

# The Relationship Between Workforce Diversity and Work Performance Among Employees at a Manufacturing Company in Johor

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## ABSTRACT

Workplace diversity and employee work performance have evolved to be an even greater issue considered by organizations that are focused on remaining competitive, innovative, and effective in the current dynamic business environment. Nevertheless, organizations still struggle to know how workforce diversity affects the work performance of employees. Past research revealed poor empirical data that measures workforce diversity through emotional reactions, judgment, behavioral intentions, personal consequences, and perceived organizational outcomes against employee work performance within Malaysian organization. This study examined the relationship between workplace diversity and employee work performance at a manufacturing company located in Johor. The population of the study comprised 87 employees, from which a sample of 73 employees participated in the research. Data were collected using structured questionnaires consisting of three sections including demographic information, workforce diversity, and employee work performance. The Workplace Diversity Survey was used to measure workplace diversity, while the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire was employed to assess employee work performance. The statistical methods of analysis used were descriptive and correlation analysis, like mean, standard deviation, and the Pearson correlation coefficient. The study found that employees stated moderate levels of workforce diversity ( $M = 3.35$ ) and high levels of employee work performance ( $M = 3.72$ ). The results showed that the workplace diversity relationship with employee work performance was moderate, and the effective diversity management practices could be applied to increase the work performance of employees and contribute to organizational effectiveness.

**Keywords:** Workforce Diversity, Employee Work Performance, Diversity Management, Organizational Outcomes, Human Resources

## RESEARCH BACKGROUND

### Background Of Study

The dynamics in the labour market today suggest women and minority groups are joining the workforce in higher numbers, making workplace diversity an irreplaceable attribute of the US economy (Byrd & Scott, 2024). In the contemporary workplaces, there are employees with different backgrounds in terms of demographics and education, as well as culture who contribute to the organization through diverse views, abilities, and experiences that contribute to decision-making, innovation, and the overall adaptability of the organization (Tazminur et al., 2024). At the same time, the performance of employees has become a decisive factor of organizational success since it has an impact on productivity, the quality of services, and the ability to stay in the long run (Ayele, Wu, and Chen, 2024). The current empirical data points out strongly to the factor that the advancement of employee work performance is triggered by the appropriate management of workforce diversity (Obeng et al., 2025). The obtained findings align with the rest of the literature to prove that workforce diversity leads to the increased

richness of human capital, creativity, and innovation, which subsequently reinforce both individual and team performance (Turi et al., 2022).

## **Workforce Diversity**

Diversity in the workforce has a variety of dimensions that include gender, age, ethnicity, education and tenure and when appropriately handled, can become effective lever tools of enhancing performance within an organization. Empirical studies evidence that a healthy diversity is a phenomenon that can be related to increased employee satisfaction levels, the improved performance of the group, or production (Gharti and Modi, 2024). Age diversity also expands institutional knowledge since the employees who belong to various age groups bring diverse experience and new dimensions and a study has been carried out in the health sector of Sub-Saharan Africa to show how age diversity could improve service delivery and productivity (Antwi et al., 2023). Furthermore, employee diversity with varying educational backgrounds and majors has the capacity to creating creative synergy, which contributes to an enhanced performance through innovative capacity and problem-solving ability (Kumar and Gupta, 2023). Ethnic diversity, in its turn, may improve organizational flexibility and market knowledge, through which the ethnic heterogeneity increases decision-making and competitiveness in the SMEs (Das, 2025).

## **Employee Work Performance**

As shown by available empirical studies, well applied diversity management and climate positively affect employee work performance. The research conducted by Ayele et al., (2024) demonstrates that extra-role performance can be directly increased with the help of diversity climate where employees feel respected, included, and treated equally. Elamin et al., (2024) proved that diversity programs in the United Arab Emirates increase employee engagement, and its result is creativity and innovation when performing work. In a broader sense, workforce diversity management is associated with that being better in terms of task and contextual performance This is stated in a Nigerian educational setting, Ismaila and Usman (2023) observed that diversity management also plays a significant role in explaining variation in the performance of employees.

## **Problem Statement**

In the modern organizational set-up, workforce diversity has become a key determiner of various organizational results. There is significant evidence that this diversity introduces a variety of views and skills into the working environment, thus creating innovative thinking and promoting the quality of decision-making (Amodio et al., 2024). Research proves that to the extent that your organization lacks strategic planning, diversity can create personal conflict and communication challenges that dissolve organizational unity and lower productivity (Tazminur et al., 2024). The interrelationship between workforce diversity and work performance among employees is importance when referenced in the Malaysian context. A study focusing on the food and beverage retail industry of Malaysia discovered that age, gender and ethnicity differences have substantial impacts on output among employees (Sandrasegar, 2024). The data illustrate the need of the organizations in the country to develop diversity programs to suit the nature of their working forces. The minority racial, cultural or religious employees are still experiencing marginalization and discrimination.

