

Study on the Effect of Diverse Human Resources on Employees's Working At High-Level Education Center: Case Study in Dienbien, Vietnam

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Abstract:

The paper has conducted an overview of research works both in Vietnam and around the world on topics related to diversifying human resources in different fields. From there, we analyze the role of human resource diversification on the performance of organizations, especially educational institutions. Dien Bien Province Vietnam is a mountainous province with many different ethnic groups, therefore, in each agency, the workforce is organized with a variety of ethnic groups and personality characteristics. From there, we propose research models and expected research hypotheses in the future.

Keywords: *Diversifying human resources, performance, Vietnam*

1. Introduction

Due to the Constitution, policies and regulations of the state, universities have been forced to transform demographic structures and incorporate a more diverse workforce (van Walt & du Plessis, 2010). Hence, this has seen a plausible improvement in the workforce from a homogenous (male and female) workforce to a diverse workforce (Lumadi, 2011). This is evidenced by the Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS) which shows that the overall payroll in universities is staffed by Black employees, accounting for 45% of the total number of employees, white people. accounting for 38%, female representatives 53% and men 48% of the total number of employees (DHE, 2015). This is also supported by the 2012/13 Job Market report which reports a sensible improvement in diversity in the workforce associated with the transition for highly qualified jobs such as jobs. management and academic affairs (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2014).

However, while these legislative measures have promoted the adoption of diversity in the workforce in universities and other public institutions, they are clearly focused on tackling problems. issues of prejudice and historical discrimination in the workplace (van Walt & du Plessis, 2010). However, they do not focus on the business needs of diversity and how the results of employee behavior such as employee performance (van Walt & du Plessis, 2010). With this, the problem of combining diversity in both private and public institutions has been perceived as more of a compliance issue than a business need (Carelse, 2013). Munjuri (2012) argues that identifying the effects of diversity in the workforce can help organizations identify and predict the barriers and benefits of having a heterogeneous workforce. meeting the diverse needs of businesses. Therefore, this increases the need for research on this phenomenon so that universities can fully manage and understand the role of workforce diversity for institutions.

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However, while these legislative measures promote the adoption of diversity in the workforce at universities and other public institutions, they are clearly intended to address problems. issues on prejudice and gender and ethnic discrimination at work (van Walt & du Plessis, 2010). However, they do not focus on the profit purposes of diversity and how the outcomes of employee behavior like employee performance are focused (van Walt & du Plessis, 2010). With this, the problem of combining diversity in both private and public institutions has been perceived as more of a compliance issue than a business need (Carelse, 2013). Munjuri (2012) argues that

identifying the effects of diversity in the workforce can help organizations identify and predict the barriers and benefits of having a heterogeneous workforce. meeting the diverse needs of businesses. Therefore, this increases the need for research on this phenomenon so that universities can fully manage and understand the role of workforce diversity for institutions.

How diversity in the workforce is managed within an organization can positively or negatively affect employee performance (Saxena, 2014). If it is properly managed, it can lead to better decision-making, higher creativity and improved productivity (Maingi, 2015). On the other hand, if it is not managed, it can lead to organizational conflicts, low employee morale, and increased conflicts, thus leading to poor employee performance; a variable that has received great attention from both the academic and corporate worlds (Munjuri, 2012). Tinofirei (2011, p. 15) defines employee performance as "successfully completing an individual's task and being evaluated by a supervisor or organization against predefined, acceptable standards. while effectively and efficiently using resources available in a changing environment "

