

**WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND ITS EFFECTS ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN  
A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION IN SOUTH AFRICA: A CASE OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF VENDA**

**BY**

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## DECLARATION

I Zhuwao Simbarashe do hereby declare that this dissertation for Masters of Commerce in Human Resource Management and Labour Relations done at the University of Venda is my own work. This work has not been submitted in any form for another degree or diploma at any university or other institution of higher education. Information derived from the published or unpublished work of others has been acknowledged in the text and a list of references is given below.

Date.....

Signature.....

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Zhuwao Simbarashe

## DEDICATION

This research is dedicated to my mother, Sylvia Moyo and father, Kenneth Zhuwao, who gave me strength to further my studies during the time when I was supposed to support my family.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

<b>HEI</b>	: Higher Educational Institution
<b>SPSS</b>	: Statistical Package for Social Science
<b>AD</b>	: Age diversity
<b>GD</b>	: Gender diversity
<b>ETD</b>	: Ethnic diversity
<b>ED</b>	: Educational diversity
<b>EP</b>	: Employee performance
<b>AA</b>	: Affirmative Action
<b>EEA</b>	: Employment Equity Act 95 of 1998
<b>BCEA</b>	: Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997
<b>BBBEEA</b>	: Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act 53 of 2003 (BBBEEA)
<b>LRA</b>	: Labour Relations Act 55 of 1995
<b>DHE</b>	: Department for Higher Education
<b>CHE</b>	: Council for Higher education
<b>HESA</b>	: Higher Education of South Africa

## ABSTRACT

The objective of this study was to investigate the effects of workforce diversity on employee performance in a selected Higher Educational Institution in South Africa. Various legislative measures were introduced by the government in order to shape the workforce in organisations. However, these legislative measures expressly focus on compelling organisations to embrace diversity and thus not considering the business need of it and how it influences employee behavioral outcomes such as employee performance. It is upon this backdrop that this study investigated the effects of workforce diversity on employee performance in an HEI in South Africa. A cross-sectional research design was used. A random sample ( $n = 267$ ) was chosen by dividing employees into homogeneous strata of academic and non-academic employees. A Workforce Diversity Questionnaire and Employee Work Performance Questionnaire were administered. The results showed a positive and significant relationship between independent variables (gender diversity, ethnic diversity and educational diversity) and the dependent variable (employee performance). The relationship between age diversity and employee performance was not significant. HEIs should introduce diversity management programs to improve the effectiveness of workforce diversity towards employee performance. Because a cross-sectional research design was employed, conclusions about causality could not be made.

### Key terms:

Workforce diversity, age diversity, gender diversity, ethnicity diversity, educational diversity, workforce diversity management, higher educational institution, workforce diversity initiatives.

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

### 1.1 Introduction

This study investigates the effects of workforce diversity on employee performance in a higher educational institution (HEI) in South Africa. This chapter presents the background of the study, research problem, research objectives, hypotheses, the significance of the study, scope of the study, definition of terms and finally, the chapter outline.

### 1.2 Background of the study

The South African higher education sector has been through a period of unprecedented political, economic and social transformation for the past two decades (CHE, 2015). According to van Pletzen (2015), the process of political democracy that began in the early 1990s led to more transformation than was experienced during the period of white supremacy. In this period, the South African higher education system was extremely shaped through social and political discrimination and inequalities of race, gender, institutional and spatial nature (DHE, 2015). Given this, the domain of the academic workforce was characterised by a racialisation and gendering, which left higher educational institutions (HEIs), as homogeneous entities, dominated by a white and male academic and non-academic workforce (Breetzke & Hedding, 2016).

Post 1994; the new-democratically elected government committed itself to institutionalise a new social order within the higher education sector (HESA, 2014). Henceforth, the government adopted the Higher Education Act 101 of 1997 which declared the need for HEIs to respond better to human resource, redress previous discriminatory practices and ensure representation and equal opportunities for all (CHE, 2015). Furthermore, as instructed by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996, to encourage transformation in every organisation, the government passed various forms of workforce diversity initiatives. Examples of these initiatives include policies and legislations such as the Affirmative action, Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act 4 of 2000, Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998, Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 and Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997, (Carelse, 2013; Veldsman, 2013). These workforce diversity initiatives altogether were aimed at establishing equal employment opportunities and fairness in the workplace.

Owing to the Constitution, policies and legislative measures, HEIs were compelled to transform their demographic structure and incorporate a more balanced diverse workforce (van Walt & du Plessis, 2010). Hence, this saw a reasonable improvement in the workforce from a largely homogenous (white and male) workforce to a progressively multiethnic and diverse workforce (Lumadi, 2011). This is evidenced by Higher Education Management Information System (HEMIS) which indicated that the overall staffing profile in HEIs constitutes Black staff members who represent 45% of the total staff, Whites representing 38%, women representing 53% and men representing 48% of the total staff (DHE, 2015). This is also supported by the 2012/13 Employment Equity report which reported a reasonable improvement in workforce diversity with regards to the transformation for the highly-qualified jobs such as management jobs and academic jobs (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2014).

However, while these legislative measures have promoted the adoption of workforce diversity in HEIs and other public institutions, they expressly focus on tackling matters of past prejudices and discriminations in the workplace (van Walt & du Plessis, 2010). Yet, they do not focus on the business need of diversity and how it influences employee behavioral outcomes such as employee performance (van Walt & du Plessis, 2010). Given this, the issue of incorporating diversity in both private and public organisations has been perceived as a matter of legal compliance rather than as a business need (Carelse, 2013). Munjuri (2012) argued that the identification of the effects of workforce diversity may help organisations to identify and anticipate the barriers and benefits of having a heterogeneous workforce, thus satisfying the business need of diversity. Therefore, this raises the necessity to research on this phenomenon so that HEIs can manage and fully comprehend the role of workforce diversity towards organisations.

How workforce diversity is managed in organisations may positively or negatively influence the performance of employees (Saxena, 2014). If it is managed properly, it may result in improved decision making, higher creativity and improved productivity (Maingi, 2015). On the other hand, if it is left unmanaged, it may result in poor communication, low employee morale, increased conflicts, consequently leading to poor employee performance; a variable that has received great attention from both the academic and corporate world (Munjuri, 2012). Tinofirei (2011, p. 15) defined employee performance as the “successful completion of tasks by a selected individual

as a set and measured by a supervisor or organization to pre-defined acceptable standards while efficiently and effectively utilising available resources within a changing environment”.

The relationship between workforce diversity and employee performance has been widely discussed in various studies (Magoshi & Chang, 2010; Ohimare, 2012; Odhiambo, 2014; Selvaraj, 2015; Shifnas & Sutha, 2016). A study conducted by Ohimare (2012) in Nigerian firms revealed that workforce diversity was positively related to employee performance. The study concluded that the effects of workforce diversity are determined by the business strategies a firm pursues and how the senior management and employees respond and manage diversity. In addition, a study conducted by Magoshi and Chang (2010) in Kenyan secondary schools found workforce diversity to be a significant factor in explaining a variation in employee performance. Based on these findings, Magoshi and Chang (2010) recommended organisations to view workforce diversity as an important asset that adds value over their competitors.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Odhiambo (2014) in an insurance industry in Kenya found workforce diversity to be significantly related to employee performance. Odhiambo (2014) concluded that the increasing adoption of workforce diversity is not a custom but a sign of its unavoidable implications of global economic, demographic changes and performance of employees. Also, a similar study conducted by Shifnas and Sutha (2016) revealed that workforce diversity was a significant factor in explaining a variation in employee performance in the construction sector in Sri Lanka. Contrary to the above studies, Selvaraj (2015) findings in Singapore organisations revealed workforce diversity as an insignificant factor in explaining any variation in employee performance. The author further recommended managers to implement effective human resource management programs in order to enhance the effectiveness of workforce diversity.

Although there are several studies that were done on the relationship between workforce diversity and employee performance, most of these studies have been carried outside of South Africa (Magoshi & Chang, 2010; Odhiambo, 2014; Selvaraj, 2015; Shifnas & Sutha, 2016). Furthermore, these studies focused more on firms and secondary schools thus not in HEIs. Therefore, this study seeks to fill these gaps by investigating the effects of workforce diversity on employee performance in a higher educational institution in South Africa. The study will examine workforce diversity through using demographic attributes namely age, gender, ethnicity



and education. Each of these attributes has its own positive effect towards employee performance.

### **1.3 Research problem**

Workforce diversity has become a significant aspect in the modern-day world of work. In this study, an examination of this construct is important due to the social and political changes that have taken place in the South African higher education sector. As stated in the background, these changes were driven by various legislative measures which led to an improvement in workforce diversity (DHE, 2015). However, these legislative measures precisely focus on tackling matters of past injustices and discrimination in organisations rather than on the business need of diversity and how it influences employee behavioral outcomes such as employee performance. Given this, organisations have not been focusing much on the effects workforce diversity but on the legal side of it (van Walt & du Plessis, 2010). Besides the above, most studies on workforce diversity were conducted outside of South Africa and most of them were focused on firms and secondary schools (Magoshi & Chang, 2010; Odhiambo, 2014; Selvaraj, 2015; Shifnas & Sutha, 2016). Furthermore, workforce diversity has not received enough attention in examining the variables that may influence employee performance (Beziibwe, 2015). Most studies about employee performance primarily focused on aspects such as training and financial resources as perceived variables that may influence employee performance (Fiskerstrand & Seiler, 2004; Gao, 2016; Sila, 2014).

Given the above, this study is aimed at investigating the effects of workforce diversity on employee performance in a selected higher educational institution in South Africa by considering the effects of age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity and educational diversity on employee performance.

The problem statement above triggered the following research objectives:

### **1.4 Research objectives**

This section presents the general objective and specific objectives of the study. The study objectives are presented as follows:

#### 1.4.1 General objective

The general objective of this study is to investigate the effects of workforce diversity on employee performance at a higher educational institution in South Africa.

#### 1.4.2 Specific objective

The specific objectives of this study are

- To determine whether there is a relationship between age diversity and employee performance.
- To determine whether there is a relationship between gender diversity and employee performance.
- To determine whether there is a relationship between ethnic diversity and employee performance.
- To determine whether there is a relationship between educational diversity and employee performance
- To determine which independent variable between age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity and educational diversity has more influence on employee performance.

### 1.5 Research hypotheses

In this study, age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity and educational diversity are the independent variables while employee performance is the dependent variable. Therefore, the study hypothesises that there is a relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable. The hypotheses are stated below.

H1: There is a relationship between age diversity and employee performance

H2: There is a relationship between gender diversity and employee performance.

H3: There is a relationship between ethnic diversity and employee performance.

H4: There is a relationship between educational diversity and employee performance.

H5: The four variables (age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity, and educational diversity) are significant in explaining the variance in employee performance.

## **1.6 Significance of the study**

This study provides an understanding of the concept of workforce diversity and its influence on employee performance, thus enabling employees to accept, value and comprehend the perceptions of one another. It also shows the importance of having a diverse workforce to enable multiple ideas in solving problems at work and ultimately improving employee performance.

The study also provides more information to the body of knowledge by encouraging more research in the field of workforce diversity and employee performance. Furthermore, it creates awareness in higher educational institutions on the benefits of having a proper shape of workforce diversity, thus steering up an employee and organisational performance. Above all, this study helps policy and legislative makers to view workforce diversity as an important aspect in steering up business growth rather than as a legal need.

## **1.7 Scope of the study**

This study was focused on academic and non-academic employees at the University of Venda in South Africa. The University of Venda is situated in Thohoyandou Town, Limpopo Province in South Africa. It is made up of one campus, constituting of 800 academic and non-academic employees, mostly from different cultural backgrounds and nationalities.

## **1.8 Definition of important concepts**

### **1.8.1 Diversity**

Diversity is defined as the “acknowledgement, understanding, accepting, valuing and celebrating differences amongst people with respect to age, class, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, race, sexual orientation, spiritual practice and public assistance status” (Wambui, Wangombe, Muthura, Kamau & Jackson, 2013, p. 2).

### **1.8.2 Workforce diversity**

Workforce diversity means that “organisations are becoming a more heterogeneous mix of people in terms gender, age, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation. A diverse workforce, for instance includes women, Africans, Indians, Coloureds, to mention a few. “(Carelse, 2013, p. 4).

### 1.8.3 Employee Performance

According to Tinofirei (2011, p. 15), employee performance is defined as the “successful completion of tasks by a selected individual, as a set and measured by a supervisor or organisation, to pre-defined acceptable standards, while efficiently and effectively utilising available resources within a changing environment”.

### 1.8.4 Diversity Management

Diversity management means “the creation of an inter- and intra-national environment within which these divergent perspectives, approaches and sensitivities are incorporated and developed to manage diversity in such a way that the full potential (productivity and personal aspirations) of individuals and institutions may be realised optimally” (Patrick & Kumar, 2012, p. 3).

### 1.8.5 Employment Equity Act (EEA)

Employment Equity Act is an act aimed at “promoting equal opportunities and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination in the workplace” (Coetzee, 2015, p. 2).

### 1.8.6 Affirmative Action (AA)

According to Coetzee (2016, p. 4), affirmative refers to the “specific steps taken to promote equal opportunity for the designated groups, thereby transforming the present composition of employees so that they will become more representative of the designated groups”.

## 1.9 Chapter layout

The present study is comprised of five chapters.

### 1.9.1 Chapter 1: Introduction to the study

This chapter highlights the introduction of the study, indicating the variables that are of significance to the study. It also gives a summary of the foundation of the study, showing the key objectives to be achieved after the study. The hypothesis of the study is presented and key aspects defined.

### 1.9.2 Chapter 2: Literature review

An overview of literature is given in this chapter, highlighting the constructs which are being investigated.

### 1.9.3 Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter provides the methods that were used for collecting data. It also highlights the research design and the statistical techniques to be used for testing the hypotheses.

### 1.9.4 Chapter 4: Analysis, presentation and Interpretation of results

This chapter outlines the statistical results of the study. It also provides data presentation and a summary of important notes.

### 1.9.5 Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, Limitations and Recommendations

This chapter provides a discussion of the outcomes of the study, relating to the present literature. Furthermore, a conclusion and future recommendations to the organisation and the researcher are made.

