

A Comparative study on Global Workforce Diversity by Management

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Abstract:

This paper explores the relationship among three social dilemmas faced by organizations wishing to attain and maintain workforce diversity: the dilemmas of organizational participation, managerial participation, and individual participation. Functional and social category diversity offer benefits for organizations creativity, adaptation and innovation, and access to external networks, but there are costs which deter organizations from pursuing these benefits. The costs associated with organizational participation in diversity initiatives arise because managers and their employees perceive organizational conflicts and organize their interactions along social identity lines, so that temporal traps and collective fences surround diversity. Resolving the subordinate dilemmas of managerial and individual participation provides the key to resolving the dilemma of organizational participation. Social identity theory is used to understand the dilemmas and to develop possible resolutions, which should make the benefits of diversity more immediately accessible to organizations and society. This article reports the results of a study on the current status and future trends in diversity initiatives in the workplace. The study identified barriers that have inhibited the employment, development, retention, and promotion of diverse groups in the workplace and the significant factors that are influencing diversity initiatives. It revealed that the primary reasons for managing diversity are to improve productivity and remain competitive, to form better work relationships among employees, to enhance social responsibility, and to address legal concerns. This article presents these findings as well as the best strategies for managing diversity. It also discusses components of an effective diversity training program and future trends related to diversity. Notes that

the globalization of business, the increased use of teams, and changing workforce demographics have all made managing workforce diversity a critical competency for today's organizations. But for many companies, efforts to manage diversity have produced disappointing results. Organizations are challenged to move away from merely "counting heads for the government" and begin creating effective strategies for a more positive approach to managing diversity. It outlines the diversity challenge and the forces that drive it and then presents strategies for change through leadership, research, and education.

Key Words: *Organizational participation, Managerial participation, Individual participation, Diversity Management, Spiritual Diversity, Diversity and Globalization*

Introduction:

The workforce of the twentieth century is likely to be much more heterogeneous than any other generation in the past. The same is true of twentieth century organizations and their need to make good use of their available human resources asset. Effective use of an organization's human resources asset and modern technology in the twenty-first century can greatly enhance learning for all workers and managers, especially those with various forms of disabilities. Along with an introduction to the concept of appreciative inquiry, this presents how computer-aided instruction is one method that can be used by leaders and educators to engage students and encourage learning.

Diversity Management:

The Cultural, generational, personal, and professional differences as well as unique motivational factors are characteristics of learners in today's academia. The student population of nearly all institutions has drastically changed from what it was twenty and thirty years ago. Some institutions of higher education have predominantly traditional students from 18 to 23 years of age attending college on a full-time basis; while other institutions might have all working adult students and/or a mixture of the two. It is apparent that today's student populations are much more diverse in terms of their gender, ethnicity/nationality, age, disability, and beliefs than they were twenty years ago. Therefore, these student populations need diverse teaching skills, different experiences, and more facilitation abilities in order for them to learn best as per their learning styles. One of the

needed skills would be to acknowledge their differences, and then actively incorporate their experiences into the learning objectives of each session. Cultural influences, conditioned responses, and unfair work practices have been impacting individuals, teams, organizations, and businesses since the beginning of time. In many cases, the impacts of certain work practices, both in the society and workplace, have been negative, unethical and unfair to members of the minority group. It discusses the various sources of information and stereotypes as well as their impact on behavior, and also how to make conscious choices when it comes to decision-making in a diverse workforce. In most cultures, women make up about 50% of the population; consequently, they should represent 50% of the workforce, when they are provided fair opportunities to acquire education and contribute to society. However, women make up only a small percentage of senior management positions, due to various reasons including stereotypes and the impact of glass-ceiling in the workplace.

Culture and Management:

It is assumed treating others the way one wants to be treated is sufficient for healthy interpersonal relationships and, perhaps this is

true to some extent. When it comes to the diversity of cultures and different cultural practices, the “Golden Rule”, treating others the way one would like to be treated may not always apply in each case and, thus, some have resorted to adopting the “Platinum Rule” in their workplace. The Platinum Rule states that one should treat others the way they want to be treated. Today’s diverse situations and diverse cultures require flexibility in using whatever is relevant for the culture and time. As such, this chapter and section discuss cultural issues, organizational cultural issues, and international management concerns in today’s global environment of business, using the healthcare industry as an example. As previously implied, cultural competency refers to the process of continually learning about diversity so one can effectively function in the contexts of national and international differences. If we want to retain competent employees in our health care organizations, we must meet their needs of value, recognition, and inclusiveness and be aware of their sensitivities. One way to achieve this is to provide adequate training for health care managers, with a focus on how to communicate with persons from diverse cultures. Managing diversity in the health care system will require that equity be promoted and

accountability maintained both in the social environment and within health delivery systems.

