

Strategies To Increase Cultural Diversity In The Workplace: A Study Of Several Approaches And Their Offered Benefits

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Abstract

Cultural discrimination and differences results due to low acceptance and exclusivity of cultural diversity in the workplace. McKinsey study pointed that companies encouraging ethnically diverse environment gain 35% of more returns and has cash flow 2.3 times per employee as compared to less diverse companies. The research objective of this paper is to analyze and address the issues of cultural bias in recruitment and determine new ways of transforming organizational culture introducing more diversity in the workforce. The meta-analysis is generated to identify problems pertaining in the adoption of diversity at workplace. Next a change model is presented comprising of miscellaneous strategies to resolve discovered diversity issues. Findings suggest that a diverse workforce promotes new ideas and perspective, and can drive innovation. The last section of paper implies that developing multicultural workplace is a people-oriented change involving implementation of new approaches within an organization.

Keywords: Cultural diversity, Organizational culture, Cultural bias, Cultural discrimination, Diverse workforce

I. Introduction

"Together we are stronger" this saying holds true for multicultural organizations. Organizations need to have more cultural diversity within the workforce. This change is important to businesses for moral & social reasons and embracing new thinking and perspective. There is need to increase creativity, productivity and organizational commitment along with the acceptance of talent pool and diverse skills. Equity in job opportunities for applicants in recruitment is essential regardless of cultural background. Strategies and processes of self-awareness and staff training are necessary for addressing issues of discrimination and biasing in recruitment. Workforce that practice bias intentionally or unintentionally on the basis of cultural background are wasting skilled resources and suitable opportunities for businesses, putting organization at the risk by avoiding competent candidates (Berk, 2017).

This paper intends to recommend the change model and change process in an organization in order to increase cultural diversity in the workplace. First, in research methodology the current situation problem of cultural discrimination is discussed gathering

empirical observations of previous studies conducted by different authors. At the same time, what is expected ideally is interpreted in the change model of an organization. Further, different approaches and solutions are explained to bridge the gap between previous two stated scenarios. Finally, the positive impact is predicted offering possible recommendations in discussion. It can be inferred that once cultural diversity build in the workplace can lead to enhanced organizational culture.

II. Research Methodology

2.1 Meta-analysis

The empirical analysis is carried out to search key research problems of cultural acceptance at workplaces and their results are stated. Previous studies literature are considered in last 15 years from 2002 till 2018. This procedure was conducted referring scholarly articles on Google Scholar website. The keywords included were: "cultural diversity challenges", "cultural differences workplace", "cultural bias in organizations", "cultural intelligence within employees" etc. A detailed search was done using above titles and it resulted into 16 hits. Out of 16, 10 were chosen excluding books,

magazines and periodical articles. It was then followed by the evaluation of journal articles titles and abstract, selected at first. After that in a final review, it was verified that articles includes keywords and study of it. Table 1 demonstrate a thorough analysis of articles.

Table 1. Meta-analysis of literatures to indicate the research problems and results studied by different authors