## 1.10 Chapter summary

This chapter discussed the background of the study, highlighting the role played by workforce diversity initiatives in improving diversity in HEIs. Furthermore, the variable workforce diversity was discussed in relation to whether it affects employee performance through empirical studies. This was followed by a presentation of the research problem, research objectives, hypotheses, significance of the study, the scope of the study, the definition of terms and lastly, the plan of the study. To have a better understanding of the concept workforce diversity and its effect on employee performance in the higher education sector, a review of literature and testing of a conceptual framework will be carried out in the next chapters of the study.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the definition of workforce diversity, the origin of workforce diversity, workforce diversity management and workforce diversity initiatives in South Africa. Furthermore, it provides a theoretical framework regarding workforce diversity and as well, a conceptual framework which critically shows the relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable under investigation. The independent variables to be discussed include age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity and educational diversity while employee performance will be discussed as the dependent variable. Furthermore, an empirical review of related literature will be discussed which shows various previous studies about workforce diversity and its effect on employee performance.

### 2.2 Workforce diversity

Workforce diversity is a multi-dimensional concept that will continue to evolve globally as organisations shift towards hiring people from different cultural backgrounds (Saxena, 2014). It is argued that this has led to a perception that workforce diversity became an inevitable feature of occupational life in the corporate world (Rizwan, Khan, Nadeem & Abbas, 2016). Various authors (D'Netto, 2014; Elsaid, 2012) argue that workforce diversity is a significant asset that elevates organisations to offer quality products and services, or to gain value against their competitors. As such, D' Netto (2014) recommend organisations to have a bounderyless view towards workforce diversity and comprehend it as an inevitable feature of their daily business operations.

#### 2.2.1 Definition of workforce diversity

Various studies have defined workforce diversity from a very narrow perspective (Ehimare & Ogaga-Oghene, 2011; Lee & Gilbert, 2014; Veldsman, 2013), while some from a broader perspective (Barak, 2016; Carelse, 2013; Foma, 2014;). Given this, advocates of a narrow definition (Ehimare & Ogaga-Oghene, 2011; Lee & Gilbert, 2014; Veldsman, 2013), defined workforce diversity as the degree of heterogeneity among employees that is precisely limited to specific cultural attributes such as age, gender and ethnicity. Lee and Gilbert (2014) further explained that workforce diversity based on age, gender and ethnicity cannot be viewed in a

similar way as workforce diversity that is based on organisational roles and individual aptitudes. In addition, Veldsman (2013) contented that because cultural workforce diversity attributes interact with other attributes of diversity, a narrow definition would be lacking as it will fail to identify those interactions.

Contrary to the above, advocates of a broader definition (Barak, 2016; Carelse, 2013; Foma, 2014) defined workforce diversity as acknowledging, understanding, accepting, valuing and celebrating differences amongst people with respect to a whole continuum of differences including age, class, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, race, economic status, sexual orientation, spiritual practice and public assistance status. Based on this definition, Barak (2016) further stated that employee differences may as well extend to the values, organisational roles, occupation and behavioural styles.

Given the above, this study adopted a narrow definition to use the cultural dimensions namely age, gender, ethnicity and educational background in examining the effects of workforce diversity on employee performance at the University of Venda.

### 2.2.2 Origin of workforce diversity

Workforce diversity was practically a non-existing concept in the academic dialogue for many decades (Duppler & Garbers, 2012). Its origin is complex and related to the social, economic and political forces that have and continue to occur across the world. For instance, in developed areas such as the United States of America (Phillips, 2012). Europe (Stuber, 2007) and other parts of Asia (Kaise & Prange, 2004). Workforce diversity has however originated from an emphasis on a legal protection of human attributes such as age, gender and ethnicity and other attributes to a more comprehensive concept which comprise a whole range of human differences such as physical status, religion, sexual orientation and proficiency (Kruse & Tuck, 2011; Srivalli & Rajesh, 2013).

In harmony with Srivalli and Rajesh (2013), Beziibwe (2015) stated that the origin of workforce diversity was influenced by the establishment of workforce diversity initiatives in the early days of the industrial revolution. During this period, many companies assumed that integrating new employees into the organisation needed them to go through a socialisation process so that they can be familiar to the existing organisational culture (Shin, Kim, Lee & Bian 2012). However, because of need by companies to attract and retain a more skilled workforce which can stimulate organisational growth, they realised that the corporate culture itself must adapt to the

diverse workforce itself (Shin *et al.*, 2012). This philosophy was somehow motivated by the introduction of workforce diversity initiatives although the initiatives themselves did not mention any business need for diversity (Duppler & Garbers, 2012).

The first workforce diversity initiative known as the Affirmative action became viable in 1961 when the “Executive Order 10925” was implemented in the United States of America (Ting-Toomey, 2012). This Executive Order emphasised the need to provide equal opportunities and fair treatment to employees in the military (Phillips, 2012; Truman, 1948). Through its feasibility, by the end of 1952, more than 90% black American soldiers were working in the joined divisions of the military (Kruse & Tuck, 2011; Phillips, 2012). The Executive Order 9981 also brought about social and political changes thus resulting in the establishment of human rights legislation which led to the prohibition of discrimination based on age, gender, race and religion in organisations (Richard, Kirby & Chadwick, 2013).

Given the adoption of the first workforce diversity initiative in the United States of America, this process swiftly took hold in the newly developing democratic states such as South Africa (Carelse, 2013) and Kenya (Odhiambo, 2014). The historical case of black marginalisation in Africa made these countries to adopt the Affirmative action and other legislative measures in order to tackle discriminations and ensure an equitable sharing of the economy amongst the citizens (Steyn, 2013). Given the Affirmative Action, the workforce continues to be more socially diverse in these countries (Jamieson & O’mara, 2012).

Besides the role played by workforce diversity initiatives in cultivating diversity in organisations in both developed and developing countries, the modern workforce has become more diverse due to demographic factors such as immigration and globalisation (Dike, 2013; Freeman, 2006). To support the above, Arggawal (2014) highlighted that workforce diversity in industrialised countries such as the USA has risen from 17.4% in the year 2005 to 19% in 2015 and is likely to rise to about 24% in the next 30 years.

In adapting with this cumulative growth of diversity inherent in the workforce, diversity management has become an issue of strategic importance, and its adoption has gradually increased (Algahtani, 2013; Kaiser & Prange, 2004). However, Luring (2013) argue that several companies have reported challenges with their diversity management programs. The possible explanation was given by Erasmus (2007) and Weiliang (2011) is that diversity management and workforce diversity is a forced combination which cultivates instability and



uncertainty among employees, particularly if both the management and employees are not well versed with diversity management principles and objectives.

Given the above, workforce diversity is therefore not an isolated social change but it is a phenomenon that resulted from increasing economic, political and legal changes for organizations to shape their workforce demographic structure and remain competitive players in the new global economy

## **2.3 Workforce diversity initiatives in South Africa**

Post 1994, South Africa began its transformational initiative in becoming a constitutional democracy, in which recognising diversity became a legal imperative, particularly in public organisations (Godefrey, 2014). This followed the lack of representation of the diverse South African population in the workplace (Godefrey, 2014). According to the bleu Index homogeneity, South Africa is on the top lists of the most diversified nations across the world, with a diversity index that is above 0.85 (Moultrie & Dorrington, 2014). To address the lack of representation in the workforce, the South African government adopted “workforce diversity initiatives”. These initiatives include policies and legislations namely, the Labour Relation Act No. 66 of 1995, Basic Conditions of Employment Act No 75 of 1997, Employment Equity Act, No. 55 of 1998 and the Affirmative Action measures. This workforce diversity initiatives are explained in detail below;

### **2.3.1 Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995**

According to Kruger and Tshoose (2013), the Labour Relations Act 66 of 1995 was one of the primary Acts that was adopted to ensure that diversity becomes a reality in the South African workforce. According to the authors, this Act came as a piece of legislation aimed at accommodating every employee and regulating many significant aspects that relate to employees’ and employer’s relationship. Cohen (2014) supports this and further explains that the LRA primarily focuses on securing employment for all employees through protecting them against unfair discriminations. This is shown in Section 187 of the LRA which prohibits dismissing an employee based on unfair discrimination.

### **2.3.2 Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997 (BCEA)**

Based on the common law, the employer and employee have the right to agree to any terms and conditions which they consider appropriate in establishing an employment relationship

(Swanepoel, Erasmus & Schenk, 2014). However, since one party holds more power than the other, resulting in an unreceptive relationship, the legislation came to play and restricted the liberty to engage in any employment contract (Swanepoel *et al.*, 2014). Taking apartheid as an example, the whites were the only people that were legally protected against these power disparities. Hence, the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 75 of 1997 was promulgated, citing the minimum conditions thus to avoid unfair labour practises (Moifo, 2012). In a nutshell, the BCEA promotes the establishment of a just society through enforcing the right to fair labour practises (Finnemore & Joubert, 2016). This a fundamental right in terms of section 23 (1) of the Constitution of South Africa of 1996).

### 2.3.3 Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998

The Employment Equity Act strives to create a diverse workforce that is representative of the population (Du Toit & Potgieter, 2014). It was enacted in 1998 with an aim of creating a fair and equal work environment by means of eliminating unfair discriminatory practises particularly towards designated (Jongens, 2006; Pretorius, Klinck & Ngwenya, 2012). This is indicted in Section 2 of the Act which stipulates that (i) “everyone must be given equal employment opportunity to prove him/herself and be treated fairly and (ii) to redress the inequalities of the disadvantaged individuals in organisations thus giving them the right to apply for every level in the organisation” (Mula, 2014). To achieve these goals, the South African government mandated every organisation to comply with the Act, or if they do not, they will face financial consequences (Pretorius *et al.*, 2012).

### 2.3.4 Affirmative Action (AA)

The principle of equality in the society is violated through discrimination, hence the need for measures that support the creation of equal and fair treatment such as the Affirmative Action (Ncayiyana, 2012). According to Carelse (2013), the Affirmative Action refers to policies and practices that seek to redress social, economic or educational inequalities that arise from unfair discrimination towards a specific group of people. It was adopted by the South African government with an aim of realising three objectives. These objectives include (i) “to ensure the eradication of the present social and economic discrimination against blacks and women, (ii) to fix the remaining effect of the past discrimination against the designated groups and (iii) to avert the advancement of discrimination against these groups” (Pretorius *et al.*, 2012).

### 2.3.5 Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act 53 of 2003 (BBBEEA)

In pursuing the objectives of the Affirmative Action and the Employment Equity Act of 1998, the Department of Trade industry introduced the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act 53 of 2003 introduced with an objective of empowering South African who were fervently secluded in participating in the economy (Kruger & Tshoose, 2016). This is evidenced in the definition in section one of the Act which defines it as the “economic empowerment of black people (Cohen, 2014). This definition describes blacks as women, youth, the disabled, workers, rural based individuals. To achieve its goal; various social and economic strategies were put in place to empower these people.

According to Swanepoel *et al.* (2008, p. 3), the BBBEEA gives a detailed explanation of the economic empowerment of the Black South Africans but not restricting it to, “equal representation of black employees at different levels within organisational structures and levels of the workforce, higher number of blacks should manage, control or be self-employed, human resources and skills development, facilitating ownership and management of enterprises and productive assets by workers, cooperatives, communities and other collective enterprises, and investment in organisations that are owned or managed by previously disadvantage groups”. The BBBEEA also further specify the need for an organisation to continuously empower more and more black people thus including coloureds and Asians who were also previously marginalized (Mula, 2014).

Given the above-mentioned workforce diversity initiatives, none of them mentions any business need for diversity or any possible effects of diversity towards organisational success if managed or left unmanaged. Therefore, workforce diversity management was devised in order to channel the outcomes of workforce diversity initiatives to become business oriented.

## 2.4 Workforce diversity management

Workforce diversity management has become a fundamental aspect used by organisations to channel or link the fruits of workforce diversity initiatives towards business goals (Patrick & Kumar, 2012). In support of the above, Sharma (2016) described workforce diversity management as holistic business oriented concept that signifies a big shift from traditional approach of complying with equal opportunity legislations, policies and practices to recognising

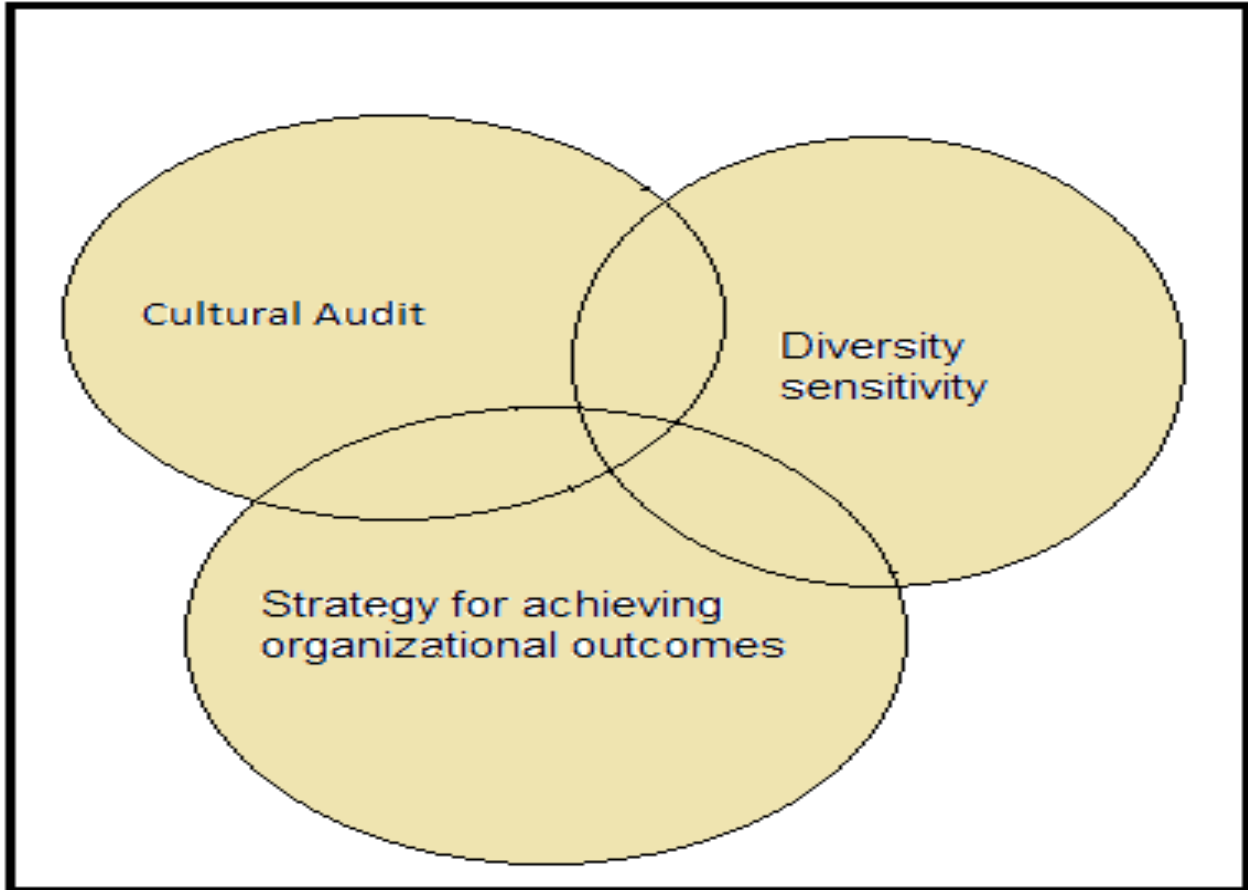
and embracing individual differences as important attributes towards organizational success (Hur, & Strickland, 2015; Sharma, 2016).

