

Trends and Strategies for Diversity in the Global Inclusive Workplace

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This paper focuses on trends and strategies for diversity in the global inclusive workplace. Understanding those with different backgrounds within the organization is a key to promote diversity and inclusion. Equal possibilities to collaborate in an organization have been made possible by the expanding trend of globalization. The goal of global diversity is to comprehend the multicultural nature of individuals working in a specific environment. Integrating diversity and inclusion initiatives into the workforce would contribute to obtaining the most qualified candidates during the hiring process. Businesses with a diverse workforce are much more likely to achieve higher success than their competitors in terms of generating money, managing employees, and reaping the rewards of organizational performance. This paper found that mentoring programmes, diversity skills and training, employee resource groups, communication with employees, building diversity friendly workforce policy, and empowering and educating members are strategies associated with managing diversity in the global inclusion.

Keywords: global diversity, inclusion, stereotyping, age discrimination, cultural misunderstanding, communication barrier

Introduction

Diversity is becoming a significant and inclusive issue in many organizations as a result of globalization. It has tremendously impacted people at work and changed our culture and businesses (Susan, 2011). Growing globalization has given businesses the chance to move production across cultural divides when developing new products, conducting business, and forming teams (Cho, 2018). Owing to this, several corporations now take the initiative of hiring people from a variety of backgrounds and cultures in order to appear competitive. Diversity has become the standard in shaping organizational outcomes including greater global knowledge, high performance, creativity, and employee engagement (Lauring, 2013). Undoubtedly, diverse workplace is all about individual differences. A diverse workforce offers a possibility to promote inclusion in a multiculturalism.

However, a diverse staff is not enough to guarantee the success of a global diversity management program. The creation of an inclusive workplace culture that meets the different needs of employees and allows for their full participation in achieving corporate goals is significant in the modern workplace (Schmidt, 2014; Knotter, De Lobel, Tsipouri, & Stenius, 2011). Programs and initiatives for inclusion give staff members the tools when they need to handle any difficulties that may arise from working on diverse, international teams (Susan, 2011).

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Most visitors have an unfavorable image of the multicultural diversity in Nigeria, which often center on religion and sociopolitical upheaval, particularly in the north of the country. Multicultural disparities also exist because of racial and linguistic variances when compared to European nations like Sweden. Due to cultural differences, some people detect unfavorable reactions and feel threatened when exposed to the foreign nations stated above.

In light of the aforementioned, Jawad and Memoona (2017) contend that organizations are now expected to go above and beyond merely adhering to the law in order to ensure equal access, employment, and promotion opportunities as well as that diversity initiatives take advantage of employee diversity and benefit both local and global communities. Cho (2018) emphasizes once more that due to special diversity characteristics it is advised for government to create equal employment policies to control multiculturalism.

A legislative act that implements regulations and standards for treatment in employment-related matters given by the United States of America Equal Employment Commission regulates the difficulties posed by diversity (US EEOC, 2018). It is empowered to look into allegations of workplace discrimination, make settlement offers, and, if required, pursue legal action where the law has been broken.

Therefore, several laws that have been passed and implemented forbid all forms of workplace discrimination. Discrimination is the unjust treatment of job applicants or employees during the employment process or at work based on their identity group, physical or mental health, or other personal traits. It might happen due to factors including marital status, ethnicity, and religion, among others. In addition to protecting the workers, legal enforcement is intended to make business and nonprofit companies to increase more awareness of the need to promote workplace equality. The goal is to be relevant and competitive in a global setting.

Definitions of Global Diversity

Global diversity refers to the differences that exist within and between different countries as well as understanding one's own environment (Gunding & Zanchettin, 2007). It is important to recognize and value the unique characteristics of each country.

Global diversity aids businesses in putting in place diversity initiatives that foster inclusion, respect, and admiration among all employees (Farrah, n.d.).

The term "global diversity" refers to the variety of distinctions that characterize a group of two or more individuals with a cross-cultural and international heritage (The Wharton University of Pennsylvania, 2022). It aids businesses in establishing policies to guarantee equitable access for all workers.

