

**WORKPLACE DIVERSITY AND TEAM PERFORMANCE AMONG
ACADEMIC STAFF OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN**

BY

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**BEING A PROJECT PRESENTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT, FACULTY OF
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REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE
(B.Sc.) IN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

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DECLARATION

This work is the result of my investigation on the topic “WORKPLACE DIVERSITY AND TEAM PERFORMANCE AMONG ACADEMIC STAFF OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BENIN”. To the best of my knowledge, this work has not been submitted elsewhere for the award of any degree.

The materials used have been properly acknowledged.

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DAATE

CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this work was carried out and compelled by **NWAGBARA CHINWENDU ALFRED** with Matriculation Number **MGS2104933** of the Department of Human Resource Management, Faculty of Management Science, University of Benin, Benin City and confirmed to be adequate in scope for the award of Bachelor Degree (B.Sc) in Human Resource Management.

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DEDICATION

This project is Dedicated to God Almighty from whom all knowledge and wisdom comes.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the relationship between workplace diversity and team performance among academic staff of the University of Benin. Workplace diversity, which encompasses differences in gender, age, ethnicity, academic discipline, and professional experience, has become a key factor influencing organizational effectiveness in higher education institutions. The research investigates how these diverse attributes shape collaboration, communication, and productivity within academic teams. Using a descriptive survey design, data will be collected from academic staff across faculties to assess perceptions of diversity and its impact on teamwork outcomes such as innovation, decision-making quality, conflict management, and overall performance. The findings are expected to reveal whether diversity enhances or constrains team effectiveness in the university context, providing insights into the role of inclusivity in fostering academic excellence. The study contributes to the understanding of diversity management in Nigerian universities and offers practical recommendations for creating an inclusive work environment that maximizes the strengths of diverse academic teams.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

In the modern organization, including academic institutions staff are drawn from different walks of life. People come together with different demographic characteristics—such as gender, race, age, and culture—and these differences form what is known as workplace diversity. Diversity is more than just physical differences; it includes the way people think, behave, and relate with one another. When a university or college has staff members from different backgrounds, it may affect how well these staff members work together as a team. In some cases, diversity can bring new ideas and improve team efforts. While in other situations, if it is not well managed, it may lead to misunderstandings and affect the team's ability to perform well (Ehilebo, Lamido-Abubakar & Cross, 2022).

Gender is a major part of diversity. In academic settings, both male and female lecturers contribute to teaching and research activities. However, differences in experiences or biases may affect how team members work together. For instance, studies have shown that in some Nigerian universities, gender imbalance may reduce group interaction or lead to poor collaboration in team-based projects (Nwaoma, 2022). However, where there is gender inclusion, communication improves and academic output becomes stronger. Institutions that promote equal opportunities between male and female lecturers often see better team spirit and cooperation among staff.

Another aspect of diversity is race and ethnicity. In a country like Nigeria, where people speak different languages and belong to different ethnic groups, race and ethnicity often affect how people relate in the workplace. Academic staff from diverse ethnic backgrounds may view work processes, communication, and even leadership differently. If this difference is respected and well managed, it could help boost teamwork. But when there is ethnic bias or stereotyping, team members may withhold ideas or avoid collaboration. According to Nwaoma (2022), university teams with high ethnic inclusion showed better performance in joint research and curriculum development projects.

Age diversity is also very common in academic institutions. Lecturers come from different generations, from young assistants to senior professors. These age gaps bring different styles of thinking. Younger staff often bring digital skills and fresh methods, while older ones share long years of experience and wisdom. Joseph (2014) studied age diversity in Singaporean firms and found that mixed-age teams tend to perform better when roles are shared based on strengths. In Nigerian institutions, similar trends have been observed. When age differences are accepted, younger and older lecturers mentor each other, and team performance increases naturally.

Cultural identities form the final layer of workplace diversity. Culture includes values, religion, customs, and language. Academic staff may share office spaces but differ in belief systems and how they interpret actions or behaviors. These cultural differences sometimes lead to tension, especially when not handled with empathy and understanding. However, Rostina et al. (n.d.) and Anyalor et al. (2018) found that in

institutions where staff were trained to embrace cultural tolerance, there was less conflict and more productivity in team settings. Staff who feel their culture is respected are more willing to collaborate and offer their full potential in team projects.

It is against this background that this study workplace diversity—defined through differences in gender, race/ethnicity, age, and cultural identity—directly influences how academic teams function and perform. As a federal university with a richly diverse academic workforce drawn from various parts of Nigeria, these differences shape daily staff interactions, classroom delivery, committee roles, and collaborative research. The performance of academic teams depends not only on qualifications and experience but also on how well staff members manage and adapt to diversity among themselves. Where diversity is understood and respected, team spirit and output tend to improve. However, when diversity is ignored or poorly managed, it can hinder teamwork and reduce performance outcomes. This study, therefore, focuses on investigating the influence of workplace diversity on team performance specifically among the academic staff of the University of Benin, with the aim of identifying both the strengths and challenges that arise within its unique and culturally mixed academic environment.

1.2 Statement of problem

Modern academic institutions like the University of Benin are increasingly characterized by diverse workforces, comprising differences in gender, ethnicity, age, and cultural identities. While such diversity introduces valuable perspectives, it also presents challenges that may hinder team cohesion and performance if not effectively managed.

Despite the university's cultural richness, there is limited understanding of how these differences impact academic teamwork, especially in teaching, research, and administration.

Unacknowledged differences in cultural identity, generational expectations, and gender roles can lead to miscommunication, exclusion, and low motivation. As Ottuh (2024) notes, poor diversity management can deepen institutional divides and reduce productivity. Similarly, Wallrich et al. (2024) found that team diversity's impact is shaped by how well it is managed. Without inclusive structures, diversity may weaken collaboration and trust among staff.

Cultural identities also plays a complex role. Heliot et al. (2016) and Messarra (2014) suggest that belief differences can either enhance or disrupt teamwork, depending on the institution's inclusiveness. At the University of Benin, where multiple beliefs and Cultural practices coexist, ignoring this dynamic risks fragmentation and team inefficiency. Further, Fry et al. (2011) and Benefiel et al. (2014) emphasize that recognizing cultural values boosts team cohesion and performance. However, when such values are overlooked, academic teams may become disengaged and underperform.

This study, therefore, seeks to examine the impact of workplace diversity—defined by gender, ethnicity, age, and Cultural identity—on team performance among academic staff at the University of Benin. In doing so, it addresses a critical gap in understanding how diversity affects productivity in the Nigerian university context.

1.3 Research Objectives

This study aims to examine how workplace diversity affects team performance among academic staff at the University of Benin, focusing on collaboration, innovation, and productivity. Specifically, the objectives are;

1. To assess the impact of gender diversity on team performance among academic staff at the University of Benin.
2. To investigate the influence of age diversity on academic team performance at the University of Benin.
3. To explore the impact of ethnic diversity on teamwork and performance among academic staff at the University of Benin.
4. To examine the role of cultural identity in influencing team performance at the University of Benin.

1.4 Research Questions

The following research questions guides the study

1. How does gender diversity influence team performance among academic staff at the University of Benin?
2. How does age diversity affect academic team performance at the University of Benin?
3. What is the impact of ethnic diversity on teamwork and performance among academic staff at the University of Benin?

4. In what ways does ethnic and cultural identity impact team performance at the University of Benin?

1.5 Hypotheses

1. Ho1: There is no significant relationship between gender diversity and team performance among academic staff at the University of Benin.
2. Ho2: There is no significant relationship between age diversity and academic team performance at the University of Benin.
3. Ho3: There is no significant relationship between ethnic diversity and teamwork and performance among academic staff at the University of Benin.
4. Ho4: There is no significant relationship between cultural identity and team performance at the University of Benin.

1.6 Scope of the study

The scope of this study focuses on examining the impact of workplace diversity—specifically gender, ethnicity, age, and religious diversity—on team performance among academic staff at the University of Benin. It will assess how these factors influence collaboration, productivity, and innovation within academic teams in the university setting. The study will be done within the 2025 academic session.

1.7 Significance of the study

The study on the impact of workplace diversity on team performance among academic staff at the University of Benin is of significant importance as it explores how diversity factors like gender, ethnicity, age, and cultural identity affect collaboration,

productivity, and overall team success. The findings from this study will be crucial for various stakeholders within the academic environment, providing actionable insights to improve institutional effectiveness. The research will benefit the following groups:

University Administrators: The findings will offer administrators valuable information to develop and implement policies that foster an inclusive work environment, optimize team performance, and improve staff productivity.

Academic Staff: Understanding the impact of diversity on team dynamics will help academic staff work more collaboratively, reduce conflicts, and enhance their contributions to the university's academic and research goals.

Researchers: The study will contribute to the body of knowledge on diversity management, offering insights that will aid future research on diversity and performance in higher education institutions, particularly within the Nigerian context.

Policy Makers: The research will inform policymakers on the importance of diversity management strategies in universities, guiding the formulation of policies that promote inclusive practices and equitable work environments in higher education

Educational Institutions: The findings will assist other universities and institutions in Nigeria and beyond to improve team performance by addressing diversity challenges, enhancing communication, and fostering a culture of inclusivity within academic teams.

1.8 Limitations of the Study

This study is centred on the impact of workplace diversity on team performance among academic staff of the University of Benin, carried out in the 2025 session.

Limited timeframe/ cross-sectional snapshot:

Conducting the study within a single academic session captures only a snapshot of relationships between diversity and team performance and prevents strong causal conclusions or observation of long-term effect. (Mitigate with longitudinal follow-ups).

Restricted diversity dimensions:

The study examines gender, ethnicity, age and cultural identity but may omit other important dimensions, such as (disability, socioeconomic status, religion, sexual orientation). This narrows the picture of workplace diversity

Population limited to academic staff:

Excluding non-academic/support staff, students, and administrators limits understanding of how diversity affect broader institutional teams and operations.

Uncontrolled confounding variables:

Factors such as leader style, department resources, discipline, norms, workload or pre-existing interpersonal conflict can influence team performance independently of diversity and may not be fully controlled.

Ethical /sensitivity constraints:

Because diversity topics can be sensitive, some participants may withhold candid answers or decline o discuss negative experiences, leading to underreporting of problems.

1.9 Definition of terms

Workplace diversity refers to the inclusion of individuals from varied demographic backgrounds—such as gender, age, ethnicity and cultural identities—within the academic staff at the University of Benin.

Team performance is the collective ability of academic staff at the University of Benin to achieve academic goals, including effective collaboration, productivity, research output, and the overall success of departmental and university initiatives.

Academic staff refers to the faculty members involved in teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities at the University of Benin, including professors, lecturers, and researchers.

The University of Benin is a public federal university located in Benin City, Nigeria, known for its diverse academic community and its role in higher education and research.

Gender diversity refers to the equal representation and participation of individuals of different genders, such as male, female, and non-binary, in the workplace.

Ethnic diversity refers to the presence of individuals from different ethnic groups, each with distinct cultural backgrounds, languages, and traditions, within a team or organization.

Age diversity encompasses the inclusion of individuals from different age groups, ranging from younger to older employees, each bringing different experiences, perspectives, and work styles.

Cultural diversity refers to the inclusion of individuals from various cultural backgrounds with distinct traditions, values, languages, and norms. It impacts academic staff interactions, collaboration, and team performance at the University of Benin.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Preamble.