The relationship between employee diversity and employee performance has been widely discussed in various studies (Magoshi & Chang, 2010, Ohimare, 2012, Odhiambo, 2014, Selvaraj, 2015, Shifnas & Sutha, 2016). A study by Ohimare (2012) conducted in Nigerian companies found that diversity in the workforce is related to employee performance. The study concludes that the effects of diversity in the workforce are determined by the business strategies a company pursues and how senior management and employees respond to and manage diversity. In addition, a study conducted by Magoshi and Chang (2010) at Kenyan high schools showed that diversity in the workforce is an important factor in explaining change in employee performance. tablets. Based on these findings, Magoshi and Chang (2010) recommend that organizations view the diversity of the workforce as an important asset that adds value to their competitors.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Odhiambo (2014) in the insurance industry in Kenya found that the diversity of the workforce is significantly related to employee performance. Odhiambo (2014) concludes that increasing diversity in the workforce is not a custom but a sign of changes in the economy, demographics and performance of employees. In addition, a similar study by Shifnas and Sutha (2016) found that diversity in the workforce is an important factor in explaining change in employee performance in the construction industry. in Sri Lanka. Contrary to the above studies, Selvaraj (2015) found at Singaporean organizations found that labor force diversity was a negligible factor in explaining any change in performance of Staff. The author also recommends that managers implement effective human resource management programs to improve the effectiveness of diversity in the workforce.

Although some studies have been done on the relationship between employee diversity and employee performance, the majority of these studies have been done abroad (Magoshi & Chang, 2010, Odhiambo , 2014, Selvaraj, 2015, Shifnas & Sutha, 2016). Furthermore, these studies focus more on companies and high schools, not universities. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by investigating the effects of diversity in the workforce on employee performance at higher education institutions in Dien Bien province, where there is ethnic diversity. The study will examine the diversity of the workforce through the use of demographic attributes such as age, gender, ethnicity, and education. Each of these attributes has its positive impact on employee performance.

2. Literature review

In higher education centers the workforce is characterized by a division of different ethnic groups, and the nature of work makes these educational institutions heterogeneous, dominated entities. by an academic and non-academic workforce (Breetzke & Hedding, 2016)

2.1. Research on human resource diversification

Workforce diversity is a multidimensional concept that will continue to grow globally as organizations move to employ people from diverse cultural backgrounds (Saxena, 2014). It is argued that this has led to the perception that the diversity of the workforce has become an unavoidable feature of professional life in the world (Rizwan, Khan, Nadeem & Abbas, 2016). Different authors (D'Netto, 2014; Elsaid, 2012) argue that the diversity of the workforce is an important asset that elevates organizations to deliver quality products and services, or to Gain value compared to their competitors. Thus, D 'Netto (2014) advises organizations to take a holistic view of diversity in the workforce and understand it as an unavoidable feature of day-to-day business operations.

2.1.1. Workforce diversity

Many studies have identified diversity in the workforce from a very narrow perspective (Ehimare & Ogaga-Oghene, 2011, Lee & Gilbert, 2014, Veldsman, 2013), while some from a broader perspective (Barak, 2016, Carelse, 2013, Foma, 2014;). With this definition, proponents of a narrow definition (Ehimare & Ogaga-Oghene, 2011, Lee & Gilbert, 2014, Veldsman, 2013) identified the diversity of the labor force as the degree of heterogeneity between The exact employees are limited to specific cultural attributes like age, gender, and ethnicity. Lee and Gilbert (2014) further explain that the diversity of workers based on age, sex and ethnicity cannot be viewed in the same way as the diversity of the workforce based on organizational roles and functions. personal aptitude. In addition, Veldsman (2013) argues that because diversity in the cultural workforce interacts with other attributes of diversity, a narrow definition will be lacking as it will not identify correlations. that work.

Contrary to the foregoing, advocates of a broader definition (Barak, 2016, Carelse, 2013, Foma, 2014) define diversity in the workforce such as acknowledgment, understanding, acceptance, pricing and accept the difference between people regarding the entire difference including age, caste, ethnicity, sex, physical and mental abilities, race, economic status, gender, real spiritual practice and public assistance status. Based on this definition, Barak (2016) also states that employee differences can also extend to values, organizational roles, careers and behavioral styles.

This study gave a narrow definition to use cultural dimensions such as age, gender, ethnicity and education level in examining the effects of labor diversity on individual performance. staff at higher education centers in Dien Bien Province.

