MANAGING CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN WORKPLACE

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ABSTRACT

Diversity plays a significant role within an organisation. Workplace diversity refers to employing diverse employees within the organisation. The workforce in a diverse workplace includes people from different gender, race, age group, religion, sexual orientation and cultural background. It has been observed that workplaces with diverse workforce may experience conflict like situations because of cultural differences. However, the organisation has the ability to deal with these situations effectively. The organisations have the responsibility of maintaining equality and diversity within the workplace. Maintaining equality and diversity contributes towards a positive impact on the productivity of the organisation. Discrimination within the business organisations may have a severely negative impact on the organisational performance and hence the company needs to ensure that they take all the necessary measures to control discrimination within the workplace. The workplace environment needs to support the performance of the employees. This assignment will develop a research proposal on managing cultural diversity in workplace. The entire research proposal has been structured in a way that it is easier for the reader to comprehend. A through research has been done to prepare this research proposal. This research proposal will be based on a company called Huddle. This company deals with technology and offers technological assistance to various different organisations.

BACKGROUND OF THE RESEARCH

It has been observed that diversity has a significantly positive impact on the workforce. Further, diversity enhances the efficiency of the workforce to perform. It is important for the concerned

organisation to ensure that they maintain diversity appropriately within the organisation. This research procedure aims to analyse the measures taken to manage workplace diversity within an organisation. The Human Resource Management contributes effectively towards maintaining workplace diversity. Further, the company also includes policies that are developed by the organisation to contribute towards the effectivity of managing workplace diversity (Flory*et al.,* 2019). This study will consider a company called Huddle and hence analyse the steps taken by the company to deal with workplace diversity within the organisation. The main objective is to understand the role played by the organisation and the management to manage workplace diversity and how does the same impact the productivity of the employees. The employees require an appropriate workplace culture to work effectively. Further, it has been observed that workplace diversity strengthens the organisation's ability to perform. Apart from workplace diversity, this research will consider the aspect of equality as well.

RESEARCH AIMS

The aim of this research proposal is to analyse the steps taken towards maintaining workplace diversity in Huddle.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To analyse the significance of workplace diversity within an organisation.
- To analyse the steps that contribute towards managing workplace diversity.
- To analyse the impact workplace diversity has on the employees and their performance.
- To analyse the organisational policies that may contribute towards managing workplace diversity.

RESEARCH QUESTION

- Why is workplace diversity important within an organisation?
- What are the challenges associated with managing workplace diversity?
- What positive impacts do workplace diversity has on the performance of the employees?
- How can the company contribute towards effectively managing workplace diversity within an organisation?

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section of the research proposal will include a detailed study of the research topic which is workplace diversity. All the important aspects associated with workplace diversity will be included in this part of the proposal. Further, the gaps in the literature of the researches conducted earlier will be identified in this specific section.

TYPES OF WORKPLACE DIVERSITY

Diversity can be of various different types which may include race and ethnicity, age and generation, different gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, disability and socioeconomic status. Diversity based on race and ethnicity refers to people belonging to different cultures and areas. The common challenge that people from different race and ethnicity face is of communication. Language is a huge issue that people face and this may create conflicting situations as well. Cultural difference may contribute towards conflicts between the employees which will impact the productivity of the organisation.

Disability and socioeconomic status are two other important aspects that may create difference between the employees. From the perspective of equality, it has often been observed that

disabled people and people belonging to different genders are treated differently within a workplace (Guillaume*et al.,* 2017). The difference in treatment may include difference in wages or inequality during increments or promotions. The main issue related to workplace diversity is that people are being judged on the basis of different factors and treat them unequally. This does not make a workplace environment to be supportive for the employees to perform.

FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED WHILE MANAGING WORKPLACE DIVERSITY

Managing diversity can be a challenging task for the company. The Human Resource Department contributes towards managing workplace diversity within the organisation. It is essential for the management to consider the following aspects while managing workplace diversity within an organisation. Effectively managing workplace diversity will enhance the ability of the organisation to perform maintaining a sustainable position within the market. Further, managing workplace diversity contributes towards ensuring that the employees do not engage in any kind of unethical activities and that they work effectively within the organisation. The following factors need to be followed while managing workplace diversity.

