

## **The Effect of Teaching Multicultural Awareness on Perceptions of Organizational Diversity: Implications for Organizational Leaders**

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— *Review of* —  
**Integrative  
Business &  
Economics**  
— *Research* —

### **ABSTRACT**

How influential is University coursework on student attitudes and beliefs? The researcher analyzed the change in student attitudes and beliefs about diversity in organizations as a result of taking Global Perspectives, a required course in the Bachelor of Science degree in Organizational Leadership program at Robert Morris University. University undergraduate students completed a pre-assessment and post-assessment of their attitudes and beliefs about organizational diversity during the first and last weeks of the course. It is assumed that the change in attitudes and beliefs over an eight-week period were attributed to the students' involvement in the Global Perspectives course. The author examined what specific attitudes and beliefs were effected as a result of the course and what course topics were associated with this change. The results of this study are meaningful for faculty and administrators in other university Organizational Leadership programs, as well as organizational leaders who are committed to promoting diversity in their corporations.

Keywords: Organizational Diversity, Workplace Diversity Initiatives, Multicultural Education.

### **1.0 Introduction**

How influential is University coursework on student attitudes and beliefs? The researcher analyzed the change in student attitudes and beliefs about diversity in organizations as a result of taking Global Perspectives, a required course in the Bachelor of Science degree in Organizational Leadership program at Robert Morris University. University undergraduate students completed a pre-assessment and post-assessment of their attitudes and beliefs about organizational diversity during the first and last weeks of the course. It is assumed that the change in attitudes and beliefs over an eight-week period were attributed to the students' involvement in the Global Perspectives course. The author examined what specific attitudes and beliefs were

effected as a result of the course and what course topics were associated with this change. The results of this study are meaningful for faculty and administrators in other university Organizational Leadership programs, as well as organizational leaders who are committed to promoting diversity in their corporations.

Recent advances in the social, political and technological arenas have resulted in a global workforce that consists of people from a wide spectrum of racial and ethnic backgrounds (United Nations Statistics Division, 2009). As the population of the United States becomes more diverse, all organizations, both for-profit and non-profit, must take steps to address the diversity of their community. Over 25% of the America workforce is comprised of minorities, and this percentage is expected to increase dramatically over the next ten years. Hispanics are the most rapidly growing group in the United States and have replaced African Americans as the second-largest ethnic group. The growth of Hispanics in the United States has, in fact, surpassed projections. Within the next fifty years, one in four Americans will be Hispanic, 14% will be African-American, and 8% will be Asian-American. By 2060, non-Hispanic whites will be in the minority (Gibbons, 2009; McShane & Von Glinow, 2003).

Organizational diversity is defined as “the ways in which people differ that may affect their organizational experience in terms of performance, motivation, communication, and inclusion” (Harvey & Allard, 2009). University degree programs in Organizational Leadership and Business commonly address organizational diversity in order to increase their students’ awareness of multiculturalism in the workplace.

The Bachelor of Science in Organizational Leadership program at Robert Morris University in Moon Township, Pennsylvania includes a course entitled “Global Perspectives”. The content of the course encompasses the following topic areas:

1. Understanding Individual Perspectives of Diversity
2. Understanding Social Identity Perspectives on Diversity
3. Understanding Organizational Diversity and Inclusion

## **2.0 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this research study is to determine the effect increased multicultural awareness has on students’ perceptions of diversity in their organizations in order to inform university faculty and administrators of the relevance of a multicultural awareness course in business or organizational leadership degree programs. Tangentially, this study will also inform organizational leaders of the

importance of diversity training for promoting and celebrating diversity within their company.

### 3.0 Research Questions

1. Will instruction in multicultural awareness change a student's perceptions of diversity in their organization?
2. If changes in perceptions of diversity occur, are they positive (productive) or negative (counterproductive) ideas?
3. What are these perceptions?

### 4.0 Review of the Literature

Diversity is defined as the ways in which people differ from one another, i.e., differences in gender, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual affinity, and abilities/disabilities. These differences can affect a person's performance, motivation, communication and inclusion within organizations (Harvey & Allard, 2009).

'Valuing diversity' can be defined as the ability to understand and appreciate the contributions that differences in people can make to organizations (Schockley-Zabalak, 2009). The ability to value diversity is imperative for organizational success in a global economy.