There are various definitions of diversity management. For example, Cummings and Worley (2014, p. 5) defined workforce diversity management as “not regulating diversity but enabling an environment that empowers every employee to perform at their maximum abilities without being secluded or unfairly treated”. In another definition by Dike (2013, p. 2), workforce diversity management is a “planned systematic managerial process for developing an environment in which all employees, with their similarities and differences can contribute to the strategic and competitive advantage of the organisation”. When deducing from these definitions, they reveal that diversity management is a business centered concept that seeks to capitalise on the benefits of a heterogeneous team of employees and increase the economic profits of organisations through providing an enabling environment for performing.

Roberge, Lewicki, Hietapelto and Abdyldeaeva (2011) believes that managing a diverse workforce is complex and thus it needs organisations’ total attention in terms of implementing proper and clear practices that at present and in future will enhance the performance of the organisation. This is supported by Mahadevan, Primecz and Romani (2014) who further explained that dysfunctional workforce diversity management rise due to lack of communication between the management and employees on how workforce diversity benefits the organisation, its linkage, for example with Affirmative action goals and how achieving these goals basically become beneficial towards employees and organisation.

#### 2.4.1 Human resource approaches of workforce diversity management

Due to the need to implement effective workforce diversity management practises, Kossek and Lobel (1996) offered three Human Resource (HR) approaches that provides a framework for effective workforce diversity management. These HR approaches include, Diversity sensitivity, Cultural audit and a Strategy for achieving organisational outcomes and are shown in Figure 2.1 below.



**Figure 2.1:** Human resource approaches of workforce diversity management adopted from Kossek and Lobel (1996).

#### *2.4.1.1 Diversity sensitivity*

According to Kossek and Lobel (1996), this approach acknowledges the possible challenges presented by bringing people from different backgrounds together in an organisation. To overcome these challenges, Peretz, Levi and Fried (2015) in interpreting this approach outlined that this approach makes use of diversity training and education that seeks to sensitise employees to stereotypes, biases and discrimination whilst also encouraging smooth interaction and communication. The authors stated that the basic principle in this approach is that the more employees are sensitised to diversity, the more they will acknowledge their differences and thus improves their performance. They further stated that diversity training and education must be related to the overall goals of the organisation. However, they recommended organisations in their diversity management training not to emphasise more on the differences

of employees because this can backfire by strengthening stereotypes and highlighting employee differences.

#### *2.4.1.2 Cultural audit*

This approach is aimed at detecting barriers that prevent the growth and advancement of employees from the different cultural background (Alcázar, Miguel, Fernández & Sánchez, 2013; Jonsen, Maznevski & Schneider, 2011). Furthermore, it seeks to identify obstacles that prevent the cooperation of employees in the organisation (Rawat & Basergekar, 2016). Normally, this audit is carried out by external organisations who conduct research and identify challenges faced by employees whose cultural backgrounds are different from the dominant cultural group (Rawat & Basergekar, 2016). Although this approach is tailor-made to specific corporate cultures, the need for transformation is basically based on the idea that the basis of the problem is in the dominant cultural group and that transformation should primarily begin within that group (Pattnaik & Tripathy, 2014). An example of a cultural audit is the Ford Motor company employee satisfaction survey (Semmono, 2012). This survey is conducted every year and amongst its 12 assessments, the satisfaction of employees with diversity is also assessed. The findings are then used to measure the company's effort in embracing workforce diversity (Semmono, 2012)

#### *2.4.1.3 Strategy for achieving organizational outcomes.*

The strategy for achieving organisational outcomes approach is a comprehensive structure aimed at achieving organisational goals through managing diversity (Kundu & Mor, 2017). Given the above, this approach emphasises the need for organisations to relate diversity management objectives with the employee and organisational goals in order to become successful in this global market (Seuss, 2012). The goals of organisations are mainly influenced by external environmental forces such as political, economic, legal and social changes (Akanni, Oke & Akpomiemie, 2015). Therefore, assessing these forces can assist the organisation from determining the substantial gains that it expects from managing its diverse workforce and how these gains are related to the goals of the organisation (Akanni *et al.*, 2015). For instance, creativity and innovation are viewed as a business strategy for organisations, hence it is wise enough for organisations to major in increasing its diverse workforce because it is found to be more creative and highly responsive in this modern global market (Mayer, Warr & Zhao, 2016).

## 2.4.2 Benefits of workforce diversity management in organisations

As stated in a definition by Dike (2013), workforce diversity management intends to capitalise on the similarities and differences of employees so as to contribute to the strategic goals of the organisation. As such, there are several resultant outcomes of workforce diversity management that lead to improved overall organisational performance. These outcomes are explained below.

### *2.4.2.1 Increased productivity*

Improving productivity has been one of the key problems faced by organisations. Because organisations have their own different structures and goals, several approaches can be employed to enhance productivity (Dobre, 2013; Shemla, Meyer, Greer & Jehn, 2014). Amongst the approaches include adopting workforce diversity and implementing effective diversity management practises to manage it (Barak, 2016). These practises include valuing individual differences, offering fair and equal compensation, providing equal training and development programs (Aswathappa, 2008; Barak, 2016). This enables employees to develop a sense of belonging regardless of their socio-cultural differences though maintaining their loyalty and commitment which assist the organisation to improve its productivity and profits (Kirton & Green, 2015).

### *2.4.2.2 Sharing of diverse ideas and team work.*

Team work has been identified by organisations as a means of attaining the expected task results and ensuring that goods and services are delivered properly (Kennedy & Nilson, 2008). This principle is based on that a single employee cannot be able to carry out numerous task at the same pace of which a team could (Fernandez & Polzer, 2015). Therefore, every team member comes with unique ideas and providing a different viewpoint towards problem solving to effectively reach the best solution in a short period (Podsiadlowski, Gröschke, Kogler, Springer & Van Der Zee, 2013).

### *2.4.2.3 Learning and development*

The co-existence of individual differences in an organisation creates a platform for employee self-development (D'Netto, Shen, Chelliah & Monga, 2014). When employees interact with other employees from different cultures and with different perspectives, it may enable each employee to intellectually socialize and have a view of their workplace in a global perspective

and thus their own environment (D'Netto *et al.*, 2014). The more an employee spend time with culturally diverse co-workers, the more the employee destroy the subconscious obstacles of ethnocentrism, hence inspiring employees to be highly experienced societal members (Dike, 2013).

#### *2.4.2.4 Effective communication*

Workforce diversity can enormously reinforce an organisation's relationship with diverse customers through activating a smooth communication process (Trittin & Schoeneborn, 2015). The customer service section is amongst the most important sections where active communication process is required (Martin & Nakayama, 2015). In heterogeneous organisations, employees working in the customer service section can be matched up with diverse customers and can make the customers feel at home through their holistic understanding of cultural differences (Martin & Nakayama, 2015). For instance, in the USA, most organisation prefer hiring individuals who are multi-lingual to deal with a lot of native languages (Dike, 2013).

#### *2.4.2.5 Experience in diversity*

A team that is culturally diverse can bring some degree of different perception and experience when carrying out team tasks (Shemla *et al.*, 2014). Bringing out the unique skills, values, proficiency, work experience and knowledge of a culturally diverse group of employees can extensively benefit the organisation through reinforcing the receptiveness and productivity of teams to adjust to the ever-changing environment (Shemla *et al.*, 2014). Each culture comes along with its own strength and weaknesses, hence in addition to their eccentricity, each diverse employee holds a different strength and weakness that comes from their culture (Ferrara, 2016). When each employee's distinct attribute is managed effectively, it can control the strength and overshadow its weaknesses to extremely influence the workforce (Ferrara, 2016).

## **2.5 Employee performance**

Performance has been perceived as a variable that is dependent on variables such as training, knowledge, skills and motivation other than workforce diversity (Odhiambo, 2014). This supports Beziibwe (2015) who argued that during the industrial revolution, many organisations viewed performance as a variable that was principally concerned with "inputs" aspects, particularly financial resources. However, in this modern-day, organisations have realised the need to



embrace diversity due to a holistic business knowledge that diverse work teams are creative, innovative and more responsive to the global market economy (Mollel, Mulongo & Maket, 2015).

There are various definitions of employee performance highlighted in different studies. For example, a study by Odhiambo (2014) on human capital development, defined performance as the effective discharge of duty for which one is hired to do. The author further explained that, regardless of numerous duties one has performed, he/she can be regarded to have performed well if the performance outcomes are related to the goals and objectives of the organisation. In another definition by Tinofirei (2011), employee performance is defined as the successful completion of tasks by a selected individual, as a set and measured by a supervisor or organisation, to pre-defined acceptable standards, while efficiently and effectively utilising available resources within a changing environment.

Performance may be equally beneficial to both the employees and the organisation itself (Osabiya, 2015). Highly performing employees are more productive and this may indirectly reduce their intention to quit their jobs (Hassan, 2013). This supports Vroom (1964)'s Expectancy Theory which described a high-performance appraisal as a signal that alerts employees of earning recognition and receiving benefits such as salary increase and promotion. In turn these benefits may influence one to stay in the organisation (Rubaii-Barrett & Beck, 1993). On the organisation itself, Osabiya (2015) argue that increased employee performance leads to positive business outcomes such as increased market share and revenue growth. Hence, above all, employee performance acts as a huge determinant for individual, team and organisational growth.

### 2.5.1 Performance as a multi-dimensional concept

According to Hedfi-Khayati and Zouaoui (2013), performance is a multi-dimensional concept. It is manifold in the sense that it can be measured in terms of task performance and contextual performance (Hedfi-Khayati & Zouaou, 2013).

#### 2.5.1.1 Task performance

Borman and Motowidlo (1993, p. 2) defined task performance as an “employee’s proficiency with which he or she undertakes activities that contribute or adds value to the organisational technical core”. According to the author, an individual contribution in an organisation can be both direct and indirect, whereby direct contribution involves taking part in the production of

goods and indirect involves the supervisory or managerial process. Task performance on its own is multi-dimensional (Sonnetag & Frese, 2002; Koopmans, Bernaards, Hildebrandt, Schaufeli, de Vet Henrica, & van der Beek, 2011). It includes performance concepts such job specific task performance, non-job specific task proficiency, written and oral communication proficiency, supervision and lastly, management (Campbell, McHenry & Wise, 1990). In recent years, many scholars have been focusing more on specific components of task performance (Schechner, 2013; Hogan & Coote, 2014; Shields *et al.*, 2015). For instance, innovation and customer centered behaviour have progressively become significant components as organisations seek to provide excellent customer service (Sahay, 2013; Anderson, Potočnik & Zhou, 2014).

### *2.5.1.2 Contextual performance*

According to Lai (2013), contextual performance is concerned with aspects of an individual's performance which maintain and enhances an organisation's social network and the psychological climate that supports technical tasks. It is divided into two types namely stabilising contextual performance behaviours and proactive behaviours (Kumar, 2015). The stabilising contextual performance behaviour includes organisational citizenship behaviour (sportsmanship, courtesy and conscientiousness), while proactive behaviours consist of personal initiatives (Muindi & K'Obonyo, 2015). The stabilising performance behaviours are aimed at ensuring that the organisations run smoothly at their existing state while the proactive behaviours are aimed at transforming individual work procedures and organisational processes (Muindi & K'Obonyo, 2015).

## **2.6 Theoretical framework**

This study was guided by the social identity theory proposed by Trajfel and Turner (1979) as it considers attributes such as age, gender, ethnicity and education which is being investigated in this study. The social identity theory explains that employees have a tendency of classifying themselves based on groups in which they fit in. Such group maybe be based on age, gender, ethnicity and education, amongst others. According to the authors, these groups are the basis of egotism and self-confidence or agony and low self-confidence. In most instances, a group will develop high self-confidence through discriminating and prejudging members of other groups, what the Trajfel and Turner (1979) describe as in group and out group classification. These discriminatory practises and biased perceptions, for example on race may result into racism

which can further lead to constant political and economic battles like the case of whites and blacks in South Africa and Zimbabwe. This theory further explained that an employee work behaviour is defined by the inside principles of the group to which they belong. In consequence, this directly influences the performance of the employee.

This theory opens up the need for this study to investigate how the phenomenon of age diversity, gender diversity, ethnicity diversity and educational diversity contribute towards employee performance at the university of Venda through identifying their effects.

## 2.7 Conceptual framework

Based on the theoretical framework the researcher developed the conceptual framework below.

