

Linking Workforce Gender Diversity and Inclusion with Organizational Commitment: An Empirical Study

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Abstract

Workforce diversity and inclusion in today's globalized world is a primary challenge for any organization. Diversity is inevitable issue which could not be neglected by the management of the organisations. People are different from one another in terms of their culture, attitude, behaviour and psychology and management of working organisations need to decide that how this diversity which seems as one of the organisational challenge could be productively used in benefit of the organisations. It is the art of the managers that how they plan and utilise the human resources and their relative differences for organisational development.

This study is made to identify the impact of workforce gender diversity and inclusion on an important organization outcome, i.e., organizational commitment. This study follows descriptive research design and for data collection, convenience sampling technique was used for 354 employees of IT companies of metro cities of India. The data analysis is done through statistical tools like descriptive statistics and regression analysis.

The findings of the study reflect a direct and significant relationship between workplace inclusion and organizational commitment through linear regression analysis. The results of z-test reflected that male and female employees have different perception towards workplace inclusion and organizational commitment. The study provides guidelines to IT companies to understand and facilitate inclusive workplace that will encourage the employees to exhibit high level of organizational commitment.

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I. INTRODUCTION

In the previous decade, there has been developing a proof demonstrating that diversity and inclusion are basic indicators of employee practices and outcomes (Milliken, and Martins, 1996; Mor Barak and Levin, 2002; Williams and O'Reilly, 1998). The motivation for developing the diversity management has increased in both academics and corporate for purpose of increasing organizational competitiveness by building an inclusive organizational environment that values employees' differences and acknowledges individuals as they seem to be. Social and financial changes, like, the flood of international workers and endeavors to use

women employees as important part of manpower necessitate that more consideration be paid to diversity and managing diversity.

Handling diversity is a need of hour not only in western nations; but also in Asian nations where the corporations have to develop the efficient strategies for managing diversity. India contains a prominent level of workforce diversity, essentially in global enterprises. Overseeing workforce diversity might be an essential challenge in the present globalized world. As an expanding range of female, racial minorities, language, cultural differences, geographic disparities, experience, training, and individual with disabilities to search for a business,

and an opportunity to require the preferred position of an expanding ability pool presents itself a great deal of corporations.

Most of the studies discussed about the positive and negative consequences of diversity at the workplaces and very less consideration is being given to managing diversity and its role in influencing employees' psychology and behavior. Although this has also been marked that different composition of the work cluster impact to workplace performance and it has been widely studied (Prieto et al., 2009; Leonard, Levine & Joshi, 2004), however, question of how managing diversity impact the employees' behavior, attitudes and performance at the workplace is still unanswered?

Most of the studies done in western nations have shown the positive impact of managing diversity on workers and it's complicated to conclude that how diversity management practices are successful across different socially diverse nations and cultures. To resolve with the shortcomings of earlier studies, the present study tried to explore the impact of managing diversity on employees' behavior and attitudes especially in an Asian culture, such as the male-dominated cultures like India.

Diversity is happening because of the changing environment, which is beyond of the administration of the organization and if the organization doesn't adjust these changes, it ought to be problematic for organizations to claim a reasonable competitive advantage.

Social identity theory stated that individuals distinguish their identity among society through classifying themselves into a selected cluster. Notable cluster enrollments like gender, position, and quality-square measure the variables by that individuals order themselves as well as other people (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). Social identification assists in-group individuals share indistinguishable qualities, that outcome in positive plot for in-group individuals, and cultivates a negative edge toward

out-group individuals (Rubin & Hewstone, 2004). In an exceedingly male-dominated setting, male staff, individuals from the larger part cluster, has higher positions and extra resources than feminine staff owing to their high status and power; consequently, feminine staff, individuals from the minority cluster, square measure discriminated against by the cluster with significance sharing information and resources.

As indicated with the aid of social exchange theory, when staff comprehends fair exchange by way of a corporation, they will start helping organization in that advantageous ways (Aryee et al., 2002). Managing diversity intended to form larger inclusion noticeably into structure networks (Gilbert et al., 1999), assists staff with feeling that the corporation regards and cares concerning them notwithstanding of differences of their sexual orientation, age, and quality, and the opposite characteristics. The business enterprise's useful practices for workers add to constructing up a trust relationship among the group of workers and the organisation that make commitments for workers to pay back their company (Settoon et al., 1996), prompting improved worker commitment and progressed performance.