Sr. No	Author's Name	Research focus	Research result
1.	Dobbin & Kalev (2018)	Anti-bias diversity training ineffectiveness	Most of Fortune 500 companies training programs were failed and didn't reduce or alter biased behavior at workplace Now training and coaching are considered to be part of orientation session and expensive of all trainings
2.	Berk (2017)	Microaggressions at workplace	Verbal and non-verbal forms of Microaggressions Implicit and explicit unconscious biases exhibiting disrespect and insults in behavior at workplace
3.	Zheng et al. (2016)	Ostracism and exclusion practice at workplace	Employees commitment and intention to sustain at workplace is weak Unwanted attitude and mistreatment leads to withdrawal from interaction
4.	Pinkerton (2013)	Racial discrimination in companies	Middle east names were discriminated and compared to Anglo-Saxon names. It was supported by hypotheses
5.	Booth, Leigh and Varganova (2012)	Ethnicity differences at workplace	4000 resume's were rejected on the basis of their ethnic names Middle east names people had to submit 50% of more applications than Anglo-Saxon race people so as to receive call for interviews
6.	Beattie and Johnson (2012)	Unconscious biases in recruitment	Racial inequality is practiced not offering professional positions to black and ethnic minority 50% of white candidates had possibility of securing interviews than black
7.	Fozdar (2012)	Negative perception of religion (religious discrimination) and exclusion in job market	Lack of social engagement at workplace; resulting into poor employment outcomes
8.	Colic-Peiskar (2009)	Racial discrimination for culturally distant in the Australian job markets	Unsatisfactory employment outcomes, segmented labor market, loss of human capital benefit and wastage of skills
9.	Gelfand et al.(2007)	Unicultural and monolithic organizations transformation	Discrimination at individual level in the form of stereotypes and prejudicial behavior At group level, homogenous teams and attitude towards minorities
10.	Riach and Rick (2002)	Employment discrimination rates across major countries and continents	Non-whites discrimination is prevalent in Europe, North America and Australia Discrimination for disables in Britain and for old applicants in USA

2.2 Proposed Change Model

The following Figure 1 exhibits the framework of proposed change model to be implemented in an business and organization. The current problem states that individuals are still discriminated based on their cultural backgrounds. Second, the objective of zero discrimination is

defined to be fulfilled. Third, to solve the problem, solutions and leadership approaches are interpreted in detail at different stages of organization. Last, the positive social and moral impact influencing business and well being of community are expressed.

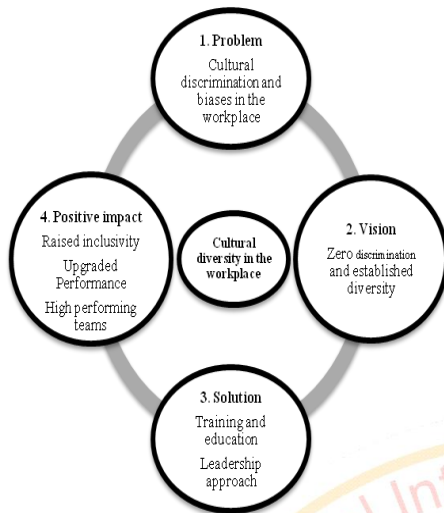


Figure 1. Proposed change model to build diverse culture at workplace

Figure 2 manifests the current and expected future scenarios for culturally diverse environment in the workplace as the first & second key blocks of Figure 1.

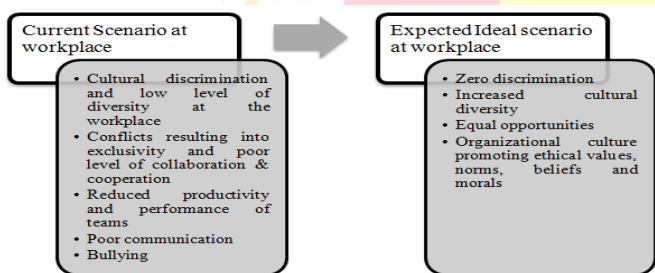


Figure 2. General situational scenarios at workplaces

Numerous steps and mechanics are applicable to attain the ideal scenario at workplaces described further. It involves achievable and feasible change process in an organization illustrated further.

1) Firstly, raising cultural awareness by introducing training and education. For instance, in an flat organizational structure the head of each division will attend the diversity training made clear in a Figure 3 below. A qualified instructor will be hired to conduct this training session at each division and checklist will be maintained to analyze the effectiveness of an each training task.