2.1.2. The origins of diversity in the workforce

Workforce diversity is practically a little debated concept in academic dialogue for decades (Duppler & Garbers, 2012). Its origins are complex and involve social, economic, and political forces and continue to occur around the world. For example, in developed regions such as the United States (Phillips, 2012). Europe (Stuber, 2007) and other parts of Asia (Kaise & Prange, 2004). However, the diversity of the workforce stems from an emphasis on legally protecting human attributes such as age, gender and ethnicity and other attributes for a more comprehensive concept. This includes a complete range of human differences such as physical status, religion, gender and education (Tuck, 2011; Srivalli & Rajesh, 2013).

In line with Srivalli and Rajesh (2013), Beziible (2015) reports that the origin of diversity in the workforce is affected by the establishment of initiatives on labor diversity in the early days of the revolution. industrial networks. During this period, many companies believe that integrating new employees into the organization requires them to go through a process of socialization so that they can be familiar with the current organizational culture (Shin, Kim, Lee & Bian 2012). However, since companies' need to attract and retain a more skilled workforce can stimulate organizational growth, they realize that corporate culture itself must adapt to the workforce. labor diversity (Shin et al., 2012). This philosophy is motivated in some way by introducing diversity initiatives in the workforce even though they do not address any diverse business needs (Duppler & Garbers , 2012)

The first workforce diversity initiative called the Act of Acceptance became possible in 1961 when "Executive Order 10925" was implemented in the United States (TingToomey, 2012). This executive order emphasizes the need for equal opportunity and equal treatment of military personnel (Phillips, 2012, Truman, 1948). Through its feasibility, by the end of 1952, more than 90% of black American soldiers working in military units had been involved (Kruse & Tuck, 2011, Phillips, 2012). The 9981 executive order also caused social and political changes, leading to the introduction of human rights laws leading to the prohibition of discrimination based on age, sex, race, and religion. organizations (Richard, Kirby & Chadwick, 2013).

In addition to the role of diversified initiatives in the workforce in developing diversity in organizations in both developed and developing countries, the modern workforce is becoming more and more diverse. due to demographic factors such as immigration and globalization (Dike, 2013; Freeman, 2006). To support this, Arggawal (2014) emphasizes that the diversity of the workforce in industrialized countries such as the US has increased from 17.4% in 2005 to 19% in 2015 and is likely to increase. to about 24% over the next 30 years.

In keeping with the cumulative growth of diversity inherent in the workforce, diversity management has become an issue of strategic importance, and its adoption has gradually increased (Algahtani , 2013, Kaiser & Prange, 2004). However, Lauring (2013) claims that some companies have reported challenges with their diverse management programs. The possible explanation given by Erasmus (2007) and Weiliang (2011) suggests that managing diversity and diversity in the workforce is a combination of employees, especially if management is involved. and the employees do not share the same goals.

Workforce diversity is therefore not an isolated social change but it is a phenomenon due to increasing economic, political and legal changes for organizations to shape. the demographic structure of the workforce and retains a competitive role in the new global economy.

2.2. Manage workforce diversity

Managing workforce diversity has become a fundamental aspect that organizations use to align the results of their diverse workforce initiatives against business goals (Patrick & Kumar, 2012). In support of the above, Sharma (2016) describes the management of labor diversity under a comprehensive business-oriented concept showing a major shift from the traditional approach of regulatory compliance, books and practices of equal opportunity to acknowledge and accept individual differences are important attributes to an organization's success (Hur, & Strickland, 2015, Sharma, 2016).

There are many different definitions of diversity management. For example, Cummings and Worley (2014, p. 5) have defined managing workforce diversity as "not adjusting diversity but enabling every employee to do their best. not be treated unfairly or unfairly ". In another Dike definition (2013, page 2), human resource diversity management is a "systematic management process that develops the environment in which all employees, with similarities and differences. They can contribute to the organization's "competitive and strategic advantage". As they draw from these definitions, they show that diversified management is a business-focused concept that takes advantage of the benefits of heterogeneous employees and increases the economic profitability of organizations through creating a conducive environment for execution.