A survey by Aminuddin (2020), included 1,200 Malaysians consisting of 319 Chinese and 881 Malays. The researchers concluded that the Malays were more willing to discriminate against non-Malaysian neighbors than against members of the same ethnic group, especially in residential integration, than the Chinese respondents. Moreover, Ting et al., (2024) found that ethnic identity rather than national identity was strongly linked to perceived in-group discrimination among Chinese Malaysian young adults, which in implication showed a strong relationship with psychological distress. The results of this research show that the minority workers must face explicit and implicit forms of racial and religious discrimination in the workplace, as well as in society, and beyond.

## **Purpose Of Study**

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between workforce diversity and employee work

performance at a manufacturing company in Johor. It seeks to determine the role of the emotional reactions, judgments, behavioral intentions, personal consequences, and perceived organizational outcomes of the employees towards workforce diversity impact on their task performance, contextual performance and counterproductive work behavior. The research aims to offer information that can assist the organization to effectively manage its diverse workforce to increase overall productivity and organizational performance.

The objectives of the research are:

- a. To identify the level of workforce diversity among employees at a manufacturing company in Johor.
- b. To identify the level of work performance among employees at a manufacturing company in Johor.
- c. To examine the relationship between workforce diversity and work performance among employees at a manufacturing company in Johor.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Workforce Diversity

Workforce diversity has been reframed within the last few years, where the relevant features go beyond the conventional typologies of gender and race. A Malaysian study of the retail food and beverage sector seems to be relevant because employee performance depended heavily on age, gender, and ethnic diversity, which supports an assumption concerning the significant value of different perspectives to achieve the enhanced operation of an organization (Harshini, 2024). Furthermore, more inclusion of diversity in the organization also correlates with the improved job satisfaction of workers, reduced work turnover, and the overall reputation of the employer, and thus, being selected as a favoured employer in a diverse labour market (Sharma & Sharma, 2023). Promoting inclusive leadership and overcoming language or cultural barriers have been emphasized as essential steps in realizing the benefits of diversity in employee performance (Bathumalai & Vijaya, 2024). These findings collectively underscore the necessity for organizations to implement culturally sensitive and innovative strategies to maximize the positive effects of workforce diversity on employee performance.

### Employee Work Performance

As analyzed by Sandall et al., (2022), the working performance refers to the extent to which employees are performing their allocated duties, tasks, and functions in accordance with the organizational goals. It does include both the fulfilment of the central tasks and provision of the contextual behaviors that exploit the broader operation of the organization (Platania et al., 2023). Cores duties are known to be often referred to as task performance, and this is an output in form of meeting given targets or producing the required goods or services. Contextual performance in contrast consists of various voluntary behaviors, such as helping peers and displaying organizational citizenship (Ennida et al., 2025). Task structures and individual competencies affect performance, but personal and job resources bring about a profound impact (Yuan & Kongruang, 2025). According to Juyumaya (2022), it is discoverable that psychological empowerment strengthens work performance, and the mediating factors are increased work engagement, which is described by being vigorous, dedicated, and being absorbed.

### Theories and Model

#### Social Identity Theory

Social Identity Theory by Tajfel and Turner (1979) is crucial that explains the process wherein people define their identity and self-esteem through the belonging to groups identified with race, ethnicity, gender, or occupation. The identification with groups can be performed on the organizational level affecting employee performance: collaboration and innovation can be at its peak, whereas in-group bias and exclusion can be present. A recent study by Arshad et al., (2022) reveals that empowering leadership will increase the level of organizational identification, which leads to an increase in work engagement and performance. Further, Qureshi

(2024) finds that dissimilarity feelings and identity disclosure behaviours are the critical issues that affect the workplace environment, and the practices of psychological safety are essential to prevent poor consequences.

### Workplace Diversity Survey

This study employs the Workplace Diversity Survey, developed by De Meuse and Hostager (2001) to determine workforce diversity. The WDS extends beyond the differences in demographics to include the emotional and behavioural reactions of the employees in a diverse workplace. It evaluates five dimensions, including emotional reactions (temporary feeling towards colleagues), judgments (how people believe they will be judged), behavioural intentions (actions employees would like to take), personal consequences (such as stress or job satisfaction) and organizational outcomes (how people feel they are working in a diverse environment). Applying WDS can be used to evaluate both psychological and organizational dimensions of workforce diversity at a manufacturing company.

### Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model

As originally introduced by Bakker and Demerouti (2007), the so-called JD-R model remains an overarching system of investigating the impact of job characteristic on employee well-being and performance. It groups job-related variables through job demands, job resources and personal resources as illustrated in Figure 1.

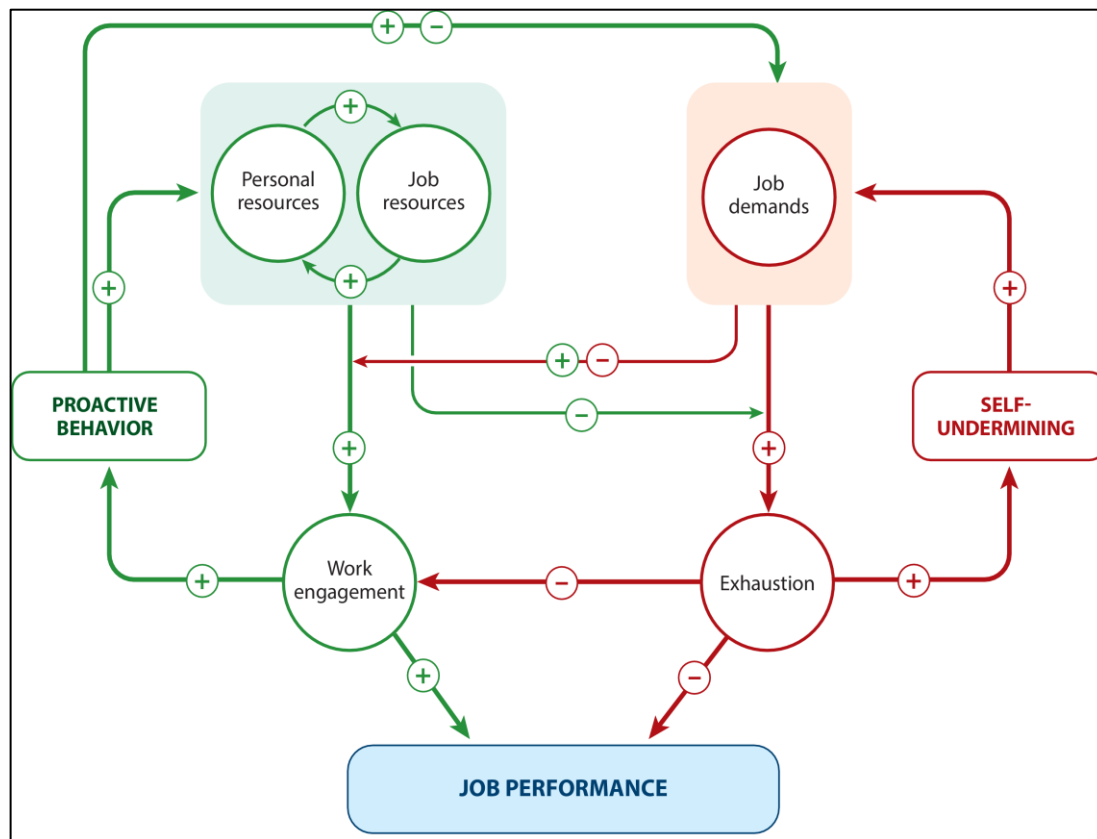


Figure 1: JD-R Model

Source: Baker and Demerouti (2017)

JD-R Model describes why job resources, personal resources, and job demands interact to increase or decrease employee work performance via motivational and health impairment mechanisms (Bakker et al., 2023). As Figure 1 shows, job resources and personal resources are positively related to each other and become the basis of the motivational process, where sufficient resources increase the degree of work engagement and, consequently, job performance (Schaufeli, 2021). Inclusive leadership, equitable HR practices, and respectful interpersonal relationships serve as valuable job resources in the context of workplace diversity and enhance personal resource, namely self-efficacy and resilience, which induces proactive behaviour and greater work

engagement (Leroy et al., 2021). On the contrary, when workers experience more demands in the labour market in the form of work pressure, emotional strain and interpersonal conflict than they have resources, employees become exhausted, and this aspect harms engagement as well as job performance (Tummers et al., 2021; Schaufeli et al., 2021).