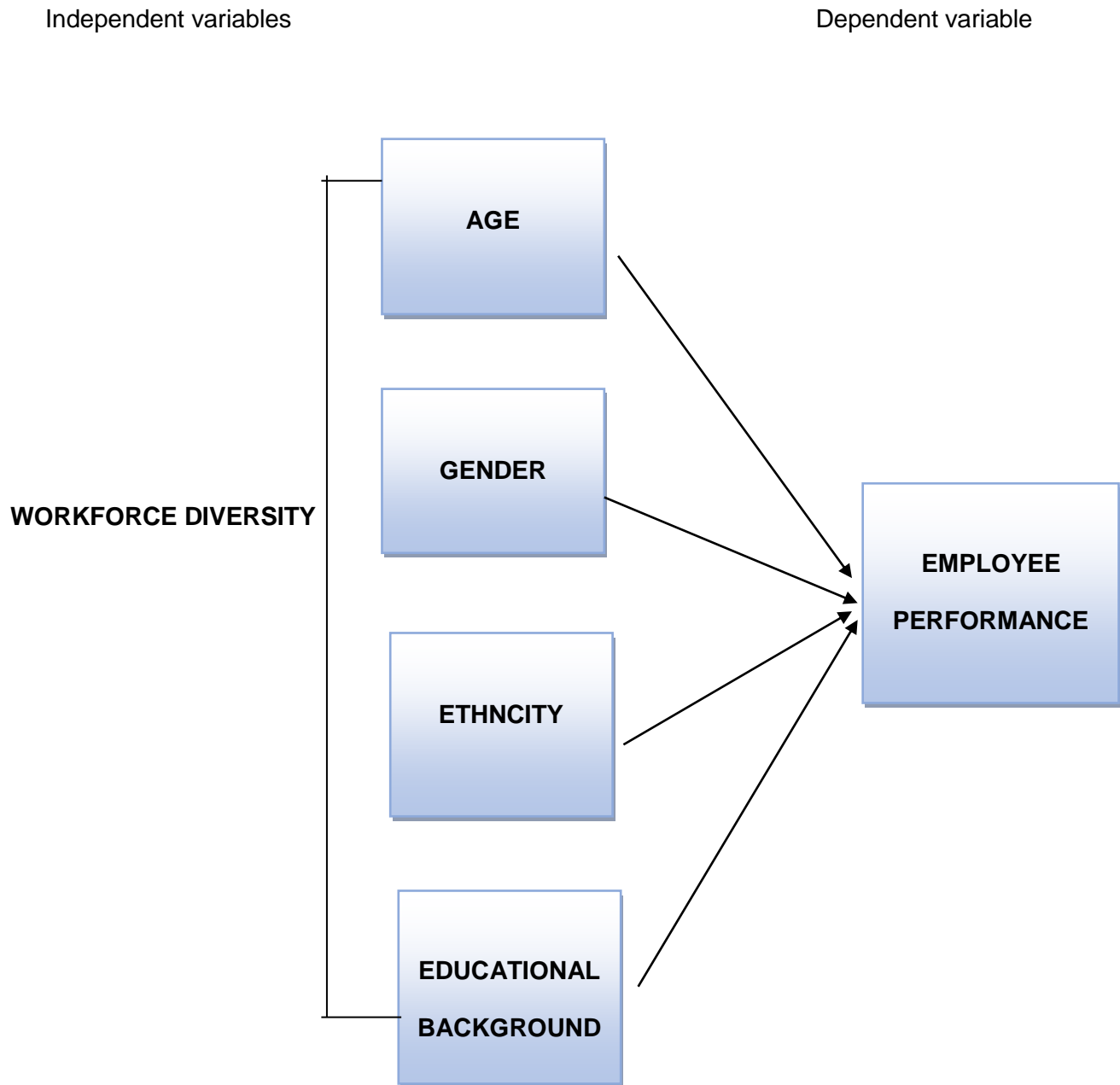


Figure 2.2: Proposed conceptual framework (self conceptualised by the researcher, 2017)

In Figure 2.2 is workforce diversity in terms of age, gender, ethnicity and education. A theoretical review of the link of each variable, age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity, educational background and performance was explained below.

### 2.7.1 Age diversity and Employee performance

According to Kunze (2013), age diversity is defined as the differences in age distribution among employees and is used to describe the composition of the organisation or the composition of workgroups within an organisation. Various researchers argue that age diversity can have both advantages and disadvantages for the organisations. For instance, Mwatumwa (2016) cited examples of age diversity disadvantages as communication problems and conflict. In support of the above, Opstal (2009) further explained that when managers fail to manage generational gaps amongst employees, conflicts are likely to evolve and thus reducing the productivity of employees. In addition, according to Backes-Gellner and Veen (2015) argument using a cost-benefit analysis of the firm, an increasing age heterogeneity may result in poor communication, less interaction and reduced employee performance due to differing values and preferences. Backes-Gellner and Veen (2015) further stated that organisations that focus much on routine tasks rather than creative tasks are likely not to experience any significant gains from age diversity that can counterbalance the increasing costs of a more age diversity.

In contrast to the above, Boehm and Kunze (2015) argued that an age heterogeneous workforce yields a host of multiple skills, intellectual styles, morals, and preferences that may result in increased productivity. This supports Park and Lin (2008) who outlined that the perceptions, cognitive models and interpretations of an age diverse workforce are different hence, if brought together may result in a larger pool of knowledge, a larger problem solving toolbox and increased employee performance.

### 2.7.2 Gender diversity and Employee performance

Gender is regarded as the description of masculinity or femininity of people (Connell & Messerschmitt, 2013). Mwatumwa (2016) argue that gender diversity is positively linked to employee and organisational performance. This concurs with Weiliang (2011) who used a resource based-view of a firm, stating that gender diversity at the management and organisational levels can provide a firm with better competitive advantage. However, Kirton and Greene (2015) argued that most organisations' do not realise these benefits as gender-based imbalances still persist in organisations. According to Nishii (2013), most cultures around the

world still adhere to the notion that the world is dominated by men. As such, the corporate world holds the same belief organizations and thus prefer to hire men compared to women because men are perceived to have better performance and ability to manage their jobs and women are stereotyped against in those characteristics (Nishii, 2011). Kirton and Green (2015), however stated that providing equal employment opportunities for women is important to improve employee performance in organisations.

### 2.7.3 Ethnic diversity and Employee performance

Ethnicity is referred to as a tribalistic grouping of people (Makokolo, 2005). It has a sense of a shared historic origin and shared destiny (Makokolo, 2005). Dastane and Eshegbe (2015) argued that an ethnic-diverse workforce may be beneficial and disadvantageous to organisations. Martin and Nakayama (2015) gave examples of ethnic diversity as increased creativity and innovation. They argued that an ethnic diverse team brings different views for team problem solving, new creative ideas thus leading to improved team performance. This supports Van Knippenberg, Van Ginkel and Homan (2013) who further argued that an ethnic diverse team brings creativity and innovation to the organisation and thus resulting to increased organisational performance. However, Arokiasamy, (2013) argued that if ethnic diversity is left unmanaged, poor communication and interpersonal conflicts may arise. Bleaney and Dimico, (2016) agree and further stated that ethnic based conflicts may negatively affect the reputation, performance and profits of the organisation. Given the above advantages and disadvantages. Given the above, Elsaid (2012) encouraged organisations to implement effective diversity management strategies so that they can capitalise on the benefits and minimise the negative effects of ethnic diversity.

### 2.7.4 Educational diversity and Employee performance

Most organisations implement educational diversity initiatives to motivate and encourage employees to work effectively with others so that organisational goals are achieved (Tracy & David, 2011). A person's educational background can be a significant indicator of their knowledge, skills, and capability (Tracy & David, 2011). Furthermore, the choice of a specific educational major may reflect one's cognitive strength and personality (Daniel, 2009). For instance, an individual educated in computer science can be expected to have a somewhat different cognitive disposition than an individual educated in marketing or advertising (Daniel,

2009). As in functional expertise, educational diversity seems to have a positive impact on team performance because it fosters a broader range of cognitive skills (Horwitz, 2005).

Lewin, Massini and Peeters (2011) contend that the absorptive capacity of the organization is likely to increase with variety in knowledge structures as reflected in diverse educational majors. Bamberger, Biron and Meshoulam (2014) observed that informational diversity, such as education and functional areas, were positively related to actual work group performances, although the relationship was mediated by task conflict. Hambrick, Humphrey and Gupta (2015), similarly reported that international experience and diverse educational background were positively related to firms' global, strategic postures among top management teams.

However, educational diversity can also negatively affect team performance and social integration in teams (Peretz, Levi & Fried, 2015). The author further stated that educational diversity can negatively affect decision-making consensus in top management teams thus resulting in poor performance. In addition, heterogeneous educational diversity tends to increase the level of discomfort and conflict that may lead to decreased social integration and performance in teams (Jindal, Bagade & Sharma, 2013).

## **2.8 Empirical review of literature**

In this section, the empirical review resultant from the studies carried out in six organisations which include, the Malaysian Airline (Eugene, Lee, Tan, Tee & Yang, 2011), Egypt pharmaceutical industry (Elsaid, 2012), banking sector in Kenya (Kyalo, 2013), Kenya education sector (Odhiambo, 2014); Kenyan Port Authority (Ngao & Mwangi, 2013); Singapore manufacturing industry (Selvaraj, 2015). Therefore, the effect of workforce diversity on employee performance was captured using findings of the studies in the organisations stated above.

### **2.8.1 Effects of age diversity on employee performance**

A study conducted by Selvaraj (2015) in Singapore manufacturing industry revealed that there was no relationship between age diversity and employee performance. Given these findings, Selvaraj (2015) concluded that the employees in Singapore neither viewed workforce diversity as benefit nor as burdensome to them as they gave neutral responses. Also, a study conducted by Kyalo (2013) in the banking sector in Kenya revealed that age diversity was not related to employee performance. Furthermore, in the Egyptian pharmaceutical industry, Elsaid (2012)

found that there was no relationship between age diversity and employee performance. Elsaid (2012) further stated that the possible explanation to this was the less noticeable numerical uniqueness between young and old employees as compared to the numerical uniqueness between male and female employees. In contrast to the above, a study conducted by Odhiambo (2014) in the Kenyan education sector reported that increasing age diversity was positively related to employee performance. Odhiambo (2014) further found out that schools that focus on innovative task benefit more from age diversity as compared to those which focus on routine tasks.

### 2.8.2 Effects of gender diversity and employee performance

At the Malaysian airline, Eugene *et al.* (2011) found out that there was a significant positive relationship between gender diversity and employee performance. Furthermore, Eugene *et al.* (2011) found out that a 10% increase of women in Airline industry for the past five decades resulted in an increase in productivity and GPD by 5% and 1%, respectively. Kyalo (2013) also reported similar results in a study conducted in the banking sector in Kenya, indicating that gender diversity was significantly related to employee performance. Kyalo (2012) further observed that the recruitment strategies in banking sector favour and promote women, hence most of the banks benefit from the varied skills and knowledge of diverse gender teams. Another conducted study by Ngao and Mwangi (2013) in the Kenyan Port Authority revealed similar findings that gender diversity had a huge positive effect on employee and organisational performance. In support of Kyalo (2012), Ngao and Mwangi (2013) stated that the main reason for this maybe that females and males think differently thus if their ideas are put together, they lead to better decision making, creativity and innovation and improved employee performance. In addition, Selvaraj (2015) found gender diversity positively related to employee performance. Based on these findings, gender diversity was found to be positively affecting employee performance even though it was not an area of concern in the organisation (Selvaraj, 2015).

### 2.8.3 Effects of ethnic diversity on employee performance

From the results of a study conducted by Odhiambo (2014) study in the education sector in Kenya, ethnic diversity was found to be significantly related to employee performance. Odhiambo (2014) further observed that in most homogeneous schools, ethnic diverse teams performed poorly as compared to homogeneous teams and ethnic diverse teams in heterogeneous schools performed better as compared to homogeneous teams. Ngao and



Mwangi (2013) also reported that increased ethnic diversity results in improved employee performance in the Kenyan Port Authority. Another study by Kyalo (2013) in the banking sector in Kenya reported the same findings that ethnic diversity was positively and significantly related to employee performance. Kyalo (2013) further observed that most banks in Kenya accommodate all members from different ethnic groups to participate in problem solving and decision making thus resulting in increased team cohesiveness and performance. Contrary to the above studies, a study conducted by Selvaraj (2015) in Singapore manufacturing industry revealed that there was no relationship between ethnic diversity and employee performance. The study further concluded that employees in Singapore manufacturing industry neither view ethnic diversity as a boon for them nor reject it as a white elephant, as they gave neutral responses (Selvaraj, 2015).

#### 2.8.4 Effects of educational diversity on employee performance

A study by Elsaid (2012) in the Egyptian pharmaceutical industry revealed that educational diversity was positively and significantly related to employee performance. Based on these findings, Elsaid (2012) further explained that more or balanced educational types may increase the likelihood of an organisation to benefit from increased creativity, innovation and improved employee performance. Furthermore, a study by Odhiambo (2014) in the Kenyan education sector revealed that educational diversity was significant in explaining a variation in employee performance. In harmony with Elsaid (2012), Odhiambo (2014) found that having more varied educational types in an organisation improves problem solving skills and decision making amongst employees, thus resulting in improved employee performance. In addition, Eugene *et al.* (2011) findings show that informational diversity, such as education and functional areas, were positively related to actual work group performances, although the relationship was mediated by task conflict. However, Eugene *et al.* (2011) established that there is bias in educational diversity measure as it evaluates diversity in employees who are extremely educated (Bachelor's degree and Post graduate degree) and putting employees who are less educated in one group (certificate and diploma).

## 2.9 Chapter summary

The literature highlighted the definition of workforce diversity, the background of workforce diversity and its origin. The literature also discussed various workforce diversity initiatives introduced in South Africa and their roles in increasing diversity in the workplace. The concept

of performance was discussed together with its types. Furthermore, a theoretical and conceptual framework was presented to explain the relationship between workforce diversity and employee performance.

## CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the methods that were utilised in this research. The basic contents of this chapter include; the research design, population, sample size, sampling technique, data collection methods, research instruments and data analysis.

### 3.2 Research design

A cross-sectional research design was used in this study. Relating to Creswell (2013) definition of a cross sectional research design, this design was used to obtain a representative sample by taking a cross section of the population of academic and non-academic employees within a higher education institution in South Africa. Moreover, since this study was aimed at investigating the relationship between the independent variables (age diversity, gender diversity, ethnical diversity, educational diversity) and the dependent variable (employee performance), a cross sectional research design was more suitable. This is supported by Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2013) who indicated that a cross-sectional research design is suitable for the descriptive functions that are related to correlational research.

#### 3.2.1 Research Method

A quantitative research method was used in this study due to the available relational research objectives of the independent variables (age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity, educational diversity) and the dependent variable (employee performance), which require numerical data for statistical treatment. This is according to Creswell (2013), who stated that one can use a quantitative research method in correlational research. Based on the above, this then enabled the researcher to accept or reject the research hypotheses. Furthermore, Yin (2013) states that a quantitative research method is suitable for generating statistics form a large-scale research though using data collection methods such as questionnaires. Therefore, this makes a quantitative research method suitable in this study due to the available large population size of academic and nonacademic in the institution.

### 3.3 Population of the study

Bell and Waters (2014) define a population as a total group of individuals or units that are of interest to the researcher and individuals at which the outcomes of the study can be generalised. In this study, the target total population consisted of 852 academic and non-academic employees from the University of Venda. This includes both male and females.