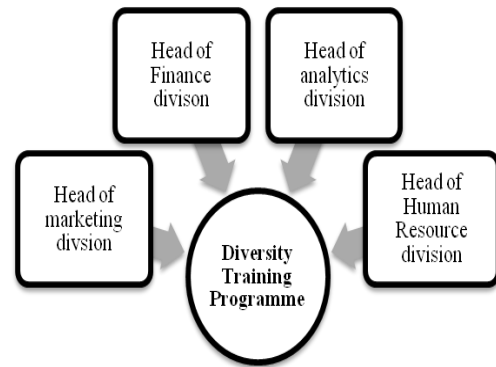


Figure 3. Training and education approach for increasing awareness of cultural diversity in a flat organizational structure

2) Secondly, ethical values are to be practiced to implement change by transforming & renewing organizational culture through shared beliefs and norms, which guides the behavior and attitude across cultural groups. This will result into integration of workplace systems. Experiential practice of Self Determination Theory (SDT) can prove conducive to promote the autonomy supportive coaching and teaching which will control the behaviors of social and shape management environment (Donelly, 2017). Perceived and positive feedback about competence accompanying strength focused skillset, expand ability to engage and interact with environment. This results in improved creativity and performance. Moreover, it will create the sense of belonging and relatedness within employees. This will help to maintain relationships, interpersonal communication and build trust. Figure 4 represents the significance and contribution of SDT in an organizational behavior and values.

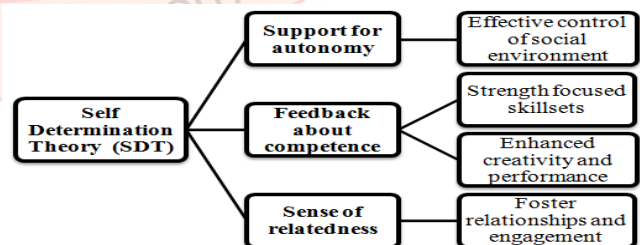


Figure 4. Self Determination Theory (SDT): a source of motivation for transforming organizational culture

3) Finally, having a participatory and collaborative leadership approach will decrease cultural bias and influence people to bring out change. There is a need of a leader who can highlight shared organizational

goals besides sharing information acquired during professional workshops and training. Even he will be a facilitator of knowledge and a coach with a desire to bring out the best in people. This change can be implemented from top to bottom where top management leaders and middle level management managers acts "change makers" and "champions of change", displayed in Figure 5 below. For example, in a hierarchical organizational structure, leaders at top and managers at middle management level will be attending training & development sessions. Another point is they will work together to further disseminate information to their subordinates at operational level through weekly scheduled meetings. Similarly, subordinates will dissipate goals among team members.

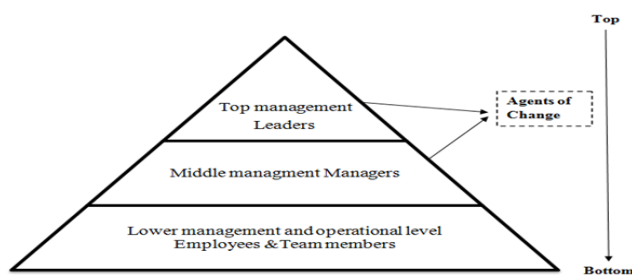


Figure 5. Leadership approach in an organization for disseminating cultural diversity from top to bottom

III. Analysis and Interpretation

Table 2 shows Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) percentage for globally diverse organizational workplaces and its positive impact on business in year 2018. It gives an in-depth account of methodologies these top businesses have preferred and their positive consequences are specified.

Table 2. Diversity and Inclusion scores for top five culturally diverse organizations worldwide

(Source: Reuters, 2018)

Figure 6 indicates graphical view of Table 2 data and it clearly represents an overview of companies on Y-axis and D&I index on X-axis.

Sr.No	Company Name	Diversity & Inclusion Percent (%) score for Year 2018	Measures undertaken to increase cultural diversity and its outcomes
1.	Accenture PLC	84	No discrimination for disability, gender identity and age Diversity training helped understand the benefits of working in diverse teams and professional developments of diverse workforce
2.	Novartis AG	79	Improved hiring methods of diversity and educating human resource employees for inclusive leadership and unconscious bias Diverseability was stimulated for disables and viewing them with equity
3.	Medtronic PLC	79	Diverse cultural background teams reflecting innovation and engagement. They are open to many perspectives and capabilities advancing business as whole
4.	Diageo PLC	78	Cultivated commitment and gender equality Diversity in thinking styles has proven beneficial for their commercial performance
5.	Gap Inc.	78.50	Has exhibited deep and long-standing commitment in hiring candidates of diverse pools. Mentoring employees for initiating and building a community of cross-cultural high quality relationships and learning Organization has attracted top talents, employee retention and excelled business results
Average Global D&I index			79.7 %