### Individual Work Performance Questionnaire

The Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (IWPQ) by Koopmans et al., (2014) and modified by Platania et al., (2023) is a popular instrument in assessing employee performance in three dimensions: task performance, contextual performance, and counterproductive work behavior (CWB). Task performance looks at how well employees accomplish their central job responsibilities, contextual performance is an evaluation of those behaviors that benefit the organization, including assisting others or performing additional work, and CWB is an assessment of those actions that are detrimental to the organization or the employees. Adapted IWPQ offers a valid and reliable measure which considers various work settings that allow a holistic assessment of individual and organizational performance.

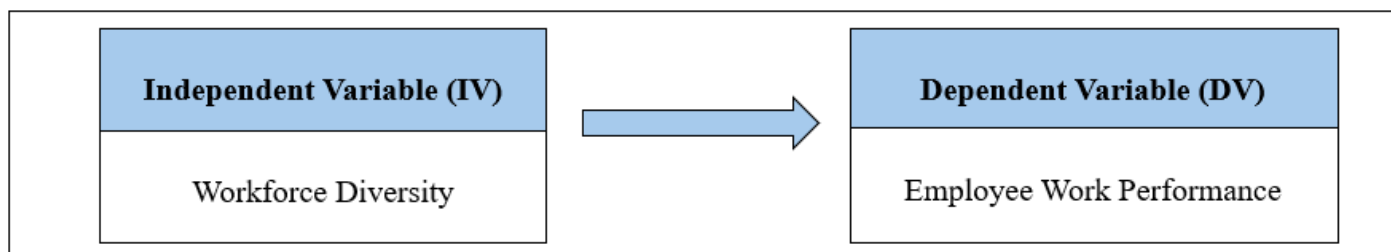
### Relationship between Workforce Diversity and Employee Work Performance

Recent researchers validate the idea that workforce diversity has a significant input on employee work performance. The study in Ode et al., (2024) proves the increase in productivity that is caused by the diversity in age, gender, ethnicity, and, most importantly, education, as it expands the vision and encourages innovation. Additional evidence is provided by Chhetri (2024), as the author indicates that differences in numerous ways, such as education, experience, and culture, have a positive impact on the performance of insurance companies in Nepal. Nevertheless, their correlation is not always straightforward; Mehari et al., (2024) where it was stated that workplace ethics act as a key mediator, i.e., the positive outcomes of diversity will only be achieved in those organizations, whose ethical climates are strong. The findings indicate that diversity may be an asset but understanding its performance contribution to work requires an efficient management of the same in the organizational setting.

### Research Framework

The prior study’s findings assist the researcher in developing a conceptual framework, as seen in Figure 2. A brief research framework was created to demonstrate the relationship between independent and dependent variables. In this study, workplace diversity serves as the independent variable that influences the dependent variable.

Figure 2: Conceptual Framework



Workforce Diversity is conceptualized and was gauged based on the *Workplace Diversity Survey* (WDS) formulated by De Meuse and Hostager (2001). One of the implementations of workforce diversity is in five dimensions, emotional reactions, judgments, behavioral intentions, personal consequences, and organizational outcomes by capturing the perception and responses of employees to workforce diversity and work experience as a result. Contrastingly, *Individual Work Performance Questionnaire* (IWPQ) developed by Platania et al., 2023 measures the dependent variable. Employee Work Performance divided into three factors, task performance, contextual performance and counterproductive work behavior. The conceptual framework aims at analyzing deeper the effect of diversity in the workplace to performance and the type of relationship that exists between the two.

## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The research design in this study can be seen in Figure 3. The research design embraced in this study are quantitative and correlational. The aim is to examine the relationship between workforce diversity and work performance among the employees of a manufacturing company. This research utilized a quantitative research design in which survey research and structured questionnaires were used as the fundamental data gathering technique to investigate the workplace diversity impact on employee work performance. The unit of analysis was individual employees with various types of demographic backgrounds in terms of gender, age, ethnicity within a multicultural organizational environment. A cross-sectional (one-shot) design was adopted where researcher took one observation at a specific time and, therefore, one took a snapshot of a particular organizational behavior without the need of a longitudinal study (Bell, Bryman, and Harley, 2022).