Global diversity, according to Nipporica Associates (2022), is all about leveling the playing field for participation on an equal footing. It emphasizes providing everyone with an equal chance to participate in a given setting.

Definitions of Inclusion

Inclusion is an organizational effort and practices in which different groups or individuals having different backgrounds are culturally and socially accepted and welcomed in the workforce (Farrah, n.d.). These distinctions may be self-evident due to factors including age, national origin, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, marital status, socioeconomic status, and educational background. Inclusive cultures make people feel appreciated and cherished for who they are as individuals or members of a community. People who participate in it develop a sense of dedication, drive, and belonging at work. Inclusion frequently entails a shift in an organization's thinking and culture that manifests itself in ways that are obvious, such as participation in meetings, the physical layout

of offices, or access to specific resources or information. The inclusion process helps businesses effectively engage and use their talent. By implication, it makes people feel appreciated as being crucial to the success of the organization.

Definitions of Workforce Diversity

The degree to which individuals within an entity, such as a group or organization, differ from one another is referred to as diversity (Gonzalez & Zamanian, 2015; Shore et al., 2009). Understanding those with different backgrounds within the organization is key. It covers a wide range of personal characteristics, including nationality, culture, education, job title, tenure, aptitude, sexual preference, religion, ethical standards, personality, gender, race/ethnicity, and age. The value of a diverse workforce has been noted by Melissa (2012). She emphasizes that employers seek out candidates with a global attitude who are capable of collaborating successfully across cultures and in a global setting.

There is a connection between diversity, creativity, and innovation, according to research. The diversity of information offers a wide range of cognitive resources, allowing for more innovation and creativity in collaborative projects and decision-making. A more diverse workforce increases the potential for dissenting debate, which can result in improved decision-making. A team with diverse perspectives may become more reflective, which may enhance their capacity for learning and efficiency (Melissa, 2012).

According to Ankita (2014), workforce diversity is the existence of both similarities and differences among employees in terms of their ages, cultural backgrounds, physical capabilities, disabilities, races, religions, genders, and sexual orientations. Human characteristics such as gender, racial, social, and psychological traits lead to discrimination against us in society.

According to Gartner (2023) and Scott and Byrd (2012), workforce diversity is the sum of an employee's individual qualities, values, views, experiences, backgrounds, interests, and behaviors. It acknowledges that each person is unique as a result of their social status and personal traits, which aid in their ability to work cooperatively with others when completing a task.

Workforce diversity, according to Ahmed (2018), is the ways in which individuals differ from one another. It fosters appreciation of people's diversity and individuality in work. Cultural diversity entails distinctions. It discusses the characteristics that set people apart from one another. It explains variations in financial status, geographic location, and academic and professional backgrounds. Therefore, it is crucial to manage diverse people with a variety of viewpoints, educational and professional backgrounds, political and religious convictions, sexual orientations, ethnic backgrounds, and life experiences.

Diversity is described as how individuals within an organization are different from and similar to one another (Robbins & Coulter, 2013). Workplace diversity takes into account differences in age (old/young), color and ethnicity (white/black), and gender (male/female). People from diverse geographic regions predominate at work. Similarly, diversity entails means of acknowledging, understanding, accepting, and appreciating variations in people based on their age, class, race, ethnicity, gender, impairments (Esty, Griffin, & Schorr-Hirsh, 1995).

Challenges of Diversity in the Workplace

Race, ethnicity, gender, experience, and personality are all becoming more diverse in the workplace. Diversity in the workplace presents unique difficulties. Below is a discussion about them.

Race and Ethnicity Discrimination

Race is described as person's biological heritage, which is linked to their location of origin. It contains a person's physical traits, such as their skin tone and hair type. Ethnicity is linked to a social characteristic that the human community shares, such as cultural background or allegiance. A person may be subjected to unfair treatment or discrimination on the basis of their race, ethnicity, national origin, accent, or outward appearance (US EEOC, 2018).

Communication Barrier

It is usual to observe people from different countries who speak different languages. It is inevitable in the workplace for varied workforce members to communicate at different levels. This inescapable trend in people's various communication preferences or styles may affect how someone speaks in meetings. There is no denying that individuals who have hearing issues or who speak English as a second language may need explanation during meetings (Perelson, n.d.).