McShane and Von Glinow (2003) discuss the primary and secondary dimensions of workforce diversity. The primary dimensions represent personal characteristics that influence an individual's socialization and sense of identity, and include gender, ethnicity, age, race, sexual orientation, and mental/physical qualities. The secondary dimensions are those features that are learned or that we exercise some control over, such as education, marital status, religion and work experience. Essentially, workplace diversity describes the differences in the age, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation and values of employees (Schockley-Zabalak, 2009).

Bennett-Alexander & Hartman (2009) define multiculturalism as learning to understand, appreciate, and value (not just "tolerate") the unique aspects of cultures different from one's own. Multiculturalism and valuing diversity contribute to maximizing production and minimizing liability in organizations. Bennett-Alexander & Hartman (2009) offer nine steps to fostering diversity:

1. Aggressively recruit qualified, diverse candidates.
2. Speak out about inappropriate behavior.
3. Include employees and volunteers in decision making.
4. Introduce diversity education within the workplace.
5. Mentor a diverse student or colleague.

6. Share diversity development strategies with colleagues.
7. Incorporate diversity into all aspects of the workplace.
8. Review policies and practices for hindrance of diversity.
9. Broaden your definition of diversity to be inclusive of white males.

Bennett-Alexander & Hartman. (2009) recommend the following suggestions for eliminating barriers to diversity in organizations:

1. Think about and recognize your own cultural biases.
2. Learn more about different cultures within your own organization.
3. Enhance communication by focusing on the whole person and the content of the message.
4. Understand that diversity is a bottom-line business issue.

A diverse workforce is beneficial for business. As employees are exposed to new cultural perspectives, they re-examine their points-of-view and consider new ideas. This diversity of information is necessary to make decisions that will produce productive organizational action (Jehn, Northcraft & Neale, 1999; Simons, Pelled & Smith, 1999).

“Moreover, diversity enriches the workplace by broadening employee perspectives, strengthening their teams, and offering greater resources for problem resolution. The creative conflict that may emerge leads to close examination of assumptions, a more complex learning environment and, arguably, better solutions to workplace problems” (Herring, 2009).

## **5.0 Methodology**

### 5.1 Procedures

Students in the researcher’s undergraduate course entitled ‘Global Perspectives’ in the Department of Organizational Leadership, School of Communications and Information Systems at Robert Morris University, Moon Township, Pennsylvania were asked to complete a pre-assessment and post-assessment of their perceptions of diversity in organizations. These survey instruments can be found in Appendix A. The pre-assessment survey was administered during the first week of an eight-week session and the post-assessment survey administered during the final week of the course. All the students in the Department of Organizational Leadership are adult learners who are employed either full-time or part-time. The students’ identities have

been protected. Only the researcher has reviewed the survey responses which will be kept in a password protected file for a period of five years.

The survey responses were transcribed into a database and analyzed according to the General Inductive Approach to qualitative coding (Thomas, 2003). The text was read in detail to facilitate an understanding of the content, details, and themes in the text. A qualitative analysis of the survey questions was conducted by identifying the content of the constructs and arranging them in common themes or categories that aligned with the research questions. The themes were labeled according to the meaning of the constructs relating to each research question. Overlapping coding and un-coded text were examined to determine if the information warranted mentions in the text. The researcher selected a key quote to highlight each theme and the results were reported.

## 5.2 Results

58 undergraduate students participated in this research study. N = 58

### 5.2.1 Pre-Assessment Survey

A quantitative analysis of each survey question follows. The reoccurring themes for the Pre-Assessment Survey were “Fairly Knowledgeable” and “Not Knowledgeable”. The researcher calculated the percentage of students who demonstrated that they were “Fairly Knowledgeable” and “Not Knowledgeable” about the content in each question.

1. Describe your knowledge of laws and legal and ethical issues related to diversity.

Table 1.0 Pre-Assessment Survey: Question One Results

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Percentage of Students</b>
	<b>#Students/N</b>
Fairly Knowledgeable	33/58 = 57 %
Not Knowledgeable	25/58 = 43%

One participant commented: “I realized that I have a lot to learn about diversity, and that I am more closed-minded than I originally thought. After taking this assessment, I am intrigued about what I will learn in this course. I feel it will help me manage a diverse group of individuals and can potentially help my

company become more diverse.”