This chapter presents the literature review on workplace diversity and academic staff team performance. The independent variable is workplace diversity and the dependent variable is team performance. The chapter examines how gender diversity, age diversity, ethnic diversity and cultural identity diversity affects academic team performance. Additionally, a review of important empirical studies highlights crucial findings and perspectives on diversity and academic success. Additionally, the chapter covers essential theoretical viewpoints and frameworks to better understand the dynamics. A conceptual framework illustrates the approach for analyzing diversity's impact on academic staff team performance. The chapter concludes by identifying literature gaps and suggests further research in this topic.

2.2 Conceptual Review

2.2.1 Team Performance

Team performance in academic settings is shaped by both internal and external factors, with a key influence being the diversity of skills, knowledge, and cultural backgrounds among team members. Effective collaboration is essential for achieving shared goals such as research, teaching, and service delivery. High-performing academic teams rely on the interaction between individual expertise and collective team processes, where trust and communication are foundational. When teams foster trust and open

communication, they can address complex issues, share insights, and innovate more effectively. Conversely, poor communication and lack of trust lead to misunderstandings and diminished engagement, ultimately lowering performance outcomes (Salas et al., 2015).

Leadership plays a critical role in guiding academic teams toward success. Effective leaders create environments that empower team members, promote autonomy, and encourage collaborative decision-making. By leveraging diverse perspectives, leaders unify the team toward a common vision, which is crucial in environments where individuality and varied expertise are common (Mathieu et al., 2019).

Team diversity, including demographic and cognitive differences, can enhance creativity and problem-solving in academic teams. This diversity fosters innovative research and teaching strategies but can also introduce challenges in communication and work styles. Effective leadership is vital in managing these differences, ensuring that diversity contributes positively to team performance while minimizing conflicts (DeChurch & Mesmer-Magnus, 2010).

Psychological safety is another key element, where team members feel safe to express ideas and offer feedback without fear of judgment. This encourages innovation and is essential in academic teams for the development of high-quality research and teaching methods. Without psychological safety, team performance can stagnate (Edmondson, 1999).

2.2.2 Workplace diversity

Workplace diversity plays a pivotal role in influencing team performance, especially in academic settings. Diversity encompasses a wide range of differences, such as gender, ethnicity, age, education, and cultural background, which shape how individuals work together in teams. These differences can significantly enhance the creative problem-solving abilities of teams, as they bring various perspectives that can lead to more innovative solutions.

The inclusion of diverse individuals in teams is known to foster creativity and improve decision-making. According to Fujimoto and Härtel (2017), organizations that go beyond traditional diversity training programs and embrace comprehensive diversity learning frameworks are more likely to experience positive changes in team dynamics and performance. These frameworks help in leveraging the diverse skills, backgrounds, and experiences of team members, contributing to better collaboration and improved outcomes.

In academic settings, where teamwork and collaboration are essential, the diverse skills and ideas brought by different individuals can enhance the teaching and learning environment. Gomathy (2023) emphasizes that when diversity is well-managed, it creates an environment conducive to knowledge sharing, skill enhancement, and productivity. The combination of diverse talents can help academic teams generate more innovative research ideas and develop creative teaching methods. Managing diversity effectively is not always straightforward. Mwangi (2021) notes that poorly managed diversity can lead

to communication barriers, conflict, and disengagement, all of which can negatively impact team performance. Thus, organizations, including academic institutions, must be intentional in their approach to diversity, ensuring that differences are valued and leveraged to drive innovation.

2.2.3 Gender

Gender diversity has significant implications for team performance across various organizational and academic settings. Research has consistently highlighted that teams composed of both men and women tend to outperform homogeneous teams in terms of collaboration, communication, and innovation. In particular, gender diversity enhances group processes, including collective intelligence, which is the shared ability of a group to work effectively towards a goal (Woolley et al., 2010).

One of the primary reasons for this improvement is the difference in communication and leadership styles between men and women. Women often engage in more democratic and inclusive approaches, encouraging participation and equality in conversations. In contrast, men tend to display more autocratic styles, which can hinder full team engagement (Bear & Woolley, 2011). This difference fosters a more collaborative environment when teams include both genders, resulting in better cohesion and problem-solving abilities.

Further, the presence of women in teams has been shown to improve team morale and psychological safety, where members feel more valued and confident in sharing their ideas (Jehn et al., 1999). The positive impact on team dynamics is also related to

increased interpersonal sensitivity, where women often excel at reading non-verbal cues and managing interpersonal relations effectively (Bear & Woolley, 2011).

However, the relationship between gender diversity and team performance can vary based on contextual factors. For instance, in male-dominated industries or teams, the presence of women might initially face challenges due to stereotypes and bias. Over time, as the gender balance becomes more equitable, these effects tend to diminish, and the team's performance improves. Therefore, achieving gender parity in teams, particularly in traditionally male-dominated sectors, could be crucial for maximizing team performance and innovation (Joshi & Roh, 2009). Gender diversity enhances team collaboration and performance, especially when accompanied by an inclusive organizational culture that values diverse contributions. This relationship is not only beneficial for workplace dynamics but also crucial in academic and research teams, where collaborative efforts lead to scientific breakthroughs and innovations (Woolley et al., 2010).

2.2.4 Age

Age diversity in teams has become an increasingly important area of research, particularly in the context of organizational performance. Teams composed of individuals from various age groups bring diverse skills, experiences, and viewpoints that can enhance creativity, problem-solving, and decision-making processes. In this context, understanding the role of age diversity in team performance is crucial, especially as organizations navigate the complexities of a multigenerational workforce.

Research by Morales and Marquina (2009) suggests that age does not directly predict team performance when performance is measured by teamwork variables. This finding aligns with other studies indicating that the impact of age on performance is often mediated by other factors such as team dynamics, the nature of tasks, and individual perceptions of diversity. Specifically, the perception of age diversity within teams moderates its effects on performance. Teams that view their age diversity positively tend to experience better cooperation and higher levels of collective intelligence (Morales & Marquina, 2009). Conversely, when age diversity is viewed as a source of conflict or discomfort, it can lead to communication breakdowns and reduced performance.

The positive impact of age diversity on team performance is often attributed to the complementary nature of different generational perspectives. Younger employees tend to bring adaptability, innovation, and technical skills, while older employees contribute with their wealth of experience, problem-solving skills, and knowledge of organizational processes (Coleman Selden & Sowa, 2004). These differences, when managed effectively, can enhance team effectiveness and innovation. As Bergmann Lichtenstein and Mendenhall (2002) suggest, the growing emphasis on expertise over tenure in the knowledge economy means that both younger and older team members can equally contribute to high-performance outcomes, provided that their respective strengths are recognized and utilized appropriately.

As noted by McKay et al. (2007), the workplace diversity climate, including how age diversity is perceived, plays a crucial role in determining its impact on team

performance. Teams with a positive diversity climate are more likely to engage in open communication, share ideas freely, and collaborate effectively, regardless of age differences. In contrast, teams with negative perceptions of diversity may experience increased turnover and disengagement, ultimately harming performance (McKay et al., 2007).

Additionally, age diversity also influences the social dynamics within teams. Studies have shown that mixed-age teams are more likely to exhibit behaviors that encourage egalitarian leadership, with equal participation across all members, regardless of their age (Bergmann Lichtenstein & Mendenhall, 2002). This equal distribution of influence fosters an inclusive team environment, which enhances collaboration and promotes high performance.

While age diversity does not guarantee improved team performance, its positive effects can be realized when teams embrace it as a source of strength. Acknowledging the complementary skills and experiences that each age group brings to the table, and fostering an inclusive culture that values age diversity, can lead to improved collaboration, innovation, and performance.

2.2.5 Ethnicity

In today's increasingly interconnected world, the workforce is becoming more diverse than ever, and ethnicity plays a significant role in shaping team dynamics. As organizations evolve, understanding the effect of ethnic diversity on employee performance becomes crucial for maintaining a competitive edge. Ethnic diversity can

serve as both a challenge and an opportunity—where it can either enhance performance by fostering creativity and innovative solutions or hinder it due to potential cultural clashes and communication barriers.

The power of ethnic diversity lies in the differing viewpoints, experiences, and problem-solving techniques that individuals from various ethnic backgrounds bring to a team. According to Nguta and Omuya (2024), a diverse ethnic makeup in teams often leads to higher levels of creativity, as individuals with different cultural perspectives are more likely to propose unique and varied solutions to problems. This diversity enriches decision-making processes, ensuring that multiple facets of an issue are explored, which ultimately improves team performance. Additionally, when organizations actively promote diversity and create an inclusive environment, employees from different ethnic backgrounds feel more motivated and empowered to contribute their ideas and knowledge, thus improving overall organizational outcomes.

Managing ethnic diversity comes with its own set of challenges. As noted by Telyani et al. (2022), when ethnic diversity is not properly managed, it can lead to misunderstandings, biases, and even conflicts among team members. These issues can significantly undermine team cohesion and hinder effective communication, resulting in lower performance levels. In contrast, when ethnic diversity is embraced and integrated into the organizational culture, it enhances teamwork, increases productivity, and promotes a sense of belonging among employees, as individuals from diverse backgrounds feel valued and respected (Pettersson et al., 2020).

Further research by Porcena, Parboteeah, and Mero (2021) suggests that ethnic diversity can positively affect performance when there is a critical mass of diverse team members. In teams where the majority of members come from different ethnic backgrounds, ethnic diversity not only improves collaboration but also enhances the overall performance of the group. This is because diverse teams bring together a wide range of skills and knowledge, allowing for more comprehensive and innovative approaches to tasks and projects. By fostering an inclusive culture that values and respects the unique contributions of employees from various ethnic backgrounds, organizations can harness the full potential of ethnic diversity. When managed properly, ethnic diversity is a powerful driver of creativity, innovation, and organizational success.

2.2.6 Cultural identities

In the dynamic landscape of today's globalized workforce, the influence of cultural identities within teams has become a central point of focus for organizations striving for high performance. With teams becoming increasingly multicultural, driven by globalization and migration, the question of how cultural backgrounds shape team behavior and productivity is more relevant than ever. Cultural identities—which encompass an individual's values, traditions, communication styles, and social norms—play a crucial role in determining how team members interact, collaborate, and approach problem-solving.

Studies, such as those by Misoc (2017), have found that teams composed of members from diverse cultural backgrounds often excel in areas such as creativity and

innovation. The range of perspectives brought by individuals from different cultural identities enriches group discussions and drives novel ideas. In contrast, teams that are monocultural may lack this diversity of thought, limiting their ability to tackle complex problems in new ways. This is particularly important in academic settings, where intellectual diversity and varied problem-solving methods are crucial for research and teaching innovation (Stahl et al., 2010).

However, the effect of cultural diversity is not without its challenges. Hoogendoorn and Van Praag (2012) emphasize that cultural diversity can introduce communication barriers, misunderstandings, and even conflicts if not managed effectively. For instance, cultural differences in communication styles or work expectations can lead to misinterpretations or frustration, impacting team cohesion. Furthermore, research by Stahl and Maznevski (2021) suggests that while cultural diversity benefits creativity and innovation, it can initially disrupt team cohesion due to clashes in work norms and behaviors.

