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学位論文の要約

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学位論文題名

# Cultural diversity in workgroups: Shedding light on its effects and the roles of leadership.

（ワークグループの文化的ダイバーシティ：
ダイバーシティの効果とリーダーシップの役割に関する検討）

## 1. Background

Due to socioeconomic trends, e.g., globalization, more organizations today are operating in multinational and multicultural contexts, and as such, the composition of their workforce and their stakeholders are growing increasingly diverse in a wide range of cultural attributes. This has prompted increased attention to cultural diversity. Prior research argues that organizations stand to benefit, e.g., improved performance and a competitive edge when their workforce mirrors the diversity in the communities in which they are embedded. The logic is that employees from different cultural backgrounds and experiences tend to possess diverse knowledge and perspectives that can help to meet the broader objectives of the organization.

## 2. Research Problems

Research evidence however demonstrates that the effective constitution and utilization of the potential of culturally diverse workgroups remains a challenging task. When constituted, the relationship between culturally diverse workgroup members may sometimes complicate workgroup functioning, presenting inherent problems of coordination and conflict. It remains unclear if and how cultural diversity can improve workgroup performance. Prior research has not yet clearly established a framework for understanding how cultural diversity affects workgroup performance positively.

## 3. Research Objective

Our study sought to develop a conceptual framework for understanding the performance-promoting effects of cultural diversity. We argue that the effect of cultural diversity on workgroup creative performance will be contingent on underlying process variables often not considered in diversity studies. We apply cognitive resource theory to look at the effect of

cultural diversity on workgroup creativity as manifested through workgroup information elaboration. Also, we investigate the importance of leaders as diversity managers.

## 4. Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated after a systematic review of literature:

1. Does diversity in surface-level/social category cultural attributes give rise to diversity in deep-level cognitive resources?
2. What workgroup processes influence the relationship between cultural diversity and positive workgroup performance?
3. Finally, how can workgroup processes be managed to minimize the costs and maximize the benefits that may result from cultural diversity?

## 5. Research Model and Hypothesis

A process-oriented conceptual framework was developed to address the aforementioned research questions. It assumes in particular that ethnic diversity will positively influence cognitive diversity in culturally diverse workgroups. Additionally, a positive effect of ethnic diversity on workgroup creativity through workgroup cognitive diversity and information elaboration respectively is hypothesized. Finally, inclusive leadership behaviors are predicted to moderate the above relationships.

## 6. Methods

Adopting an empirical, cross-sectional survey study, our research addresses the pertinent research questions raised by the literature review about how cultural diversity affects workgroup performance and how its effects can be managed. We test the above conceptual model on a sample of firms in Nigeria, a country whose culturally diverse society has had a far-reaching effect on its socioeconomic and political life. Data analysis was performed using 'PROCESS'- a regression-based path-analyses.

## 7. Findings

The findings of this study support the notion that cultural diversity is indeed beneficial to workgroups. Ethnic diversity, a surface-level cultural attribute, contributed to diversity in deep-level cognitive resources. Workgroups were able to capitalize on these variations in deep-level cognitive resources to enhance their creativity when they engaged in the elaboration of task-relevant information. Results also demonstrated that the effective management of workgroup processes through inclusive leadership helped materialize the performance-promoting effects of cultural diversity.

## 8. Conclusions

Theoretically, this study contributes to future investigations into the effects of cultural diversity by highlighting the need for researchers to be explicit in their definitions of cultural diversity and the need to match their definitions of (cultural) diversity with its measurement. In addition, it provides empirical validation to the widespread implicit assumptions that differences in social categories result in cognitive variety among group members. The observed positive effect of cultural diversity on workgroup creativity further provides evidence for the "value-in-diversity hypothesis." Finally, it offers credible footing for inclusive leadership behaviors as a means of managing diversity in workgroups and, by extension, organizations.

Managerially, our study advocates a resource-based view of cultural diversity by showing practitioners and workgroup leaders the need to look beyond surface-level diversity and ensure that they stimulate and utilize the variety of deep-level cognitions each unique member brings to the workgroup. It provides empirical evidence for workgroup managers to go above and beyond constituting a diverse workforce, by actively ensuring the commitment of workgroup members to cognitive workgroup processes through inclusive leadership.

## 9. Organization of Study

This dissertation is organized into six chapters. In Chapter One, we present the introduction, which highlights the background of this study, research problems, and research objectives. In Chapter Two, we present a review of extant literature relevant to the study, from which research gaps were identified and research questions proposed. A conceptual framework is also proposed to address the research questions. Chapter Three provides details on the research methodology, and the analytical model to be used in testing the hypothesized conceptual model. In Chapter Four, we present the research data analysis and the results of the hypotheses. In Chapter Five, we provide discussions on the results and findings of the study. In Chapter Six, we conclude the study by discussing the theoretical and managerial contributions of the study, and recommendations for further research. Finally, references and appendices are presented at the end of the thesis.