2. What is your awareness of individual and organizational multiple social identities?

Table 2.0 Pre-Assessment Survey: Question Two Results

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Percentage of Students</b>
	<b>#Students/N</b>
Fairly Knowledgeable	39/58 = 67 %
Not Knowledgeable	19/58 = 33%

One participant commented: “As I continue in this course, I must seek objective answers to this question as I gain perspectives on other cultures.”

3. Share your knowledge of concepts of culture and the range of cultural behaviors and expectations.

Table 3.0 Pre-Assessment Survey: Question Three Results

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Percentage of Students</b>
	<b>#Students/N</b>
Fairly Knowledgeable	35/58 = 60 %
Not Knowledgeable	23/58 = 40%

One participant commented: “Studying nursing, or any medical profession, students are taught to know and understand different cultures and their beliefs.”

4. What do you know about the formation and impact of stereotypes?

Table 4.0 Pre-Assessment Survey: Question Four Results

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Percentage of Students</b>
	<b>#Students/N</b>

Fairly Knowledgeable	53/58 = 91 %
Not Knowledgeable	5/58 = 9%

One participant commented: “We all use stereotypes as a natural defense mechanism to help us deal with things we have experienced in the past, and it is difficult to deal with the changing of our preconceived attitudes towards something or someone. That being said, I understand the impact that stereotypes can have on someone by making them feel like you are judging them without really knowing them.”

#### 5. Are you aware of psychological theories of prejudice and discrimination?

Table 5.0 Pre-Assessment Survey: Question Five Results

Degree of Knowledge	Percentage of Students
	#Students/N
Fairly Knowledgeable	56/58 = 97 %
Not Knowledgeable	2/58 = 3%

One participant commented: “As a psychology major, one of the reasons I took this course was to learn about different ways to deal with culturally diverse people.”

#### 6. Do you understand your own cultural values, biases and behaviors and how they may influence one’s behavior and interactions in organizations?

Table 6.0 Pre-Assessment Survey: Question Six Results

Degree of Knowledge	Percentage of Students
	#Students/N
Fairly Knowledgeable	58/58 = 100 %
Not Knowledgeable	0/58 = 0%

One participant commented: “I am aware that my own cultural biases will influence my behavior, and by extending this thought, I know that the cultural biases of others will influence their behaviors. I know it will be important to

know how to round up and direct these behaviors toward a common goal, but I do not yet possess the required skill set to make it happen.”

7. What are the issues and challenges related to the management of a diverse workforce?

Table 7.0 Pre-Assessment Survey: Question Seven Results

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Percentage of Students</b>
	<b>#Students/N</b>
Fairly Knowledgeable	8/58 = 14 %
Not Knowledgeable	50/58 = 86%

One participant commented: “After taking this pre-course assessment, I find myself in the middle of the road. It would seem that I am aware that a diversified workplace is a great concept, but I do not currently possess the skills and knowledge to be effective in implementing such diversity.”

8. Identify potential gains from a diverse workforce.

Table 8.0 Pre-Assessment Survey: Question Eight Results

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Percentage of Students</b>
	<b>#Students/N</b>
Fairly Knowledgeable	7/58 = 12 %
Not Knowledgeable	51/58 = 88%

One participant commented: “I think the disabled population is underrepresented in the workforce.”

9. What do you know about flexibility in management style that meets the needs of diverse employees?

Table 9.0 Pre-Assessment Survey: Question Nine Results

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Percentage of Students</b>
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	<b>#Students/N</b>
Fairly Knowledgeable	52/58 = 89 %
Not Knowledgeable	6/58 = 11%

One participant commented: “My goal in this course is to really gain new insight on all aspects of diversity within organizations and how they play an important role not only in the organization, but individuals and myself.”

10. Have you conducted a diversity audit of a web site of a company? Explain.

Table 10.0 Pre-Assessment Survey: Question Ten Results

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Percentage of Students</b>
	<b>#Students/N</b>
Fairly Knowledgeable	10/58 = 17 %
Not Knowledgeable	48/58 = 83%

One participant commented: “I already think about these topics a lot and have been trying to be a culturally aware person for most of my life. However, I lack knowledge on some more specific topics like critical analysis of a web site of a company. I simply don’t have experience doing things like that.”

11. Do you comprehend international and intercultural communication skills?

Table 11.0 Pre-Assessment Survey: Question Eleven Results

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Percentage of Students</b>
	<b>#Students/N</b>
Fairly Knowledgeable	2/58 = 4 %
Not Knowledgeable	56/58 = 96%

One participant commented: “I have the least knowledge in the areas of international and countercultural communication skills and understanding. I hope to be more educated on these areas by the end of this course.”