The positive effects of cultural diversity in teams are supported by global meta-analyses. According to Stahl et al. (2010), cultural diversity, when supported by inclusive leadership and organizational learning climates, enhances both knowledge sharing and innovation outcomes. This is particularly important in complex academic or research environments where diversity is increasingly the norm. Embracing cultural diversity in teams can lead to higher performance, but organizations and academic institutions must be intentional in creating an inclusive culture where diverse perspectives are valued and

integrated. Proper management of cultural diversity can unlock its full potential, enhancing collaboration, innovation, and overall team success

2.3 Workplace Diversity and Team Performance

Workplace diversity refers to the range of differences among individuals in a team, including age, gender, nationality, language, educational background, work experience, and personal values. In academic environments, where intellectual engagement and collaboration are central, these differences shape how staff interact and how effectively they work together. Diversity can serve as a source of strength for teams, bringing a broader set of perspectives, skills, and approaches to problem solving. Teams with varied backgrounds often demonstrate higher creativity and more innovative solutions, as they draw from multiple ways of thinking and experiences to address complex issues (Jha, 2018; Michalička, Lančarič, & Skočdopole, 2023). This richness in viewpoints can enhance the quality of decision making and strengthen the capacity for tackling academic challenges.

Despite these benefits, diversity can also create barriers when not well managed. Differences in values, work methods, and communication styles can lead to misunderstandings or conflict, which may erode trust and reduce the sense of unity within a team (Schouten, Khattab, & Pahng, 2020; Kravitz, 2005). When individuals identify more strongly with those who are similar to themselves, it can divide the group into subgroups and weaken collaboration (Schouten et al., 2020). Such fragmentation may

slow progress, especially in academic settings where coordinated efforts are essential for achieving research and teaching goals.

The relationship between diversity and team performance is shaped by several conditions. In tasks that demand creativity, innovation, and complex problem solving, diversity tends to have a stronger positive impact, as varied perspectives feed into more original and effective solutions (Mansoor, Ali, Ali, & Ali, 2013; Garcia, Zouaghi, & Marco, 2017). On the other hand, in highly structured or routine tasks, the influence of diversity on performance can be less pronounced, and in some cases, it can even hinder efficiency when integration among team members is weak (Wallrich, Opara, Wesołowska, Barnoth, & Yousefi, 2024).

Different types of diversity do not contribute equally to performance outcomes. Studies have shown that gender, nationality, and language diversity have notable effects on team achievements, particularly when supported by an inclusive working environment (Michalička et al., 2023). Generational diversity can combine the adaptability and technical skills of younger members with the experience and institutional knowledge of older ones, though this mix may require deliberate communication efforts to prevent misunderstandings (Becker, Richards, & Stollings, 2020). Cognitive diversity, involving variations in thinking styles and approaches to problem solving, can significantly enhance innovation but may also create tension if team processes do not encourage integration (Mansoor et al., 2013).

The role of leadership is central in turning diversity into a performance advantage. Leaders who promote inclusivity, ensure that all voices are heard, and establish clear shared goals are more likely to see diversity translate into better results (Knippenberg, Ginkel, & Homan, 2013). When leaders value diverse input and actively support collaboration, teams are better able to draw on their differences to find solutions and make sound decisions (Shin, 2023). In academic staff teams, such leadership can foster trust, openness, and a commitment to collective goals, which are essential for effective research and teaching.

Insights from these studies indicate that diversity can be a strong asset for academic teams when it is deliberately and thoughtfully managed. Without such management, the risk of division, miscommunication, and reduced cohesion can outweigh potential benefits. Structured communication practices, training in conflict resolution, and a strong focus on common objectives can help ensure that diversity strengthens rather than weakens team performance. In the context of academic work, where knowledge creation and dissemination are central, these measures can help diverse teams reach their full potential while maintaining harmony and productivity.

2.4 Conceptual Framework Model

The conceptual framework for this study explores the relationship between workplace diversity and team performance among academic staff at the University of Benin. It conceptualizes the independent variables (gender, age, ethnicity, and cultural

identity diversity) as the key factors influencing the dependent variable, team performance.

The framework can be illustrated as follows:

Independent Variables (Workplace Diversity Factors)

Gender Diversity: The representation of different genders within academic teams, which can influence team dynamics and collaboration.

Age Diversity: The inclusion of staff from various age groups, contributing to diverse perspectives, adaptability, and learning in teams.

Ethnic Diversity: The presence of staff from various ethnic backgrounds, which affects cultural understanding, problem-solving, and team cohesion.

Cultural Identity Diversity: The cultural backgrounds of staff members, which influence communication, collaboration, and overall team synergy.

Dependent Variable (Team Performance)

Team Performance: This refers to the overall effectiveness, productivity, and success of academic teams at the University of Benin, as influenced by the diversity factors. It includes aspects such as team collaboration, innovation, and goal achievement

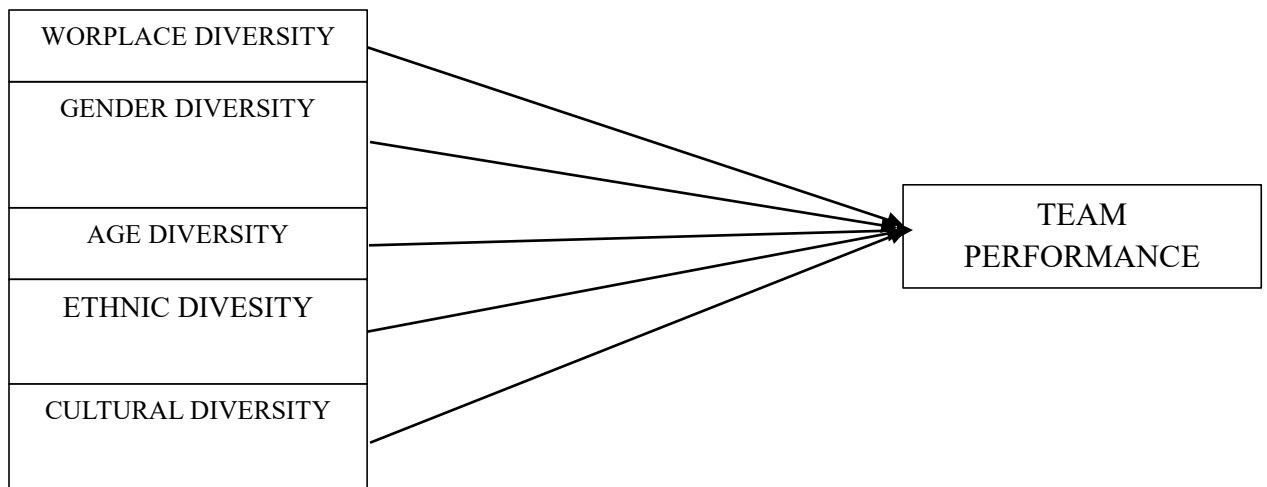


Fig. 2.1: Conceptual Framework
 Source: Researcher’s conceptualization, 2025

2.5 Theoretical Review

2.5.1 Social Identity Theory

Social Identity Theory (SIT) was formulated by Henri Tajfel and John Turner in the late 1970s to explain intergroup behavior and the psychological basis of group membership. Originally developed in the context of intergroup discrimination, the theory posits that individuals derive a part of their self-concept from their membership in social groups such as ethnicity, gender, age, profession, or organizational affiliation (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Since its inception, SIT has evolved into one of the most influential frameworks in organizational and social psychology, particularly for understanding behavior in diverse workplaces.

At the heart of SIT is the concept of social categorization—the mental process by which people classify themselves and others into social groups. This process fosters a

sense of in-group favoritism and out-group bias, which can significantly shape team dynamics in a diverse workplace. In an academic setting, such as among university staff, this may manifest as subgroups formed around age, academic discipline, rank, or cultural background, affecting collaboration and cohesion (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Haslam, Reicher, and Platow (2011) expanded on the theory, emphasizing that a shared social identity enhances trust, cooperation, and team performance. When members of a diverse team identify with a common organizational or departmental identity, they are more likely to engage in collaborative behaviors, which is essential in academic environments where teaching, research, and administrative functions often require interdisciplinary and intercultural teamwork.

Meyer and Parfyonova (2010) offer a complementary perspective by suggesting that commitment in the workplace—particularly normative commitment—can be influenced by identification with the team or institution. This aligns with SIT's assertion that strong group identification drives motivation and performance, especially when employees perceive their values as congruent with those of their group or organization.

Lewis (2011) supports this further by illustrating that collective efficacy and strong team identity enhance innovation and productivity in diverse groups. In academic institutions, where staff roles often span research, instruction, and service delivery, such shared identities and perceived group cohesion contribute meaningfully to output and morale.

The theory also sheds light on the potential challenges of diversity. Without effective diversity management, individuals may experience social identity threat—a condition where members of underrepresented groups feel their identities are devalued, leading to disengagement and underperformance (Ellemers et al., 2004). This is particularly relevant in universities where power dynamics and status differences (e.g., between tenured and adjunct faculty) may influence how identities are perceived and valued.

Chattopadhyay and George (2001) explored how identity salience affects temporary and permanent employees' engagement and performance. Their findings indicate that when employees feel disconnected from the dominant in-group, collaboration and satisfaction decline. Academic institutions often mirror such dynamics, especially in departments where diversity (ethnic, generational, or disciplinary) is high but unmanaged.

Mitchell et al. (2015) reinforce the notion that inclusive leadership is key to overcoming social identity barriers. Their study found that leader behaviors fostering inclusivity enhance team identification and reduce the impact of subgroup divisions, leading to stronger team performance. In academic environments, department chairs and administrators play this leadership role in cultivating inclusive spaces for collaboration.

Ellemers et al. (2014) argue that the impact of diversity on team outcomes is moderated by the degree of identity integration. In teams where individuals can simultaneously identify with both their subgroup and the larger organization, diversity

becomes a strength rather than a source of conflict. This integrative identity approach is particularly valuable in higher education, where staff from diverse academic traditions, ethnicities, and experiences collaborate on shared institutional goals.

2.5.2 Information/Decision-Making Theory

The Information/Decision-Making Theory (IDMT) emerged from the broader field of cognitive psychology and organizational behavior in the early 1990s. This theory was developed in response to earlier models of group behavior that focused primarily on social categorization and intergroup conflict, such as Social Identity Theory. While those models emphasized the risks of demographic differences, IDMT provided a contrasting, more optimistic view by highlighting the cognitive benefits of diversity in teams. It posits that team diversity enhances decision-making processes by bringing varied experiences, knowledge bases, and perspectives to bear on problem-solving tasks (Williams & O'Reilly, 1998).

The theory gained significant traction with scholars such as Dahlin, Weingart, and Hinds (2005), who proposed that functional diversity in teams—manifested in terms of educational background, expertise, and cultural knowledge—enables more comprehensive information processing and more effective solutions. In academic environments, such as the University of Benin, diversity in age, gender, ethnicity, and culture among academic staff can enrich research ideation, curriculum design, and administrative policy-making through diverse cognitive frameworks.

According to Van Knippenberg et al. (2004), IDMT emphasizes two main principles: information elaboration and task-relevant diversity. Information elaboration refers to the exchange, discussion, and integration of knowledge held by different team members. When team members come from diverse backgrounds, the breadth and depth of information shared are greater, potentially enhancing creativity and innovation. However, this benefit is not automatic—it depends heavily on the team’s ability to integrate diverse input and on psychological safety within the group.

For example, academic teams that consist of lecturers from different cultural backgrounds may interpret student needs, teaching approaches, and assessment standards differently. These contrasting perspectives, if well-managed, can lead to innovative and more inclusive educational strategies. Homan et al. (2007) found that the positive effects of diversity on group performance were strongest when members valued diversity and believed in its usefulness—a key implication for higher education institutions aiming to harness diversity for improved team outcomes.