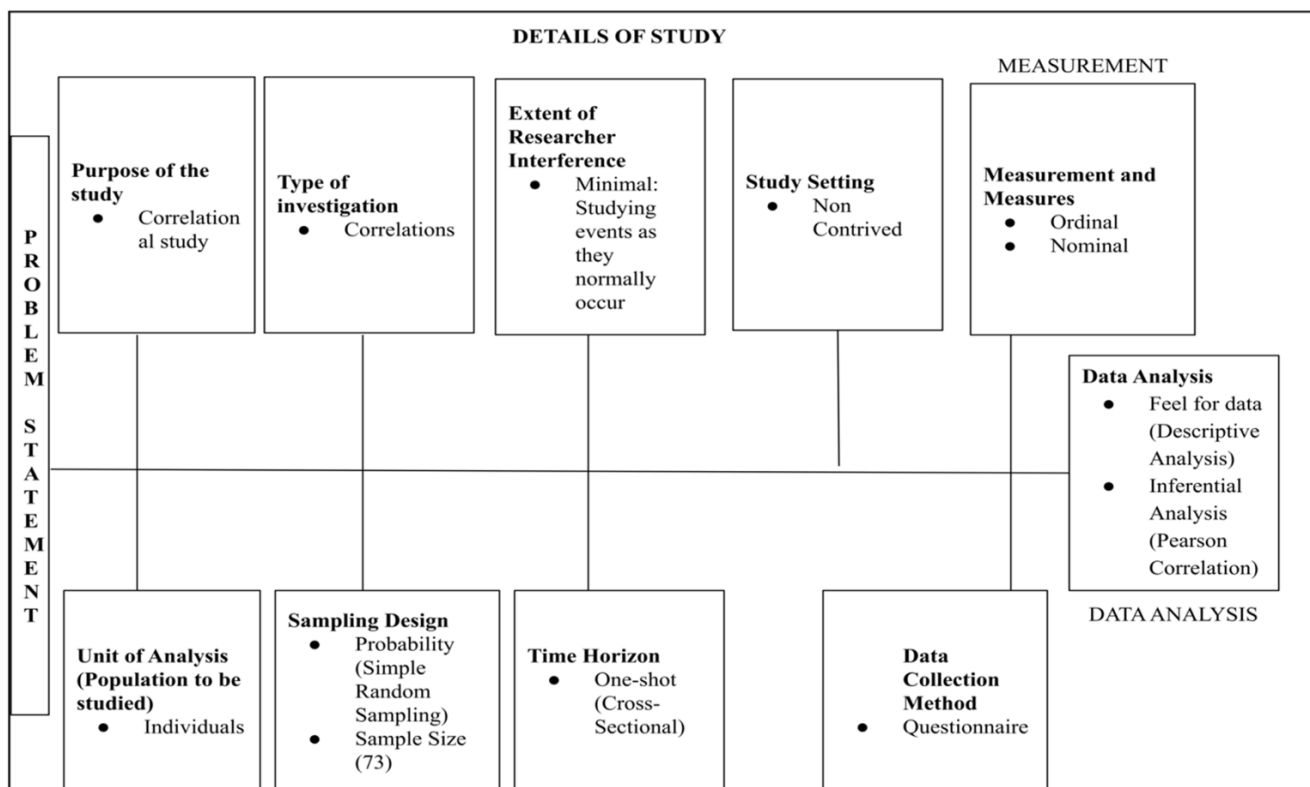


Figure 3: Research Design

(Adapted from: Sekaran and Bougie, 2016)

It was chosen as a probability sampling method in a way that all employees would have the same chance of being selected and, therefore, this will improve the external validity of the study results. The closed-ended type of questions was used to facilitate uniformity, objectivity, and appropriateness of quantitative analysis, and standardized measurement tools were used to enhance consistency and reliability (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). The analysis of data was performed through the Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS), where both the descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used to test the hypotheses of the study (IBM Corp., 2022).

### Population and Sampling

The study was conducted based among employees of the manufacturing company in Johor. The company was found to employ 87 employees as per the records retrieved in the human resource department. The probability sampling approach was simple random sampling which was used so that every employee could have an equal opportunity of being picked. According to the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table, the size of the sample was

calculated, and the sample of 73 employees was selected to complete the questionnaire survey. The selection of the respondents was made using a random number generator according to the list of employees.

### Research Instrument

The *Workplace Diversity Survey* (WDS) developed by De Meuse and Hostager (2001) was chosen to measure workforce diversity, whereas the *Individual Work Performance Questionnaire* (IWPQ) expounded by Platania et al., (2023) was selected to assess the employee work performance. The questionnaire will contain three separate sections. Table 1 presents the demographic items, Table 2 presents the items of Workforce Diversity, and Table 3 presents the items of Employee Work Performance. Section A has 6 items, including gender, age, ethnicity, education level, work experience and employment type. For Section B, it has 20 items, used five-point Likert Scale on agreement was used to designate the response levels for each item (1= Disagree, 2= Disagree Somewhat, 3= Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4= Agree Somewhat, and 5= Agree). Meanwhile, Section C has 9 items, five-point Likert Scale on frequency was used (1= Rarely, 2= Sometimes, 3= Regularly, 4= Often and 5= Always).