## 12. What ethical behaviors are imperative in a diverse organization?

Table 12.0 Pre-Assessment Survey: Question Twelve Results

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Percentage of Students</b> <b>#Students/N</b>
Fairly Knowledgeable	12/58 = 21 %
Not Knowledgeable	46/58 = 79%

One participant commented: “I think of myself as an ethical manager, but can always learn more about ethical behaviors in a diverse workplace. The workplace changes often and keeping an open mind to new or different ideas is always beneficial.”

## 13. Outline your understanding of the business case for diversity.

Table 13.0 Pre-Assessment Survey: Question Thirteen Results

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Percentage of Students</b> <b>#Students/N</b>
Fairly Knowledgeable	4/58 = 7 %
Not Knowledgeable	54/58 = 93%

One participant commented: “I have traveled the world and currently hold a management position with one of the largest companies in the world. Diversity training is important to my organization and is continuous. We, in management, must take required online courses where we cover laws and have study groups in which we play out scenarios and evaluate our performance of handling different diversity issues.”

## 5.2.2 Post-Assessment Survey

A quantitative analysis of each survey question follows. The reoccurring themes for the Post-Assessment Survey were “Knowledgeable” and “Fairly Knowledgeable”. The researcher calculated the percentage of students who

demonstrated that they were “Knowledgeable” and “Fairly Knowledgeable” about the content in each question.

1. Describe your knowledge of laws and legal and ethical issues related to diversity.

Table 14.0 Post-Assessment Survey: Question One Results

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Percentage of Students</b>
	<b>#Students/N</b>
Knowledgeable	55/58 = 95 %
Fairly Knowledgeable	3/58 = 5%

Student comment: “In the beginning of this course, I was aware that some individuals are legally protected from discrimination. However, I discovered that discrimination and bias can be applied to many more situations than I initially recognized.”

2. What is your awareness of individual and organizational multiple social identities?

Table 15.0 Post-Assessment Survey: Question Two Results

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Percentage of Students</b>
	<b>#Students/N</b>
Knowledgeable	56/58 = 97 %
Fairly Knowledgeable	2/18 = 3%

One student stated, “I considered myself aware of the many individual and organizational social identities: primary, secondary and tertiary and how these characteristics are combined, overlapped and compiled for each individual. However, the numerous possible attribute combinations along with the importance than an individual can place on any single or multiple cultural identities really did not occur to me until I read the material in this course.”

3. Share your knowledge of concepts of culture and the range of cultural behaviors and expectations.

Table 16.0 Post-Assessment Survey: Question Three Results

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Percentage of Students</b> <b>#Students/N</b>
Knowledgeable	54/58 = 93 %
Fairly Knowledgeable	4/58 = 7%

Student comment: “Cultural behaviors and patterns of thinking are ingrained in people and create certain expectations. I now realize that these expectations may not always be clear and sometimes are the underlying factors of one’s behavior.”

#### 4. What do you know about the formation and impact of stereotypes?

Table 17.0 Post-Assessment Survey: Question Four Results

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Percentage of Students</b> <b>#Students/N</b>
Knowledgeable	58/58 = 100 %
Fairly Knowledgeable	0/58 = 0%

A participant stated, “Stereotypes and discrimination are factors that are unfortunately present in most work environments, but this course made me realize the detrimental impact it can have on the organizational culture.”

#### 5. Are you aware of psychological theories of prejudice and discrimination?

Table 18.0 Post-Assessment Survey: Question Five Results

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Percentage of Students</b> <b>#Students/N</b>
Knowledgeable	47/58 = 81 %
Fairly Knowledgeable	11/58 = 19%

Student comment: “By researching diversity and the impact diversity has on organizations as well as individuals, I have gained more of an understanding of all facets regarding this subject, particularly prejudice and discrimination, and its impact on human relations in the workplace, as well as on a personal level.”

6. Do you understand your own cultural values, biases and behaviors and how they may influence one's behavior and interactions in organizations?

