

Employees' Perception on Diversity in Management

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Abstract: This paper attempts to study the differences in the perception of the employees across gender and categories towards diversity management at the workplace. The diversity in workforce can be managed through effective human resource management practices. Employees are, irrespective of their diverse nature, readily accepting the diversity and diversity management in the organization. Generally, employees deduced that women are not capable of assuming leadership roles as they believe that, they possess the traits of leadership viz., emotionally stable, temperament, self – reliant, competitive, self-confident, ambitious and well informed of the current affairs and happenings. The diversity management contributes to the performance of employees with the help of work practices and policies irrespective of their diverse nature. Diversity in management influences the performance of employees in the first instance in turn affects the organisation's performance. Increasing Diversity in human resource is one of the positive indicators of productivity increase. Organisations also started introducing work teams to integrate the knowledge of workers across specialisations and geographic locations. The kind of workforce diversity can be planned based on the recruitment process because the integration of employees with diverse nature can bring creativity, innovation and multiple perspectives of grievance handling to the competitive advantage of the organization. The differences in personal, cultural and societal background of the employees influence their skills set and productivity potential. This study gives theoretical knowledge regarding the strategies followed to increase the potentiality of diversity management from the point of view of the employees so as to maximize outcomes to both the employees as well as to the management as a whole.

Keywords: Diversity Management, Employee Perception, Productivity, Employee Performance

I. INTRODUCTION

Human Resource is an important asset of an organization than the capital and other physical resources. The success of any organization is completely depends on the efficiency and effectiveness of the work force and the policies adopted to mould the workforce. Anything can be reached by the organization with the support of the employees. So it is important to manage the human resources in such a way to achieve the organizational goals in turn to satisfy and fulfill the needs and demands of the employees. Each employee is different from others as that of their needs and wants. This difference is because of their religion, education background, age, gender and etc. may affect inter personal

relationship among workgroup. In order to manage this diversified workgroup, the organization should adapt and follow tactful strategies to maintain and increase the productivity.

Diversity in Management means that the organisations are becoming more heterogeneous mix of people from different domains i.e., 'Bringing together a variety of people together' to gather a variety of novel ideas with different perspectives without getting into collision in the work place. Now-a-days organisations are interested in appointing people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds with different age groups, gender, religion and ability. Organization that accepts Work Force Diversity should enhance its skills base to be more innovative and competitive. The organisations should invest their money and time in training programs, creating flexible work opportunities, developing new work-life policies and etc.

The concept of 'diversity in management' originated in the US and adopted in the industrialised countries of the West including the UK, Canada and Australia. The concept is derived from the demographic, socio-cultural and economic environments in the US and other Western countries.

- Initially Diversity was done based on Race, Color, Religion or Natural origin for the members of armed forces.
- Later the companies in Silicon Valley, started considering them as trade secret i.e., favouring the concept but not releasing their diversity status as it would cause competitive harm for their existence.

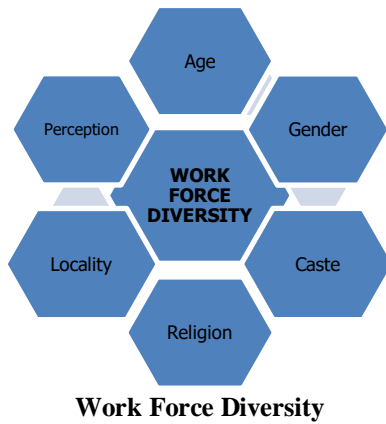
II. MEANING OF DIVERSITY IN MANAGEMENT

Workforce diversity consists of employees from different backgrounds of domestic and national backgrounds. The elements of diversity consist of age, gender, ethnicity, race, physical ability, sexual orientation, income level, marital status, geographic location, parental status.

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Work Force Diversity

III. DEFINITION OF WORK PLACE DIVERSITY

Workforce diversity implies ‘creating an organisational climate in which a heterogeneous workforce performs to its best potential; without the organisation favouring any particular segment of workforce with a view to facilitate the best attainment of organisational goals’.

It should create an inclusive environment that adopts each individual’s differences considering the strengths and providing opportunities to utilize their full potential for the betterment in the performance of the organization.

Accepting diversity among the workforce positively impact not only on the internal activities but also with the stakeholders who directly interact with the business regularly in different ways. This diversity not only brings the potential benefits for the business but also come out with the potential risks like differences in opinion, perceptions, culture collision and conflicts among the employees. In order to manage this diversity issues, the management should implement strong work life policies and strategies to match the ever changing environment.

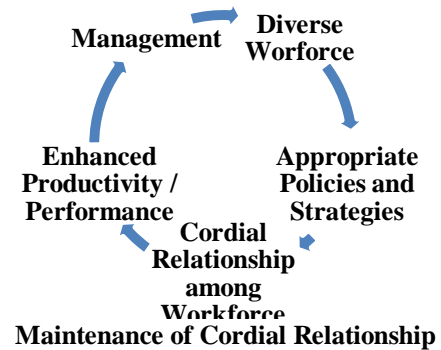


Impact of Work Force Diversity

The above figure interprets that, if the management is interested in implementing diverse workforce and able to channelize the varied kind of employees towards the target without any deviation and disturbance, can enhance the productivity/performance of the organization. Undoubtedly, the diverse workforce can be utilized in such a way to make use of their diverse skillsets to fulfil the targets and even go beyond that.

