**WORKPLACE DIVERSITY**

Simran Ahuja

Student, Indore Institute of Law , Indore

# Abstract

Management being a collective regulation deals with the behaviour of humans within reach. Hence, workforce diversity is the most important confront and at the same time the largest chance for the 21st century managers. Diversity Management is a plan to sustain the attentiveness, acknowledgement and implementation of diversity in organizations. Workforce diversity has substantial implications for the management. The managers will be required to reallocate their approach from treating each faction of workers alike to recognizing differences among them and following such policy so as to promote originality, improve efficiency, reduce labour revenue and keep away from any sort of favouritism.

Booming diversity management policy and program will sooner or later make a huge disparity in the communication among workforce and the general efficiency of the organization. Today‘s organization need to be familiar with and handle workforce diversity effectively. The research is conducted to seek out how companies handle workforce diversity and its consequences to the company’s continuation as well as to inspect how companies’ deal with challenges that comes with workforce from diverse cultural backgrounds. Is workforce diversity interrelated to organization performance and output and its effect on human resource management? The research therefore answers the question `Has workplace diversity contributed to organizational achievement.

# Introduction

## What is work force diversity

Workforce diversity means similarities and as well as differences in employee working in an organization. No one can be similar, differences between races, caste, gender, culture; psychology is natural among all human beings. It is important for an organization to keep looking for more comprehensive and diverse workplace for their growth and being in the competition. As it is important to keep diverse workforce in an organization it is equally important to keep a good management for that workforce.

Workforce diversity can be strength of an organization and it can also be a major disadvantage for the company, it all depends upon the management of the workforce. Diversity not only includes how one identifies them but how others identify them. To accumulate variety of people in one place is known as workforce diversity.

Biggest advantage of having diverse workforce in an organization is there are a lot of new and creative ideas, perspectives of different people which help a lot in increasing the efficiency of the company. Talk of diversity within the geographical point is nothing new, however as a lot of people, organizations, and politicians talk about feminism, colonization, individual identity, and therefore the gender pay gap, it's coming back to the forefront of news all over again. To boot, studies area unit showing that the lot of numerous a geographical point is, a lot of success it achieves, and organizations area unit wanting to be told a lot of concerning a way to increase diversity and manage diversity.[[1]](#footnote-1)

Gender diversity is that the most recognized kind of diversity in Indian IT firms and organizations are creating constructive efforts to make an atmosphere of gender diversity inclusiveness in IT business. Ladies represent the most economic force in most of the developing countries. Standing at close to five hundredth of the population, the main focus on ladies as valuable cluster of talent to draw in and retain is that the subject of strategic discussions within the organizations. As economies become a lot of and more information-driven, the problems of women’s access to and use of ITs is growing in importance for each developed and developing Economies.[[2]](#footnote-2)

# Importance of diversity

With ever-increasing obscurity and difficulty of business, it has become essential to have recruits from diverse background and cultures. It is imperative to have mixture in an organization for a variety of reasons like:

High level of productivity – increasing productivity in an organization has been a big challenge for managers, every company has its own unique technique and methods for doing it so, but one method that is unbeatable for increasing productivity is when management look after the welfare of the workers by paying proper compensation, employee appraisal, health care facilities, it allows workers to feel that they belong to that organization irrespective of their caste, culture, gender, color by remaining devoted and diligent which helps the company to increase its productivity and profit.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Exchange of varieties of ideas and team work - each individual has its own perspective, with a diverse workforce in an organization it allows different ideas of every individual which helps in solving the problem effectively. Teamwork helps in completion of work in time. An individual taking on multiple tasks cannot carry out the same speed as a team could, so teamwork is important.

# Performance appraisal approach to managing diversity and equality

Performance appraisal is conducted to enhance managerial and organizational performance along with employee motivation.  Throughout performance appraisals, reasons for disparities between diverse racial groups could be due to a set of factors related to performance assessment and appraisals such as stereotyping, low expectations, and hypocrisy.

The main purpose of performance appraisal is to have full control over the activities of the workers and managing them properly serving them with suitable promotion and rewards. The duty of the supervisors are to rate the employee on certain traits ranging between inadequate or unsatisfactory to exceptional outstanding performance and these ratings were prone to various errors like stereotyping, low expectations, and hypocrisy.[[4]](#footnote-4)

# Consequences of ignoring diversity

For any organization it may have negative effects if management fails in handling diversity or ignores it at any point, as it can cost loss of productivity, increases the conflict, waste of time money efficiency. Some of the consequences can be unhealthy tensions; inability to attract and retain talented people of all kinds, inability to retain valuable employees resulting is lost investments in recruitment and training. Having a good management is not enough to help you work effectively with a diverse workforce, it depends upon how that management handle the situation when it comes to give equal opportunity without discriminating, providing help with training and giving advice on variety of situations that occurs, tailored to your specific environment.[[5]](#footnote-5)