Table 1: Demographic Items

Section	Item Code	Table of Items
A	A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6	6

Table 2: Items of Workforce Diversity

Section	Item Code	Table of Items	Source
B	B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, B6, B7, B8, B9, B10, B11, B12, B13, B14, B15, B16, B17, B18, B19, B20	20	De Meuse and Hostager (2001)

Table 3: Items of Employee Work Performance

Section	Item Code	Table of Items	Source
C	C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C8, C9, C10, C11, C12, C13, C14, C15, C16, C17	17	Platania et al., (2023)

### Pilot Test

Pilot studies should recruit a minimum of ten people to ensure that data is collected properly, the instruments function well and questions in the survey are improved before it reaches a large group (Pearson et al., 2020). According to Hertzog (2008), samples, which have a few participants per group ranging between 10 and 40 would yield estimates that are often accurate to address most of the pilot test that one might have in mind. The Statistical Package of Social Sciences Version 29 was used to analysis data obtained during the pilot phase.

Table 4: The Rule of Thumb of Cronbach's Alpha

Range for Cronbach's Alpha	Strength of Internal Consistency
< 0.6	Poor
0.6 to < 0.7	Moderate
0.7 to < 0.8	Good
0.8 to < 0.9	Very Good
0.9	Excellent

(Source: George and Mallery, 2003)

The validity and reliability of the final questionnaire were assessed after conducting a pilot study. The evaluation was done using Cronbach's alpha coefficient. As show in Table 4, George and Mallery (2003), an alpha value less than 0.6 is not acceptable for reliability. They further state that a Cronbach's alpha exceeding 0.60 is deemed acceptable, while a value surpassing 0.70 indicates statistically solid reliability. Cronbach's alpha for the section on workforce diversity was calculated to be 0.952, which is considered excellent. In contrast, the employee work performance section displayed a Cronbach's alpha of 0.912, indicating good reliability. In conclusion, the measures employed in the questionnaire exhibit a notably high degree of reliability.

Table 5: Findings of the Pilot Test

Variables	Work Diversity	Employee Work Performance
No of Items	20	17
Cronbach’s Alpha	0.952	0.912

**Data Analysis Techniques**

The data obtained from the distributed questionnaires were analyzed using SPSS version 29.0. To describe the demographic of the respondents, frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were employed. Cronbach’s alpha was used to assess the reliability and internal consistency of the questionnaire items. Pearson correlation, under inferential statistics, was performed to examine the strength and level of the relationship between workforce diversity and employee work performance at a manufacturing company in Johor. Table 6 shows the mean score ratio, table 7 presents the mean score range for the level of workforce diversity and employee work performance, while Table 8 provides the interpretation of pearson’s correlation coefficient.

Table 6: Mean Score Ratio

Mean Score Ratio: <u>Highest Score - Lowest Score</u>
Total Level
= (5-1)/3
=1.33

**Table 7:** Level of Workforce Diversity and Work Performance among Employees

Mean Score	Level
- 2.33	Low
2.34 - 3.66	Moderate
3.67 - 5.00	High

(Source: Landell, 1997)

Table 8: Interpretation of Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient

Value of Correlation Coefficient	Interpretation
0- 0.199	Very Weak
0.200 - 0.399	Weak
0.400 - 0.599	Moderate
0.600 - 0.799	Strong
0.800 - 1.000	Very Strong

(Source: Care et al., 2018)

## RESEARCH FINDINGS

### Demographic Details of the Respondents

In this section, the demographic distribution based on the items in Section A of the questionnaires. There were six items presented in the demographic information includes gender, age, ethnicity, education level, work experience and employment type. Analysis was carried out used a descriptive method with the frequency and percentage for each element as show in Table 9 below. In this research, a total of 73 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. Out of these, 69 questionnaires were successfully returned, yielding a response rate of 94.5%.