### 3.4 Sampling technique

For the purpose this study, probability sampling was used. Under this method, stratified random sampling technique was employed to divide employees into homogeneous strata of academic and non-academic employees. This was in consideration of the availability of a heterogeneous population of employees within the university. In these strata, simple random sampling technique was applied to ensure that every employee in each stratum has an equal chance of being selected, thus improving the representativeness of the sample.

### 3.5 Sample size

To determine a sample size that is more representative of the total population of (N=852) employees, the Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size calculating formula was adopted. This formula is shown below;

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where, N= total population,

n= sample size,

e= error term, which is 5% (i.e. at 95% confidence interval).

Given the above formula, the minimum recommended sample size for this study was;

$$\begin{aligned} & \frac{852}{1 + 852(0.05)^2} \\ & = 267 \end{aligned}$$

However, to reach this minimum recommended sample size, the researcher distributed 300 questionnaires to cater for the unreturned questionnaires.

### 3.6 Data collection

The researcher used questionnaires to gather primary data from the target population within the institution. 300 questionnaires were distributed. The questionnaires enabled the information obtained to be consistent and complete (Saunders, 2011). Furthermore, in consideration of the availability of a large population size in this study, it was practicable enough for the researcher to use questionnaires in order to reach a larger number of the population (Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2013). On the other hand, secondary data was obtained from the findings stated in books, published documents and literature related to the research. This information was essential to the researcher in presenting evidence, supporting ideas and statements through referencing various sources (Whittaker, 2012).

#### 3.6.1 Measuring instruments

To collect data from the chosen sample, the below mentioned measuring instruments plus a demographic questionnaire were used.

A *Workforce Diversity Questionnaire* (WDQ) adapted from Elsaid (2012) was used to measure the perceptions of employees on workforce diversity in a higher education institution. The 27-item questionnaire consists of four subscales which are gender diversity, age diversity, ethnic diversity and educational diversity and it is scored on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly Agree*). Examples of the questions are “The employees have not been discriminated by the employer while hiring and recruitment process on the gender basis”, “The organization does a good job of attracting and hiring minorities”. The reliability of this scale was considered acceptable, indicated by Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.70 in a population of 300 middle managers at the Egyptian Pharmaceutical industry.

An *Employee Work Performance Questionnaire* (EWPQ) adapted from Bekele, Shigutu and Tensay (2007) was used to assess the level of employee performance. The 10-item questionnaire is scored on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly Agree*). An Example of questions is ‘I internationally expend a great deal of effort in carrying out my job’; “I often perform better than what can be expected”. The reliability of this

scale was considered satisfactory indicated by Cronbach alpha coefficient of 0.84 in a population of 354 employees at ANRS office of the auditors general (Bekele *et al.*, 2007).

### **3.7 Pilot study**

In this study, 30 questionnaires were issued. The respondents were asked to give comments and make recommendations on the questionnaire. Most of the comments received from the participants were directed to the comprehensibility of the items, hence the researcher revised some of the items to ensure that they are clear. Conducting a pilot survey minimised the errors in the questionnaire and challenges before progressing to issuing out to the participants.

### **3.8 Data analysis**

In this study, data was analysed with the aid of the Statistical Package for the Social Science, version 21 (IBM-SPSS, 2014). The software also enabled the researcher to present the data or information better in a graphical form, for example in bar graphs and pie charts. To test whether a significant relationship exists between independent variables (age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity, educational diversity) and the dependent variable (employee performance), correlation analysis was used. This also enabled the researcher to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between these variables.

To assess which independent variables between age diversity, gender diversity, and ethnic diversity and educational diversity has more influence on the dependent variable; employee performance, multi regression analysis was used. Furthermore, the researcher used ANOVA to test if there is any significant mean difference between age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity and educational diversity with employee performance.

### **3.9 Ethical consideration**

Ethics are defined as the “branch of philosophy which deals with the dynamics of decision making concerning what is right or wrong” (Marianna, 2011, p. 2). The consideration of ethics is necessary to ensure the privacy of the participants. Clearance to conduct the research was obtained from the University of Venda Research and Innovation Directorate. The researcher allowed the participants to participate openly and voluntarily. Furthermore, the participants were notified of their right to pull out from the process if they feel that their rights were being violated or for any other reasons without stating them to the researcher. Again, confidentiality or

anonymity of the respondents was maintained and they will also be treated with respect and politeness.

### **3.10 Research procedure**

Before conducting the study, the researcher asked for permission to undertake the research from the university management. Communication with regards to the objectives of the study was done to all heads of departments and employees within the university. After this, the researcher issued out questionnaires to the target participants. The questionnaires were then collected from the participants at the agreed collection point. Data was captured and statistically analysed using the IBM-SPSS program.

### **3.11 Chapter summary**

The chapter outlined the methods that were used in collecting data. Furthermore, the chapter explained ways in which the obtained information was arranged and analysed using what tools. All in all, the chapter gave an exposition of the processes adopted to reach a scientific conclusion about the effects of workforce diversity and employee performance in a higher education institution.

## CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

### 4.1 Introduction

The aim of this study was to investigate the effects of workforce diversity on employee performance in an HEI in South Africa. Given the data collected from the sample determined in chapter three, this chapter presents the patterns and analyses of findings related to the research objectives and hypotheses established in chapter one and chapter two. This chapter presents the reliability analysis, response rate of the study, descriptive analysis and inferential analysis. The descriptive analysis will describe the demographic characteristics of the participants, central tendencies measurement of constructs and measurement of dispersion of the constructs. The inferential analysis will present the correlation analysis and regression analysis.

### 4.2 Reliability analysis

To measure the internal consistencies and stability of the constructs namely age diversity, gender diversity, ethnicity diversity, educational diversity and employee performance, Cronbach's Alpha coefficient was used. Table 4.1 below shows the rule of thumb of labelling Cronbach Alpha coefficient by Hair, Money, Samouel and Babin (2003).

**Table 4.1:** Rule of thumb for labelling Cronbach Alpha coefficient

Alpha coefficient	Level of reliability
0.80 to below 0.95	Very good reliability
0.70 to below 0.80	Good reliability
0.60 to below 0.70	Fair reliability
Below 0.60	Poor reliability

Source: Hair, Money, Samouel and Babin (2003)

The Table 4.1 above shows that the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient that ranges from 0.80 to below 0.95 represent an "a very good reliability". Cronbach Alpha coefficient that ranges from 0.70 to below 0.80 represents "a good reliability". A "fair reliability" is represented by a Cronbach Alpha Coefficient that ranges from 0.60 to below 0.70. Lastly, the Cronbach alpha coefficient that is less than 0.60 represents a "poor reliability".



Therefore, given the above rule of thumb, the Cronbach Alpha coefficient of age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity, educational diversity and employee performance is computed in Table 4.2 below.

**Table 4.2: Reliability test**

Number	Construct	Coefficient alpha	Number of items	Reliability level
1	Age diversity	0.62	8	Fair
2	Gender diversity	0.70	4	Good
3	Ethnic diversity	0.68	7	Fair
4	Educational diversity	0.79	8	Good
5	Employee performance	0.83	10	Very good reliability

From Table 4.2 above, gender diversity was measured using 8 items and its coefficient alpha is 0.70. As for age diversity, it was measured using 4 items and it obtained a coefficient alpha of 0.62. Ethnicity was measured using 7 items and it obtained a coefficient alpha is 0.68. Educational diversity which was measured using 7 items has coefficient alpha of 0.79. Lastly, employee performance which was measured using 10 items, obtained a coefficient alpha of 0.83.

Above all, the coefficient alpha for employee performance falls under a “very good reliability”. The coefficient alpha for educational diversity and gender diversity falls under a “good reliability”. In addition, the coefficient alpha for age diversity and ethnic diversity fall under “fair reliability”. To conclude, the reliability coefficient attained by all constructs is satisfactory as they are above 0.60 thus showing the consistency and stability of the questionnaire (Hair *et al.*, 2003).

### 4.3 Response rate of the study

Table 4.3 below presents the response rate of the study.

**Table 4.3:** Response rate

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Total
Questionnaires distributed	300		300
Questionnaires returned	258		258
Usable Responses	258		258
<b>Total Response Rate</b>	<b>258</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>258</b>

The Table 4.3 above indicates that from a total of 300 questionnaires that were distributed, 258 were returned and fully completed thus representing an 86% response rate. According to Welman, Mitchell and Kruger (2011), a good response rate for a survey is one that is above 60% so as to ensure the results are accurate, useful and representative of the target population. Therefore, based on the above, an 86% response rate of this study is good enough to attain meaning full results that are representative of the whole target population.

### 4.4 Descriptive analysis

This section discusses the characteristics of the participants and measurement of central tendencies of constructs.

#### 4.4.1 Characteristics of the Participants

This section describes the demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of frequency analysis.

**Table 4.4:** Characteristics of the participants (Gender, Age and Ethnicity)

Item	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
<b>Gender</b>	Male	117	45.3%
	Female	141	54.7%
<b>Age</b>	18-29	67	26.0%
	30-39	92	35.7%
	40-49	55	21.3%
	50 and above	44	17.1%
<b>Ethnicity</b>	Zulu	2	0.8%
	Swati	3	1.2%
	Venda	142	55.0%
	Pedi	21	8.1%
	English	6	2.3%
	Africana	2	0.8%
	Tsonga	32	12.4%
	Ndebele	1	0.4%
	Tswana	4	1.6%
	Xhosa	1	0.4%
	Sotho	4	1.6%
	Others	48	18.6%

From the results in Table 4.4, 141(54.7%) of the respondents were female and 117(45.3%) were males. In terms of the age group, the respondents who are between the age 30 to 39 were 92 (35,7%) of the sample, followed by 18 to 29 who were 67 (26%), 40 to 49 who were 55 (21.3%), 50 and above who were 44 (17.1%). With regards to ethnicity, the Venda ethnic group made up 142(55%) of the sample, being the majority, followed by others groups 44 (18.6%),

Tsonga 32 (12.4%), Pedi 21 (8.1%), English 6 (2.3%), Tswana 4(1.6%), Sotho 4(1.6%), Africana 2 (0.8%) (Ndebele 1 (0.4%) and Xhosa 1 (0.4%).

**Table 4.5:** Characteristics of the participants (Educational level and Work experience)

Item	Category	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
<b>Educational level</b>	Certificate	3	1,2%
	Diploma	27	10.5%
	Bachelor's Degree	65	25.2%
	Post Graduate Degree	162	62.8%
<b>Work experience</b>	0-5 years	26	10.1%
	6-10 years	44	17.1%
	10-15 years	88	34.1%
	More than 15 years	100	38.0%

The results in 4.5, the respondents holding post graduate degree were 162 (62.8 %), followed by bachelor's degree holders who were 65 (25.2%), Diploma holders who were 27 (10.5%) and lastly, certificates holders who were 3 (1.2%), being the least of all. In terms of work experience, most of the respondents 100 (38%) had more than fifteen years' experience in the institution, followed by 88 (34,1%) with 10 to 15 years, 44 (17%) with 6 to 10 years and 26 (10.1%)% with 0 to 5 years.

#### 4.4.2 Central Tendencies of Measurement of Constructs

The measurement of central tendencies was used to determine the level of agreement of the respondents on each item of the constructs, age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity and educational background in their institution.

**Table 4.6:** Central tendencies measurement of construct of age on performance

		Mean	Standard deviation
AG1	My team leader includes all members at different in problem solving and decision making.	3.78	1.000
AG2	The age differences in work group might cause conflict.	2.33	1.306
AG3	At work, I experience a lack of bonding with people of different age group.	2.73	1.289
AG4	I am positive about age diversity in this workplace.	3.55	1.036

From the Table 4.5 above, the results indicate that the respondents agreed that “the team leader includes all members at different ages in problem solving and decision making” (mean= 3.78;  $SD= 1.000$ ) and that “they are positive about age diversity in the institution” (mean=3.55;  $SD=1.036$ ). Furthermore, the respondents were neutral on that “age differences in work might cause conflict (mean= 2.90;  $SD=1.306$ ) and that “at work they experience bonding with people of different age group” (mean=2.73;  $SD=1.289$ ).

**Table 4.7:** Central tendencies measurement of construct of gender on performance

		Mean	Standard deviation
GD1	The employee has not been discriminated by the employer while hiring and recruitment process on the gender basis.	3.78	1.201
GD2	The organization does a good job of attracting and hiring women.	3.70	0.991
GD3	Fair treatment is given to all employees, whether they are male or female.	3.62	2.216
GD4	Opportunities for growth and advancement exist for women in our organization.	4.64	0.142

GD5	Women are involved in the organisation's decision making as much as men.	3.43	1.190
GD6	The performance criteria for success are expected to be higher for men than for women.	2.69	1.176
GD7	I am positive about gender diversity in this workplace.	3.77	1.167
GD8	The training and development programs are developed to meet the requirements for both men and women.	3.86	1.029

Based on the findings in Table 4.6 above, the respondents strongly agreed that “opportunities for growth exist for both men and women in their organisation” (mean =4.64; *SD*= 0.142). Furthermore, the respondents agreed that “the training and development of their organisation meets the requirement for both men and women” (mean=3.86; *SD*= 1.029), “employees have not been discriminated by the employer while recruiting and hiring of gender basis” (mean=3.78; *SD*= 1.201), “they are positive about gender diversity in their organisation” (mean= 3.77; *SD*= 1.1670), “the organisation does a good job of attracting and hiring women” (mean= 3.70; *SD*= 0.991) and “that fair treatment is given to all, whether there are men or women” (mean= 3.62; *SD*= 2.216). On a different note, the respondents gave a neutral response on that “women are involved in decision making in the institution as much as men” (mean= 3.43; *SD*= 1.190) and that “the performance criteria for success are expected to be higher for men than for women” (mean= 2.69; *SD*= 1.176).

**Table 4.8:** Central tendencies measurement of construct of ethnicity on performance

		Mean	Standard deviation
ED1	The organisation does a good job of attracting and hiring minorities.	3.26	1.093
ED2	Opportunities for growth and advancement exist for minorities in my organisation.	3.43	1.108
ED3	The organisation concerns about employee customs, cultures and values.	3.32	1.077
ED4	Different languages are used to communicate do not create problems among employees.	2.39	1.075
ED5	At work, I developed low self-esteem due to my ethnicity.	2.37	1.248

ED6	The team leader includes all members of different ethnicity in problem solving.	3.57	1.000
ED7	I am positive about ethnic diversity in this workplace.	2.90	1.204

From the results in Table 4.7 above, the respondents agreed that “the team leader includes all members of different ethnicity in problem solving” (mean= 3.57;  $SD=1.000$ ). Furthermore, the respondents gave a neutral response on that “opportunities for growth and advancement exist for minorities in my organisation” (mean =3.43;  $SD= 1.108$ ), “the organisations concerns about employee customs, cultures and values (mean= 3.32;  $SD=1.077$ ), “the organisation does a good job of attracting and hiring minorities” (mean= 3.26;  $SD= 1.093$ ), “their positive about ethnic diversity in the workplace” (mean= 2.90;  $SD=1.204$ ). On a different note, the respondents disagreed on that “different languages used to communicate create problems among employees” (mean= 2.39;  $SD= 1.075$ ) and that “they developed self-esteem due to their ethnicity” (mean= 2.37;  $SD= 1.248$ ).