# Insights on the challenges for cultivating diversity

## *Fairness and diversity*

It is very difficult for a manager to create equality in all perspectives for all the employees, due to difference in age and gender particularly it makes it more complicated. For explaining this in a better way let’s take an illustration, a person working in an organization for 5 years will obviously get more perks as compared to a new intern in that organization. Second example can be if an organization gives wages on the basis of working hours of an employee then Latino as compared to females work more, here one cannot say its discrimination because as it’s the one of the policy of an organization this will come under fairness and diversity.[[6]](#footnote-6)

## *Wage Gaps*

A wage gap is a term that signifies differences in pay for like work based on race and sex. The National Committee on Pay Equity reported that in 2012, women were earning an ordinary of 76.5% of what men were earning ("Wage Gap over Time," 2013). in spite of claims that since the late twentieth century in general wage gap has closed between men and women, many dispute that the wage gap has only improved for white women. According to the US Current Population Survey (2011) and the National Committee on Pay Equity (2013), shows the change in wage gaps from 1975 and 2010 representing 35 years of improvement for white women. Today, the combination of being the "wrong" gender and the "wrong" race appear to have a double penalty. African Americans and Hispanics have lost ground to white women over the past decades. The wage gap between Hispanic women and white women is greater than the wage gap between white men and white women. The rise of service industries and the demise of manufacturing have benefited white women but not all women. Though a wage gap for like work does exist between men and women as well as white Americans and minorities in America, the major reason for the overall wage gap lies in job separation and job marginalization.[[7]](#footnote-7)

# *Productivity*

As we have already discussed every individual is different from one another because of their, religion, gender, geographical region, age and educational background. When all these different people come together to work, situation may arise where everyone’s perspective may not match at the same point, at that point of time it is going to affect the interpersonal relationship among people which directly affects the productivity of the organization.

Cordial interpersonal relationships are very important among the employees for the smooth functioning of an organization. As organization is nothing but a network of different individuals who work together in the same place to achieve some common objectives and if the network has some loopholes then it would be very difficult for an organization to achieve those objectives effectively or in other words it would be difficult to increase the productivity in the organization.[[8]](#footnote-8)

# *Consequences of ignoring diversity*

Ignoring diversity issues costs time, money, and efficiency. Some of the consequences can include unhealthy tensions; loss of productivity because of increased conflict; inability to attract and retain talented people of all kinds; complaints and legal actions; and inability to retain valuable employees, resulting in lost investments in recruitment and training, discrimination and promoting inclusiveness. Good management alone will not necessarily help you work effectively with a diverse workforce. It is often difficult to see what part diversity plays in a specific area of management. The Office of Affirmative Action, Equal Opportunity and Diversity is experienced in providing help with training and advice on the variety of situations that occur, tailored to your specific environment. To illustrate, the following two examples show how diversity is an integral part of management. The first example focuses on the area of selection; the second example looks at communication:

# *Characteristics of a Good Mentor*

A good mentor portrays certain qualities and uniqueness. Due to the existence of individual differences, some of the qualities that a particular mentor may process may differ from another mentors ´qualities. However many mentors have some similarities. Mentors could as well come in different forms such as a group of people, mentoring conferences, associations and so on.[[9]](#footnote-9)

## *Awareness of the outside world*

A good mentor is aware of the world outside his or her own environment. As good businessmen are aware of changes that occur outside their own particular line of business, which may influence their decisions making process and actions in the business, a good mentor maintains an awareness of current changes in other career programs, of long term occupational need advancements. Awareness of the outside world helps him to well understand the various workforce and adopt the best tools to use in mentoring each diverse employee to positively understand his position internally and the external perspective as well, in a suitable and efficient manner. Moreover, ability to effectively engage in a potentially long-term relationship with each workforce irrespective of his or her opinions or background is also very important. From a happier staff to an increased organizational productivity rate, the benefits of a workplace cultural mentor actively supports.[[10]](#footnote-10)

## *Having A Global Vision*

An efficient mentor has a broader view of the company´s mission and objective and guides the day-to-day operation of the company. He or She usually looks beyond the ordinary and consider the company’s operations as a whole to know where it is currently, where it is heading and more importantly, where it should be going. An ideal mentor is aware that there is usually a requisite that surpasses the task at hand. A person having such a global vision looks ahead to the necessities of the Department with which he/she has been appointed for or the company in general over a set period of time.

