

Review of: "How Do Team Diversity Act to Exercise Effect on Team Performance: Looking through the Lens of Cultural Intelligence among Employees"

Martina Zanella¹

¹ University of Dublin, Trinity College

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

Research question:

What is the relationship between team diversity and performance? Is this relationship mediated by cultural intelligence?

The research question is relevant and the setting is very interesting, especially considering the challenges posed by globalization. There is a growing need to integrate different cultures in working environments and provide services to users that are more and more diverse. The UK healthcare sector is a good example of this.

Main challenges:

1. The causal effect of diversity on performance cannot be identified, as the authors acknowledge in their limitations section
2. Self-reporting of performance and team cultural intelligence, no objective measures
 - a. How do they correlate with actual performance and cultural intelligence?
 - b. Are people truthful in their answers? Or do they answer differently because they know they are being studied and/or they might receive pressure from management (if I understood correctly, management has been involved in the study at the beginning)?
3. External validity: how generalizable are the findings of the study?

Suggestions:

1. Causal effect:
 - a. You say that you randomly selected care homes, but you do not describe how teams were selected within each care home. It would be useful to provide more information about how and why certain teams were selected.
 - b. How do care homes create teams?
 - i. Do they put together people who work well together? For example, similar people might be put to work in the same team when people are equipped with low cultural intelligence. Or, the other way around when people are equipped with high cultural intelligence or diverse people already work well together.

- ii. Or, on the other hand, teams' selection might have nothing to do with how well people work together. For example, team members might be selected based on shift patterns.

It would be useful to tell us more about this.

- a. How do the teams in this study compare to the other teams not in the study in terms of characteristics?

- b. Self-reporting of performance and team cultural intelligence

- a. Is there a way to say something about how these measures correlate with actual performance and team characteristics?
 - i. Is there a way to get data on more "objective" measures of performance, such as customers' evaluations for example?
 - ii. If you can do a follow-up survey, it would be interesting to add some questions regarding group cohesiveness or social skills. An example of the former is what has been used by Aron et al. (1992). Examples of the latter are the Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test (Baron-Cohen et al., 2001) and the Big 5 inventory (Bell, 2007; John and Srivastava, 1999)
 - iii. An alternative idea could be to make people perform some games. An example of this can be found in Weidman and Deming (2021) – a key reference for your study.
- b. You measure perceptions of team performance and cultural intelligence, not actual performance, and cultural intelligence. This is different but still interesting! Why don't you exploit this more?
 - i. You can for example exploit the fact that you are asking about team performance to every single person. Perceptions about how the team works might be different. You can exploit disagreement/agreement (for example measured as deviations from the mean) and look at how this correlates with performance
 - ii. You also measure supervisors' opinions – can you show something about whether supervisors' perceptions are different from team perceptions and whether this is correlated with better/worse performance? This might tell us something about leadership inadequacy
- c. Can you tell us something regarding how likely it is that participants are answering what their managers or researchers want them to answer?

- c. External validity:

- a. It would be useful to tell us how representatives Birmingham City's care homes are compared to the overall UK care homes

Additional comments:

- It is not very clear from the introduction what you do exactly. You have a long introduction on UK care homes, the situation of the healthcare sector in the UK, and what other studies have done, but you do not talk much about what

you do and what you find.

- It would be interesting to explore whether diversity is more or less useful depending on the task that the team performs or the objective the team has to reach
- It would be interesting to explore whether cultural intelligence should be considered a fixed trait or a capital that can be accumulated or depleted.

References:

Aron, A., Aron, E. N., & Smollan, D. (1992). Inclusion of Other in the Self Scale and the structure of interpersonal closeness. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 63(4), 596–612. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.63.4.596>

Baron-Cohen, S., Wheelwright, S., Hill, J., Raste, Y. and Plumb, I. (2001), The "Reading the Mind in the Eyes" Test Revised Version: A Study with Normal Adults, and Adults with Asperger Syndrome or High-functioning Autism. *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 42: 241-251. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1469-7610.00715>

Bell, S. T. (2007). Deep-level composition variables as predictors of team performance: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 92(3), 595–615. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.92.3.595>

John, O. P. and S. Srivastava (1999): The Big Five Trait Taxonomy: History, Measurement, and Theoretical Perspectives," *Handbook of personality: Theory and research*, 2, 102-138

Weidmann, B. and Deming, D.J. (2021), Team Players: How Social Skills Improve Team Performance. *Econometrica*, 89: 2637-2657. <https://doi.org/10.3982/ECTA18461>