**Table 4.9:** Central tendencies measurement of construct of educational diversity on performance

		Mean	Standard deviation
ED1	The recruitment plan for the organisation is based on the educational background of the employees.	3.83	1.116
ED2	The organisation provides paid study to leave to employees who further their education.	4.68	0.844
ED3	Opportunities for growth and advancement exists for employees who have a lower qualification in education.	3.67	1.089
ED4	The difference in education background does not encourage conflict.	3.36	1.137
ED5	At work, I experience a lack of confidence due to my educational background.	2.41	1.179
ED6	The team leader includes all members at a different educational level in problem solving and decision making.	3.55	1.096

ED7	The organisation gives equal treatment when it comes to the diversity of educational background.	3.62	1.175
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Based on the results in Table 4.8 above, the respondents strongly agreed that “the organisation provides a study leave to employees who further their education” (mean= 4.68; *SD*= 0.844). In addition, the respondents agreed that “the recruitment plan of the organisation is based on the educational background of the employees” (mean=3.83; *SD*= 1.116), “opportunities for growth exist and advancement exists for employee who has lower qualification in education” (mean= 3.67; *SD*= 1.089), “the organisation gives equal treatment when it comes to diversity of educational background” (mean= 3.62; *SD*= 1.175) and that “the team leader includes all members at different educational levels in problem solving and decision making” (mean= 3.55; *SD*= 1.096). The respondents further gave a neutral response on the statement “the difference in education background does not encourage conflict” (mean= 3.36; *SD*= 1.137). Lastly, the respondents disagreed that “at work the experience lack of confidence due to their educational background” (mean= 2.41; *SD*= 1.179)

**Table 4.10:** Central tendencies measurement of Construct of employee performance

		Mean	Standard deviation
EP1	I almost always perform better than what can be characterized as acceptable performance.	4.37	0.643
EP2	I often perform better than what can be expected.	4.77	0.580
EP3	I always reach my performance target.	4.22	0.832
EP4	I consider my performance is better than the average employee in this organisation.	4.29	0.670
EP5	Overall, I am a very good performer.	4.22	0.604
EP6	I feel that my performance is reflective of my abilities.	4.08	0.816
EP7	I often expend extra effort in carrying out my job.	4.29	0.692
EP8	I try to work as hard as possible.	4.36	0.628
EP9	The quality of my work is superior.	4.30	0.802
EP10	I intentionally expend a great deal of effort in carrying my job.	4.35	0.679

From the Table 4.9 above, the results indicate that the respondents strongly agreed that “they almost perform better that what can be expected” (mean= 4.77; *SD*= 0.580) Furthermore, the



respondents agreed that “they almost always perform better than what can be characterized as acceptable performance” (mean= 4.37; SD= 0.643), “they try to work hard as possible (mean= 4.36; SD= 0.628), “they intentionally expend a great deal of effort in carrying out their job (mean=4.35; SD= 0.679), “the quality of their work is superior (mean= 4.30; SD= 0.802), “they consider their performance better than the average employee in the institution (mean= 4.29; SD= 0.670), “they often expend a great extra effort in carrying out their job”(mean= 4.29; SD= 0.692), “overallly their good performers (mean= 4.22; SD= 0.604), they always reach their performance targets (mean= 4.22; SD= 0.832), “their performance is reflective of their abilities” (mean= 4.08; SD= 0.816).

## 4.5 Inferential analysis

This section presents the correlation analysis and regression analysis.

### 4.5.1 Correlation analysis

In order to test the hypotheses of this study, correlational analysis. The correlation analysis helped to determine the relationship between the independent variables (age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity and educational diversity) and the dependent variable (employee performance). The Pearson’s correlation coefficient was used to show the direction, strength and significant of the relationship. According to Hair, Money, Samouel and Page (2007), the value that represents the Pearson correlation is called the r-value. The r-value ranges from -1.00 to +1.00, whereby a +1.00 r-value indicates the existence of a perfect positive linear relationship between the variables and a -1.00 r-value indicates that there is a perfect negative linear relationship between the variables (Hair *et al.*, 2007). Given that the r-value is 0, it means that there no relationship between the variables.

Therefore, the R-value, together with the p-value which indicates the statistical significance of the relationship were provided in the correlation analysis in order to show the direction, strength and significance of the relationship. The p-value was based on a 99% confidence interval, meaning that if the p-value is lower than 0.01 ( $p < 0.01$ ), it is regarded as statistically significant, *vice versa* (Cohen, Cohen, West & Aiken, 2013).

Given the above, the following hypothesis was tested and the analysis computed below.

#### 4.5.1.1 Hypothesis testing number 1

The first statement of hypothesis is given below;

**H0:** There is no significant relationship between age diversity and employee performance.

**H1:** There is a significant relationship between age diversity and employee performance.

**Table 4.11:** Correlation of age diversity and employee performance

		Age diversity	Employee performance
<b>Age diversity</b>	Pearson correlation	1	-0.037
	Sig. (2 tailed)		0.557
<b>Employee performance</b>	Pearson Correlation	-0.037	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)		

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

The results in Table 4.10 shows that the relationship between age diversity and employee performance is not significant ( $r=-0,037$ ,  $p=0.557$ ).

#### 4.5.1.2 Hypothesis testing number 2

The second statement of the hypothesis is.

**H0:** There is no significant relationship between gender diversity and employee performance.

**H1:** There is a significant relationship between gender diversity and employee performance.

**Table 4.12:** Correlation of gender diversity and employee performance

		Gender diversity	Employee performance
<b>Gender diversity</b>	Pearson correlation	1	0.274**
	Sig. (2 tailed)		.000
<b>Employee performance</b>	Pearson Correlation	0.274**	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)		

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

Based on the results in Table 4.11 above, there is a positive and significant relationship between gender diversity and employee performance ( $r=0.274$ ,  $p=0.00$ ). A positive relationship in this scenario means that when gender diversity increases, employee performance also increases.

#### 4.5.1.3 Hypothesis testing number 3

The third statement of hypothesis is given below;

**H0:** There is no significant relationship between ethnicity diversity and employee performance.

**H1:** There is a significant relationship between ethnicity diversity and employee performance.

**Table 4.13:** Correlation of ethnicity diversity and employee performance

		Age diversity	Employee performance
<b>Age diversity</b>	Pearson correlation	1	0.277**
	Sig. (2 tailed)		0.00
<b>Employee performance</b>	Pearson Correlation	0.277**	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)		

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

The results in Table 4.12 indicates that there is a positive and significant relationship between ethnic diversity and employee performance shown by ( $r= 0.277$ ,  $p=0.00$ ). A positive relationship in this case means that when ethnicity diversity increases, employee performance also increases.

#### 4.5.1.4 Hypothesis testing number 4

The fourth statement of hypothesis is given below;

**H0:** There is no significant relationship between educational diversity and employee performance.

**H1:** There is a significant relationship between educational diversity and employee performance.

**Table 4.14:** Correlation of educational diversity and employee performance

		Educational background	Employee performance
<b>Educational diversity</b>	Pearson correlation	1	0.236**
<b>Employee performance</b>	Sig. (2 tailed)		0.00
	Pearson Correlation	0.236**	1
	Sig.(2-tailed)		

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

From the Table 4.13 above, the relationship between educational diversity and employee performance is positive and significant ( $r= 0.236$ ,  $p=0.01$ ). In this case, a positive relationship means that when educational diversity increase, employee performance also increases.

#### 4.5.2 Multiple linear regression analysis

Multiple linear regression analysis was performed to determine whether the independent variables (age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity and educational diversity) predict the dependent variable (employee performance). In addition, multiple linear regression analysis was used to determine which amongst the four independent variables (age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity and educational diversity) contribute most to the variation of the dependent variable (employee performance).

**Table 4.15 Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R square	Std. Error of the estimate
1	.329 <sup>a</sup>	.108	0.27	.20211

- a. Predictors: (Constant), age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity, educational diversity
- b. Dependent variable: employee performance

The model summary illustrates the (R square) value which helps in explaining variance in the dependent variable (employee performance). Based on the results in Table 4.13, the (R square) value is 0.108. This means that the independent variables (age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity and educational diversity) predict the dependent variable (employee performance) by 10.8%, thus, leaving out 89.2% (100%-10.8%) unexplained. In a nutshell, this means that there are other extra independent variables that were not put into consideration in this study that is significant in explaining variation in employee performance.

**Table 4.16: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.080	4	1.520	18.106	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	20.002	253	.081		
	Total	26.082	257			

significant at the 0.01 level

The ANOVA was performed to test the statistical significance of the regression model on whether it is a good descriptor for the relationship between the predictor variables (age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity and educational diversity) and the dependent variable (employee performance). Therefore, based on the results, the model is a good descriptor of the relationship between independent variables (age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity and educational diversity) and the dependent variable (employee performance) ( $F= 18.108$ ;  $p=0.000$ ). Thus, this means that the independent variables (age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity and educational diversity) are significant in explaining the variation in the dependent variable (employee performance).

**Table 4.17: Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardize	Standardized			
		d Coefficient	Std. Error	$\beta$	t	Sig.
		B				
1	(Constant)	2.025	.170		13.864	.000
	Age diversity	-.121	.035	-.237	-3.588	.138
	Gender diversity	-.257	.042	.285	6.362	.000
	Ethnic diversity	.043	.037	.058	1.222	.000
	Educational diversity	.175	.027	.214	3.605	.000

Dependent variable: employee performance

**Table 4.18: Ranking of Standardized Coefficient, Beta ( $\beta$ )**

Independent variables	Standardized coefficient beta	Rank
Gender diversity	.285	1
Educational diversity	.214	2
Ethnicity diversity	.058	3

The coefficients Table 4.16 helped the researcher to compare which of the four predictor variables (gender diversity, ethnic diversity and educational diversity) contribute the most to the variation of employee performance. Therefore, to make the comparison, the Beta standardised coefficients were used. The results indicate that gender diversity is a predictor variable that contributes the highest to the variation of employee performance ( $\beta= 0.285$ ;  $p= 0.000$ ), followed by educational diversity ( $\beta= 0.214$ ;  $p= 0.000$ ) and ethnic diversity ( $\beta= 0.058$ ;  $p= 0.000$ ). Age diversity is not a significant predictor of employee performance ( $\beta= -0.237$ ;  $p= 0.138$ ).

#### 4.6 Chapter summary

From the data collected, this chapter performed the descriptive analysis in order to determine the response rate, characteristics of the participants and central tendencies measurement of constructs. Furthermore, the regression and correlation analysis was performed to test the hypotheses of the study.

## CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of the study. The descriptive and inferential analysis presented in the last chapter is summarised. Furthermore, the explanations or evidence are given to support the hypotheses results. The recommendations and limitations of the study are discussed. In the last section, the general conclusion of the whole research is presented.

### 5.2 Discussion of the results

The aim of this study was to investigate the effects of workforce diversity on employee performance in an HEI in South Africa. The effects of workforce diversity were measured in terms of age, gender, ethnicity and educational background. The results of the study are discussed below.

#### 5.2.1 Reliability analysis results

The reliability test was performed to measure the internal consistency for age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity, educational diversity and employee performance. The construct gender diversity was measured using 8 items and its coefficient alpha was 0.70. As for age diversity, it was measured using 4 items and it obtained a coefficient alpha of 0.62. With regards to ethnicity, it was measured with 7 items and it obtained a coefficient alpha of 0.68. Also, the coefficient alpha for the educational background which was measured using 8 items was 0.79. Finally, employee performance which was measured using 10 items obtained a coefficient alpha of 0.83.

Above all, the coefficient alpha for the construct of employee performance falls under “very good reliability” while educational diversity and gender fall under “good reliability”. The constructs of age diversity and ethnic diversity fall under “fair reliability”. To conclude, the reliability coefficient obtained by all constructs is satisfactory since there are all above 0.60 thus signifying the consistency and reliability of the questionnaire (Sekaran, 2011). These results are in line with a similar study conducted by Weiliang (2011) who obtained a reliability coefficient above 0.60 for all five constructs. Furthermore, the findings also concur with the findings by Odhiambo (2014)

who conducted a study on the effects of workforce diversity on employee performance in a Kenyan secondary school. The reliability coefficient was above 0.60, making it acceptable.

## 5.2.2 Descriptive analysis results

### 5.2.2.1 Characteristics of the Participants

From the results in chapter four, 141(54.7%) of the respondents were females and 117(45.3%) were males. This means that most the respondents in this study were females. These findings agree with Kossek, Lobel and Brown (2005) findings who found out that from the entire workforce across the world, 54% are women.

With regards to ethnicity, the Venda ethnic group made up 142(55%) of the sample, being the majority, followed by others groups 44 (18.6%), Tsonga 32 (12.4%), Pedi 21 (8.1%), English 6 (2.3%), Tswana 4(1.6%), Sotho 4(1.6%), Africana 2 (0.8%) (Ndebele 1 (0.4%) and Xhosa 1 (0.4%). Given these results, one can conclude that the workforce is ethnically diverse at the higher education institution, though the Venda group is the majority. These results agree with Watson, Johnson and Zgourides (2002) who argued that the structure of workforce in many institutions is quickly becoming more diverse with regards to ethnicity.

In terms of the age group, the results showed that the respondents who are between the age 30 to 39 were 92 (35,7%) of the sample, followed by 18 to 29 who were 67 (26%), 40 to 49 who were 55 (21.3%), 50 and above who were 44 (17.1%). Given the results above, it shows that the institution has an aged diverse workforce. This concurs with Kunze, Boehm and Bruch (2009) who argued that age diversity has become an inevitable feature of many organisations.