*Processing a Positive Attitude*

Processing a positive attitude about the goals and objectives of mentoring is an important attribute of a good mentor. A successful leader may not always be a successful mentor. The mentor is very competent and believes that the mentees or workers can substantially benefit from participation, and willingly shares these beliefs with other multi cultural mentee. The mentor must also not dispute the fact that one culture is as important as the other and therefore must portray the same attitude towards all workers.[[11]](#footnote-11)

*Having Networking Experience*

Networking entails the ability to make and maintain a wide contact with business partners and leaders and benefit from the partners´ offerings and ideas in a variety of career areas, level of management, and organizations over a long period of time. Networking can also help provide relevant information, insightful views and career-enhancing contacts. An effective mentor do not only participates in networking, but also understands how employees in the organisation can benefit from networking. A mentor ensures that the mentee learns the importance of networking irrespective of their cultural differences, in order to begin to establish his own networks in his position of work in the company.[[12]](#footnote-12)

*Possessing some Professional characteristics*

A cultural mentor must process professional characteristics as respect, duty, loyalty, personal courage, integrity, condor, compassion, competence and commitment. These characteristics are of heightened importance and must be strictly observed and applied during the daily routine. In addition to applying these qualities on the job, the mentor guides the new multi-cultural employees by setting a positive example, through encouragement and open communication.

# *Barriers to effective diversity management*

Managing a diverse workforce comes with potential challenges that mentors and leaders must overcome. Some common barriers to implementing diversity management are

• The difficulty in balancing career and Family**:** Women are most likely to be presented with this challenge. In modern culture, women are still expected to take care of young children and to manage the household. Although attitudes are shifting, women still bear the greatest household responsibilities.[[13]](#footnote-13)

• An unsupportive and hostile working environment for diverse employees: Diverse employees are excluded from social activities and are thus prevented from forming networks among other employees.

• Fears of discrimination: People fear of being discriminated upon and therefore are reluctant to apply for jobs where there are different nationalities than theirs.

• Diversity is not seen as an organizational priority**:** Employees may not view diversity efforts as work contributing to the success of the organization.[[14]](#footnote-14)

• Resistance to change: People resist change for reasons such as fear of failure, mistrust and peer pressure.

It is up to leadership to overcome these challenges by properly informing and managing changes and the perceptions when they feel threatened

# Conclusion

Workforce diversity represents both a challenge and an opportunity for business. A growing number of progressive organizations are realizing the need for valuing diversity in the workforce, so as to ensure strategic utilization of human resources for the accomplishment of strategic goals. The extent to which managers recognize diversity and its potential advantages and disadvantages defines an organization’s approach to managing the diversity.

No organization in this world of globalization would survive without workforce diversity. It is believed that organizations should put in place strategies to enhance workforce diversity. In terms of organizational learning, organizations are still stuck on the problem of getting people to value diversity and have not yet determine the ways to utilize and exploit it. It is the approach to diversity, not the diversity itself which determines the actual positive and negative outcomes. Finally, creating a diverse workforce takes time and even longer to reap the benefits. The management and leaders must not lose focus and interest in creating a diverse workforce due to the lack of immediate returns.

1. 27th December, 10:38 A.M. (IST), https://www.wonolo.com/blog/50-must-read-articles-on-diversity-in-the-workplace [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. 27th December, 12:01 P.M. (IST), http://www.iosrjournals.org/iosr-jbm/papers/Vol16-issue2/Version-1/C016211225 [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Joerges BC., Reframing organizational culture, 1991 Aug 7. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. 28th December, 10:13 A.M. (IST), www.managementstudyguide.com/performance-appraisal-and-performance-management.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. 29th December, 03:41 P.M. (IST), Dillman DA. Mail and Internet surveys: The tailored design method--2007 Update with new Internet, visual, and mixed-mode guide. John Wiley & Sons; 2011 Jan 31. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. 29th December, 07:17 P.M. (IST), https://www.enotes.com/research-starters/diversity-workplace. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Ibid [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. 30th December, 12:34 A.M. (IST), Day GS, The capabilities of market-driven organizations, Journal of marketing, 1994 Oct;58(4), 37-52. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Higgins MC, Kram KE, Reconceptualizing mentoring at work: A developmental network perspective, Academy of management review, 2001 Apr 1;26(2), 264-288. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Myers KK, Sadaghiani K., Millennials in the workplace: A communication perspective on millennials’ organizational relationships and performance, Journal of Business and Psychology, 2010 Jun 1;25(2), 225-238. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Smith AD, Problems of conflict management in virtual communities. In Communities in cyberspace 2002 Jun 1,pp. 145-174. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Klasen N, Clutterbuck D., Implementing mentoring schemes, Routledge; 2012 May 4. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Lorber J. Gender inequality. Los Angeles, CA: Roxbury. 2001. [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Cox TH, Blake S., Managing cultural diversity: Implications for organizational competitiveness, Academy of Management Perspectives. 1991 Mar 1;5 (3):45-56. [↑](#footnote-ref-14)