The other argument, supported decision-making theories, prescribe that diversity can give a wide change of perspectives, abilities, and experiences, which may build the group's power and problem-solving capabilities, along these lines improving performance (Cox et al., 1991). Heterogeneous teams are in this manner certainly to be extra imaginative, make better determinations, and perform higher than same teams (Wanous and Youtz, 1986).

Workforce diversity researchers defined two particular dimensions of diversity indicators: surface-level diversity and profound level diversity. They need sketched out surface-level diversity as "contrasts among group individuals openly, biological attributes whose most part reflected in physical features". These traits area is noticeable and basically defined by individuals. Samples of

surface-level diversity would be age, sexual orientation, and race/ethnicity. Bound visible stigma like physically handicap, distortion, likewise as weight issues (i.e., largeness or anorexia) may even be grouped underneath surface-level diversity. In the qualification, profound level diversity alludes to a ton of refined properties that can't basically be legitimately and straight off decided. Such qualities talk about with members' characters, frames of mind, convictions, and qualities. For instance, sexual direction or spiritual convictions might be ordered beneath profound level diversity.

Surface-level or demographic diversity alludes to the degree to that a unit is heterogeneous on attributes like age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, deliberate foundation, and nationality (Lawrence, 1997; Tsui, Egan, and Xin, 1995).

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The studies of work diversity and equality have developed in various ways throughout the most recent 20 years. However, it's feasible to reason investigation into 3 wide streams; investigations of the association and propriety of explicit approaches (in the case of overseeing diversity or ensuring equal opportunities), an examination into the effect of diversity on structure results, and studies investigating the subject of discrimination in regard to explicit parts of the work what follows might be a brief survey of those 3 strands of investigation. Diversity management began in North America (Maxwell et al., 2003; Ozbilgin, 2008; Kandola et al., 1998).

Later on, this center was reoriented towards various drivers, similar to dynamic socioeconomic and consequently the business case for diversity (Jayne and Dipboye, 2004). It's been guaranteed that diversity the executives inside the America has been the method for handling a dreadful soul and apparitions of the past.

Diversity will expand conflicts that correspondingly could likewise be useful or not, wagering on the sort

of conflict that's actuated. Three styles of conflicts could happen during a different bunch like socio-emotional conflict, task conflict, and worth conflict. Task conflict exists once there's a difference among group individuals concerning the substance of the tasks which are to be performed, just as varieties in perspectives, thoughts, and assessments (Jehn, 1995).

A few investigations inspecting the effect of diversity at an individual level and have indicated that when put by comparative individuals, people that region unit entirely unexpected (unique people) have a lesser amount of fascination and trust in peers (Chatopadhyay, 1999), less successive communication (Zenger and Lawrence, 1989), lower degree of commitment for clusters (Tsui, Egan, and O'Reilly, 1992), lower task commitments (Kirchmeyer and Cohen, 1992; Kirchmeyer, 1993), lower view of structure fairness and inclusiveness (Mor-Barak, Cherin, and Berkman, 1998). One also needs to remember R. Roosevelt Thomas Junior has presented the expression "managing diversity" and the ways through which it could be better managed in the organisational context.

III. BENEFITS OF WORKPLACE DIVERSITY

Different investigators elaborated the positive consequences of keeping diversity. Some are: Businesses with an especially directed arranged workforce have an unrivaled probability of appreciation and tending to the necessities of different clients (Allen et al, 2004).Diverse workforce agrees an affiliation progressively significant opportunity to grasp and serve distinctive markets and furthermore give a wealthier pool of workers from which the affiliation can select (Richard, 2000; Cox and Blake, 1991).

Diversity helps the organisations in generating different benefits including better handling of diversified customers, improved leadership and minimizing the costs related with turnover, extended productivity, upgraded quality transport, improved

access to an advancing business focus, augmented customer base, lessened costs associated with turnover and absenteeism, support of the best capacity (through redesigning the nature of the workplace), improved organization climate, convincing harmony advancement strategies in the relationships, updated total coordinated effort, extended quality and versatility, and upgraded imagination, innovations and improvement (Kersten, 2000; Maxwell et al., 2000; Groschl and Doherty, 1999; Shen et al., 2009). These convert into progressive workplace and promote benefits (Allen et al., 2007; Maxwell et al., 2000).