Importantly, IDMT also identifies potential barriers. Diverse teams may struggle with coordination and conflict due to misaligned communication styles or varied assumptions about tasks (Dahlin et al., 2005). In academia, this might present as disagreements during curriculum development or collaborative research projects. Nevertheless, when structured around clear roles and inclusive communication norms, such teams often outperform homogeneous ones in complex tasks requiring judgment and analysis (Van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007).

Further support for IDMT comes from Mannix and Neale (2005), who argue that task complexity and interdependence moderate the impact of diversity on decision-making. In academic institutions, where responsibilities like grant writing, peer-reviewed research, and cross-departmental initiatives require collaboration, diverse knowledge inputs can significantly enhance decision quality. Therefore, the applicability of IDMT in academic settings is particularly salient. Moreover, Homberg and Bui (2013), in a systematic review, confirmed that diversity within top management and academic leadership teams leads to more balanced and high-quality strategic decisions. They conclude that the success of diverse decision-making teams is closely tied to organizational practices that support inclusion, knowledge sharing, and collaborative norms.

In the context of academic staff performance, IDMT suggests that diversity in professional training and discipline—a common feature in universities—improves collective reasoning by introducing varied analytical frameworks. For example, collaboration between faculty in humanities and STEM fields can yield richer research outputs when facilitated through respectful knowledge exchange. Robert et al. (2018) reinforce this by showing that diversity-driven decision-making leads to higher innovation when supported by effective communication tools and media, especially in hybrid or remote academic teams.

Maznevski (1994) proposed that performance in diverse decision-making groups improves when group members are trained to understand and value diverse input. This

training is essential in academic institutions, where the interplay between individual autonomy and collective academic responsibility often defines team dynamics. Understanding how to leverage information diversity rather than letting it become a division is key to maximizing team productivity.

2.5.3 Categorisation-Elaboration Model

The Categorisation–Elaboration Model (CEM) was developed by van Knippenberg, De Dreu, and Homan in 2004 as an integrative framework for explaining the inconsistent findings in diversity research. It combines two previously distinct perspectives: social categorisation, which describes how individuals classify themselves and others into social groups leading to in-group bias, and the information/decision-making perspective, which views diversity as a source of varied knowledge, skills, and perspectives that can enhance group performance when effectively integrated (van Knippenberg et al., 2004). CEM proposes that diversity influences performance through two parallel but interacting processes. Social categorisation can lead to subgroup formation, stereotyping, and conflict, which may disrupt collaboration and reduce the exchange of task-relevant information (van Dick et al., 2008). On the other hand, diversity can promote elaboration, defined as the exchange, discussion, and integration of different perspectives, which improves decision quality and creativity when conditions are supportive (Knippenberg & Hoever, 2017).

The model rejects the assumption that certain types of diversity are inherently beneficial or harmful, emphasising instead that all forms of diversity can produce both

positive and negative effects depending on contextual moderators such as leadership style, diversity beliefs, and organisational climate (Shin, 2023; Qi et al., 2022). Later research expanded CEM by identifying factors like demographic faultlines and subgroup balance as important contingencies influencing whether cognitive diversity translates into effective information elaboration (Qi et al., 2022). Simulations of the model also revealed a curvilinear relationship between diversity and performance, with moderate diversity often producing the best outcomes (Palmer, 2006). The framework's strength lies in its recognition that the benefits of diversity emerge when teams are able to capitalise on information elaboration while minimising the disruptive effects of social categorisation, making it a central theoretical lens in modern diversity and performance research (Ding & Riccucci, 2022).

2.5.4 Similarity-Attraction Paradigm

The Similarity–Attraction Paradigm was first articulated by Byrne in 1971 as part of a broader attempt to explain the psychological processes underpinning interpersonal relationships. The central proposition is that individuals are drawn toward others with whom they share similar attributes such as values, attitudes, beliefs, demographic factors, and behavioural tendencies, because such similarities validate one's self-concept and reduce the uncertainty inherent in social interactions (Byrne, 1971). Over time, this proposition has been reinforced by research showing that perceived or actual similarity fosters positive affect, trust, and mutual understanding, leading to stronger relational bonds (Ruijten, 2020; Salas-Schweikart et al., 2024). Similarity operates on both surface-

level dimensions such as age, gender, and ethnicity, and deep-level attributes like personality, cognitive styles, and moral values, though the latter often exert a stronger influence over time as interpersonal interactions deepen (Tekleab & Quigley, 2014).

The paradigm has been supported in various organisational contexts where similarity between individuals in teams, leader–member dyads, or cross-functional groups has been linked to improved communication and reduced interpersonal conflict (Lin et al., 2012; Wang et al., 2022). The process is often mediated by perceived attraction and social integration, where shared attributes encourage more frequent and positive exchanges, thereby enabling smoother collaboration (Lin et al., 2012). Studies have also extended the theory beyond interpersonal domains into intergroup relations, revealing that even at the collective level, perceived similarity between groups promotes willingness for closer contact and cooperation, irrespective of whether similarities or differences are emphasised in the social narrative (Salas-Schweikart et al., 2024). The enduring strength of the Similarity–Attraction Paradigm lies in its consistent empirical backing across decades and settings, supported by both cognitive explanations such as information integration models and affect-based reinforcement-emotion models (Yang, 2024). Its utility continues to evolve as contemporary research incorporates it into broader frameworks addressing diversity, inclusion, and team performance in increasingly complex work environments.

2.6 Theoretical Framework

2.6.1 Categorisation-Elaboration Model

The categorisation–elaboration model (CEM) offers a strong theoretical basis for examining workplace diversity and team performance among academic staff because it captures the dual nature of diversity’s impact in organisational settings. This model asserts that diversity influences performance through two primary pathways: social categorisation processes and the elaboration of task-relevant information (van Knippenberg et al., 2004). Within the context of academic institutions, diversity among staff can enrich the pool of knowledge, perspectives and problem-solving approaches, enhancing decision quality and innovation when information elaboration occurs effectively (Knippenberg & Hoever, 2017). At the same time, the model acknowledges that diversity can also trigger categorisation processes, in which individuals align more closely with those perceived as similar, potentially leading to subgroup formation, reduced cohesion and conflict (Schouten et al., 2020). This dual pathway makes CEM suitable for exploring the nuances in academic staff interactions where collaboration and knowledge sharing are essential to performance outcomes.

In academic teams, the model’s emphasis on elaboration processes aligns with the inherent requirement for critical discourse, peer review and collective problem solving. When diversity is coupled with strong communication structures and supportive leadership, teams are more likely to integrate varied perspectives into their work, yielding higher quality research and teaching outcomes (Urionabarrenetxea et al., 2021).

Conversely, without mechanisms to foster trust and mitigate bias, categorisation can dominate, leading to information silos and diminished collaborative output (Qi et al., 2022). This interplay is critical in academia where performance is tied to both individual expertise and collective productivity. The CEM also incorporates the role of contextual moderators, such as leader diversity beliefs and organisational culture, which can either facilitate or hinder the positive utilisation of diversity (Shin, 2023). Such variables are particularly pertinent in higher education, where leadership styles and institutional policies directly shape team dynamics and the flow of intellectual exchange.

Selecting CEM for this study is further justified by its integrative nature, bridging the informational and relational perspectives of diversity. It not only accommodates the possibility that any diversity dimension can yield both positive and negative outcomes but also provides a framework for identifying conditions under which the benefits outweigh the drawbacks (Zhan & Hample, 2022). In academic environments characterised by complex tasks and interdependence, the model's focus on task-related elaboration underscores the potential for diversity to enhance performance if supported by appropriate structural and interpersonal enablers. This makes CEM a fitting lens for dissecting how workplace diversity among academic staff translates into tangible performance outcomes.

2.7 Empirical Review

Urionabarrenetxea, Fernández-Sainz, and García-Merino (2021) investigated how team diversity affects performance among university management students, integrating

social categorization theory—which predicts negative effects of diversity—and information/decision-making theory—which predicts positive effects. The study involved student teams working on academic management projects, with diversity measured across demographic and experiential variables. Using an Input-Mediator-Outcome (IMO) model blended with the Categorization-Elaboration Model, the authors examined conflict as a mediating variable and assessed the moderating influence of initial group cohesion, leadership strength, and prior group work experience. Quantitative data on team diversity, conflict levels, and performance outcomes were collected through surveys and project assessments, and analyzed statistically to test the proposed model. Results indicated that diversity improved team performance only in contexts where cohesion was high, leadership was strong, and members had prior collaborative experience. In low-cohesion or weak-leadership teams, diversity was more likely to increase conflict and reduce performance. The study concluded that for academic teams, diversity can be a performance asset when supported by strong social and leadership structures, but without such conditions, its potential benefits may not be realized.

Ben-Hafaïedh and Micozzi (2021) examined how incorporating non-academic members into academic spin-off entrepreneurial teams—representing vertical diversity—affects firm performance, alongside horizontal diversity among team members. The study analyzed a sample of 164 Italian academic spin-offs, collecting data on team composition, ownership distribution, and business performance indicators. The focus was on distinguishing the contributions of surrogate entrepreneurs, typically external to academia,

and assessing how their presence and relative ownership power influenced outcomes. Statistical analysis revealed that the inclusion of non-academic entrepreneurs generally enhanced performance by bringing market-oriented skills, broader networks, and strategic perspectives that complemented academic expertise. However, when surrogate entrepreneurs' ownership and decision-making influence outweighed that of the academic founders, performance gains diminished, suggesting potential misalignment in strategic priorities. The findings underscored that while vertical diversity can be a valuable driver of performance in academic commercialization efforts, optimal results are achieved when the influence between academic and non-academic members is balanced to maintain alignment with both research-driven and market-driven objectives.

Andoh, Okogun-Odompley, Ghansah, and Benuwa (2022) investigated the influence of workplace diversity on employee performance within four selected private universities in Ghana, focusing on both academic and administrative staff. Out of a total population of 320 staff members, 175 respondents participated in the study, selected to represent various diversity attributes including age, gender, ethnicity, and educational background. The researchers applied a survey design, using structured questionnaires to collect data, and employed statistical analyses to examine the moderating effects of the different diversity dimensions on performance outcomes. The study revealed that workplace diversity significantly influenced employee performance, with educational diversity exerting the greatest positive effect, followed by age diversity. Gender and ethnic diversity were found to have no statistically significant influence on performance

in the surveyed universities. Specifically, educational diversity was linked to higher levels of problem-solving capacity and knowledge sharing, while age diversity contributed to more balanced decision-making processes. The authors concluded that university leaders should prioritize managing educational and age diversity effectively to maximize productivity, while also fostering an inclusive environment that mitigates potential challenges linked to other diversity dimensions.

Garcia, Zouaghi, and García Marco (2017) investigated how surface-level diversity (such as gender) and deep-level diversity (such as skills and expertise) within R&D teams influence innovative performance, with insights applicable to academic research teams. The study analyzed organizational data from multidisciplinary R&D groups, assessing innovation outcomes by the novelty and market readiness of developed products. Statistical modeling was used to examine how different diversity dimensions interact and to identify optimal diversity configurations. Findings confirmed that diversity serves as a strategic asset, expanding cognitive capacity and enabling teams to identify and integrate scientific developments more effectively, thereby reducing time to market. However, the study also found that excessive heterogeneity could be detrimental, leading to coordination issues and potential conflict. Specifically, high gender diversity or overly broad skill diversity sometimes correlated with reduced performance in cognitively diverse teams. The authors emphasized that the key to leveraging diversity lies in balancing heterogeneity levels to maximize creativity while maintaining team

cohesion, recommending that managers carefully curate diversity to align with project goals and team dynamics.