Table 19.0 Post-Assessment Survey: Question Six Results

Degree of Knowledge	Percentage of Students
	#Students/N
Knowledgeable	57/58 = 98 %
Fairly Knowledgeable	1/58 = 2%

As one student stated, "I thought I understood the concept of culture and the differences in cultural behavior and expectations, It was only after thoroughly examining my own cultural identity and the weight or priority that I placed on cultural primary and secondary characteristics that I realized how it has affected my own opinions, biases, and judgments."

7. What are the issues and challenges related to the management of a diverse workforce?

Table 20.0 Post-Assessment Survey: Question Seven Results

Degree of Knowledge	Percentage of Students
	#Students/N
Knowledgeable	56/58 = 97 %
Fairly Knowledgeable	2/58 = 3%

One student stated, "Although I gained a greater perspective of cultural knowledge, I have always appreciated the need for a diverse workforce. Flexibility in management style allows a leader to communicate with diverse employees as individuals."

8. Identify potential gains from a diverse workforce.

Table 21.0 Post-Assessment Survey: Question Eight Results

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Percentage of Students</b>
	<b>#Students/N</b>
Knowledgeable	58/58 = 100 %
Fairly Knowledgeable	0/58 = 0%

Student comment: “As a concept, diversity is considered to be inclusive of everyone. In many ways, diversity initiatives complement non-discrimination compliance programs by creating a workplace environment and organizational culture that fosters cooperation. Diversity is about learning from others, about dignity and respect for all, and about creating a workplace environment and practices that encourage learning from others and captures the advantage of diverse perspectives.”

9. What do you know about flexibility in management style that meets the needs of diverse employees?

Table 22.0 Post-Assessment Survey: Question Nine Results

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Percentage of Students</b>
	<b>#Students/N</b>
Knowledgeable	53/58 = 91 %
Fairly Knowledgeable	5/58 = 9%

As one student stated, “I feel the importance of flexibility in management style is paramount. I am now personally comfortable in my management style flexibility to fit diverse audiences. I am able to establish a trust faculty with people of diverse backgrounds and beliefs.”

10. Have you conducted a diversity audit of a web site of a company? Explain.

Table 23.0 Post-Assessment Survey: Question Ten Results

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Percentage of Students</b>
	<b>#Students/N</b>
Knowledgeable	44/58 = 76 %

Fairly Knowledgeable	14/58 = 24%
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One student stated, “I realized the importance of closely examining any web site or organizational newsletter to ensure that it does not promote negative stereotypes and that it addresses a diverse audience.”

11. Do you comprehend international and intercultural communication skills?

Table 24.0 Post-Assessment Survey: Question Eleven Results

Degree of Knowledge	Percentage of Students
	#Students/N
Knowledgeable	58/58 = 100 %
Fairly Knowledgeable	0/58 = 0%

As one student stated, “A company is more marketable when it is proficient in international and intercultural communication.”

12. What ethical behaviors are imperative in a diverse organization?

Table 25.0 Post-Assessment Survey: Question Twelve Results

Degree of Knowledge	Percentage of Students
	#Students/N
Knowledgeable	55/58 = 95 %
Fairly Knowledgeable	3/58 = 5%

One student stated, “I thought I understood ethics prior to this class, but the readings and discussion really fleshed out and improved my knowledge of organizational ethics.”

13. Outline your understanding of the business case for diversity.

Table 26.0 Post-Assessment Survey: Question Thirteen Results

Degree of Knowledge	Percentage of Students
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	<b>#Students/N</b>
Knowledgeable	52/58 = 90 %
Fairly Knowledgeable	6/58 = 10%

Student comment: “In making the business case for diversity, we all need to remember that diversity creates employee satisfaction, because people feel respected as individuals and confident in the company’s support of their individuality and contributions. Management is able to utilize the vast array of experience and knowledge to serve the client or vendor on a personal level.”

### 5.2.3 Comparison of Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment Data

1. Describe your knowledge of laws and legal and ethical issues related to diversity.

Table 27.0 Comparison of Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment Data – Q1

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Pre-Assessment</b>	<b>Post-Assessment</b>	<b>Change in the Degree of Knowledge</b>
Knowledgeable	0%	95%	+95%
Fairly Knowledgeable	57%	5%	-52%
Not Knowledgeable	43%	0%	-43%

2. What is your awareness of individual and organizational multiple social identities?

Table 28.0 Comparison of Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment Data – Q2

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Pre-Assessment</b>	<b>Post-Assessment</b>	<b>Change in the Degree of Knowledge</b>
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Knowledgeable	0%	93%	+93%
Fairly Knowledgeable	67%	7%	-60%
Not Knowledgeable	33%	0%	-33%