IV. INCLUSION

Inclusion is the primary requirement for the better functioning of a diverse workplace and believes in involving successful assimilation of diverse people into the workplace. An inclusive culture initiates a climate where everyone is given value; justice and all the differences are recognised positively.

The Constitution of India disallows segregation at the grounds of faith; race, rank, interaction, or a places person belongs to. Through the order thoughts of country inclusion, the Constitution, as a security measure to exact age-old social, money related, political, and monetary hardships, sets out that the State will advance with remarkable consideration the scholastic and financial interests of the scheduled castes and tribes. While instructional foundations and public-area enterprises are required to enroll considering sufficient depiction of backward castes and tribes, in truth, segregation and discrepancy.

Individuals from historical past may have the ability, skills, and capabilities which can give an advantage to the business enterprise just as supplements the general implementation. It makes advancement while there is inclusion of human beings from unmistakable history. Cultural differences and language boundary can limit the organization yet having one of the kind people convey the advantage of different language which could remove the

obstacle. It additionally encourages enterprise to hold work force as organization acknowledges human beings from unique foundation. Fairness inside the work environment is significant for empowering laborers from all foundations to detect certain of their ability and achieve their wonderful. The better the team morale, the extra profitable employees are. (Deering, 2015)

V. ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT

Organizational commitment is defined as “employees’ mental connection closer to their organization”. Commitment is a power that initiates a strategy toward one goal (Meyer, 2002). Organisational commitment is essentially required to connect the employees with their assigned job, leaders, management and the working organisation (Meyer, 2001). A comprehensively utilized adaptation of organizational commitment as a multidimensional collect seems to be (Meyer J P and Allen N, 1997) ‘Three-Segment Model of Commitment’, it means commitment is defined in three ways; this is affective, continuance, and normative commitment (Meyer J P and Allen N, 1997). Affective commitment is characterized as a passionate connection to the organization. Continuance commitment is the apparent costs identified with leaving the organization. Normative devotion alludes back to the perceived obligation to stay inside the organization (Meyer, 2001). Organisational commitment is a significant employees’ behavior which helps to develop their trust, positive behavior and good relationship with the employer and the organisation.

Conceptual Framework

On the basis of above discussion figure 1 represent the conceptual framework of the present study followed by the research objectives and hypotheses.

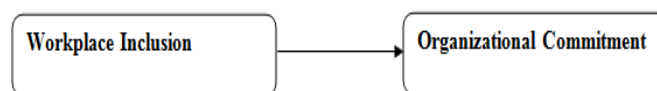


Figure: 1 Conceptual Framework

Research Objectives

- a) To study the difference in employees' perception towards workplace inclusion on the basis of gender.
- b) To examine the difference in employees' perception towards organizational commitment on the basis of gender.
- c) To assess the association between workplace inclusion and organizational commitment.

Research Hypotheses

On the basis of above research objectives following hypotheses were proposed to investigate-

Hypothesis 1: There is statistically significant difference among male and female employees towards workplace inclusion.

Hypothesis 2: There is statistically significant difference among male and female employees towards organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 3: There exist statistically significant and positive relationship between workplace inclusion and organizational commitment.

VI. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sample and sampling procedures

For understanding the relationship among study variables, data was gathered from the employees working in well-known IT companies which are located in metro cities of India by using a self-administered questionnaire. One cover letter was also attached with the questionnaire informing them about the purpose of data collection, study nature and also ensures the confidentiality of their given responses. Most of employees voluntarily agreed to become participant in an online survey for this research. Approx 500 questionnaires were sent through e-mails and face to face interaction, and out of 500, 375 responses were received in total. Researchers decided to reject twenty-one questionnaires due to incompleteness of information during the data cleaning process. This way for data

analysis only 354 questionnaires was used. The sample of respondents consists of 55% male and 45% are female respondents.

The strength of the instrument was examined by using Cronbach's alpha value, which is a measure to test the reliability of the scale and for all the constructs under study; the value of Cronbach's alpha was above 0.70. A detailed description is also given below. All the responses were received on 5-point likert scale where 1 represents strongly disagree and 5 indicates strongly agree.