Table 9: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Demographic Data

Demographic Data	Frequency ( <i>f</i> )	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	27	39.1
Female	42	60.9
<b>Age</b>		
21 - 30	27	39.1
31 - 40	18	26.1
41 – 50	18	26.1
51 – 60	6	8.7
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
Malay	23	33.3
Chinese	18	26.1
Indian	18	26.1
Others	10	14.5
<b>Education Level</b>		
SPM	21	30.4
STPM / A-Level / Diploma / Foundation	16	23.2
Bachelor’s Degree	24	34.8
Master’s Degree	6	8.7
PhD / Doctorate	2	2.9
<b>Work Experience</b>		

Less than 2 years	15	21.7
2 -5 years	27	39.1
5 – 10 years	18	26.1
10 years and above	9	13
<b>Employment Type</b>		
Full-time	37	53.6
Part-time	12	17.4
Contract	5	7.2
Internship / Trainee	12	17.4
Others	3	4.3

**The Level of Workforce Diversity**

The first objective of this study is to identify the level of workforce diversity among employees at a company in Johor. A total of 20 items for Workforce Diversity were assessed using a 5-point Likert scale. Table 10 depicts the level of workforce diversity at a manufacturing company in Johor. Overall, the level of workforce diversity was moderate, with a mean score of 3.35 and a standard deviation of 0.64. While many respondents recognize that diversity can promote fairness, harmony, and opportunities for personal learning, there are also noticeable concerns related to stress, communication barriers, and potential cost implications.

Table 10: Findings on the Level of Workforce Diversity

Variable	FINDINGS	Level
Workforce Diversity	Mean: 3.35 Standard Deviation: 0.64	Moderate

**The Level of Employee Work Performance**

The second objective of this study is to identify the level of work performance among employees at a manufacturing company in Johor. A total of 17 items for Employee Work Performance were assessed using a 5-point Likert scale. Table 11 shows the level of work performance among employees at a manufacturing company in Johor. Overall, the findings demonstrate a high level of employee work performance, with a mean score of 3.72 and a standard deviation of 0.52. Specifically, respondents expressed strong commitment in the dimension of Task Performance and Contextual Performance based on high mean scores in the work-related areas of planning work, setting priorities, managing time wisely, taking initiative, updating job-related knowledge and skills, accepting additional responsibilities, and being involved in work-related activities. Conversely, the items that assessed the Counterproductive Work Behavior only achieved moderate means, which revealed that negative behaviors like overemphasizing problems or focusing on negative things about work or talking about work dissatisfaction are occasional and not common among most of the respondents.

Table 11: Findings on the Level of Employee Work Performance

Variable	FINDINGS	Level
Employee Work Performance	Mean: 3.72 Standard Deviation: 0.52	High

### The Relationship between Workforce Diversity and Employee Work Performance

Table 12 displays research findings on the coefficient correlation between workforce diversity and work performance among employees at a manufacturing company in Johor. The p-value of the variable illustrates the findings for these two variables is less than 0.01. Furthermore, the Pearson correlation coefficient ( $r = .5933^{**}$ ) shows a moderate positive relationship between workforce diversity and employee work performance. This finding suggests that as the level of workforce diversity increases, employee work performance tends to improve moderately.

Table 12: Coefficient Correlation between Workforce Diversity and Employee Work Performance

	r	Sig	N
<b>Workforce Diversity and Employee Work Performance</b>	.593**	<.001	69

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

## DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

### The Level of Workforce Diversity among Employees at a Manufacturing Company in Johor

The primary objective of this research is to identify the level of workforce diversity among employees at a manufacturing company in Johor. The overall mean score for workforce diversity is 3.35 with a standard deviation of 0.64, indicating a moderate level of workforce diversity within the organization. The analysis revealed that the item with the highest mean score related to perception of employees regarding diversity as the factor that helps to make thoughtful decisions because most respondents can understand its role in helping to improve the process of critical thinking and making well-informed decisions. This fact indicates that exposure to varied viewpoints, background as well as experience allows one to think more profoundly and apply more critical judgement in solving workplace issues or when making decisions in an organization. The study by Turi et al., (2022) revealed that the workforce diversity about gender, age, education level, and ethnicity has a positive impact on organizational performance mediated by leadership experience, and diversity should contribute to better performance of organizations by allowing employees to make more informed choices and better decisions based on the information available. Dongrey and Rokade (2021) add that the diversity of the required teams might lead to enhanced problem-solving and creativity as the employees of various experience levels offer new insights into their work.

The employees at a manufacturing company feel that diversity is not worth the case and this is evident in the statement where the mean score is the least. Such result proves that even though most of the employees perceive diversity favorably, a relatively low percentage might still be doubting the need or applicability of diversity in the organization. Jehn et al., (1999) add that the problem of divergent values and perceptions may sometimes put strain or confusion in different teams when there is lack of proper management of diversity. However, there are findings indicate that these obstacles can be addressed by means of inclusive management practices. Kumar and Singh (2025) noted that cultural diversity which is dealt with in an inclusive manner is a great type of diversity in enhancing performance and innovation in an organization due to the integration of various perspectives.

