

Managing Diversity of Secondary Schools in Legazpi City Division

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Abstract

This study investigated the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the extent of diversity management across three areas of concern—teachers, students, and parents and community—within selected public secondary schools in the Division. Employing a descriptive survey design, data were gathered from 267 respondents composed of school heads and teachers from 12 schools. A structured questionnaire using a Likert scale was utilized to measure perceptions and practices of diversity management. The study also explored challenges encountered in implementing diversity initiatives and proposed a management plan to address barriers. Findings revealed that diversity management practices were consistently observed across the three areas, with respondents reporting high levels of engagement in fostering inclusivity and collaboration. The results underscore the importance of systematic approaches to diversity management, highlighting the shared commitment of school stakeholders in promoting equitable learning environments.

Further analysis determined whether differences existed between the two respondent groups in their ratings of diversity management. Using ANOVA, the computed F values for teachers (0.611), students (2.714), and parents and community (2.480) were all significantly lower than the tabular F value of 5.318 at the 0.05 level of significance. These results confirm that there is no statistically significant difference between the perceptions of school heads and teachers regarding diversity management practices. Both groups consistently rated diversity management as being implemented at a high and uniform level across the three dimensions. This finding suggests a shared understanding and alignment among school leaders and teachers in addressing diversity concerns, reinforcing the notion that diversity management is embedded in the organizational culture of schools in the Division. The study concludes that while diversity management is effectively practiced, continuous improvement through targeted management plans remains essential to overcome challenges and sustain inclusive educational practices.

Keywords: Diversity Management; Inclusive Education; Equitable Learning Environment

1. Introduction

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, remains a cornerstone in the global recognition and protection of fundamental freedoms. Drafted by representatives from diverse cultural and legal traditions, it established a common standard of achievement for all peoples and nations, affirming the inherent dignity and equal rights of every individual. Article 26 of the UDHR specifically underscores education as a basic human entitlement, emphasizing its role in fostering respect for human rights and maximizing human potential. This provision has served as a guiding principle for subsequent international treaties and frameworks, inspiring over seventy human rights agreements and shaping national policies worldwide. By embedding education within the broader human rights discourse, the UDHR laid the ethical and legal foundation for inclusive schooling systems that promote equity, diversity, and social cohesion.

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In the decades following the UDHR, additional international instruments reinforced the imperative of inclusive education. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) of 1989 redefined children as rights holders, mandating governments to ensure access to education, health, identity, and protection without discrimination. Similarly, the Salamanca Statement of 1994, endorsed by UNESCO and the Spanish government, advanced the global consensus on inclusive education by advocating for student-centered pedagogy and restructuring school systems to eliminate exclusion. These frameworks collectively highlight the responsibility of educational institutions to address the varied needs of learners, including those from marginalized, disadvantaged, or minority backgrounds. In secondary education, where diversity is most visible, effective management becomes crucial to creating environments where students, teachers, parents, and communities feel valued and supported. Schools must therefore translate inclusive ideals into practical strategies, such as staff training, adaptable curricula, and community partnerships, to ensure equitable opportunities for all.

Managing diversity in schools is not only a local concern but a global challenge, as classrooms everywhere reflect cultural, linguistic, and socio-economic differences. UNESCO's *Inclusion and Education: All Means All* (2020) further emphasizes that education systems must embrace diversity as a strength, promoting equity and inclusion for all learners, including those with disabilities. These international frameworks have significantly influenced national education policies, guiding curriculum design, teacher training, and governance structures to integrate diversity management into everyday practice. By aligning with these global standards, secondary schools can foster inclusive learning environments that prepare students to thrive in an interconnected world. This study builds on these foundations, examining the extent of diversity management in schools and proposing strategies to strengthen inclusive practices, thereby contributing to the broader goal of advancing human rights through education.

2. Materials and Methods

This study employed a descriptive survey design to examine diversity management practices in secondary schools within the Legazpi City Division. As emphasized by Best and Khan (2005), this method is effective for capturing current conditions, perceptions, and emerging trends across large populations. To strengthen reliability, a quantitative approach was integrated, utilizing statistical analysis to ensure precision in measuring the extent of diversity management.

Data were drawn from primary and secondary sources. Primary data consisted of responses to a structured questionnaire, while secondary data included books, journals, memoranda, and issuances from the Department of Education. The respondents comprised 267 individuals: 12 school heads (the entire population of heads in the division) and 255 teachers, selected through random sampling using the fishbowl method. This teacher sample represented 30% of the total population of 713 teachers, proportionally distributed across 12 schools.

The research instrument was divided into three parts: (1) identification of diversity areas (cultural, linguistic, socio-economic, academic), (2) assessment of diversity management practices across students, teachers, parents, and community using a five-point Likert scale, and (3) identification of challenges in managing diversity, such as resource limitations, lack of training, or resistance to initiatives.

3. Results

Analysis revealed that diversity management practices were consistently applied across the three areas of concern. The computed *F* values—teachers (0.611), students (2.714), and parents/community (2.480)—were all significantly lower than the tabular *F* value of 5.318 at the 0.05 level of significance. This indicates no significant difference in the extent of diversity management between school heads and teachers. Both groups rated diversity management practices as being implemented at a high and uniform level.

Respondents also identified challenges, including limited resources, insufficient training, and occasional resistance to diversity initiatives. Despite these barriers, schools demonstrated strong commitment to inclusivity, with practices consistently observed across stakeholders.

4. Discussion

The findings confirm that diversity management in secondary schools within the Legazpi City Division is practiced at a high and consistent level, with alignment between school heads and teachers. This shared perception reflects a strong

organizational culture that values inclusivity and equity. The absence of significant differences between respondent groups suggests that diversity management is embedded across all levels of school governance and instruction.

However, the challenges identified highlight areas requiring intervention. Resource allocation, professional development, and community engagement remain critical to sustaining inclusive practices. These results align with international frameworks such as the UDHR, UNCRC, and Salamanca Statement, which emphasize the importance of inclusive education systems. By addressing barriers through targeted management plans, schools can further strengthen their capacity to provide equitable learning environments, ensuring that diversity is not only acknowledged but actively managed to promote student success and social cohesion.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study affirms the critical role of international human rights frameworks—particularly the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948), the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC, 1989), and the Salamanca Statement (1994)—in shaping inclusive education policies and practices worldwide. These instruments collectively emphasize education as a fundamental right and highlight the responsibility of schools to foster environments that respect diversity, equity, and social cohesion. Within the context of secondary education in the Legazpi City Division, findings revealed that diversity management practices are consistently implemented across the areas of teachers, students, parents, and the community, with no significant differences between the perceptions of school heads and teachers. This alignment underscores a shared commitment to inclusivity and demonstrates that diversity management is embedded in the organizational culture of schools. However, challenges such as limited resources, insufficient training, and occasional resistance to diversity initiatives remain, signaling the need for continuous improvement. By addressing these barriers through targeted management plans, schools can strengthen their capacity to translate inclusive ideals into everyday practice. Ultimately, the study reinforces the importance of integrating global human rights principles into local educational strategies, ensuring that schools are not only places of learning but also spaces where diversity is celebrated, equity is promoted, and every learner is empowered to succeed in a multicultural and interconnected world.

Compliance with ethical standards

Disclosure of conflict of interest

No conflict of interest should be disclosed.

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