Another possible problem what the organization will face is Gender discrimination and language. Due to the increased rate of LPG (Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization), the workplace of any organization is also facing a lot of changes. Entering of increased number womenfolk into the work, employees from varied geographical locations, varied culture and language create another problem of co-ordination which may, sometimes, disturb the inter-personal relationship among the workforce. Maintaining cordial relationship among another issue to be faced by the organization that can be solved with the help of appropriate policies and strategies in order to maintain and

increase the performance both in terms of productivity and profitability. The effectiveness and efficiency of the organization can also be measured in terms of its productivity and in economic terms, through increased profitability. Performance and Profitability are directly related to each other. If performance is enhanced automatically the profitability is also increased if the external factors remain constant and vice versa.



Maintenance of Cordial Relationship

IV. TYPES OF DIVERSITY

Diversity in workforce can be identified based on few variables which are enlisted in the following table.

Types of Diversity

Sl. No.	Type	Based on	Components
1	Demographic	Demographic background	Age, gender, caste, religion, ethnicity, race, ability and disability status
2	Experiential	Life experiences	Being a parent, being an employee, former doctor, being a policeman, immigrant, etc.
3	Informational	Individual knowledge and educational background	Completed schooling, being a graduate, post graduate, professional degree holder and etc.
4	Fundamental	Individual beliefs and values	Importance of ethics in work place, relationship among the workforce.

V. HOW TO INCORPORATE DIVERSITY?

Organizations have to find out the ways and means to incorporate the diversity in their workforce in order to reap the benefits out of it, such as, variety of ideas to incorporate, varied number of perceptions, enhanced productivity, increased profitability and etc. without causing any disturbance in their regular operations. The diversity practices can be



- i. incorporated even from the recruitment process where they can pool the talents from various backgrounds;
- ii. pervaded into the practices of advertising to ensure the products or services to reach the target customers from various backgrounds using print media, online, television and etc.
- iii. used to identify the varied options available to finance the operations of the business like through raising share capital, loans from banks, financial institutions, friends, ploughing back of the available profits and etc.
- iv. considered even in taking decisions regarding the tapping of markets to reach the target customers such as, local markets, national or international markets, online markets, MLM and etc.

VI. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. **Bacouel and Jentjens**(2019) published an article on Diversity in the management of a private organization. This paper investigates on the very existence of diversity management'. Interviews were conducted on semi- structured form to extract the data from the employees working in private organisations. A case study was conducted to identify the importance of workforce composition and power to execute the same.
 2. **Garg and Ganesh** (2018) presented an article on employees perception and diversity in management. Data were collected from employees with various backgrounds using Pan – India Survey. The variables like awareness on diversity practices, attitude towards diversity management and perception on the discrimination at workplaces were identified and studied using the demographic and structural characteristics of the employees.
 3. **Otaye** (2018) studied the perception of employees on the practices of diversity management. In this study 590 employees from various organisations were identified as samples and studied the variables using 9 points scale was used to achieve utmost accuracy in the data to provide accurate results in the analysis. This study insisted on the discussion of the implications for theory and future research
 4. **Velten and Lashley** (2018) identified the impact of cultural diversity on the employees motivation. The research was done with the help of data provided by the front office and house-keeping employees through the semi structured interviews. Cultural diversity occupied an important role in the motivation of employees. Cultural diversity is positively related to the employees working in the organisations and at the same time, proper care is to be taken to avoid conflicts at the work place.
 5. **Cho and Kim** (2017) conducted a study in social enterprises on the importance of diversity strategies. In depth interviews were conducted among the employees in social enterprises. Thematic analysis was used to analysed the data collected. It was concluded that the workforce diversity and diversity management were positively related to the organizational performance.
 6. **Manoharan** (2017) in his article concentrated on the role of diversity in the hospitality industry. The diversity components of age, gender and migrants were studied along with the diversity management practices. It is observed that, comprehensive literature study is to be done to understand the concept of diversity and its components with the help of various policies and strategies.
 7. **Kim and Mullins** (2016) conducted a study on the interaction of work/family issues and diversity. In this study he investigated the organizational factors using perceived organizational support theory. He suggested that there is a need for supervisors' support to balance the work and personal life of employees and to maintain effective Diversity in management.
 8. **Lu.et al** (2015) analysed the role of human resource management in the implementation of divesity. This study was conducted in a Taiwan's fashion industry to examine the effect of interaction of diversity in terms of age, tenure of employment and experience. Data was collected from the managers and front line employees and multiple regression analysis was used to analyse and interpret the data.
 9. **Selvaraj** (2015) analysed the position of the organisations in Singapore in using the diverse workforce. In this study, the focus was given on the factors like age, gender and ethnicity of the workforce. A semi-structured questionnaire was administered to collect the data from the employees from both the manufacturing and service industries. Cronbach's alpha test was used to test the reliability of the data collected and to analyse the performance of the employees in relation to diversity factors the SPSS tool was used. It was concluded that, the human resource practices suggested by the employees should be implemented to get the optimum results.
 10. **Choi and Rainey** (2014) examined how the organization is fair in implementing the diversity in management. This study has examined how the perceived organizational fairness is related to diversity in management. Regression analysis was used to analyse the data gathered. The results indicated that the fair stand of the organization is positively related to the diversity in management.
- It is understood from the literature review that, Diversity in management plays an important role in influencing the organizational performance and its competitive advantage. If Diversity in management is properly implemented and managed, there is a positive response on the performance of organization in terms of its profitability, creativity, employee engagement, reduction in turnover, reputation building and competitive advantage. The issues related to various aspects could be easily resolved with the help of diverse perspectives and ideas from the manifold workforce