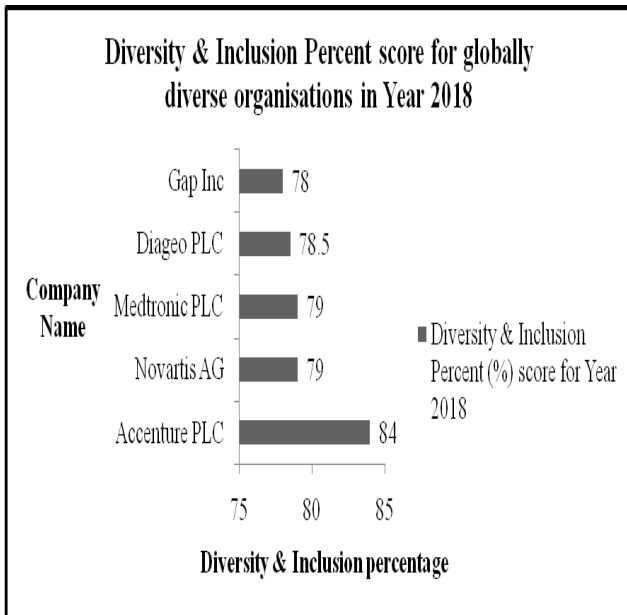


Figure 6. Graphical representation of Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) index for top five globally diverse organizations

IV. Discussion

The proposed and exemplified change model if implemented successfully on the basis of recommended mechanics can lead to positive and fruitful effects. Diverse workforce can drive creativity and strategic thinking exchanging new intentions, outlook and skillsets to secure a competitive advantage in business. It will not only promote high level of collaboration elevating productivity but also increase resourcefulness of high performing teams. Also, it will set up equity and fairness in employment opportunities. Besides, growth of an organization highlighting shared cultural values and morals increasing inclusivity, openness and transparency within communication will take place. Additionally, it will build multiculturalism lessening cultural differences and allowing employees to work efficiently across cross-culture. It is essential for an organization to inculcate cultural intelligence and Cultural Quotient (CQ) in their culture to be able to work inter-culturally. Its awareness should be strengthened introducing CQ capabilities within employees. Another reason is cognitive competency of intercultural interactions and understanding others will grow as well. Furthermore, knowledge of different cultures will make better know similarities and differences increasing ability to engage in any social-setting. The

significance of other forms of leadership approaches can be explored more where authentic leadership encourages equality and suppress favoritism in an organization, charismatic leadership helps lifting awareness at individual and social level for organizational commitment (Donnelly, 2017). Transformational leadership along with charismatic leadership can reduce opposition to change and create good work (Mckinsey&Company, 2018). Managing diversity issues and diversity specific training is a bit challenging but if leadership styles mentioned previously utilized together with balanced motivation can make social change workable.

V. Conclusion

The prejudices and stereotypes issues practiced at the time of recruitment are addressed in paper by suggesting measures to overcome them. Blind recruitment, self-awareness exercises, micro affirmations and staff training are few initiatives to stir culturally diverse environment. The articles reviewed from previous studies made picture clear revealing that biasing and exclusion is still observed making diversity trainings useless. New ways, new processes, new technologies and new ventures are need of an hour which are attainable through diverse and multicultural skills sets. Parameters of Self Determination Theory (SDT) can propel goal directed behavior and organizational behavior linking it to business objectives. Deploying authentic informal leaders can nurture empathy, adaptability and social awareness towards others. To sum up, within workforce, Intelligent Quotient (IQ) and Emotional Quotient (EQ) have become secondary as Cultural Quotient (CQ) has primary profound impact on businesses exemplifying organizational cultural tendencies.

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