As for educational qualification, post graduate degree holders were 162 (62.8 %), followed by bachelor's degree holders who were 65 (25.2%), Diploma holders who were 27 (10.5%) and lastly, certificates holders who were 3 (1.2%), being the least of all. A recent study conducted by Hoff (2014) found that, organisations usually reject hiring people with insufficient educational qualifications, for example primary and secondary qualifications. This may explain the reason why the University of Venda have no employees with primary and secondary educational level.

In terms of work experience, most of the participants 100 (38%) had more than fifteen years in the institution, followed by 88 (34,1%) with 10 to 15 years, 44 (17%) with 6 to 10 years and 26 (10.1%)% with 0 to 5 years. These findings are similar to Hoff (2014) findings which further argued that the age of employees affects their work experience in the organisation.



#### *5.2.2.2 Central tendencies measurements of construct age diversity on performance*

The results in chapter four, indicate that the respondents agreed that “the team leader includes all members at different ages in problem solving and decision making” (mean= 3.78;  $SD= 1.000$ ) and that “they are positive about age diversity in the institution” (mean=3.55;  $SD=1.036$ ). Furthermore, the respondents were neutral on that “age differences in work might cause conflict (mean= 2.30;  $SD=1.306$ ) and that “at work they experience bonding with people of different age group (mean=2.73;  $SD=1.289$ ). According to Kyalo (2013), age diversity results in poor communication, less cohesion and reduced performance. Kyalo (2013) stated that this emanates from the fact that young people carry pride and have ambition while the old regard themselves as experienced and offer better problem solving solutions. However, this is not the perception in the institution under study as respondents disagree that age diversity cause conflicts and that they experience a lack of bonding with other different age groups.

#### *5.2.2.3 Central tendencies measurements of construct gender diversity on performance*

Based on the findings in chapter four, the respondents strongly agreed that “opportunities for growth exist for both men and women in their organisation” (mean =4.64;  $SD= 0.142$ ). Furthermore, the respondents agreed that “the training and development of their organisation meets the requirement for both men and women” (mean=3.86;  $SD= 1.029$ ), “employees have not been discriminated by the employer while recruiting and hiring of gender basis” (mean=3.78;  $SD= 1.201$ ), “they are positive about gender diversity in their organisation” (mean= 3.77;  $SD= 1.1670$ ), “the organisation does a good job of attracting and hiring women” (mean= 3.70;  $SD= 0.991$ ) and “that fair treatment is given to all, whether there are men or women” (mean= 3.62;  $SD= 2.216$ ). On a different note, the respondents gave a neutral response on that “women are involved in decision making in the institution as much as men” (mean= 3.43;  $SD= 1.190$ ) and that “the performance criteria for success are expected to be higher for men than for women mean= 2.69;  $SD= 1.176$ ).

Given the above, it shows that the University of Venda is narrowing the gender gap and increasing similarity work principles between females and males. This is also in line with a study conducted by Mwatumwa (2016) at the Country Government in Mombasa.

#### *5.2.2.4 Central tendencies measurements of construct ethnic diversity on performance*

From the results in chapter four, the respondents agreed that “the team leader includes all members of different ethnicity in problem solving” (mean= 3.57;  $SD=1.000$ ). Furthermore, the

respondents gave a neutral response on that “opportunities for growth and advancement exist for minorities in my organisation” (mean =3.43;  $SD= 1.108$ ), “the organisations concerns about employee customs, cultures and values (mean= 3.32;  $SD=1.077$ ), “the organisation does a good job of attracting and hiring minorities” (mean= 3.26;  $SD= 1.093$ ), “their positive about ethnic diversity in the workplace” (mean= 2.90;  $SD=1.204$ ). On a different note, the respondents disagreed on that “different languages used to communicate create problems among employees” (mean= 2.39;  $SD= 1.075$ ) and that “they developed self-esteem due to their ethnicity” (mean= 2.37;  $SD= 1.248$ ).

According to Jackson and Joshi (2004), ethnicity can be a source of poor communication and conflict in organisations which are ethnically heterogeneous. When observing the responses, this can be the situation at the University of Venda as the respondents disagreed that difference in languages does not cause conflicts.

#### *5.2.2.5 Central tendencies measurements of construct educational diversity on performance*

The results in chapter four, show that the respondents strongly agreed that “the organisation provides a study leave to employees who further their education” (mean= 4.68;  $SD= 0.844$ ). In addition, the respondents agreed that “the recruitment plan of the organisation is based on the educational background of the employees” (mean=3.83;  $SD= 1.116$ ), “opportunities for growth exist and advancement exists for employee who has lower qualification in education” (mean= 3.67;  $SD= 1.089$ ), “the organisation gives equal treatment when it comes to diversity of educational background” (mean= 3.62;  $SD= 1.175$ ) and that “the team leader includes all members at different educational levels in problem solving and decision making” (mean= 3.55;  $SD= 1.096$ ). The respondents further gave a neutral response on the statement “the difference in education background does not encourage conflict” (mean= 3.36;  $SD= 1.137$ ). Lastly, the respondents disagreed that “at work the experience lack of confidence due to their educational background” (mean= 2.41;  $SD= 1.179$ ).

According to Eduard (2010), individuals who possess lower educational qualification as compared to others in an organisation are likely to experience low self-esteem which to a certain extent may affect their performance. However, this is not the case at the University of Venda is different as the respondents disagree that they experience a lack of confidence due to their educational background.

#### 5.2.2.6 Central tendencies measurements of construct of employee performance

The results in chapter four indicates that the respondents strongly agreed that “they almost perform better than what can be expected” (mean= 4.77;  $SD= 0.580$ ) Furthermore, the respondents agreed that “they almost always perform better than what can be characterized as acceptable performance” (mean= 4.37;  $SD= 0.643$ ), “they try to work hard as possible (mean= 4.36;  $SD= 0.628$ ), “they intentionally expend a great deal of effort in carrying out their job (mean=4.35;  $SD= 0.679$ ), “the quality of their work is superior (mean= 4.30;  $SD= 0.802$ ), “they consider their performance better than the average employee in the institution (mean= 4.29;  $SD= 0.670$ ), “they often expend a great extra effort in carrying out their job”(mean= 4.29;  $SD= 0.692$ ), “overallly their good performers (mean= 4.22;  $SD= 0.604$ ), they always reach their performance targets (mean= 4.22;  $SD= 0.832$ ), “their performance is reflective of their abilities” (mean= 4.08;  $SD= 0.816$ ). These findings concur with Magoshi and Chang (2010) that workforce diversity influences employees to perform better that what is expected.

### 5.2.3 Correlation results

#### 5.2.3.1 There is a relationship between age diversity and employee performance

According to the results in chapter four, there was no significant relationship between age diversity and employee performance ( $r=-0,037$ ,  $p=0.557$ ). The p-value was more than the alpha value ( $p>0.01$ ) meaning that the relationship was not statistically significant. Thus, we accept the null hypothesis and conclude that there is no relationship between age diversity and employee performance. These findings are not in line with the social identity theory which stipulates that age diversity is a predictor for negative outcomes such as poor communication, less cohesion, low job satisfaction and low employee performance (Trafjel & Turner, 1979). However, these findings concur with Selvaraj (2015) findings in a study conducted in Singapore manufacturing industry. According to Selvaraj (2015), a possible reason why there is no effect of age diversity and employee performance is the less pronounced numerical distinctiveness between the younger and older employees as compared to the numerical differences between males and females. Thus, perhaps age diversity has a less pronounced influence on employee performance. Another reason by Elsaid (2012) is that a further increase in group heterogeneity with the extreme case of an equal number of team members in each diversity category mitigates this effect. Furthermore, in a sample, age can be a substitute for status or experience than for social classification. Therefore, this lessens its effect on group performance.

### 5.2.3.2 *There is a relationship between gender diversity and employee performance*

Based on the results in chapter four, there was a significant positive relationship between gender diversity and employee performance ( $r=0.274$ ,  $p=0.00$ ). A positive relationship in this case means that when gender diversity increases, employee performance also increases. The p-value was less than the alpha value ( $p<0.01$ ) which means that the relationship was statistically significant. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a relationship between gender diversity and employee performance. Eugene *et al.* (2011) also found a significant positive relationship between gender diversity and employee performance. Selvaraj (2015), in Singapore organisations also reported similar results, stating that gender diversity was significant in explaining a variation in employee performance even though it was not an area of concern in the study. Selvaraj reported that during the study, employees were unconscious of their gender identities and they were expected to meet their yearly targets regardless of the working grades (Selvaraj, 2015). According to Ngao and Mwangi, (2013), the possible reason why there is a positive significant relationship is because female and male participants think differently thus if their ideas are put together, better decisions are made. This supports Mc Millan-Carphart (2011) who argued that an increased gender diversity organisational levels can provide a firm with better competitive advantage through improved employee performance.

### 5.2.3.3 *There is a relationship between ethnic diversity and employee performance*

From the results in chapter four, there was a significant positive relationship between ethnic diversity and employee performance ( $r= 0.277$ ,  $p=0.00$ ). A positive significant relationship in this case means that when ethnic diversity increases, employee performance also increases. The p-value was less than the alpha value ( $p<0.01$ ), thus we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a relationship between ethnic diversity and employee performance. These results do not concur with Arokiasamy (2013) findings which reported that in an ethnic diverse group, there is a high probability of ethnocentric views among members, hence creating tribal conflicts which result in reduced group cohesion and performance. Bleaney and Dimico (2016), support the above, stating that ethnic based conflicts negatively affect the reputation, performance and profits of the organisation. However, Van Knippenberg, Van Ginkel and Homan (2013) argued that ethnic diversity brings better problem solving solutions, creativity and innovation amongst employees in an organisation. Based on Odhiambo (2014) argument, the reason why we found a positive effect of ethnic diversity on employee performance is due to the

moderating effect of ethnic demography. This means that in ethnically heterogeneous organisations ethnic identities of team members may be less salient and therefore, creating less distraction on employee performance.

#### 5.2.3.4 *There is a relationship between educational diversity and employee performance*

From the results in chapter four, it is evident that educational diversity was positively and significantly related to employee performance ( $r= 0.236$ ,  $p=0.01$ ). A positive relationship means that as educational diversity increase, the level of employee performance increases too. The  $p$ -value was less than the alpha value ( $p < 0.01$ ), hence we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a relationship between educational diversity and employee performance. These findings correspond with Elsaid (2012) who found a positive significant relationship between educational diversity and employee performance. Elsaid (2012) further stated that the more an organization is composed of highly balanced educational types, the higher the probability of an organisation becoming creative and innovative. Odhiambo (2014) also reported that having more varied educational types in an organisation improves the performance of employee performance. Eugene *et al.* (2011) supports the above, but also arguing that educational diversity measure is biased as it measures only within highly educated individuals and the less educated individuals are put in one group.

#### 5.2.4 Regression results

The results chapter four, indicate that the independent variables (age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity, and educational diversity explain a variation in employee performance by 10.8% ( $R^2=0.108$ ) thus leaving out 89.2% ( $100\%-10.8\%$ ) being unexplained in this study. In a nutshell, this means that there are other extra independent variables that were not put into consideration in this study that is significant in explaining employee performance. Furthermore, the results show that gender diversity is the highest contributor towards the variation of employee performance ( $\beta= 0.258$ ,  $p=0.00$ ) as compared to age diversity, ethnic diversity and educational diversity. The second most significant predictor is educational diversity, shown by ( $\beta =0.214$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). Ethnic diversity comes third as the most significant predictor of employee performance, indicated by ( $\beta=0.058$ ,  $p=0.00$ ). Age diversity was not a significant predictor of employee performance, shown by ( $\beta= -0.237$ ,  $p= 0.138$ ). These findings are similar with a study conducted by Kyalo (2013) in a micro-finance firm in Kenya. The study found gender diversity, ethnic diversity and educational diversity as significant predictors of employee performance except for age diversity.

### 5.3 Conclusion based on Research hypothesis

Using the quantitative analysis methods, this study tested four hypotheses as formulated. A summary of these hypotheses findings is provided below, together with the conclusions related them.

*H1: There is a relationship between age diversity and employee performance.*

The results in chapter four, show that there was no significant relationship between age diversity and employee performance. Thus, the null hypothesis is supported. This shows that age diversity does not have any effect on employee performance.

*H1: There is a relationship between gender diversity and employee performance*

The findings in chapter four, indicate that there was a significant positive relationship between gender diversity and employee performance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This shows gender diversity has an effect on employee performance.

*H1: There is a relationship between ethnic diversity and employee performance*

The results in chapter four, indicate that there was a significant positive relationship between ethnic diversity and employee performance. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This ethnic diversity has an effect on employee performance.

*H1: There is a relationship between educational diversity and employee performance*

The results as indicated in chapter four show that educational diversity was positively and significantly related to employee performance. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected. This shows that educational diversity has an effect on employee performance.

### 5.4 Limitations

There are various obstacles that were encountered in conducting this study. Firstly, the process of data collection was very slow as most respondents were taking the time to complete and return the questionnaires. The delay was mainly facilitated by the strikes which constantly disrupted the academic business of the institution. However, to overcome this, there was a constant follow up on the questionnaires through visiting the offices of the employees. The delay was also facilitated by collecting data at a single point in time. At the end of all it all, the response rate was pegged at above 86%, which is highly recommended for data analysis. In

addition, the study was affected by the frequent internet cut off by the institutions due to technical problems. This made the study to stand on hold in most instances thus facilitating the day of completing the study. However, the researcher overcame this through working day and night when the internet is available. Furthermore, ethnicity was predominantly Venda and black people thus having limited perceptions of workforce diversity from other cultural groups.

## **5.5 Recommendations**

From the discussion of the findings, the following recommendations were made.

### **5.5.1 Recommendation for practice**

The study recommends the senior management of the higher educational institutions to put more focus on diversity management to improve the effectiveness of workforce diversity. For an effective diversity management program, there must be clear communication channels among employees and the senior management. This enables employees to understand the objective of workforce diversity management and how these objectives can be linked to overall business goals.

The study further recommends policy and legislative makers to include the business side of workforce diversity in their policy documents. This enables organisations to fully comprehend workforce diversity as a concept that can be adopted to enhance the performance of the business. Once organisations see the benefits of workforce diversity, then there is no need for them to be coerced by the policies and legislations such as the Affirmative Action and EEA to adopt it.

Furthermore, the study recommends higher educational institutions to make use of common languages such as English to cater for all different ethnic groups. This avoids communication problems and ethnic related conflicts. Furthermore, higher educational institutions should continue to give both male and female equal opportunities during recruitment and other areas like growth and opportunities as it is shown in this study that gender diversity positively influence employee performance.