Roberge, Lewicki, Hietapelto and Abdyldaeva (2011) believe that managing a diverse workforce is complex and therefore requires the attention of organizations to implement consistent and clear practices that are currently at and in the future will improve the organization's performance. This was explained by Mahadevan, Primecz and Romani (2014), who further explained that management of workforce diversity was unstable and increased due to lack of communication between management and employees about diversity. how human resources benefit the organization, for example the implementation of action goals and to achieve these goals fundamentally benefit the employees and the organization.

□ Benefits of managing diversity in the workforce within organizations

As defined by Dike (2013), management of workforce diversity intends to leverage employee similarities and differences to contribute to an organization's strategic goals. As such, there are several outcomes of managing workforce diversity that lead to improved overall organizational performance.

Increase productivity

Increasing productivity is one of the main problems facing organizations. Because organizations have their own characteristics and purposes, a number of approaches can be used to increase productivity (Dobre, 2013, Shemla, Meyer, Greer & Jehn, 2014). Among the approaches include using the diversity of the workforce and implementing effective diversity management measures to manage it (Barak, 2016). These activities include assessing individual differences, equity and equality, and providing training in equity and development (Aswathappa, 2008, Barak, 2016). This allows employees to develop a sense of belonging regardless of socio-cultural differences and maintain their loyalty and commitment to helping the organization improve its productivity and profitability (Kirton & Green, 2015).

Share diverse ideas and work in groups

Organizations define teamwork as a means to achieve their desired work results and ensure that goods and services are delivered properly (Kennedy & Nilson, 2008). This principle is based on the fact that a single employee cannot perform many tasks at the same speed that a team can perform (Fernandez & Polzer, 2015). Therefore, each team member has unique ideas and provides a different perspective on problem solving in order to achieve the best solution in a short time (Podsiadlowski, Gröschke, Kogler, Springer & Van Der Zee, 2013).

Learning and development

The existence of individual difference in an organization creates a foundation for employee self-growth (D'Netto, Shen, Chelliah & Monga, 2014). As employees interact with other employees from different cultures and with different perspectives, it can allow each employee to be socially savvy and have a point of view of their workplace from the point of view. global (D'Netto et al., 2014). The more employees spend time with colleagues from different cultures, the more employees destroy the potential obstacles of individualism, thus creating employees who are members of social experience. Assembly (Dike, 2013).

Efficiently communicate

Workforce diversity can strengthen an organization's relationship with multiple customers through enabling a smooth communication process (Trittin & Schoeneborn, 2015). The customer service section is one of the most important parts of active communication (Martin & Nakayama, 2015). In heterogeneous organizations, staff working in the customer service department can associate with diverse clients and can make customers feel at home through a comprehensive understanding of the difference. cultural differences (Martin & Nakayama, 2015). In the US, for example, most organizations want to recruit multilingual people to deal with multiple native languages (Dike, 2013).

Experience in diversity

A culturally diverse group can bring a different level of awareness and experience when performing group tasks (Shemla et al., 2014). Offering the unique skills, values, qualifications, work experience, and knowledge of a diverse cultural group of employees can greatly benefit the organization through enhanced adoption and the productivity of teams to adapt to the ever-changing environment (Shemla et al., 2014). Each culture comes with its own strengths and weaknesses, so different employees have different strengths and weaknesses that come from their culture (Ferrara, 2016). When the individual attributes of each employee are effectively managed, it can exert strength and control weaknesses to have a huge impact on the workforce (Ferrara, 2016).

2.3. Employee performance

Employee performance has been seen as a dependent variable such as training, knowledge, skills, motivation and labor force diversity (Odhiambo, 2014). Beziible (2015), argues that during the industrial revolution, many organizations viewed performance as a key variable related to input aspects, especially financial sources. However, in this modern era, organizations have recognized the need to embrace diversity due to the comprehensive business knowledge that diverse groups of employees work with and are more responsive to the background. the global market economy (Mollel, Mulongo & Maket, 2015).