Workforce Diversity Management:

Is globalization causing the development of a worldwide culture? Maybe!

Some reflective thinking questions to consider are: Is it possible that globalization will cause a country's national identity to be lost as more international firms are incorporating management and operation styles from the developed nations to their business practices? While reflecting on such questions, one must acknowledge that cultures tend to regularize human behavior which can make predictability of behavior a bit easier for researchers and global employees.

Spiritual Diversity:

Generational, religious, spiritual, and age diversity are realities of life and organizational leaders must be cognizant of these trends. This discusses generational, spiritual and age-related aspects of diversity as they relate to the workplace. This chapter also provides a review of the current literature concerning a serious problem facing current day organizations. It is one of a shrinking workforce that could happen

because of the retirement of many older workers. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that many of the younger workers do not possess the skills and experience that the older workers have. The younger workers also have different moral and cultural values and different work ethics. According to an article on Managing Workplace Diversity by the Victorian Department of Education (2005), managing and valuing diversity is a key component of effective people management. It focuses on improving the performance of the organization and promotes practices that enhance the productivity of all staff. The dimensions of diversity include gender, race, culture, age, family/career status, religion and disability. Diversity also embraces the range of individual skills, educational qualifications, work experience and background, languages and other relevant attributes and experiences which differentiate individuals. Growth, age, spiritual, and generational diversity are realities of life in society and for leaders and managers in the workforce. This generational, spiritual and age-related aspects of diversity as they relate to the workplace. This chapter also provided strategies for effectively dealing with age discrimination in the workplace. Furthermore, allowing the workforce to explore and fulfill their spiritual

dreams and goals is about flexibility and the creation of a satisfactory work environment.

Organizational Learning and Knowledge:

Knowledge management is a very important part of each organization's culture as well as each manager's responsibility. Accordingly, this focuses on creating a culture of effectively managing knowledge and learning in today's diverse workplace. Organizational learning and effective knowledge management practices are a necessity in today's global work environment where information becomes available and obsolete very quickly. Furthermore, managers are expected to have all of the information they need to make effective decisions regardless of whether they work at home or abroad. Yet, today's managers are constantly bombarded with more information than they can effectively absorb in a given day. As such, organizations are required to create organizational cultures where the right information is learned, retained and shared with all relevant parties. Thus, the study of managing knowledge and learning amid continuous change becomes critical. Knowledge management is an effort to capture or tap into an organization's experience and wisdom and to make them available and useful to everyone in the organization. The literature provided various

perspectives on the emerging enthusiasm for knowledge management programs. Some researchers have supported that while knowledge management is technology based, it is not about computers, and for it to be effective it must be much more. For example, as the high positive correlations between organizational culture and knowledge management strongly suggest, organizational culture may be the "driving force" behind whether or not the organization achieved its objectives. Knowledge is considered to be one of the most important assets in the new economy. As such, it is vital to organizational benefits, such as competitive advantage, growth, and innovation. The Studies also make clear that organizational culture should foster the concept that knowledge management is the tool to support an organization's strategic plan. It is evident that the evolution of knowledge management should incorporate technology solutions, content, process and all people involved in the value chain. Seven hundred and eighty-five human resource professionals responded to a questionnaire about diversity issues in their organizations. OP= Analyses were conducted to determine the factors associated with these two factors;

- (a) Adoption of diversity training

(b) Perceived training success.

Results revealed that both training adoption and perceived training success were strongly associated with top management support for diversity. In addition, training adoption was associated with large organizational size, positive top management beliefs about diversity, high strategic priority of diversity relative to other competing objectives, presence of a diversity manager, and existence of a large number of other diversity-supportive policies. Perceived training success was also associated with mandatory attendance for all managers, long-term evaluation of training results, managerial rewards for increasing diversity, and a broad inclusionary definition of diversity in the organization. Suggestions for future research are offered.