### **5.5.2 Recommendation for future research**

For further research, this study was limited to the higher educational sector in South Africa and hence more studies should be conducted to focus on other sectors like the manufacturing industry. The study also suggests that further studies should be conducted on the relationship



between age diversity and employee performance in other sectors as there was found to be no relationship in the higher education sector.

In addition, the results were based on the comparison of the performance of an individual employee and not based on team performance. Therefore, the study recommends future research to go deeper in this area.

Furthermore, since the study only focused on the quantitative measure, future works are encouraged in several areas in both quantitative and qualitative measure. It is recommended that future research can get a better understanding of the effects of workforce diversity towards employee performance in an organization to go deeper for the study

## **5.6 Chapter summary**

This chapter discussed the findings derived from chapter four. Upon the discussion of the reliability analysis results, all the constructs; age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic diversity and educational diversity and employee performance were reliable thus concurring with other results of previous studies. With regards to central tendencies measurement of constructs results, it is evident that most employees are satisfied with age diversity, gender diversity, ethnic and educational diversity in the institution, though there is still more that needs to be done by the institution in terms of diversity management. The correlation results showed that all workforce diversity constructs (gender diversity, ethnic diversity and educational diversity) have an effect on employee performance except for age diversity. Lastly, based on the discussion, the regression results showed that gender diversity was the most contributing variable towards the variation of employee performance, followed by educational diversity and ethnic diversity. Age diversity did not have any effect on employee performance.



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### ANNEXURE A: Budget

ITEM	AMOUNT
<b><u>ASSISTANCE</u></b>	
1 research assistance for collecting data @ R160- 00 per day for 21 days	R3360-00
Data statistician (96hours @R120 per hour) 96X120	R5760-00
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>R 9120-00</b>
<b><u>CONSUMABLES</u></b>	
Modem @R600-00	R 600-00
Data bundles	R 2500-00
Memory stick	R 100-00
Stapler and staple pins	R 500-00
Puncher	R 100-00
Bond paper @R260 per box* 4 boxes	R 1040-00
Highlighter pens@R20-00*4, 10 Blue Pens @R5-00=R130-00	R 130-00
Files, folders and writing pads= R250-00	R 250-00
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>R 5220-00</b>
<b><u>SUBSISTANCE</u></b>	
Refreshment for 21 days for the period of the data collection @ R120 per person (120x21x1)	R2520-00
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>R2520-00</b>
<b><u>TECHINICAL PRODUCTION</u></b>	
Printing of research proposal for the departmental presentation, R3 per page (3 x 50 pages) X 15 documents	R 2250-00
Printing of research proposal for the school presentation, R3 per page (3 x 50pages) X 15documents	R2250-00
Proposal Language Editing @R35 per page (UGIC rate), (35x50pages)	R 1750-00
Printing of questionnaires for Pilot study @ R3/ per page (3x 7pages) 100 for validity and reliability sake	R 2100-00
Printing of final questionnaires@R3 per page (3 x7pages) 400	R8400-00
Editing and proof reading: Final Copy @35 per page, (35x 200 pages)	R7000-00
Spiral Binding@R150 per copy (150x6copies)	R 900-00

Printing Final Research Document, R3/page, (3x200 pagesx6 copies)	R3600-00
Book Binding Final thesis copies@ R400-00 per copy, (400 x 6copies)	R2400-00
Duplicating 6 thesis copies @ 250-00 per copy, (250x 6)	R1500-00
Transport to Louis Trichardt for binding (4trips by 68.7km) =274x3.30/km	907
<b>SUBTOTAL</b>	<b>R33057-00</b>
<b>GRANT TOTAL</b>	<b>R49917-00</b>

### ANNEXURE B: Proposed work plan for the Research

	Month of completion											
	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
<b>2015</b>												
Proposal development			■	■	■	■	■	■	■			
Proposal presentation to the department									■			
<b>2016</b>												
Submission of Research Proposal to the school board			■									
Adjustments of the research proposal			■									
Submission of Research Proposal to the Board and University Higher Degrees Committee				■								
Detailed Literature Review				■								
Data Collection					■							
Data Analysis and Interpretation						■						
Submission of First Draft Thesis							■					
Submission of Second Draft Thesis								■				
Proof Reading									■			
Submission of Final Draft Thesis										■		
incorporation of external examiner 's comments											■	
Submission of Final Research											■	
Attending regional and international conference												■
<b>2017</b>												
Graduation					■							



## ANNEXURE C: Informed consent



### SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

#### DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND LABOUR RELATIONS INFORMATION SHEET AND INFORMED CONSENT FORM

##### INTRODUCTION

My name is **Zhuwao Simbarashe**, a student at the University of Venda registered for Master's Degree in Human Resource Management (MCOM). I am carrying out research on: **Effects of employees' perception of workforce diversity on their performance in higher education institution in South Africa.**

I kindly request for your participation in this research by expressing your views on the topic. The purpose of this study is to understand the effects of employees' perception of workforce diversity on their performance at the University of Venda. This will help the human resources management of the institution in identifying current existing opinions of workforce diversity and if the perception towards diversity is negative, the institution will be able to take remedial action on designing and implementing diversity management strategies that will help employees view workforce diversity as benefit to them and the institution.

Your participation is voluntary, and you will be asked to respond to questions related to the research topic. You are also reminded that should you feel that questions are not proper, you can choose not to answer and you have the right to withdraw from the study even after you started completing the questions. The questionnaire will take about 10-15 minutes to complete. The questions do not require you to provide your details such as your name and contact details. Thus, your confidentiality will be protected and the information provided will not be shared with third parties with your consent. Therefore, you are kindly asked to give your honest opinion so as to assist leaders at the University of Venda to identify the current existing opinions of employee on workforce diversity. If the employees have a negative perception towards workforce diversity, the study will enable the institution to take remedial action on designing and

implementing workforce diversity management strategies to take advantage of the benefits of workforce diversity and advance the goals of higher education institutions in the country.

### **INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

In terms of the ethical requirements of the University of Venda, you are invited you to complete this form as an indication of your permission to voluntarily participate in this study

I \_\_\_\_\_ hereby confirm that I have been fully informed about the purpose, procedures, and activities of the study. The rights and risks of learners' participation have also been fully explained to me. I was given full opportunity to ask any questions and I understand that participants can withdraw from the study at any stage and time, without giving any reasons.

I therefore hereby freely **Give/Do not give** my consent for the staff and any relevant member to voluntarily take part in the study as outlined **(Delete the inapplicable)**.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Researcher signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Annexure D: The Questionnaire

Dear Respondent

My name is Simbarashe Zhuwao, a second-year master's student from the University of Venda, pursuing a Master's Degree in Human Resource Management. As a partial fulfilment for award of this degree, I am required to conduct a research work titled "workforce diversity and its effects on employee performance. A case of University of Venda employees in South Africa. I would be so grateful if you spend a few minutes of your time to complete this questionnaire. I assure you that any information collected will be used strictly for academic purposes and will be confidential. Thank you for your assistance.

Contact number: 0790773756

Email address: simbarashezhuwao@gmail.com

### Section A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please specify your answer by placing a (x) on the relevant answers provided. The following questions will be used only in determining our sample demographics.

1. Gender

Male  Female

2. Age

18-29 years  30-39 years  40-49 years  50 years & above

3. Ethnicity

Zulu  Swati  Venda  Pedi   
English  Africana  Tsonga  Ndebele   
Tswana  IsiXhosa  Sotho  Others

4. Educational Level

Certificate  Diploma  Bachelors' Degree  Postgraduate Degree

5. Work Experience

0-5 years  6-10 years  10- 15 years  more than 15 years

## Section B: WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

Based on your dispositions, please indicate the most appropriate opinion/response with the scale below.

1= Strongly Disagree	2=Disagree	3= Neutral	4= Agree	5= Strongly Agree
----------------------	------------	------------	----------	-------------------

<b>GENDER</b>		<b>scale</b>				
1	The employees have not been discriminated by the employer while hiring and recruiting on gender basis.	1	2	3	4	5
2	The organisation does a good job of attracting and hiring women.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Fair treatment is given to all employees, whether they are male or female	1	2	3	4	5
4	Opportunities for growth and advancement exist for women in our organisation	1	2	3	4	5
5	Women are involved in the organisation's decision making as much as men.	1	2	3	4	5
6	The performance criteria for success are expected to be higher for men than for women.	1	2	3	4	5
7	I am positive about gender diversity in this workplace.	1	2	3	4	5
8	The organisation's training and development program is developed to meet the criteria/requirement of the male and female.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>AGE</b>						
10	My team leaders include all members at different ages in problem solving and decision making.	1	2	3	4	5
11	The age differences in work group might cause conflict.	1	2	3	4	5
12	At work, I experience lack of bonding with people of different age group.	1	2	3	4	5
13	I am positive about age diversity in this workplace.	1	2	3	4	5
<b>ETHNICITY</b>						
14	The organisation does a good job of attracting and hiring minorities.	1	2	3	4	5
15	Opportunities for growth and advancement exist for minorities in my organisation.	1	2	3	4	5
16	The organisation concerns about the employee's customs, cultures, and values.	1	2	3	4	5
17	Different languages that are used to communicate do not create problems among employees.	1	2	3	4	5

18	At work, I developed low self-esteem due to my ethnicity.	1	2	3	4	5
19	The team leader includes all members at different ethnicity in problem solving and decision making.	1	2	3	4	5
20	I am positive about ethnic diversity in this work place	1	2	3	4	5
<b>EDUCATION BACKGROUND</b>						
21	The recruitment plan of the organisation is based on the education background of the employees.	1	2	3	4	5
22	The organisation provides paid study leave to employees who further their education.	1	2	3	4	5
23	Opportunities for growth and advancement exist for employees who have lower qualification in education.	1	2	3	4	5
24	The difference in education background does not encourage conflict.	1	2	3	4	5
25	At work, I experience lack of confidence due to my education background.	1	2	3	4	5
26	The team leader includes all members at different education level in problem solving and decision making	1	2	3	4	5
27	The organisation gives equal treatment when it comes to the diversity of education background	1	2	3	4	5

### Section C: EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

The questions below ask about your self-perceived performance. Based on your experiences and understanding, please indicate the most appropriate opinion/response with the scale below.

1= Strongly Disagree	2=Disagree	3= Neutral	4= Agree	5= Strongly Agree
----------------------	------------	------------	----------	-------------------

	DESCRIPTION	SCALE				
28	I always perform better than what can be characterised as acceptable performance.	1	2	3	4	5
29	I often perform better than what can be expected	1	2	3	4	5
30	I always reach my performance target	1	2	3	4	5
31	I consider my performance better than the average employee in this organization	1	2	3	4	5
32	Over ally, I am a very good performer	1	2	3	4	5
33	I often expend extra effort in carrying out my job	1	2		4	
34	I feel that my performance is reflective of my abilities	1	2	3	4	5
35	I try to work as hard as possible					

36	The quality of my work is superior	1	2	3	4	5
37	I intentionally expend a great deal of effort in carrying my job.	1	2	3	4	5

**THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING!!!!**

## ANNEXURE E: Ethical Clearance

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION  
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

NAME OF RESEARCHER/INVESTIGATOR:

**Mr S Zhuwao**  
**Student No: 11613005**

PROJECT TITLE: The effect of employees' perception  
of workforce diversity on their performance

PROJECT NO: SMS/16/HRM/03/2505

SUPERVISORS/ CO-RESEARCHERS/ CO-INVESTIGATORS

NAME	INSTITUTION & DEPARTMENT	ROLE
Dr TS Setati	University of Venda	Supervisor
Mr H Ngirande	University of Venda	Co-Supervisor
Mr S Zhuwao	University of Venda	Investigator - Student

ISSUED BY:

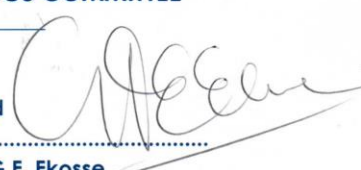
UNIVERSITY OF VENDA, RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Date Considered: May 2016

Decision by Ethical Clearance Committee Granted

Signature of Chairperson of the Committee: .....

Name of the Chairperson of the Committee: Prof. G.E. Ekosse



University of Venda

PRIVATE BAG X5050, TSHOHYANDOU, 0950, LIMPOPO PROVINCE, SOUTH AFRICA  
TELEPHONE (015) 962 8504/8313 FAX (015) 962 9060

*"A quality driven financially sustainable, rural-based Comprehensive University"*

## ANNEXURE F: Turn it report

### WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND ITS EFFECTS ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN A HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION IN SOUTH AFRICA: A CASE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

#### ORIGINALITY REPORT

<b>%22</b>	<b>%18</b>	<b>%4</b>	<b>%15</b>
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

#### PRIMARY SOURCES

<b>1</b>	<b>eprints.utar.edu.my</b> Internet Source	<b>%5</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>Submitted to University of Venda</b> Student Paper	<b>%1</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>uir.unisa.ac.za</b> Internet Source	<b>%1</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Submitted to University of Wales Institute, Cardiff</b> Student Paper	<b>%1</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>Submitted to University of South Africa</b> Student Paper	<b>%1</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>etd.uwc.ac.za</b> Internet Source	<b>%1</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>www.sciedu.ca</b> Internet Source	<b>&lt;%1</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>Submitted to London School of Marketing</b> Student Paper	<b>&lt;%1</b>



## ANNEXURE G: Editorial letter

### EDITING AND PROOF READING REPORT

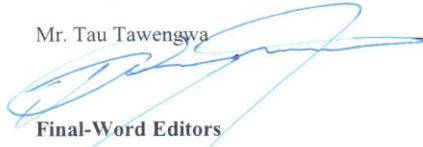
This letter is to confirm that I, Mr Tau T Tawengwa, author and proof-reader at **Final-Word Editors** of Huis 17-8, 2-8 Tuksdorp South St Hatfield, Pretoria do certify that I have proof read and edited a master's dissertation titled:

**Workforce Diversity and Its Effects on Employee Performance in a Higher Education Institution in South Africa: A Case of the University Of Venda**

By Mr S Zhuwao (11613005). I carefully read through the document focusing on proofreading and minor editorial issues. The recommended changes are highlighted and can be corrected or rejected using Microsoft Track changes system.

Sincerely

Mr. Tau Tawengwa



**Final-Word Editors**

Huis 17-8,

2-8 Tuksdorp

South St Hatfield,

Pretoria

[zimrays@gmail.com](mailto:zimrays@gmail.com)

00 27 712075989

00 263 773 789 373