Various definitions of employee performance have been highlighted in various studies. For example, a study by Odhiambo (2014) on human resource development, identifies work efficiency as effectively performing assigned tasks. The author further explains that, regardless of the many tasks performed, they can be considered to have done well if the performance is related to the overall goals of the organization. In another definition of Tinofirei (2011), employee performance is defined as the successful completion of the tasks of a selected individual, and assessed by a supervisor or organization. , with pre-accepted standards, while effectively using available resources in a changing environment.

Osabiya (2015), highly productive employees can indirectly reduce the intention to quit a job (Hassan, 2013). This supports Vroom's Theory of Expectation (1964) which describes a high efficiency rating as a signal that employees have high incomes and benefits such as salary increases and promotions. In turn, these interests may affect an organization's survival (Rubaii-Barrett & Beck, 1993). About the organization itself, Osabiya (2015) argued that increasing employee's productivity leads to positive business results such as increased market share and revenue growth. Therefore, above all, employee's work efficiency acts as a major determinant for personal, team and organizational growth.

Performance as a multi-dimensional concept

According to Hedfi-Khayati and Zouaoui (2013), efficiency is a multidimensional concept. It is very diverse and can be measured in terms of task execution and contextual performance (Hedfi-Khayati & Zouaou, 2013).

Perform mission

Borman and Motowidlo (1993, p. 2) defined job performance as a "qualification of the employees in which they performed activities that contributed or added value to the organization". According to the author, personal contributions to an organization can be direct and indirect, which directly contribute to the production of goods and indirectly related to the monitoring or management process. The individual performance of the job is a multidimensional concept (Sonntag & Frese, 2002, Koopmans, Bernaards, Hildebrandt, Schaufeli, de Vet Henrica, and van der Beek, 2011). It covers the concepts of performance at specific tasks, specific job fluently, communicating fluently, (Campbell, McHenry & Wise, 1990). In recent years, many scholars have focused more on specific components of work (Schechner, 2013, Hogan & Coote, 2014, Shields et al., 2015).

Effective in context

According to Lai (2013), contextual effectiveness relates to the operational aspects of an individual maintaining and enhancing an organization's social network and supporting general technical tasks. It is divided into two main categories: contextual stable behaviors and active behaviors (Kumar, 2015). Stable contextual behavior includes civic behavior (athleticism, courtesy and conscientiousness), while proactive behaviors include individual initiatives (Muindi & K'Obonyo, 2015). Implementing behaviors are intended to ensure that organizations operate smoothly in their current state while proactive behaviors are intended to transform workflows and organizational processes (Muindi & K ' Obonyo, 2015).

2.4. Relationship between diversity in the workforce and employee performance

2.4.1. Relationship between age diversity and employee performance

According to Kunze (2013), age diversity is defined as the difference in the age distribution among employees and is used to describe the composition of the organization or the composition of the workgroup within an organization. Various researchers argue that age diversity can have both advantages and disadvantages for organizations. For example, Mwatumwa (2016) cited examples of age-diverse disadvantages such as problems of communication and conflict. In support of the above view, Opstal (2009) further explained that when managers do not manage the distance between employees, conflicts can evolve and thus reduce employee productivity. Additionally, as argued by Backes-Gellner and Veen (2015) using company cost analysis, increasing heterogeneity can lead to poor communication, less interaction, and reduced performance of the company. employees due to different values and preferences. Backes-Gellner and Veen (2015) add that organizations that are more focused on everyday tasks rather than creative tasks are unlikely to get any significant benefits from diversity. Age can be expensive for age diversity.

Contrary to the above, Boehm and Kunze (2015) have argued that a heterogeneous workforce with age creates many skills, intellectual styles, morals and preferences that can increase productivity. This is in the same view as Park and Lin (2008) that the perceptions, cognitive patterns and interpretations of a different workforce are very different, if combined together can create a large number of ants. formula, greater problem solving toolbox and employee productivity increase

2.4.2. Gender diversity and employee performance

Gender is the description of a person's masculinity or femininity (Connell & Messerschmitt, 2013). Mwatumwa (2016) argues that gender diversity is positively related to employee and organizational outcomes. This is consistent with Weiliang (2011), who uses a company's perspective, who said that gender diversity at the managerial and organizational level can create a company with a better competitive advantage. However, Kirton and Greene (2015) argue that most organizations' do not recognize these benefits as gender imbalances persist in organizations. According to Nishii (2013), most cultures around the world still follow the concept that the world is dominated by men. Thus, from companies with the same belief organizations and therefore prefer to hire men over women because men are perceived to be more capable and capable of managing work (Nishii, 2011). Kirton and Green (2015), stated that creating equal employment opportunities for women is important to improving the performance of employees in organizations.