3. Share your knowledge of concepts of culture and the range of cultural behaviors and expectations.

Table 29.0 Comparison of Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment Data – Q3

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Pre-Assessment</b>	<b>Post-Assessment</b>	<b>Change in the Degree of Knowledge</b>
Knowledgeable	0%	93%	+93%
Fairly Knowledgeable	60%	7%	-53%
Not Knowledgeable	40%	0%	-40%

4. What do you know about the formation and impact of stereotypes?

Table 30.0 Comparison of Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment Data – Q4

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Pre-Assessment</b>	<b>Post-Assessment</b>	<b>Change in the Degree of Knowledge</b>
Knowledgeable	0%	100%	+100%
Fairly	91%	0%	-91%

Knowledgeable			
Not Knowledgeable	9%	0%	-9%

5. Are you aware of psychological theories of prejudice and discrimination?

Table 31.0 Comparison of Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment Data – Q5

Degree of Knowledge	Pre-Assessment	Post-Assessment	Change in the Degree of Knowledge
Knowledgeable	0%	81%	+81%
Fairly Knowledgeable	97%	19%	-78%
Not Knowledgeable	3%	0%	-3%

6. Do you understand your own cultural values, biases and behaviors and how they may

influence one's behavior and interactions in organizations?

Table 32.0 Comparison of Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment Data – Q6

Degree of Knowledge	Pre-Assessment	Post-Assessment	Change in the Degree of Knowledge
Knowledgeable	0%	98%	+98%
Fairly Knowledgeable	100%	2%	-98%
Not	0%	0%	0%

Knowledgeable			
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7. What are the issues and challenges related to the management of a diverse workforce?

Table 33.0 Comparison of Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment Data – Q7

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Pre-Assessment</b>	<b>Post-Assessment</b>	<b>Change in the Degree of Knowledge</b>
Knowledgeable	0%	97%	+97%
Fairly Knowledgeable	14%	3%	-11%
Not Knowledgeable	86%	0%	-86%

8. Identify potential gains from a diverse workforce.

Table 34.0 Comparison of Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment Data – Q8

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Pre-Assessment</b>	<b>Post-Assessment</b>	<b>Change in the Degree of Knowledge</b>
Knowledgeable	0%	100%	+100%
Fairly Knowledgeable	12%	0%	-12%
Not Knowledgeable	88%	0%	-88%

9. What do you know about flexibility in management style that meets the needs of diverse employees?

Table 35.0 Comparison of Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment Data – Q9

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Pre-Assessment</b>	<b>Post-Assessment</b>	<b>Change in the Degree of Knowledge</b>
Knowledgeable	0%	91%	+91%
Fairly Knowledgeable	89%	9%	-80%
Not Knowledgeable	11%	0%	-11%

10. Have you conducted a diversity audit of a web site of a company? Explain.

Table 36.0 Comparison of Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment Data – Q10

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Pre-Assessment</b>	<b>Post-Assessment</b>	<b>Change in the Degree of Knowledge</b>
Knowledgeable	0%	76%	+76%
Fairly Knowledgeable	17%	24%	+7%
Not Knowledgeable	83%	0%	-83%

11. Do you comprehend international and intercultural communication skills?

Table 37.0 Comparison of Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment Data – Q11

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Pre-Assessment</b>	<b>Post-Assessment</b>	<b>Change in the Degree of Knowledge</b>
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<b>Knowledge</b>			<b>Knowledge</b>
Knowledgeable	0%	100%	+100%
Fairly Knowledgeable	4%	0%	-4%
Not Knowledgeable	96%	0%	-96%

12. What ethical behaviors are imperative in a diverse organization?

Table 38.0 Comparison of Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment Data – Q12

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Pre-Assessment</b>	<b>Post-Assessment</b>	<b>Change in the Degree of Knowledge</b>
Knowledgeable	0%	95%	+95%
Fairly Knowledgeable	21%	5%	-6%
Not Knowledgeable	79%	0%	-79%

13. Outline your understanding of the business case for diversity.

Table 39.0 Comparison of Pre-Assessment and Post-Assessment Data – Q13

<b>Degree of Knowledge</b>	<b>Pre-Assessment</b>	<b>Post-Assessment</b>	<b>Change in the Degree of Knowledge</b>
Knowledgeable	0%	90%	+90%
Fairly	7%	10%	+3%

Knowledgeable			
Not Knowledgeable	93%	0%	-93%

The degree of 'Not Knowledgeable' and the degree of 'Fairly Knowledgeable' decreased overall as a result of taking this course. Most importantly, the degree of 'Knowledgeable' increased remarkably as a result of taking this course.