Cultural Misunderstanding

When you mix individuals from various cultures, misunderstandings can also occur frequently. People vary in terms of culture; therefore, what appeals to one person may be offensive to someone from a different background. For instance, someone may feel at ease welcoming someone by giving them a thump up with their left hand, which may be viewed as disrespectful in some cultures. People are more likely to extend the benefit of the doubt to others when they have faith that their teammates accept their differences.

Slower Decision Making

Organizational creativity can be boosted by different viewpoints, attitudes, and ideas (Yvanovich, 2020). Working with varied people who have different perspectives and ways to tackle organizational problems can occasionally cause decision-making and organizational effort to be put off. If not handled properly, differences in perspective can lead to misunderstanding or conflict. This may have an impact on long-established team relationships, trust, and corporations.

Stereotypes and Prejudice

Stereotyping is one of the main obstacles that workers from varied backgrounds face in the workplace. It occurs when someone is judged instead on the basis of their perceived membership in a race as opposed to their own traits (Robbins & Coulter, 2013; Ugwu, 2018). Mann (2009) contends that although women are perceived to be more caring, sensitive, thoughtful, subservient, loving, indecisive, and people-oriented, men are seen as being more forceful, assertive, aggressive, confident, independent, and task-oriented. Men are perceived as being more reliable as employees than women, according to Barbara (2012).

Previous research on gender stereotypes in management showed that men are more often associated with good managers (Powell, Butterfield, & Parent, 2002). The study found that men employ a more assertive, directive style of leadership, while their female colleagues are more likely to utilize a caring, inclusive, and collaborative style, which has been shown to be more effective at inspiring and involving followers (Bloomberg, 2010, Robbins & Coulter, 2013). Another study on women in leadership revealed that they tend to build teams that are more devoted, collaborative, inclusive, and ultimately more effective than their male counterparts. They also prefer to cultivate true collaboration to coach and develop others (Bryant, 2009).

In light of this, animosities people have toward others owing to discrimination on the basis of their gender or race would result in exclusion and fragmented teams, which might swiftly worsen into disturbances throughout the employee knowledge transfer process (Yvanovich, 2020).

Age Discrimination

The times of birth are frequently used to categorize ages. People that are younger than you or older than you are treated unfairly due to their age. Some workers have observed age-based discrimination in the workplace. Some organizations could discriminate against younger or older workers who have valuable abilities, knowledge, and experience required for the job because they hunt for experienced people based on age. Whether intentionally or not, companies frequently practice age bias.

Gender Discrimination

Sex is what makes up a person's gender. Male and female are included. Sex-based discrimination signifies to any unjust treatment of employees or applicants based only on their sex, including treatment based solely on gender, transgender status, or sexual orientation. Some women have experienced gender discrimination, which may prevent them from competing on an equal footing with members of the opposite sex for top executive positions inside the company. In a study with commercial banks in South East Nigeria, Ugwu (2018) found that women's gender contributes to their low participation on executive committees and boards. According to the study's findings, women's careers at the executive level are negatively impacted by their gender.

Disability Discrimination

It arises when a candidate or employee is treated poorly because of a physical or mental handicap (US EEOC, 2018). Some individuals believe that impairments are exclusively related to physical or mobility challenges; however, there are other types of disabilities that can affect workers, including visual, thinking, and learning issues. Businesses can make sure to accommodate people with varied degrees of disability in order to foster diversity in the workplace, for instance, installing pace elevators in place of stairs for those with disabilities.

Productivity

Culture difference is harmful and can dramatically lower employee morale and corporate productivity. Conflicts over cultural differences are more likely to arise between people from diverse backgrounds and may not be resolved successfully. If not properly addressed, this would have an impact on employee satisfaction, business reputation, and overall productivity (Yvanovich, 2020).

Less Trust

People from minority groups may believe that they are being treated unfairly in comparison to groups that make up the majority. They can also believe that the manager is friendlier to those with similar backgrounds than those with different backgrounds. Therefore, in order to contribute their best to problem-solving inside the organization, this group would hardly ever raise their voice. This is a result of their diminished sense of value within the company (Yvanovich, 2020).