2.4.3. The ethnic diversity and work efficiency of the employees

Ethnic groups are called tribal groups (Makokolo, 2005). It is of historical significance (Makokolo, 2005). Dastane and Eshegbe (2015) argue that an ethnically diverse workforce can be beneficial and detrimental for organizations. Martin and Nakayama (2015) provide examples of ethnic diversity that increases creativity. They argue that an ethnically diverse group brings many different perspectives for team problem solving, new creative ideas, thus leading to team effectiveness. Van Knippenberg, Van Ginkel and Homan (2013), who argue that the ethnic diversity group brings creativity and innovation to the organization and thus leads to increased organizational performance. However, Arokiasamy, (2013) argues that if ethnic diversity is not managed, there can be communication conflicts and interpersonal conflicts. Bleaney and Dimico, (2016) agree and add that national conflict can negatively affect an organization's reputation, performance and profitability. With the above advantages and disadvantages. Given the above, Elsaid (2012) has encouraged organizations to implement effective ethnic diversity management strategies so that they can take advantage of the benefits and mitigate the negative effects of ethnic diversity. .

2.4.4. Diversity in education and employee performance

Most organizations implement educational diversity initiatives to encourage and encourage employees to work effectively with others to achieve their goals (Tracy & David, 2011). A person's educational attainment can be an important indicator of their knowledge, skills and competencies (Tracy & David, 2011). Furthermore, the choice of a particular educator can reflect a person's cognitive strength and personality (Daniel, 2009). For

example, an individual with computer science knowledge may have a different cognitive layout from an individual that is marketed or advertised (Daniel, 2009). As in functional expertise, educational diversity seems to have a positive effect on group performance because it promotes a wider range of cognitive skills (Horwitz, 2005).

Lewin, Massini and Peeters (2011) argue that organizational receptive capacity tends to increase with diversity in knowledge structures reflected in diverse educational disciplines. Bamberger, Biron and Meshoulam (2014) found that diversity of information, such as education and functional areas, is positively related to working group discussions. Hambrick, Humphrey and Gupta (2015) also show that international experience and diverse education are positively related to global, strategic firms among top management teams.