Gomathy (2023) examined the effects of workplace diversity on team dynamics and productivity, with emphasis on demographic differences such as age, gender, race, ethnicity, and culture that influence organizational performance. The study, positioned within the broader context of globalization, trade liberalization, and migration, analyzed how heterogeneous work environments shape collaboration, innovation, and functional coordination in both academic and corporate teams. Using a conceptual review supported by empirical examples from organizational case studies, the work highlighted that diversity fosters collaborative and team-based learning environments, enhances productivity, and increases profitability through access to a wide pool of talents and perspectives. However, it also identified challenges including cultural misunderstandings, inter-functional complexity, and workplace discrimination. The author stressed that without structured diversity management frameworks, the potential of a multicultural workforce could be undermined by conflict or inefficiency. Recommendations included implementing organizational strategies for effective diversity management, fostering inclusion, and ensuring optimal allocation of resources to harness the benefits of heterogeneity. The findings underscored that diversity, when managed strategically, could significantly enhance teamwork, innovation, and overall productivity in academic institutions and other professional settings.

Lauring and Villesèche (2019) explored how diversity attitudes and numerical gender composition interact to influence the performance of gender-diverse teams, using survey data from 1,085 academic team leaders. The study measured openness to diversity as a contextual factor and examined team gender composition in relation to numerical balance between men and women. Statistical analyses assessed the direct effect of diversity attitudes on performance, as well as the moderating role of gender composition. Results showed that openness to diversity was strongly and positively associated with team performance, but this effect was significantly stronger when gender diversity approached numerical balance. In other words, the positive impact of favorable diversity attitudes was maximized in teams where men and women were present in roughly equal proportions. The study bridged critical mass theory and diversity–performance research by demonstrating that both compositional factors (degree of gender diversity) and contextual characteristics (diversity attitudes) jointly shape team outcomes. The authors concluded that in academic teams, promoting openness to diversity alongside ensuring balanced gender representation can substantially enhance performance.

Saa-Perez, Diaz-Diaz, Aguiar-Díaz, and Ballesteros-Rodríguez (2017) examined the influence of job-related diversity on the scientific performance of academic research teams within a university context. The study focused on research teams active between 2006 and 2009, investigating diversity dimensions such as functional, status, educational, and institutional diversity. Using empirical data from team records and publications, statistical analyses were performed to determine the relationship between these diversity

variables and performance indicators, measured primarily by the number of published articles. Findings indicated that functional diversity did not produce a significant effect on team performance, whereas status diversity exhibited a positive and significant influence. Educational diversity, however, negatively impacted performance when it exceeded a certain threshold, while institutional diversity followed an inverted U-shaped relationship with output, suggesting optimal diversity levels before diminishing returns occur. These results highlighted that the effect of diversity on academic team performance is complex and contingent on context, with certain types of diversity enhancing outcomes while others, beyond optimal levels, may impede productivity. The authors concluded that managing diversity strategically within academic settings can optimize research productivity by leveraging the benefits of heterogeneity while mitigating potential drawbacks.

Nair (2021) examined how team-role compatibility influences work team outcomes in the context of increasing workplace diversity, considering demographic factors such as gender, race, religion, and ethnicity alongside deeper-level attributes like preferred team roles. The study adopted a phenomenological approach to capture patterns of interaction and interrelation within diverse teams, analyzing qualitative data from interviews and observational records. Participants represented various organizational backgrounds, with teams comprising individuals assigned or self-selected into roles based on their behavioral and functional preferences. Findings revealed that compatibility in preferred team roles—such as leadership, coordination, or support—had a stronger and

more sustained influence on team performance than surface-level diversity traits. While demographic diversity could initially affect perceptions and interactions, these effects were often overridden by effective alignment of roles to individual strengths. Teams with higher role compatibility demonstrated improved cohesion, reduced conflict, and higher productivity, regardless of demographic composition. The study concluded that in diverse workplace settings, including academic environments, ensuring role alignment could be a critical strategy for maximizing performance outcomes while harnessing the benefits of demographic diversity.

Shin (2023) investigated the relationship between team gender diversity, information elaboration, and team performance, focusing on entrepreneurial organizations in South Korea. The study involved 94 teams, collecting data on gender composition, leader diversity beliefs, leader network heterogeneity, and team performance metrics. Using the categorization-elaboration model as a theoretical framework, the research tested whether the effect of gender diversity on performance was mediated by information elaboration—the exchange, processing, and integration of diverse perspectives among team members. Statistical analysis revealed that gender diversity had no significant indirect effect on performance through information elaboration. However, leader diversity belief significantly moderated the relationship between information elaboration and performance, such that teams led by leaders with strong diversity beliefs experienced more positive outcomes from information sharing. Additionally, leader network heterogeneity played a role in shaping team dynamics,

though its effects were less pronounced. The findings underscored that gender diversity's impact on performance is highly context-dependent and that leadership attitudes toward diversity can critically influence whether diverse teams achieve their potential in creativity and productivity.

Patrício and Franco (2022) carried out a systematic literature review to consolidate research findings on how team diversity influences team performance, aiming to propose a framework and future research agenda. The review covered peer-reviewed articles published between 1996 and 2020 in the Web of Science database within the fields of management and business. The authors synthesized studies addressing knowledge diversity, team heterogeneity, team wisdom, cross-functional project teams, and team composition, organizing them into three main literature clusters: Team Knowledge Diversity, Diversity Effects, and Desirable Outcomes of Diversity. The analysis followed a structured selection process, applying inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure empirical and conceptual relevance. Findings indicated that diversity could positively influence performance by enhancing creativity, innovation, and problem-solving, but could also generate conflict and reduce cohesion if not properly managed. The proposed framework emphasized the mediating role of contextual factors, leadership, and communication in determining whether diversity's effects are beneficial or detrimental. The authors recommended future studies focus on longitudinal designs and multi-level analyses to better understand causal pathways between diversity dimensions and performance outcomes in organizational and academic settings.

Becker, Richards, and Stollings (2020) examined the benefits and tensions associated with generational diversity in workplace teams, with implications for team performance in multigenerational academic and professional environments. The study surveyed employees aged 18 and above across various organizations, assessing preferences for working in same-generation versus mixed-generation teams and perceptions regarding work ethic, communication styles, technology use, organizational culture, and diversity values. Quantitative survey data were analyzed to identify links between generational diversity and performance outcomes. Findings indicated that employees valued generational diversity and perceived it as enhancing team performance by combining diverse perspectives, experiences, and skills. However, the study also highlighted notable challenges, including communication barriers and difficulties in knowledge transfer between generations. Respondents emphasized the need for targeted training and resources to optimize intergenerational collaboration and minimize misunderstandings. The authors concluded that while generational diversity can improve productivity and innovation, proactive management of communication styles and cross-generational knowledge exchange is essential to fully realize its benefits in workplace teams, including academic staff groups

Tagliacruzchi, Marchi, and Balboni (2018) conducted an exploratory study to assess the relationship between team background diversity and growth performance in academic spin-offs, focusing on both academic and non-academic team members. The sample comprised 67 academic spin-offs, and the analysis emphasized disciplinary

background diversity as a measure of functional heterogeneity. Data on team composition, corporate venture capital (CVC) involvement, and firm growth metrics were collected from institutional records and business performance reports. Using hierarchical regression analysis, the study examined the interaction between functional diversity and external market-oriented capabilities brought in through CVC participation. Findings revealed that functional diversity positively influenced firm growth, with the effect being significantly stronger in CVC-backed spin-offs. The integration of academic expertise with non-academic, market-oriented skills enhanced the ability to innovate, access broader networks, and respond effectively to market demands. The authors concluded that a balanced mix of academic and non-academic profiles, complemented by strategic external partnerships, could significantly improve performance outcomes for academic spin-offs, underscoring the importance of managing diversity beyond demographic factors to include skills and disciplinary backgrounds.

Ibrahim, Abiodunlukuman, and Adedeji (2024) investigated the effect of workplace diversity on organizational productivity at Federal Polytechnic Offa, Kwara State, Nigeria, focusing on both academic and non-academic staff. From a population of 1,296 employees, a stratified sampling method was used to select 306 respondents, comprising 160 academic staff and 146 non-academic staff. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire administered between July and September 2024 and analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The study examined diversity variables including gender, age, educational background, religion, and ethnicity,

and their relationship with organizational efficiency. Findings indicated a significant positive association between workplace diversity and productivity, with diverse perspectives and experiences enhancing collaboration, cooperation, and employee engagement. It was observed that aligning employee values with organizational values fostered stronger organizational culture and improved teamwork, ultimately boosting productivity. The results also highlighted that inclusive work cultures positively influenced employee morale and commitment, thereby enhancing institutional effectiveness. The authors recommended sustained diversity and inclusion initiatives to reinforce cohesion and maximize the benefits of workforce heterogeneity in academic settings.

Chaudhry (2021) explored the relationship between leadership competencies, within-team diversity, and academic performance in a team-based learning (TBL) environment at a university in the US Midwest. The study utilized both self- and peer-ratings of leadership competencies collected from students enrolled in TBL courses, incorporating diversity variables such as career orientation, gender, academic major, and prior work experience. Hierarchical linear modeling was applied to account for team membership effects and to examine leadership ratings as predictors of academic performance, measured through course grades and project outcomes. T-tests were used to determine changes in leadership competency ratings over time, revealing significant increases in peer-rated leadership scores during the course. Results showed that diversity attributes—particularly career orientation, gender, and work experience—were salient in

shaping perceptions of leadership within teams, and that higher peer-rated leadership was positively associated with stronger academic performance. The findings underscored the role of diversity in fostering leadership development in academic settings, with implications for structuring TBL to maximize both leadership growth and performance outcomes.

Schouten, Khattab, and Pahng (2020) provided a comprehensive synthesis of research on managing team diversity in evolving workplace contexts, including academic institutions where teamwork structures are increasingly prevalent. The study reviewed theoretical and empirical works addressing diversity dimensions such as demographic background, functional and educational differences, and personality traits, presenting these through the lens of the Categorization-Elaboration Model (CEM). Drawing on a range of case studies and quantitative findings, the authors discussed how diversity can trigger both social categorization—leading to reduced cohesion and increased conflict—and information elaboration, which enhances decision-making and problem-solving capacity. The review emphasized that the effects of diversity are context-dependent, influenced by factors such as task complexity, leadership style, and organizational culture. The authors noted that when managed with inclusive practices and clear communication frameworks, diverse teams in academic and professional settings can leverage broader knowledge bases and creativity, whereas unmanaged diversity risks undermining performance. They concluded that institutions should apply targeted diversity

management strategies to balance the benefits of varied perspectives with the need for unity and shared purpose in teams.