Diversity and Globalization:

Providing “Eye-opening” experiences such as temporary assignments in foreign cultures are recommended to help specific employees better understand the challenges faced by others. More work is being done for companies in countries like pan India, Asia, Europe and Latin America than ever before. From technology to call-centers to document processing what was

once only found in the US is now support globally. And with that support come the need for increased awareness to the laws and cultures of its own associates. Organization can take various actions to meet the growing needs of diversity and to address the issue of globalization. Organization can create an effective diversity programme beginning with training at all levels of the organization that would focus on inclusion.

VUCA Environment:

VUCA best describes the volatile and chaotic business, economic, and physical environment that we all now face. Many in talent management have been hoping that this chaos is a short-term phenomenon, but it is a permanent condition that we must all learn how to manage under. Because they were designed for more predictable times, almost all current HR, talent management, and workforce planning processes fail to perform in this chaotic environment. In a VUCA environment, there are more changes, a faster rate of change, and the size of the changes are so impactful that they must be labeled as “disruptive.” So, the question for talent leadership becomes, “how do you effectively hire, develop, place, and retain individuals and leaders in the volatile environment where

literally everything changes in months rather than years?"

V.U.C.A. (pronounced voo – ka) is an acronym for an environment that is dominated by:

Volatility – where things change fast but not in a predictable trend or repeatable pattern.

Uncertainty – where major “disruptive” changes occur frequently. In this environment, the past is not an accurate predictor of the future, and identifying and preparing for “what will come next” is extremely difficult.

Complexity — where there are numerous difficult-to-understand causes and mitigating factors involved in a problem.

Ambiguity – where the causes and the “who, what, where, when, how, and why” behind the things that are happening are unclear and hard to ascertain.

Business executives have been preparing for the VUCA environment for years. Although most of the initial work was done by the military and in counterterrorism, VUCA planning has been part of business processes like supply chain and risk management for years. A few firms like GE, Unilever, and McDonald’s have even begun

changing their leadership development model to fit the VUCA environment. But unfortunately, no one in recruiting, retention, skill development, compensation, performance management, on boarding, etc. has paid more than lip surface attention to this strategic problem. As a result, the time has come to face the fact that you can’t be strategic in talent management, HR, or recruiting unless you can manage and thrive in a VUCA environment. Under the established 20th-century talent management model, the future was relatively predictable. As a result, firms hired, trained employees, and developed leaders in order to prepare for the “predictable” upcoming business environment. For example, recruiting routinely plans for three distinct scenarios: no hiring, moderate hiring, and large-scale hiring. However, in a VUCA environment, talent acquisition must plan for each of those scenarios; but in addition, it must also plan for periods where the firm will do rapid hiring in some business units and regions, while simultaneously having a hiring freeze or even layoffs in other business units.

Conclusion:

"It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy in creative expression and knowledge."

***Albert Einstein**

One of the most significant challenges facing employers is an increasingly diverse workforce. Different demographic groups may have sociological and cultural tendencies that lead to different attitudes about workplace relationships. Diversity has its most basic level is simply all the ways in which people are different. The most powerful differences are age, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and physical ability. But diversity is not limited to these dimensions. A diverse organization is itself laden with rich resources of human capital waiting to be tapped in creative ways. In order to competitive and remain so, executives in today's market must engage in the management of diversity on a continuous basis. From the recruiting and staffing to even ongoing training diversity issues appear and must be recognized within the organization. Along the way, competition for the best and the brightest has altered recruitment ion strategies and orientation programs, as well as employee development, compensation and other human resources practice.

Our cultural norms must be viewed from various perspectives or actions and words get lost in translation. A major factor emphasizing the relevance of workforce diversity to top executives includes the increased importance of

global business operations. Companies go global to either acquire high skilled individuals for increased technical and professional knowledge and skill or to attract low skills associated with low wage levels. In firms that pursue a global strategy, the higher levels of integration required between affiliate and parent company operations lead to the need for the company to be both globally integrated and locally responsive.

Succession planning address the talent pool at the top of the organization, but employee development efforts must extend down into the organization where diverse candidates are being lost.

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