## 6.0 Conclusions

The researcher addressed the three research questions of this study in the following way.

1. Will instruction in multicultural awareness change an employee's perceptions of diversity in their organization?

Yes, the participants' perceptions of diversity were changed. Their degree of 'Not Knowledgeable' and the degree of 'Fairly Knowledgeable' decreased as a result of taking this course. Most importantly, the degree of 'Knowledgeable' increased substantially as a result of taking this course. Therefore, the participants' multicultural awareness and appreciation of diversity was improved as a result of taking the Global Perspectives course.

2. If changes in perceptions of diversity occur, are they positive (productive) or negative (counterproductive) ideas?

The student comments revealed that all changes in perceptions of diversity were positive in nature.

3. What are these perceptions?

The perceptions include a heightened awareness, knowledge and appreciation for:

- a. International and intercultural communication
- b. Organizational ethics
- c. Organizational diversity

d. Cultural behavior and expectations

e. Multiple social identities

As one student stated, “The most significant lesson learned from the material presented in this course is that I now have a greater degree of understanding of my own perceptions and a greater degree of comprehension concerning the conceptual aspects of managing diversity.”

## **7.0 Discussion**

In order to facilitate multicultural awareness and an appreciation of diversity in the workplace and in society, it is recommended that students study the following topics in a university diversity course or employers address the following in a workplace diversity training workshop:

1. Laws and legal and ethical issues related to diversity.
2. Awareness of individual and organizational multiple social identities.
3. Concepts of culture and the range of cultural behaviors and expectations.
4. The formation and impact of stereotypes.
5. Psychological theories of prejudice and discrimination.
6. Their own cultural values, biases and behaviors and how they may influence one’s behavior and interactions in organizations.
7. Issues and challenges related to the management of a diverse workforce.
8. Potential gains from a diverse workforce.
9. Management styles that meet the needs of diverse employees.
10. A diversity audit of an organization’s web site.
11. International and intercultural communication skills.
12. Ethical behaviors in a diverse organization.
13. The business case for diversity.

## **APPENDIX**

## Survey Instruments

The following surveys were adapted from Harvey, C.P. & Allard, M.J. (2009). *Understanding and Managing Diversity*. (4th ed.) Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson-Prentice Hall.

### Pre-Assessment Survey

1. Describe your knowledge of laws and legal and ethical issues related to diversity.
2. What is your awareness of individual and organizational multiple social identities?
3. Share your knowledge of concepts of culture and the range of cultural behaviors and expectations.
4. What do you know about the formation and impact of stereotypes?
5. Are you aware of psychological theories of prejudice and discrimination?
6. Do you understand your own cultural values, biases and behaviors and how they may influence one's behavior and interactions in organizations?
7. What are the issues and challenges related to the management of a diverse workforce?
8. Identify potential gains from a diverse workforce.
9. What do you know about flexibility in management style that meets the needs of diverse employees?
10. Have you conducted a diversity audit of a web site of a company? Explain.
11. Do you comprehend international and intercultural communication skills?
12. What ethical behaviors are imperative in a diverse organization?
13. Outline your understanding of the business case for diversity.

### Post-Assessment Survey

1. Describe your knowledge of laws and legal and ethical issues related to diversity.

2. What is your awareness of individual and organizational multiple social identities?
3. Share your knowledge of concepts of culture and the range of cultural behaviors and expectations.
4. What do you know about the formation and impact of stereotypes?
5. Are you aware of psychological theories of prejudice and discrimination?
6. Do you understand your own cultural values, biases and behaviors and how they may influence one's behavior and interactions in organizations?
7. What are the issues and challenges related to the management of a diverse workforce?
8. Identify potential gains from a diverse workforce.
9. What do you know about flexibility in management style that meets the needs of diverse employees?
10. Have you conducted a diversity audit of a web site of a company? Explain.
11. Do you comprehend international and intercultural communication skills?
12. What ethical behaviors are imperative in a diverse organization?
13. Outline your understanding of the business case for diversity.

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