Calder-Wang, Gompers, and Huang (2021) investigated how horizontal diversity (differences among team members) and vertical diversity (differences between teams and their faculty advisors) affect the performance of entrepreneurial teams formed in a compulsory MBA course. The course required students to propose and operate a real micro-business, with some cohorts self-selecting teams and others randomly assigned via an algorithm. The population comprised MBA students from multiple cohorts, with team sizes and faculty leader assignments systematically recorded. Data on team gender, race/ethnicity, and faculty leader gender were analyzed in relation to business performance metrics. Findings showed that in randomly assigned teams, greater intersectional diversity of gender and race/ethnicity significantly reduced performance, suggesting coordination and cohesion challenges. However, when teams were self-selected, this negative impact was mitigated. Moreover, teams with higher female representation performed substantially better when led by a female faculty section leader, an effect interpreted as causal due to the exogenous nature of faculty leader assignments. The authors concluded that diversity policies in entrepreneurial and academic contexts should consider both the composition of teams and the matching of leadership characteristics to optimize performance outcomes.

Saa-Perez, Diaz-Diaz, Aguiar-Díaz, and Ballesteros-Rodríguez (2017) examined the influence of job-related diversity on the scientific performance of academic research

teams within a university context. The study focused on research teams active between 2006 and 2009, investigating diversity dimensions such as functional, status, educational, and institutional diversity. Using empirical data from team records and publications, statistical analyses were performed to determine the relationship between these diversity variables and performance indicators, measured primarily by the number of published articles. Findings indicated that functional diversity did not produce a significant effect on team performance, whereas status diversity exhibited a positive and significant influence. Educational diversity, however, negatively impacted performance when it exceeded a certain threshold, while institutional diversity followed an inverted U-shaped relationship with output, suggesting optimal diversity levels before diminishing returns occur. These results highlighted that the effect of diversity on academic team performance is complex and contingent on context, with certain types of diversity enhancing outcomes while others, beyond optimal levels, may impede productivity. The authors concluded that managing diversity strategically within academic settings can optimize research productivity by leveraging the benefits of heterogeneity while mitigating potential drawbacks.

Montaudon-Tomas, Pinto-López, Montaudon-Tomas, and Muñoz-Ortiz (2020) explored the dynamics of high-performance teams (HPTs) within a multigenerational workforce in an academic setting, focusing on a Mexican business school that had adopted project-based work as part of its strategic planning. The study aimed to assess how generational diversity influences perceptions of team performance and productivity.

Teams comprising members from multiple age groups collaborated on strategic projects, and data were gathered on their self-perceived performance, valuation of multigenerational work, and actual productivity evaluations. Statistical analyses were conducted to determine correlations between these perceptions and measurable outputs. Findings indicated a positive relationship between the value attributed to generational diversity and both perceived and evaluated productivity, suggesting that multigenerational teams benefited from the combination of experience-based insights and innovative approaches from younger members. However, the study also noted that generational diversity's benefits were maximized when supported by effective communication and mutual respect across age groups. The authors concluded that fostering "generational intelligence" through targeted training and inclusive leadership practices could enhance team outcomes in academic institutions employing diverse age-based workgroups

Resende, Berardi, and Gomes-Jr (2024) examined the relationship between diversity attributes and team performance among students in computing-related academic programs, with implications for understanding team dynamics in less diverse disciplines. The study involved 634 students enrolled in 15 classes across undergraduate Information Systems, Computer Engineering, and Master's programs in Applied Computing. Data were collected on in-class social connections, gender, sociability, personality traits, emotional states, and team formation processes. Linear regression models were applied to assess the impact of each diversity dimension on academic performance, measured

through team grades. The findings showed that diversity in sociability and personality significantly improved team performance, indicating that teams composed of members with varying interpersonal engagement styles and personality traits were more effective in problem-solving and collaboration. However, the contribution of gender diversity to team performance was inconclusive, showing no consistent statistical effect across the classes studied. The results suggested that deeper-level diversity attributes, such as interpersonal behaviors and personality factors, may be more critical than surface-level traits in predicting academic team success, especially in fields with traditionally low demographic diversity

Jha (2018) carried out a conceptual and empirical review exploring how various dimensions of diversity influence team performance in organizational contexts, with particular relevance to academic and professional institutions. The study synthesized evidence on diversity factors including age, gender, race, ethnicity, educational background, work experience, and functional expertise, and linked these to efficiency and organizational effectiveness. Drawing on documented empirical studies and case analyses, the work examined how heterogeneous workforce composition can stimulate creativity, enhance problem-solving capacity, and foster divergent thinking, while also recognizing the potential downsides such as reduced camaraderie and challenges to organizational coherence. The analysis underscored that while demographic and professional differences enrich team perspectives, they must be strategically managed to avoid conflict and disengagement. The author emphasized that diversity's impact is not uniformly positive

or negative, but contingent on how well organizations align team goals, build cultural understanding, and manage interpersonal relationships. The review concluded that institutions—especially those in academic settings—should leverage diversity through deliberate management strategies that amplify its innovative potential while safeguarding team unity and performance.

2.8 Research Gap

Existing research on workplace diversity and team performance in academic settings, particularly in Nigerian universities like the University of Benin, highlights several gaps. These include the specific impact of diversity dimensions on academic teams, effective diversity management strategies, and the role of leadership. Additionally, the challenges of cross-cultural collaboration and the need for longitudinal studies to examine the long-term effects of diversity on academic team performance remain underexplored.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Preamble.

This chapter outlines the methodology used to examine how workplace diversity affects team performance among academic staff at the University of Benin. It covers the research design, study population, sampling methods, data collection techniques, and analysis procedures. The chapter also discusses the validity and reliability of the data, as well as the specific model used for analysis in the study.

3.2 Research Design

A survey design is employed in this study to assess the impact of workplace diversity on team performance. The research is cross-sectional, aiming to gather data that describes the current state of gender, age, ethnic, and cultural diversity within academic teams. This design is ideal for exploring the existing relationships between diversity and performance in the university context, providing a clear picture of how these factors influence teamwork, productivity, and collaboration.

3.3 Population of the Study

The study's population focuses on the 1824 academic staffs working across various departments (Updated UNIBEN Personnel statistics 2025).

3.4 Sampling Technique

Three faculties (Faculty of Management Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences and Faculty of Education) from the University of Benin, Benin City, Edo state made up the

study's population. The population of the study consisted of all the 522 academic staffs employed by the organization in these various departments (UNIBEN Personnel Statistics 2005).

The study's participants are the academic staffs in University of Benin, Benin City, Edo state. The sample size was chosen using Taro Yamane's (1967) statistical method, with a 5% error tolerance and a 95% degree of freedom.

The calculation formula of Taro Yamane was

presented as follows, $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$

Where n= sample size

N = Population

e-level of sig (5% i.e. 0.05)

N = 522

$$n = 522/1+522(0.05)(0.05)$$

$$= 522/2.31$$

$$= 225.9$$

So, after being roughly rounded to the closest number, two hundred and thirty-one (226) copies of the questionnaire were given out to the responders. To guarantee a fair representation from each of the faculties that made up the sample size, employees in each of the aforementioned faculties were chosen at random.

3.5 Model Specification

The model used to assess the effect of workplace diversity on team performance at the University of Benin is specified as follows:

$$TPMi = \alpha_i + \beta_1GDI_i + \beta_2ADI_i + \beta_3EDI_i + \beta_4CI_i + \varepsilon_i$$

Where:

TPM = Team Performance

GDI = Gender Diversity Index

ADI = Age Diversity Index

EDI = Ethnic Diversity Index

CII = Cultural Identity Index

α = Intercept/Constant

$\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$ = Coefficients of the independent variables

ε_i = Error term

This model aims to explore how various dimensions of workplace diversity (gender, age, ethnic, and cultural) influence team performance in academic settings.

3.6 Operationalization/Measurement of Variables for the Study

The study measures team performance as the dependent variable using a 5-item Likert scale. The independent variable, workplace diversity, will be assessed across four key dimensions: gender, age, ethnicity, and cultural identity, each measured with specific scales.

Table 3.1: Measurement of Variables

S/N	Variable	Operationalized Definition	Measurement Scale	Question Number
1.	Gender	The categorization of individuals as male, female, or other, which may impact their development and performance within the organization.	2-point scale	Q1
2.	Age	The chronological age of employees, which can influence their learning abilities, adaptability, and performance at work	4-point scale	Q2
3.	Work experience	The total duration of time an individual has spent in the workforce, affecting their skills, knowledge, and performance within the organization	5-point scale	Q3
4.	Staff Position	The specific role or job title held by an employee, which determines their responsibilities, authority, and impact on organizational performance.	2-point scale	Q4
5.	Educational Qualification	The level of formal education attained by employees, influencing their expertise, problem-solving skills, and contribution to organizational goals	5-point scale	Q5
6.	Gender Diversity	Categorization of individuals as male, female, or other, influencing team dynamics and performance.	5-point scale	Q6 – Q10
7.	Age Diversity	The age group of staff, which may influence work experience, adaptability, and performance.	5-point scale	Q11 – Q15
8.	Ethnicity Diversity	The ethnic background of staff, affecting cultural understanding and teamwork in the workplace.	5-point scale	Q16 – Q20
9.	Cultural Identity Diversity	The cultural background of academic staff, which influences communication, collaboration, and performance in diverse teams.	5-point scale	Q21 – Q25
10.	Team Performance	The overall effectiveness, collaboration, and success of academic teams, influenced by diversity factors.	5-point scale	Q26 – Q30

Source: Researcher Construction, 2025

The items above form the questions for each variable in the questionnaire. All questions are closed-ended, and responses will be measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from:

Strongly Agree (1)

Agree (2)

Undecided (3)

Disagree (4)

Strongly Disagree (5)

The Likert scale allows for the use of parametric tools for data analysis, enabling the research to assess the relationship between workplace diversity and team performance.

3.7 Sources and Methods of Data Collection

The study used primary source of data to examine the impact of staff development on the performance of University of Benin in Benin City, Edo State. Data will be collected using questionnaire which was self-administered to the staff of even-Up bottling company, Benin City, Edo state.

3.8 Research Instrument

The questionnaire will be close-ended and has only one section. The section available provides information on the dependent and independent variables. In addition, the likert measuring scale of 5 points was used in order of “strongly agree” (1), “agree” (2), “undecided” (3), “disagree” (4) and “strongly disagree” (5). Appendix 1 shows the questionnaire.

3.9 Validity and Reliability of Data

Instrument validity is very vital in any survey. It was used in this study in order to ensure that the construct making of the items in the instrument actually measured what they were supposed to measure on both the dependent and independent variables. The instrument has been proven valid by experts and supervisors and has been used for this study.

Also, the reliability of the questionnaire will be obtained through pilot sample of 20 staff responses in University of Benin, Benin City, Edo state

3.10 Administration of Research Instrument

The convenience sampling method will be employed to distribute the questionnaires for this study. Initially, the researcher sought and obtained permission from the management of University of Benin in Benin City, Edo State, to administer the questionnaires. Subsequently, the researcher personally distributed the questionnaires to the selected employees. Upon completion, the questionnaires were promptly collected from the respondents. The entire process of administering and retrieving the questionnaires spanned approximately one week, resulting in the acquisition of the required sample of completed questionnaires.

3.11 Methods of Data Analysis

In analyzing the data for this study, multiple regression analysis will be used as a tool of analysis to assess the extent to which the independent variables affect the dependent variable with the aid of SPSS version 20. It will also be used to test the research

hypotheses at 5% level of significance (95% confidence level). The rationale for the choice of multiple regression technique is that it shows clearly the actual effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. In this case, it is a better tool to bring out clearly, the effect of staff development on the performance of University of Benin, Benin City, Edo state

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis based on data obtained from the responses to the administered questionnaires. The respondents were academic staff from the University of Benin. The data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. The chapter is arranged under sections covering response rate, presentation of data, interpretation of results, and discussion of findings.