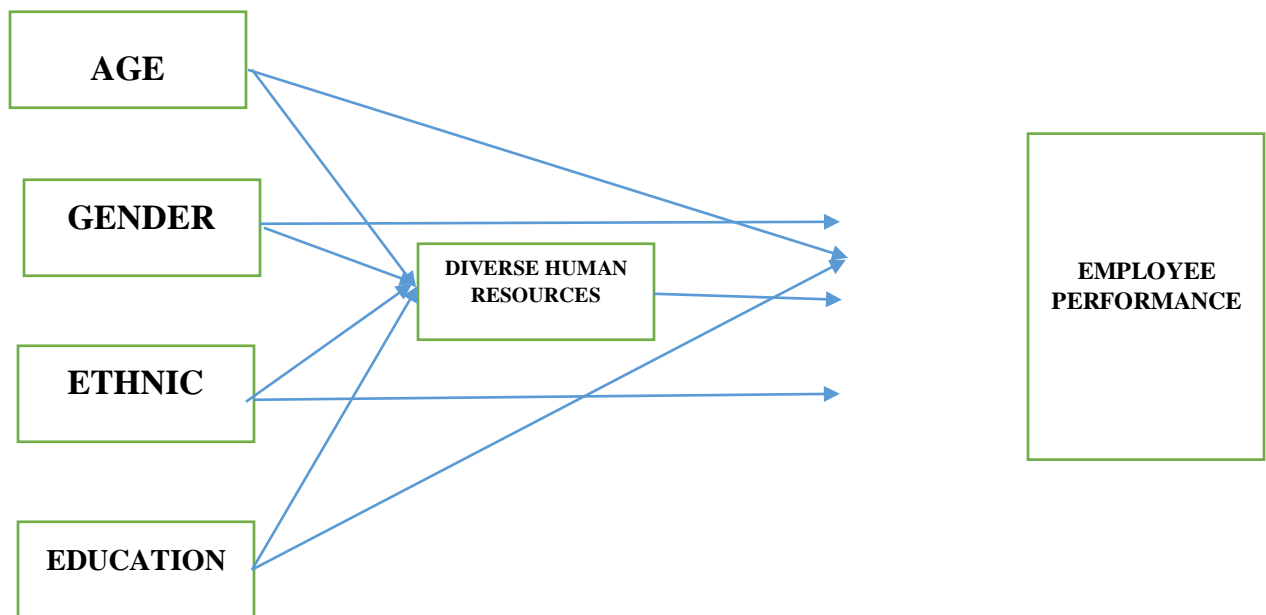
However, educational diversity can also negatively affect group performance and social integration within groups (Peretz, Levi & Fried, 2015). The author adds that educational diversity can negatively affect decision-making consensus in top management teams, leading to poor results. In addition, heterogeneous educational diversity tends to increase discomfort and conflict that can lead to social integration and reduced performance in groups (Jindal, Bagade & Sharma, 2013).

3. Research gaps and issues that need further research in the future

Diversity studies in the workforce are mainly conducted in ethnic countries such as South Africa, India, America, etc. These studies have shown the factors of diversity in the workforce. working efficiency of employees such as: Diversity in age, diversity in ethnic group, diversity in gender and diversity in education. And mainly research on diversity in the workforce is mainly done in enterprises, there are quite a few scientists studying this topic in educational institutions.

Within the author's search capacity, the author has not found any official research on diversity in the labor force in Vietnam. Moreover, Dien Bien is a province with ethnic diversity, ethnic Kinh, Muong, H'mong,... all work at the higher education and training centers of Dien Bien province. A big question posed to the author is: How does the diversity of the workforce in these centers affect employee performance?

The proposed research model is as follows:



Expected research model

(Source: Aruna, 2013)

Research hypothesis

In this study, age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity and educational diversity are independent variables, while employee performance is the dependent variable. Therefore, the research hypotheses are:

H1: There is a relationship between the age diversity and the work efficiency of employees at the higher education centers in Dien Bien province.

H2: There is a relationship between gender diversity and employee performance in higher education centers in Dien Bien province.

H3: There is a relationship between the ethnic diversity and the effectiveness of employees working in higher education centers in Dien Bien province.

H4: There is a relationship between educational diversity and employee performance in higher education centers in Dien Bien province.

H5: There is a link between total diversity in the workforce and employee performance in the higher education centers in Dien Bien province.

4. Conclusion

This study provides a conceptual understanding of workforce diversity and its effects on employees' performance, thus allowing employees to accept, evaluate and understand perceptions of each other. It also shows the importance of having a diverse workforce to allow more ideas in solving problems in the workplace and ultimately improving employee productivity. The study also provides additional theoretical background to encourage more research in the area of labor diversity and employee performance in Vietnam. Furthermore, it creates awareness in higher education institutions about the benefits of having a suitable shape of the workforce, thus directing staff and organizing implementation. Above all, this study helps policymakers and legislators to view workforce diversity as an important aspect in driving economic growth rather than a legal need. .

The research results are useful for many different subjects such as:

- The managers of the higher education centers in Dien Bien province to properly recognize the role of diversifying human resources, as well as to establish regulations on human resource diversity in the unit.
- State agencies help to promulgate diverse support and encouragement documents in the workforce.
- The employees are confident and feel respected and appreciated for their cultural and ethnic characteristics.

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