Types of Diversity

Three categories of diversity—demographic, experiential, and cognitive—have been described by Anca and Aragon (2018).

Demographic Diversity

It is connected to our origin identities—the traits that categorize us at birth and persist throughout the remainder of our lives. They include, among other things, gender, race, and sexual orientation.

Experiential or Experimental Diversity

It is connected to the events in life that mold our attitudes and behaviors. It leads to a learning process that alters our identities and advances us. Social engagement can alter a person's identity, affinity brings people together, and a relationship can convert someone's detest into a like.

Cognitive Diversity

It has to do with how we approach issues and have abstract thoughts. It includes cognitive abilities and problem-solving skills, among other things. Cognitive variety encourages us to scan our surroundings for things that we lack but that other minds possess to complement our way of thinking. It is known as aspirational identity.

Benefits of Workplace Diversity

Numerous businesses are benefiting greatly from a diversified workforce due to factors like age, ethnicity, gender among others. Diversity, talent, and dedication are important for competition and organizational success. Due to improved human resource management, a diverse pool of skilled and educated individuals brings about improvements in the workplace that boost organizational productivity and operational effectiveness (Ugwu & Osisoma, 2017). People with various backgrounds in education, experiences, and nations contribute to the innovation and creativity of organizations. Businesses with a diverse workforce have many advantages. Below is a discussion about them.

Reduction of Lawsuit

According to Esty, Griffin, and Schorr-Hirsh (1995), diversity at work can improve marketing opportunities, recruitment, and business image while decreasing lawsuits. According to Robbins and Coulter (2013), diversity is crucial for balancing the workplace and preventing lawsuits over unfair hiring practices.

People Management Benefits

Individual differences can be explored in a supportive, encouraging, and safe setting due to diversity. It enables greater utilization of the rich variability qualities that each person possesses (such as talents, abilities, and aptitude) and elevates the value of diversity in the workplace. Employing a multicultural workforce offers the chance to create a pool of talents with a distinctive set of skills necessary for success of the organization. Balancing diverse workplace allows for the development of various organizational problem-solving strategies. Regardless of their age, attitude, language, gender, or religion, businesses that support diversity in the workplace attract great employees who are competitive and thrive in the marketplace (Robbins & Coulter, 2013; Ankita, 2014; Farrah, n.d.).

Organizational Performance Benefits

Access to the best talent is increased by being open to diversity. The ability to balance the workplace and increase organizational commitment both depend on a diverse workforce. Businesses with a proper gender balance are 21% more likely to outperform their rivals when they have varied people; thus it is possible to use the gifts that each person has to raise productivity, improve organizational efficiency, and improve productivity. This is due to how similar their thought processes are. A diverse workforce fosters innovation and creativity. A diverse workplace provides businesses with the chance to leverage employee abilities, skills, and expertise to add

value to their businesses. It lowers the expense linked to employee churn, absenteeism, and litigation (Robbins & Coulter, 2013; Ugwu & Osisima, 2017; Farrah, n.d.).

Increased Revenue

Employing people from various backgrounds helps organizations compete favorably in their markets to boost revenues. According to a recent Boston Consulting Group study, businesses with a diverse staff and more innovative practices create over 19% more revenue than those with lower diversity scores (Perelson, n.d.). A diverse workplace benefits management development and the strategic planning process in terms of market share and sales volumes. Promoting organizational competitiveness or competitive advantage requires improved inventive initiatives from a diversified workforce. A diverse workplace would be seen as upholding moral and ethical standards (Robbins & Coulter, 2013; Ugwu & Osisima, 2017).

Reduced Employee Turnover

Employees will feel appreciated and accepted if their workplace promotes diversity and inclusion. Workers would be satisfied when they are contented with their job which would make them stick with their company for too long. This will lessen the organization's loss of employees (Robbins & Coulter, 2013).

Strategies for Managing Diversity in the Workplace

Mor-Barak (2014) has identified several obstacles that different persons encounter in modern organizations. According to the author, businesses should be aware of variations among people, promote cultural competence, and put emergency plans in place to ensure that all employees have an equal chance to succeed.