4.2 Data Presentation and Analysis

A total of two hundred and thirty-one (231) questionnaires were distributed to academic staff across the Faculty of Management Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences, and Faculty of Education at the University of Benin. All 231 copies were completed and returned.

The responses were compiled and analysed using SPSS version 25. The results are presented in tables under each major variable of the study. These include gender diversity, age diversity, ethnic diversity, cultural identity diversity, and team performance.

4.3 Demographic Representation

Table 4.1: Analysis of Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Items	Options	Frequency	% of Response
Gender	Male	96	41.6%
	Female	135	58.4%
	Total	231	100%
Age Group	Below 30 years	34	14.7%
	31 – 40 years	76	32.9%
	41 – 50 years	78	33.8%
	Over 51 years	43	18.6%
	Total	231	100%
	Work Experience	Less than 2 years	25
	3 – 5 years	33	14.3%
	6 – 8 years	90	39.0%
	8 – 10 years	61	26.4%
	Above 10 years	22	9.5%
	Total	231	100%
Educational Qualification	Primary	-	-
	Secondary	-	-
	ND/NCE	-	-
	HND/B.Sc.	79	34.2%
	Postgraduate	152	65.8%
	Total	231	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The gender classification shows that female academic staff had a higher representation in the study, making up 58.4 percent, while male respondents were 41.6 percent. The distribution across age groups indicates that the largest category was those between 41 and 50 years, which made up 33.8 percent. This was closely followed by those in the 31 to 40 years range at 32.9 percent. Staff aged over 51 years represented 18.6 percent, and the youngest group, those below 30 years, made up 14.7 percent.

In terms of work experience, those with between 6 and 8 years in service made up the highest share, at 39.0 percent. This group was followed by staff with 8 to 10 years of experience, making up 26.4 percent. Respondents with 3 to 5 years of experience made up 14.3 percent, those with less than 2 years were 10.8 percent, and those with over 10 years of experience represented 9.5 percent of the total.

Educational qualifications show that a majority of the respondents, 65.8 percent, had postgraduate degrees while 34.2% had HND/B.Sc. qualifications.

4.3.2 Respondents' Views on Gender Diversity

Table 4.2: Gender Diversity

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
6	Gender diversity positively affects collaboration and teamwork among academic staff.	74 (32.0%)	76 (32.9%)	21 (9.1%)	31 (13.4%)	29 (12.6%)	3.58	1.34	Agree
7	Having both male and female academic staff members improves creativity and problem-solving in teams.	112 (48.5%)	37 (16.0%)	49 (21.2%)	25 (10.8%)	8 (3.5%)	3.95	1.20	Agree
8	Gender balance in academic teams enhances the overall team performance at the University of Benin.	76 (32.9%)	86 (37.2%)	38 (16.5%)	13 (5.6%)	18 (7.8%)	3.82	1.12	Agree
9	Gender diversity fosters a more inclusive and respectful working environment among academic staff.	47 (20.3%)	80 (34.6%)	23 (10.0%)	40 (17.3%)	41 (17.7%)	3.22	1.42	Agree
10	Teams with diverse gender representation tend to be more innovative and productive.	51 (22.1%)	76 (32.9%)	12 (5.2%)	31 (13.4%)	61 (26.4%)	3.09	1.54	Agree

Cluster Mean: 3.54

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Table 4.2 presents the views of respondents on gender diversity. The mean values range from 3.09 to 3.95. The strongest agreement is seen in the belief that gender mix encourages creativity and problem-solving. The lowest support relates to innovation and productivity outcomes, though it still falls within the agreement range. All items recorded scores above the midpoint. With a cluster mean of 3.54, responses show that gender diversity is viewed positively. It can be inferred that gender diversity is present to a good extent within academic teams at the University of Benin.

4.3.3 Respondents' Views on Age Diversity

Table 4.3: Age Diversity

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
11	Age diversity among academic staff members leads to more effective communication and collaboration.	43 (18.6%)	111 (48.1%)	43 (18.6%)	13 (5.6%)	21 (9.1%)	3.61	1.13	Agree
12	A mix of younger and older academic staff members enhances the adaptability of academic teams.	75 (32.5%)	93 (40.3%)	52 (22.5%)	24 (10.4%)	10 (4.3%)	4.16	1.21	Agree
13	Teams that consist of academic staff from various age groups demonstrate higher levels of performance.	63 (27.3%)	105 (45.5%)	35 (15.2%)	21 (9.1%)	7 (3.0%)	3.85	1.02	Agree
14	Age diversity positively influences the level of experience shared within academic teams.	48 (20.8%)	94 (40.7%)	22 (9.5%)	43 (18.6%)	24 (10.4%)	3.43	1.29	Agree
15	The combination of diverse age groups in academic teams strengthens problem-solving abilities.	50 (21.6%)	83 (35.9%)	35 (15.2%)	17 (7.4%)	46 (19.9%)	3.32	1.41	Agree

Cluster Mean: 3.67

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

From Table 4.3, mean values fall between 3.32 and 4.16. Respondents showed the highest agreement with the idea that mixed age groups improve adaptability, while responses to the impact on problem-solving scored the least, though still positive. The consistency in responses across all items suggests strong acceptance of age variation within academic teams. The cluster mean of 3.67 supports this outlook. It can be inferred that age diversity exists to a good extent and contributes meaningfully to teamwork at the University of Benin.

4.3.4 Respondents' Views on Ethnicity Diversity

Table 4.4: Ethnicity Diversity

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
16	Ethnic diversity among academic staff contributes to richer perspectives and ideas within teams.	103 (44.6%)	51 (22.1%)	41 (17.7%)	16 (6.9%)	20 (8.7%)	3.87	1.29	Agree
17	Teams with academic staff from diverse ethnic backgrounds perform better by utilising varied experiences.	74 (32.0%)	62 (26.8%)	39 (16.9%)	28 (12.1%)	28 (12.1%)	3.55	1.36	Agree
18	Academic teams with diverse ethnic representations are more adaptable in handling challenges.	46 (19.9%)	78 (33.8%)	51 (22.1%)	23 (10.0%)	33 (14.3%)	3.35	1.30	Agree
19	The presence of ethnic diversity within academic teams promotes a more inclusive and creative work culture.	61 (26.4%)	104 (45.0%)	26 (11.3%)	14 (6.1%)	26 (11.3%)	3.69	1.24	Agree
20	Ethnic diversity within academic teams leads to increased productivity and overall team performance.	50 (21.6%)	97 (42.0%)	33 (14.3%)	11 (4.8%)	40 (17.3%)	3.46	1.35	Agree

Cluster Mean: 3.58

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Table 4.4 covers ethnicity diversity and its perceived effect on team dynamics. Mean values range from 3.35 to 3.87. The highest value relates to the influence of ethnicity on new perspectives and ideas, while adaptability in diverse ethnic teams scored the least. Despite slight differences in emphasis, responses showed agreement across all items. The cluster mean of 3.58 confirms that ethnic variety is viewed favourably. It can be inferred that ethnicity diversity is evident to a good extent within academic teams at the University of Benin.

4.3.5 Respondents' Views on Cultural Identity Diversity

Table 4.5: Cultural Identity Diversity

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
21	Cultural identity diversity within academic teams enhances communication and understanding among members.	34 (14.7%)	53 (22.9%)	52 (22.5%)	58 (25.1%)	34 (14.7%)	2.98	1.29	Agree
22	The varied cultural identities of academic staff positively influence team collaboration and creativity.	62 (26.8%)	76 (32.9%)	38 (16.5%)	16 (6.9%)	39 (16.9%)	3.46	1.39	Agree
23	Cultural diversity among academic staff helps improve team dynamics by fostering mutual respect.	39 (16.9%)	71 (30.7%)	48 (20.8%)	36 (15.6%)	37 (16.0%)	3.17	1.32	Agree
24	The presence of diverse cultural backgrounds in academic teams enhances innovation and problem-solving skills.	55 (23.8%)	102 (44.2%)	30 (13.0%)	21 (9.1%)	23 (10.0%)	3.63	1.22	Agree
25	Teams with varied cultural identities perform better due to a deeper understanding of different perspectives.	47 (20.3%)	87 (37.7%)	41 (17.7%)	41 (17.7%)	15 (6.5%)	3.48	1.18	Agree

Cluster Mean: 3.34

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

From Table 4.5, respondents gave mean ratings between 2.98 and 3.63 on cultural identity diversity. The strongest agreement was with the idea that cultural background helps to improve innovation and problem-solving. One item, focused on communication, came close to neutrality but did not fall below it. The other items remained clearly in the agreement range. The cluster mean of 3.34 shows a generally positive response. It can be inferred that cultural identity diversity exists to a good extent within the academic environment at the University of Benin.

4.3.6 Respondents' Views on Team Performance

Table 4.6: Team Performance

S/ N	Questionnaire Items	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remark
26	My academic team demonstrates high levels of productivity and innovation.	76 (32.9%)	74 (32.0%)	33 (14.3%)	13 (5.6%)	35 (15.2%)	3.62	1.38	Agree
27	The overall team performance is significantly influenced by the diverse backgrounds of its members.	57 (24.7%)	82 (35.5%)	23 (10.0%)	21 (9.1%)	48 (20.8%)	3.34	1.47	Agree
28	There is a positive correlation between team diversity and academic team success.	69 (29.9%)	92 (39.8%)	36 (15.6%)	15 (6.5%)	19 (8.2%)	3.77	1.18	Agree
29	Collaboration within teams has improved due to the inclusion of diverse perspectives.	101 (43.7%)	48 (20.8%)	24 (10.4%)	31 (13.4%)	27 (11.7%)	3.71	1.43	Agree
30	The success of academic teams at the University of Benin is largely influenced by the diversity of team members.	84 (36.4%)	63 (27.3%)	42 (18.2%)	24 (10.4%)	18 (7.8%)	3.74	1.26	Agree

Cluster Mean: 3.64

Source: Fieldwork, 2025

Table 4.6 highlights how respondents rated team performance. Mean scores range from 3.34 to 3.77. The strongest view was that diverse team composition supports academic team success, while the lowest agreement was tied to the influence of background on overall performance. Still, every item was rated positively. The cluster mean of 3.64 supports the view that team performance is closely linked with diversity. It can be inferred that team performance, strengthened by diversity, is present to a good extent among academic staff at the University of Benin.

4.5 Hypothesis Testing

The research hypotheses were tested using regression analysis to align with the study’s objectives. An Alpha level of significance of 0.05 was applied. (Decision rule: computed significance value < 0.05 = reject null hypothesis; computed significance value > 0.05 = accept null hypothesis).

Table 4.7a: Model Summary of Diversity Dimensions and Team Performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. Change	F	Durbin-Watson
1	0.512	0.262	0.251	0.9273	0.262	20.314	4	226	0.000		1.811

Source: Statistical Package for Social Sciences v.25

The model summary shows that gender, age, ethnic, and cultural diversity collectively explain 26.2% of the variance in team performance ($R^2 = 0.262$). The adjusted R^2 of 0.251 accounts for the predictors’ effectiveness after adjusting for sample size. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.811 indicates no autocorrelation in the residuals.