Measures

Workplace Inclusion was estimated through a fifteen-item scale developed by Mor Barak (2005). The scale is used to examine the extent to which employees feel that they play vital role in the organization. The scale items comprise of- "I am able to influence decisions that affect my organization", "I feel that I am able to participate in the general work setting." The responses so obtained for the construct show high internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha value of 0.87.

Organizational commitment was estimated through a six-item scale created by Meyer et al. (1993) to evaluate employees' commitment towards their working organization. The scale items comprise of- "I would be extremely glad to spend rest of my professional life with this organization." The responses obtained for this construct also show adequate internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha value of 0.73.

Diversity variables

Gender as specific diversity characteristic was taken for exploring its impact on relationships between dependent and independent variables. In gender male was pre-coded as 1 and female as 2.

Tools for Data Analysis

For hypotheses 1 and 2, z-tests was conducted to examine differences among diversity genders as

diversity dimension with respect to inclusion and organizational commitment. For hypotheses 3, the association between perception of workplace inclusion and organizational commitment was measured through simple linear regression.

Results

Z-test has been used to compare the means of male and female responses towards variables under study that is workplace inclusion and organizational commitment. Table 1 presents the details of means with their corresponding z-value and p-values.

Table: 1 Summary of descriptive statistics

S.NO	Variables	(Male) Mean	(Female) Mean	z-value	p-value
1	Workplace Inclusion	25.78	23.64	2.89	0.00
2	Organizational Commitment	40.63	38.35	4.37	0.00

Source: Author

Table 1 show a significant difference among male and female employees working in IT companies of metro cities of India with respect to workplace inclusion and organizational commitment. This reflects that male and female employees have different perception towards workplace inclusion and organizational commitment. Hence, it can be stated from Table 1 that H1 and H2 is accepted (p-value 0.00 at 1% level of significance).

The regression result between workplace inclusion and organizational commitment obtained from male and female employees working in IT companies are presented in Table 2. Here workplace inclusion is taken as independent variable and organizational commitment as dependent variable. The results of linear regression reflect that P-value for both male and female employees is significant; this exhibit strong linear relationship between workplace inclusion and organizational commitment. R2 value

in case of male is 67% while in case of female employees it's greater, that is 79%, indicating a strong predictive model. However, the standard error in both the cases is relatively low. Thus, organizations must manage workforce diversity in an inclusive way so that higher level of organizational commitment can be generated among employees irrespective of their gender.

Table 2: Summary of Regression analysis

Workplace Inclusion (Dependent variable)	Organizational Commitment (Independent variable)									
	Male					Female				
	Coefficients	Std. Error	t-stat	P-value	Tolerance	VIF	Coefficients	Std. Error	t-stat	P-value
	0.24	0.05	4.73	0.00	0.84	1.19	1.19	0.09	10.73	0.00
R ²	0.67					0.79				
F-value	189.77					241.59				
P-value for F-value	0.00					0.00				

Source: Author

VII. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Globalization has made a noteworthy impact on organizations with respect to employees from across the regional, national, and international boundaries resulting into increasing interest among companies and research scholars, to explore the emerging areas of workforce diversity and inclusion at the workplace (Urbsiené 2011). The study throws light on existing literature of workplace inclusion and organizational commitment in Indian IT industry. Findings of the research reflect that both male and female employees are concerned about the way it is managed by their respective organizations and thus ultimately it impacts their level of commitment towards their respective organization.

The underlying objective behind the research was to examine the impact of workplace inclusion on organizational commitment. A conceptual model was made for better understanding of the concept

and the relationship among the dependent and the independent variable. Practically, the study proposes certain suggestions to IT companies to manage workforce diversity through inclusive practices and policies so as to enhance organizational commitment.

The implication of the study is to suggest the management to encourage workforce diversity through workplace inclusion that embraces diverse employees, especially gender diversity. Further, equal opportunity for all irrespective of their diverse traits for both male and female will foster a conducive workplace.

As our study has taken into account only gender as a specific diversity dimension thus we recommend future researchers to include some specific diversity dimensions like age, category of employees, experience, designation, sexual and religious orientation.

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