and diverse composition of the workforce (Kauflin, 2018; Dasig Jr, 2014) to convey unique ideas to the boardrooms, with greater flexibility and inclusive participation, greater creativity and innovative thinking accelerating customer and process-centric services, and data-driven decision-making approaches (Cox & Blake, 1991) Multiculturalism and diversity management encompasses profound involvement with the culture of its people and the organization itself. Culturally sensitive and aware employees can understand the value system and social dimension of its unique team members. These attributes are significantly embedded in the cultural DNA of the company as a competitive advantage and core element of business strategy.

This study determined the perceptions of the academic managers/ leaders towards multicultural and diversity management in the higher education institutions. This study focused on academic managers/ leaders as it is anchored on the findings of the research that

states educational management must be adaptive to the demands of times, and responsive to the disruptions and emerging ramifications in Education 4.0. (Lynch et al, 2021; Arulkumar & Latha, 2019 ; Dasig Jr, 2014) As such, it would be of great significance that educational or academic leaders and managers are aware and knowledgeable with the emerging demand and advancements in the field of people and organizational development, particularly on multiculturalism and diversity management. The results of this study may be used for developing inclusive and comprehensive respectful workplace policy, Anti-Discrimination in the Workplace Policy, and diversity training program design to be embedded in the Talent Management and Development Program (Dasig Jr et al., 2017).

Methodology

The researcher utilized a quantitative descriptive research design to determine the perceptions of the academic managers/ leaders of selected higher education institutions in the Philippines (Mendez & Dasig, 2020; Yipeng, 2021). A Purposive Sampling or Convenient

Sampling (Dasig Jr & Pascua, 2016) was utilized to gather online responses from 100 purposively selected participants who were administrators of higher education institutions in the Philippines. The researcher-designed questionnaire was administered online using Google Form, and was analysed using frequency, percentage distribution, mean, and rank.

Results and Discussion

Demographic Profile of the Respondents.

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the respondents.

The majority of the respondents 40 or 40 % belong to the age group of 41- 50 years old. The respondents were dominated by males comprising 53 or 53% and 47 or 47% were females respectively. The majority of the respondents 60 or 60% were single and 33 or 33% were married, while a very small 7 or 7% were widowed/widower. In terms of highest educational attainment, the majority of the respondents 60 or 60% have a master's degree and 20 or 20% has a doctorate, while another 20 or 20% were college graduate.

Table 1. Demographic profile of the Respondents

| Profile | | Freq. | Percentage |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|-------|------------|
| Age | 21- 30 years old | 34 | 34 |
| | 31- 40 years old | 13 | 13 |
| | 41- 50 years old | 40 | 40 |
| | 51- 60 years old | 13 | 13 |
| | 61 and older | 0 | 0 |
| Gender | Male | 53 | 53 |
| | Female | 47 | 47 |
| Civil Status | Single | 33 | 33 |
| | Married | 60 | 60 |
| | Widow/Widower | 7 | 7 |
| Highest Educational Attainment | Doctorate graduate | 20 | 20 |
| | MS/MA Graduate | 60 | 60 |
| | Bachelor's Degree Graduate | 20 | 20 |
| Years of Work Experience | 1- 10 years | 53 | 53 |
| | 11- 20 years | 7 | 7 |
| | 21- 30 years | 40 | 40 |
| | 31- 40 years | 0 | 0 |
| | 41- 50 years | 0 | 0 |
| | 51 or more years | 0 | 0 |

| Profile | | Freq. | Percentage |
|--------------------------|---------------------------|-------|------------|
| Position | President | 0 | 0 |
| | VPAA/ VP Admin | 6 | 6 |
| | Dean/Director | 7 | 7 |
| | Coordinator/Program Chair | 87 | 87 |
| Status of Employment | Regular/Permanent | 86 | 86 |
| | Contractual/ Probationary | 7 | 7 |
| | Project-based | 7 | 7 |
| Monthly Gross Income (P) | More than 100,000.00 | 7 | 7 |
| | 75,000- 99,999.00 | 13 | 13 |
| | 50,000- 74,999.00 | 13 | 13 |
| | 40,000- 49,999.00 | 7 | 7 |
| | 30,000- 39,999.00 | 27 | 27 |
| | 20,000- 29,999.00 | 20 | 20 |
| | 10,000- 19,999.00 | 13 | 13 |

N= 100

The majority of the respondents 53 or 53% have 1- 10 years of work experience and 40 or 40% have 21- 30 years of work experience, while a very small of 7 or 7% has 11- 20 years of work experience. The majority of the respondents 87 or 87% were Coordinators/Program Chair and 7 or 7% were Dean/Director, while a very small of 6 or 6% was VPAA/ VP Admin.