from different platforms. It is evident that, now-a-days, the entry of womenfolk into action is in increasing pace, competing the men who are already in the show. This is also another factor that influences the vary functioning of the organization in a positive manner.

VII. REASONS FOR DIVERSITY IN MANAGEMENT

The following are the few reasons why the organization is interested in implementing the diversity in different avenues,

- i. It can reduce unwanted employee turnover and absenteeism. The organization can also use its varied kind of employees in the appropriate places as per their competency and needs of the concern.
- ii. In order to serve the customers from different categories, this diverse work groups can be utilized. The issues relating to locality, language, culture and etc. the organization can make use of its employees who are dominant in that particular domain which may boost up the image of the concern.
- iii. Due to LPG concept, the organisations should also operate across borders. This could be successful only with the help of diverse workforce who are experts in the concerned markets internationally even.

VIII. CONSEQUENCES OF IGNORING DIVERSITY

If diversity in management is not considered properly in the organization, the following are the costs to be borne by them in terms of time, money and efficiency. It may create unwanted tensions, conflict among workforce due to confusion in the work allotment, inability to attract and retain the talented employees, loss in investments, discrimination among the employees and promotes inclusiveness.

IX. BENEFITS OF DIVERSITY IN MANAGEMENT

The following are the benefits can be reaped by the management if the Diversity in workforce is properly implemented,

- i. Diversity in management is important for the employees also as it builds reputation for the organization in turn for themselves. It helps in increasing the productivity and competitive advantage of the organization and increases the opportunities for the employees to excel in their operations.
- ii. Diversity in management provides opportunity for the employees to mingle with diverse workforce that may facilitate to expose themselves to various culture and environment. It personally helps the employees to develop themselves in terms of changes in work style, attitude change and personality development.
- iii. It creates ideal work atmosphere in the organization, as the employees can reap mutual benefits at the work place, good learning atmosphere because of diverse work group from various backgrounds, developing their strengths and talents;
- iv. It inevitably helps to resolve the conflicts exist in the workspace through the diverse perspectives and ideas

available over there which may strengthen the inter-personal relationship among the employees.

- v. It is viable for the management even to reach the international markets by utilizing the strength of diverse workforce who can interact possibly in different markets successfully.
- vi. Diversity in management fulfils the social responsibility of the organization by including the disadvantaged group into the work community.
- vii. This concept makes it sense the term women empowerment by encouraging the womenfolk to enter into the work group and occupying the important and prestigious position where the organisations can enjoy the benefit of motherlihood in all the aspects.
- viii. By implementing the diversity in management, they can fulfil the legal requirements also.
- ix. It serves the capital building strategy in terms of penetrating the new markets with diverse workforce.
- x. This heterogeneous workgroup can fulfil and resolve the communication barriers in the workplace in all terms.

X. LIMITATIONS OF DIVERSITY IN MANAGEMENT

In spite of all the advantages, this concept is not free from the limitations. A few of them are listed below:

- i. There are chances for personal prejudices in the workplace which may spoil the work culture.
- ii. There is a problem of implementing a uniform policy for the diverse workforce on the part of organization.
- iii. Changes for groupism among the workgroup which may create negative notion among the employees.
- iv. Discrimination is another problem that may exist due to the diverse nature of employees from various backgrounds and culture set up.
- v. Being a diverse workgroup consists of both male and female workers, chances for egoism, verbal and physical harassment and unacceptability towards each other.

XI. CONCLUSION

Diversity in management presents both opportunities and challenges for the organization. Due to the changes in the atmosphere, there is a need for every organization to value the diversified workforce. The progressive organisations are interested in using diversity in management for its prospects. At this present juncture, no organization can survive in the market without using diversity in workforce. It is a big concern for the HR Department to include new trends in the work policies in line with the changing trends in the market including introduction of diversity in management. It should be taken as an opportunity to introduce new changes in the work atmosphere. Though it takes long time to reap the benefits of diversity, definitely the benefits of the diversity in management will flourish the organization in terms of productivity, profitability and competitive advantage.



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