

The impact of workplace diversity climate on perceived overqualification and career satisfaction: Moderating role of motivation of migrant employees

G. N. Wijesooriya, P. C. Gamage

*Department of International Business, Faculty of Management and Finance,
University of Colombo, Sri Lanka*

The growing emphasis on workplace diversity has prompted organizations to recognize the importance of fostering inclusive environments that shape employee experiences. However, existing literature highlights a lack of research on organizational antecedents and how diversity management practices influence the career satisfaction of migrants. Understanding the relationship between diversity climate and career outcomes is crucial since organizational practices such as recruitment, selection, performance management, and training can significantly impact migrants' careers. Furthermore, career outcomes of migrant employees are shaped by their individual characteristics such as determination, adaptability and career management techniques. This study investigates the impact of workplace diversity climate on perceived overqualification and career satisfaction among migrant employees with the moderating role of motivation. Drawing upon Person-Environment fit theory and Self-determination theory, this study adopts a positivist research philosophy with a quantitative approach. The Person-Environment fit theory explains how the mismatch of qualifications, diversified workplaces affect the career satisfaction of a migrant employee, while Self-Determination theory explains how crucial it is for an employee to be intrinsically motivated to achieve higher productivity, lower turnover and career satisfaction. The population of the study is Sri Lankan citizens currently employed abroad, mainly in foreign owned organizations across multiple countries and sectors. Data were collected from 110 respondents using a structured questionnaire. The study used purposive sampling and snowball sampling because migrant employees are geographically scattered and hard to access. Three hypotheses were derived to test the impact of diversity climate on the career satisfaction of migrant employees and to examine the mediating effect of perceived overqualification and the moderating effects of motivation. The research conducted quantitative analysis using SPSS, including correlation and regression analysis, mediation analysis via the Sobel test, and moderation analysis using interaction term regression. The findings revealed that the diversity climate significantly influences both perceived overqualification and career satisfaction, with motivation as a moderator. The workplace diversity climate positively influences career satisfaction, but this relationship is fully mediated by perceived overqualification indicating that migrant employee's feelings of being overqualified play a crucial role. Motivation acts as a significant moderator in the relationship between diversity climate and career satisfaction. The study theoretically contributes to the existing literature by identifying perceived overqualification and motivation as key psychological mechanisms that provide a nuanced understanding of how individual level factors interact to shape the career satisfaction of migrant employees, and offers practical recommendations for organizations aiming to create more inclusive, motivating work environments that foster employee satisfaction and retention. Moreover, it advances research on workplace diversity climate by examining its impact in the underexplored context of migrant employees, specifically Sri Lankans working in various parts of the world.

Keywords: *Diversity climate, Career satisfaction, Perceived overqualification, Motivation, Migrant employees*