The majority of the respondents 86 or 86% was Regular/Permanent employees and 7 or 7% were Contractual/ Probationary employees, while 7 or 7% were Project-based employees. In terms of monthly gross income, majority of the respondents 27 or 27% were earning P 30,000- 39,999.00 and 20 or 20% were earning P 20,000- 29,999.00. On the other hand, 13 or 13% were earning P 75,000- 99,999.00, 13 or 13% were earning P 50,000- 74,999.00, 13 or 13% were earning P 10,000- 19,999.00, and a very small 7 or 7% were earning more than P 100,000.00, and 7 or 7% were also earning P 40,000- 49,999.00.

Perceptions of the Respondents on Multicultural and Diversity Management in Higher Education Institution

Table 2 represents the perceptions on Multicultural and Diversity Management in Higher Education Institution of the academic managers/ leaders of selected higher education institutions in the Philippines.

Generally, 100 respondents rated their perceptions at an average mean of 3.33 interpreted as strongly agree. This implies that academic managers/ leaders believed that multicultural and diversity management in the higher education institution produced culturally sensitive climate with diverse response and results as posited by [34] such that, these academic managers come to an understanding that these initiatives embolden innovation and creativity, agile thinking, and system thinking innovative strategy [44].

Among the 11 statements about Multicultural and Diversity Management in Higher Education Institution, item number 11- *Revisit talent development curricula and embed multicultural elements in the management training program* has the highest mean score of 3.72, interpreted as strongly agree, and ranked 1. The majority of the respondents believed that diversity and inclusion training should be integrated with the human resources programs to improve equality in universities and colleges as a workplace. These programs will address biases and prejudices within a workplace. Most of them believe that the Multicultural and Diversity Management in Higher Education Institution program prepares employees for higher diversity in their team, as such, it helps in welcoming recruits with diverse backgrounds into the academic community and promotes a positive organizational culture.

Table 2. Perceptions of the Respondents towards Multicultural and Diversity Management in Higher Education Institution

| Statements about Multicultural and Diversity Management in Higher Education Institution | | Mean | Interpretation | Rank |
|---|--|------|----------------|------|
| 1. | Be open to different cultural communication styles | 2.91 | Agree | 10 |
| 2. | Develop and deploy mobility programs for mid-level managers to be immersed in different cultures | 3.24 | Agree | 8 |
| 3. | Encourage openness to all cultures and their differences | 2.87 | Agree | 11 |
| 4. | Improve Talent Acquisition efforts to bring diverse, multicultural candidates into the company | 3.24 | Agree | 8 |
| 5. | Include the multicultural experiences as an explicit part of career path conversations and performance reviews | 3.39 | Strongly Agree | 6 |
| 6. | Integrate multicultural insights into business decisions and strategy | 3.44 | Strongly Agree | 5 |
| 7. | Organize and deploy cross-cultural training | 3.53 | Strongly Agree | 3 |
| 8. | Plan and deploy projects/program around different time zones | 3.54 | Strongly Agree | 2 |
| 9. | Provide and deliver honest feedback | 3.50 | Strongly Agree | 4 |
| 10. | Recognize the language and cultural barriers | 3.28 | Strongly Agree | 7 |
| 11. | Revisit talent development curricula and embed multicultural elements in the management training program | 3.72 | Strongly Agree | 1 |
| Overall Mean | | 3.33 | Strongly Agree | |

1.00-1.74- Strongly Disagree, 1.75-2.49- Disagree, 2.50-3.24- Agree, 3.25-4.00- Strongly Agree

According to (McMahan et al., 1998), to effectively align diversity with an organization's strategy, the human resources function must be able to engage employees at dynamic levels, as such; strategic human resources management approach to an organization that can successfully integrate diversity with the organization's goals and objectives.

On the other hand, the statement that received the lowest mean score was, 3- *Encourage openness to all cultures and their differences* with a mean score of 2.87, interpreted as agree, and ranked 11. Respondents believed that Multicultural and Diversity Management in Higher Education Institution is one of the best ways that university employees and students can become accustomed to other cultures, nonjudgmental, respectful, and accepting of differences, receptive to different ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving without feeling challenged or threatened.

Conclusion

On the basis of the findings of the study, it can be gleaned that the majority of the respondents believed that multiculturalism

and diversity management in higher education institutions should be integrated with the human resources programs to improve the lenses of equality in universities and colleges as a workplace. Most of them believe that the Multicultural and Diversity Management in Higher Education Institution program prepares employees for higher diversity in their team, as such, it helps in welcoming recruits with diverse backgrounds into the academic community and promotes a positive organizational culture. Respondents also believed that Multicultural and Diversity Management in Higher Education Institution is one of the best ways that university employees and students can become accustomed to other cultures, nonjudgmental, respectful, and accepting of differences, receptive to different ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving without feeling challenged or threatened.

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