In order to effectively manage diversity in the workplace, managers should create awareness campaigns on subjects including bias, stereotyping, and discrimination, according to Visconti (2010) and Allers (2005). Making sure diversity and inclusion programs are incorporated into organizational plans and align with its objectives should be one of the first things done. Organizations require revolutionary change to emerge from their trying times when faced with risky scenarios like political and social issues, the global economic meltdown, terrorism, and civil and regional conflict. In order to guarantee that organizational concerns are handled right away, policies and procedures must be put in place. Employee resource groups, diversity skill training, and mentoring programs are advised in an effort to manage diversity issues effectively (Visconti, 2010; Allers, 2005).

Creating Mentorship Programs

Mentoring is the process by which a more seasoned or knowledgeable staff member offers guidance to a less seasoned or knowledgeable employee. According to O'Brien, Biga, Kessler, and Allen (2010), an experienced member is referred to as a mentor, whereas an inexperienced member is referred to as a protégé. High-potential employees ought to be used as mentors or protégés. Regardless of age, ethnicity, sex, or any other characteristics, mentors should be chosen. The two distinct types of mentoring support that mentors often offer are social and career development chances. A mentoring program should be designed to help minorities and women enter positions of leadership. Effective mentorship programs aid minority and diverse individuals in advancing into leadership roles more quickly. Managers are recommended to implement programs like mentoring schemes and give staff members (such women and people of color) access to knowledge and job prospects.

Diversity Skills and Training

Another strategy for managing equality in the organization is diversity skills and training. Giving workers access to a variety of options in a different place promotes learning and growth. As a result of prejudice,

stereotyping, and discrimination, people may change their behavior and lessen any personal bias they may have against others through the development, implementation, and maintenance of training programs inside the business. Regular training will alter people's attitudes and behaviors toward others in the workplace (Koonce, 2001; Devoe, 1999). In addition, it will assist workers in learning how to acquire certain talents and adjust in a diversified workplace. Everyone will benefit from understanding diversity-related issues and acquiring specific communication skills at all organizational levels. Managers are recommended to make diversity training and skills a part of their organization's policies.

Employee Resource Groups

This is another tactic to handle workplace diversity. Employee Resource Groups are a platform that connects employees with a common history and set of skills. Employees that share some aspect of diversity make up the group. People with comparable backgrounds, experiences, opinions, and points of view make up these groups. These associations are created by the staff members themselves, not by the companies. Meetings for business and social purposes offer a forum where each participant can listen and participate in discussions about how to manage diversity inside the organization. Additionally, the platform offers associates the chance for constructive criticism and feedback for learning from failures and triumphs (Flagg, 2002; Devoe, 1999).

Communicating Clearly and Creating Employee-Led Task Force

There should be open lines of communication between managers and staff members, especially when it comes to how employees are treated based on factors like gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, and religion. Managers must be careful to communicate with all groups of people using inclusive language and media. A task force run by employees is required to give organizational members feedback on employee performance, evaluations, and welfare. Taskforces should be established in each department or unit to improve the workplace and lessen conflict brought on by diversity (Flagg, 2002; Devoe, 1999).

Building Diversity-Friendly Workforce Policies

Promoting workplace diversity can be accomplished by developing new policies or changing current ones to accommodate organizational members. Everyone deserves to be treated fairly and equally, regardless of their gender, religion, color, or cultural heritage. Racial or gender discrimination will decline as a result of creating policies that value diversity (Flagg, 2002; Devoe, 1999).

Empowering and Educating Members

The value of workplace diversity and the best practices for hiring and managing employees should be taught to managers. They should be given sufficient resources to attract the brightest candidates from a variety of groups (Flagg, 2002; Devoe, 1999).

Conclusion

Equal possibilities to collaborate in an organization have been made possible by the expanding trend of globalization. The goal of global diversity is to comprehend the multicultural nature of individuals working in a specific environment. Integrating diversity and inclusion initiatives into the workforce would contribute to obtaining the most qualified candidates during the hiring process. Businesses with a diverse workforce are much more likely to achieve higher success than their competitors in terms of generating money, managing employees, and reaping the rewards of organizational performance.

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