## The Level of Work Performance among Employees at a Manufacturing Company in Johor

The second objective of this research is to identify the level of employee work performance among employees at a manufacturing company in Johor. The overall mean score for employee work performance is 3.72, with a standard deviation of 0.52, which indicates a high level of employee work performance within the organization. This result demonstrates that most employees consistently perform their tasks effectively and maintain a strong sense of responsibility in achieving work-related goals. The element with the highest overall mean related to task performance which illustrated that the workers at a manufacturing company were always reminded of the work outcomes they had to accomplish, reflecting that employees at a manufacturing company are goal-oriented and mindful of performance expectations. In a study done by Platania, Maggio, and Boccadamo (2025), inclusive leadership and organizational identification are strong predictors of employee performance as it was shown that when employees feel important and with organizational goals, they get motivated and become more productive. Similarly, Koopmans et al., (2014) created a system of measurement of personal work performance in causes and consequences that validates and proves an elaborate framework.

In contrast, the counterproductive work behavior of making problems at work bigger than they were recorded the lowest mean score, suggesting that most employees rarely overreact to workplace challenges. Nevertheless, the moderate mean score also implies that a small group of employees may still struggle with pressure or conflict. Borman and Motowidlo (1997) indicate that a well performing employee goes beyond the technical skills on jobs to embrace emotional control and responsiveness in the face of difficulty. Studies have indicated that emotional intelligence leads to higher adaptive performance and desirable workplace performance, since workers with elevated emotional intelligence can better control their emotions and deal with stressors and effectively adapt to emerging work-related demands (Coronado-Maldonado and Benitez-Marcquez, 2023).

## The Relationship between Workforce Diversity and Work Performance among Employees at a Manufacturing Company in Johor

The final objective of this study is to examine the relationship between workforce diversity and employee work performance at a manufacturing company in Johor. The researcher employed the Pearson correlation coefficient to measure the strength and direction of the relationship between these two variables. The results show a correlation value of  $r = 0.593^{**}$  with a significance level of  $p < 0.001$ , indicating a significant, positive and moderate relationship between workforce diversity and employee work performance. As stated by Lemunen et al., (2020), workplace diversity is known to improve employee performance by growing innovation and collaboration because of their exchange of distinctive views and experiences. Equally, Khan and Jahan (2021) discovered that gender, age, and cultural diversity had a positive impact on the performance perceived by the employees since it expanded the learning opportunities and promoted the behavior of teamwork.

Also, a current investigation by Letchumanan et al., (2025) established that the workforce diversity has a positive role in employee performance in the Malaysian organizations enhancing the decision-making and the flexibility. Equally, Oshin et al., (2023) pointed out that inclusive and diverse workforces are associated with a higher performance outcome in organizations. The strength of the relationship is however moderate, which means that although diversity has a positive impact on the work, other variables like the leadership style, job satisfaction, and organizational culture can as well impact on working performance. Therefore, the company should continue implementing initiatives that support diversity awareness and inclusion programs to sustain and enhance these positive outcomes. Nwahanye and Dze (2021) found that diversity enhances performance by promoting employee commitment and mutual respect.

## CONCLUSION

This study examined the relationship between workforce diversity and employee work performance at a manufacturing company in Johor. The study has presented the research background, problem statement, objectives, and scope, and reviewed relevant theories and empirical studies on workforce diversity and employee work performance. The study applied Social Identity Theory and the Job Demands-Resources Model as theoretical foundations. According to SIT, workers associate themselves with social groups founded on shared aspects, which affect performance and interactions. The JD-R Model implies that job resources, such as support,

diversity, and inclusion, can increase employee motivation and performance even in response to high-job demands. The Workplace Diversity Survey and the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire were used as quantitative, correlational design. Out of 73 questionnaires sent out 69 questionnaires were returned. The reliability and statistical rigor were achieved with SPSS, and the survey items were understood by the respondents.

The results showed that the employees rated workforce diversity moderately in terms of emotional reactions, judgments, behavioral intentions, personal consequences, and perceived organizational outcomes. There was high employee work performance such as task performance, contextual performance and counterproductive behavior. It was also observed that there was a moderate positive correlation between workforce diversity and employee work performance that indicates that good management of diversity leads to increased cooperation, engagement, and organizational climate and decreased negative behaviors. In conclusion, workforce diversity is a critical factor influencing employee work performance at a manufacturing company. Further studies would consider larger samples and both mixed methods to investigate mechanisms to connect workforce diversity and performance. Organizations should foster diversity and inclusiveness to enhance the performance of employees and lead to long-term success.

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