Table 4.7b: ANOVA of Diversity Dimensions and Team Performance

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	89.574	4	22.394	20.314	0.000
Residual	252.306	226	1.116		
Total	341.880	230			

Source: Statistical Package for Social Sciences v.25

The ANOVA confirms a statistically significant relationship between the set of diversity variables and team performance. The model explains a notable proportion of variation in team performance, with $F = 20.314$ and $p < 0.05$.

Table 4.7c: Regression Output of Diversity Dimensions and Team Performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1 (Constant)	2.217	0.436		5.084	0.000	1.358	3.076
GDI	0.082	0.095	0.071	0.863	0.389	-.106	.271
ADI	0.291	0.079	0.263	3.696	0.000	-.135	.447
EDI	0.247	0.088	0.213	2.807	0.006	-.074	.420
CII	0.074	0.096	0.067	0.771	0.441	-0.115	0.263

a. Dependent Variable: GDI

Source: Statistical Package for social Sciences v.22

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis 1

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between gender diversity and team performance among academic staff at the University of Benin.

The regression result shows gender diversity has no significant effect on team performance ($B = 0.082$, $t = 0.863$, $p = 0.389$). Since $p > 0.05$, the null hypothesis is accepted. Gender diversity does not have a statistically significant relationship with team performance.

Hypothesis 2

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between age diversity and team performance at the University of Benin.

Age diversity shows a significant effect on team performance ($B = 0.291$, $t = 3.696$, $p = 0.000$). Since $p < 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected. Age diversity significantly influences team performance.

Hypothesis 3

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between ethnic diversity and team performance among academic staff at the University of Benin.

Ethnic diversity has a significant impact on team performance ($B = 0.247$, $t = 2.807$, $p = 0.006$). Since $p < 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected. Ethnic diversity significantly influences team performance.

Hypothesis 4

H₀₄: There is no significant relationship between cultural identity and team performance at the University of Benin.

Cultural identity does not show a significant relationship with team performance ($B = 0.074$, $t = 0.771$, $p = 0.441$). Since $p > 0.05$, the null hypothesis is accepted. Cultural identity does not significantly influence team performance.

4.6 Discussion of Findings

4.6.1 Gender Diversity and Team Performance

The result shows that gender diversity has no significant impact on team performance ($B = 0.082$, $t = 0.863$, $p = 0.389$). This indicates that the presence of both male and female academic staff does not automatically enhance how well teams perform. Schneid et al. (2016) found that gender diversity alone may not influence team outcomes unless team processes and context are considered. Similarly, Zumkley et al. (2024) found no significant effect of gender diversity on team profitability or output in their simulation-based research. These findings imply that simply mixing genders in academic teams may not improve performance unless supported by policies that promote gender inclusion and cooperation. While diversity in gender adds value to team composition, it requires an environment that leverages the strengths of all team members to impact performance meaningfully

4.6.2 Age Diversity and Team Performance

The result shows that age diversity has a significant impact on team performance ($B = 0.291$, $t = 3.696$, $p = 0.000$). This means that academic teams with both younger and older members tend to perform better when working together. Wu and Konrad (2021) explained that when mutual respect and clear roles exist, age-diverse teams develop

higher trust and function more effectively. Klabuhn and Thommes (2017) highlighted that older team members provide consistency and institutional knowledge, while younger ones contribute new methods and enthusiasm. Wegge and Jungmann (2013) noted that inclusive leadership styles help age-diverse teams overcome stereotypes, which improves collaboration. These findings support that age diversity boosts performance when there is mutual understanding and team members feel equally respected.

4.6.3 Ethnic Diversity and Team Performance

The result shows that ethnic diversity has a significant effect on team performance ($B = 0.247$, $t = 2.807$, $p = 0.006$). This means that when academic teams include staff from different ethnic backgrounds, it enhances how well they work together. Kearney et al. (2009) found that ethnic diversity improves performance when team members value cognitive effort and are encouraged to share ideas openly. Similarly, Schneid et al. (2016) explained that ethnic diversity enriches team decision-making by introducing varied perspectives, which helps solve complex problems when inclusion is practiced. Ethnic diversity in academic teams contributes to better communication, deeper learning, and higher creativity, especially when diversity is welcomed as a strength rather than a challenge.

4.6.4 Cultural Diversity and Team Performance

The result shows that cultural identity does not significantly impact team performance ($B = 0.074$, $t = 0.771$, $p = 0.441$). This means that the cultural background of team members at the University of Benin does not strongly influence how well they

perform together. Timmerman (2000) reported that cultural or racial diversity in team settings may have neutral or even negative effects when there is little interdependence between tasks. Waltemyer (2009) also found that cultural background does not automatically improve collaboration in teams unless diversity is linked to shared goals and strong communication structures. This outcome from the University of Benin may reflect a lack of systems to promote cultural understanding in teams. While cultural identity is an important aspect of diversity, its contribution to team performance depends on how well it is managed and integrated into team practices.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of findings, conclusion, recommendations, contributions to knowledge, and suggestions for future studies.

5.2 Summary of the Study

This study examined the effect of workplace diversity on team performance among academic staff at the University of Benin. It focused on four key dimensions of diversity: gender, age, ethnic background, and cultural identity. The research employed a quantitative design using a structured questionnaire, with data collected from 231 academic staff across various faculties. The analysis was conducted using regression methods through SPSS version 25.

Findings revealed that;

1. Gender diversity does not have a significant influence on team performance
2. Age diversity significantly impacts team performance.
3. Ethnic diversity significantly influences team performance.
4. Cultural identity diversity has no significant effect on team performance

These findings indicate that while diversity is present across the university, not all its forms contribute equally to team outcomes. The study therefore encourages focused efforts on managing age and ethnic diversity to improve performance, while also maintaining inclusive practices that promote gender and cultural recognition.

5.3 Conclusion of the Study

Diversity in the workplace has become an increasingly important aspect of organisational growth and team effectiveness, especially in academic institutions where collaboration and knowledge-sharing are essential. This study set out to explore the broader relationship between workforce diversity and team performance within the academic environment of the University of Benin. The research was anchored on the understanding that diversity, when well-managed, can be a valuable asset to institutional success.

The study highlighted that workplace diversity goes beyond surface-level representation. It involves managing differences in ways that promote inclusion, mutual respect, and productive teamwork. Through structured data collection and analysis, the research engaged with how different forms of diversity interact with team processes in an academic setting. It stressed the importance of recognising diversity not as a challenge but as a strategic element that, when harnessed properly, contributes to innovation, collaboration, and stronger team dynamics.

The work contributes to ongoing conversations around how universities and similar institutions can improve performance by cultivating environments where diversity is embraced and channelled constructively. Overall, the study underscores the importance of intentional diversity management practices and provides a foundation for rethinking how inclusion can be translated into actual performance benefits across higher education institutions.

5.4 Study Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. The university should promote initiatives that facilitate intergenerational collaboration among academic staff, such as mentorship programs between junior and senior faculty.
2. Management should foster ethnically inclusive team structures to harness diverse perspectives and improve adaptability.
3. Although gender diversity showed no significant effect, gender inclusion efforts should be sustained to encourage equal opportunity and reduce workplace bias.
4. Cultural identity training and inter-cultural awareness workshops should be improved to potentially unlock the performance benefits of cultural diversity in future.
5. Policies that encourage open communication and inclusive leadership across age and ethnic divides should be implemented to sustain high team performance.

5.5 Contribution of the Study

The study contributes to knowledge by offering empirical evidence from a Nigerian federal university setting on how different types of workplace diversity affect team performance. Unlike many global studies that generalise diversity's impact, this research distinguishes between forms of diversity, revealing that age and ethnic variation enhance performance, while gender and cultural identity do not have significant effects in this context. It also expands diversity research within African academia, filling a gap in

locally grounded studies. This understanding equips university managers and policymakers with better insight for designing team structures, training, and collaboration frameworks that are sensitive to the diversity elements that truly drive results in academic settings.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Study

1. Future research could investigate the moderating role of leadership style in the relationship between diversity and team performance.
2. A comparative study across multiple universities could offer broader insight into institutional differences.
3. Further studies could explore other dimensions of diversity such as disability, religion, or educational background.
4. Qualitative methods may be used to explore deeper reasons behind the non-significant effect of gender and cultural identity on performance.

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QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Gender: Male () Female ()
2. Age: Below 30 years () 31 – 40 years () 41-50 years ()
3. Work experience: Over 51 years ()
Less than 2 years () 3-5 years () 6 -8 years ()
4. Staff position: 8 – 10 years () Above 10 years ()
Senior Staff () Junior Staff ()
5. Educational Qualification: Primary () Secondary () ND/NCE ()
HND/B.Sc. () Post graduate ()

SECTION B: GENDER DIVERSITY

Indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding gender diversity and its influence on team performance at the University of Benin.

Where 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.

S/N	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
6	Gender diversity positively affects collaboration and teamwork among academic staff.					
7	Having both male and female academic staff members improves creativity and problem-solving in teams.					
8	Gender balance in academic teams enhances the overall team performance at the University of Benin.					
9	Gender diversity fosters a more inclusive and respectful working environment among academic staff.					
10	Teams with diverse gender representation tend to be more innovative and productive.					

SECTION C: AGE DIVERSITY

Indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding age diversity and its influence on team performance at the University of Benin.

Where 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.

S/N	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
11	Age diversity among academic staff members leads to more effective communication and collaboration.					
12	A mix of younger and older academic staff members enhances the adaptability of academic teams.					
13	Teams that consist of academic staff from various age groups					

	demonstrate higher levels of performance.					
14	Age diversity positively influences the level of experience shared within academic teams.					
15	The combination of diverse age groups in academic teams strengthens problem-solving abilities.					

SECTION D: ETHNICITY DIVERSITY

Indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding ethnic diversity and its influence on team performance at the University of Benin.

Where 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.

S/N	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
16	Ethnic diversity among academic staff contributes to richer perspectives and ideas within teams.					
17	Teams with academic staff from diverse ethnic backgrounds perform better by utilizing varied experiences.					
18	Academic teams with diverse ethnic representations are more adaptable in handling challenges.					
19	The presence of ethnic diversity within academic teams promotes a more inclusive and creative work culture.					
20	Ethnic diversity within academic teams leads to increased productivity and overall team performance.					

SECTION E: CULTURAL IDENTITY DIVERSITY

Indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding cultural identity diversity and its influence on team performance at the University of Benin.

Where 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.

S/N	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
21	Cultural identity diversity within academic teams enhances communication and understanding among members.					
22	The varied cultural identities of academic staff positively influence team collaboration and creativity.					
23	Cultural diversity among academic staff helps improve team dynamics by fostering mutual respect.					
24	The presence of diverse cultural backgrounds in academic teams enhances innovation and problem-solving skills.					
25	Teams with varied cultural identities perform better due to a deeper understanding of different perspectives.					

SECTION F: TEAM PERFORMANCE

Indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements regarding overall team performance at the University of Benin.

Where 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.

S/N	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
26	My academic team demonstrates high levels of productivity and innovation.					
27	The overall team performance is significantly influenced by the diverse backgrounds of its members.					
28	There is a positive correlation between team diversity and academic team success.					
29	Collaboration within teams has improved due to the inclusion of diverse perspectives.					
30	The success of academic teams at the University of Benin is largely influenced by the diversity of team members.					