*Respecting co-workers***:** In a workplace scenario, it is essential for the employees to involve in effective team work. In order to ensure that employees work effectively within a team it is essential for them to respect each other while performing their tasks. Valuing co-workers point of view supports team working abilities. Further, issues related to discriminations can be dealt with effectively.

*Empowering employees***:** It is important for the organisation to ensure that the employees are being empowered to work effectively within the workplace. Employee empowerment is essential for the employees as it motivates them to work effectively and further enables the employees to understand the significance of ethics in a workplace scenario. Employee empowerment needs to be focused on while managing workplace diversity.

*Employee development***:** The employees have a set of expectations from the organisation; these expectations include the provision of achieving progress in the professional field of an individual's career. The employees too get highly engaged in the tasks assigned to them and hence the overall process helps to enhance the productivity of the organisation (Richards, 2019).

SIGNIFICANCE OF WORKPLACE DIVERSITY

Workplace diversity has a number of benefits that is being experienced by the concerned organisation. Identifying these benefits helps the company to understand the significance of managing workplace diversity. The benefits associated with workplace diversity are mentioned as follows:

*Increased creativity***:** It can be said that workplace diversity has the ability to boost creativity within the workplace scenario. Employees belonging to different culture and different areas have different way of thinking which will certainly enhance the aspect of creativity within the workplace (Ozgen*et al.,* 2017). Employee from diverse background will have different solutions to achieve the aims and objectives set by the organisation.

*Increased productivity***:** Workplace diversity contributes towards enhancing the productivity of the organisations as well. It is a commonly known fact that creativity contributes towards enhancing productivity of the organisation. Diversity in workforce hence contributes towards increasing the productivity of the team which impacts the workplace productivity effectively.

*Improved performance***:** Increased creativity and increased productivity ensures improvement in the overall performance of the organisation. It further contributes towards improving the decision making procedures as well.

*Boosts the reputation of the brand***:** Workplace diversity is appreciated by every individual, and hence effective workplace diversity contributes towards boosting the reputation of the brand in the market. The reputation in the market helps the company to increase their sales in the long run.

MANAGING WORKPLACE DIVERSITY APPROACHES

There are a variety of ways to manage workplace diversity within an organisation. It is essential for the company to know the impact diversity has on the organisational performance to plan things in a way that it has a significantly positive impact on the employees as well as the performance of the employees (Graham*et al.,* 2017). Some of the approaches to effectively manage workplace diversity have been mentioned as follows:

*Prioritizing communication***:** Communication plays an important role in managing workplace diversity. It is essential for the employees to engage themselves in effective communication procedures to know each other's perspective better. Language and cultural barriers may restrict employees to communicate between each other however it is important that the employees need to communicate effectively to know each other better. Further, effective communication has the efficiency to maintain transparency between the employees.

*Treating every employee equally***:** Equal treatment is the right of every employee and this provides the employees with a clear idea about the values followed by the organisation (Risberg*et al.,* 2019). When every individual is treated equally, the employees understand the work ethics better and achieve success in terms of accomplishing their tasks appropriately within the stipulated period of time. Company policies contribute towards the effectivity of this approach.

*Encouraging employees to work in teams***:** Teams compile a number of team members who belong to different diversities. Working in teams allows the employees to know each other better. Further, it reduces the chances of getting into conflicts (Scarborough*et al.,* 2019). Employees get the opportunity to interact with each other and hence contribute towards the implementation of workplace diversity. The preconceived notions and misunderstandings related to culture get a chance to be dealt with effectively.

*Company policies***:** The companies develop workplace policies which is mandatory for every employee to follow. These company policies need to take the aspect of workplace diversity very seriously. It is necessary to take action of employees who do not follow these policies and hence need to enable the employees to understand that it is necessary to treat every employee

equally and one need to co-ordinate with each other to ensure that they are capable of meeting the objectives set by the organisation.

CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED WHILE MANAGING WORKPLACE DIVERSITY

Managing workplace diversity can be a challenging task for an organisation. The most challenging task is to deal with cultural and ethnic differences (Barak, 2016). An individual grows in a specific culture since the very beginning of his or her life. It is difficult for them to make efforts to understand others culture and hence respect them to ensure that they contribute towards improving their performance within the organisation. Working within an organisation, as a team it is essential to understand that each of the employees is working to benefit the company. Keeping difference between them will have a severely negative impact on the organisational performance.

Further, conflicting situations affect the co-workers within the organisation which impacts the overall performance of the company. For a company to manage workplace diversity it is important to identify the factors that cause these conflicting situations (Hossain*et al.,* 2019). The employees need to engage in the process of managing workplace diversity as that will enhance the effectivity of managing workplace diversity within the company. The employees also need to have a learning attitude and must respect other's point of view.

In a diverse workplace there is no space for ego and personal conflicts. The employees need to deal with situations in the most professional way possible further it is important for the employees to consider the most efficient way that can contribute towards achieving success in terms of meeting the aims and objectives set by the concerned organisation. The employees need to just think about the benefit of the organisation and within a diverse workplace situation, there will be diverse ideas and perspectives; the aspect that has the efficiency to benefit the organisational performance needs to be considered only.

METHODOLOGY

This section of the research proposal will include the research philosophy, research approach, research design and various other important aspects associated with the research procedure. The methodology section of a research proposal is considered to be significantly important considering that it justified the use of different methods to conduct the research procedure (Durrani*et al.,* 2016). The main objective will be to answer the research questions that have been mentioned earlier.

RESEARCH PHILOSOPHY

The research philosophy provides the research procedure with the support that it requires gaining success. In general there are four types of research philosophies which include interpretivist, realism, positivism and pragmatism. Considering the research topic it has been found that interpretivist is the appropriate research philosophy for this research procedure (Core, 2020). This specific type of research philosophy is considered to be similar to idealism and contributes towards making use of a diverse type of approaches which may include phenomenology and constructivism approaches. This research approach emphasizes on considering the social differences that may occur between different people.

RESEARCH APPROACH

An appropriate research approach contributes towards enabling the research procedure to meet the aims and objectives set by the researcher. In general there are two types of research approaches called inductive and deductive research approach. Considering the purpose of this research it can be said that the deductive research approach is the most appropriate research approach for this research procedure (Bamel*et al.,* 2018). This research procedure will consider a number of secondary sources to collect relevant data that can be used for this research purpose.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design is considered to be one of the most primary steps associated with conducting the research procedure. This specific research aspect contributes towards making use of a variety of research elements that will increase the efficiency of this research to perform. The main function of a research design is that it involves in a variety of actions that help to collect as well as measure different aspects associated with the study. Research onion is one of the designs that have been implemented in this research procedure. Saunders originated this research design. This research procedure desires to meet the standards to accuracy to ensure that the outcome can be used for various purposes in the future.

RESEARCH STRATEGY

Research Strategy is considered to be one of the vital aspects associated with the research procedure. The appropriate research strategy will ensure accuracy of the research outcomes. There are a variety of research strategies but identifying the appropriate research strategy will help the research analyse the data appropriately. Considering the research aims and objectives it is considered that the qualitative data analysis is the most appropriate research strategy for this study.

DATA COLLECTION

Data collection procedure needs to be conducted with utmost care and accuracy. In general there are two methods of data collection, primary data collection and secondary data collection. Considering the research procedure and the availability of data the researcher has the independence of selecting the type of data collection method they desire to follow. The primary data is the raw data and the research may decide the way they desire the data to be collected. On the other hand the secondary data is the type of data that is being taken from any secondary source where the researcher makes use of data that has already been collected for some different purpose.

Considering the research procedure and the research strategy it has been identified that the primary data collection method is the appropriate way of data collection for this research procedure. This research will consider the primary data collection method to collect the data. The employees and the HR department of Huddle will be interviewed to collect the relevant data. The questionnaire will consider including open ended questions only to collect proper data from the answers provided by the participants. The data that will be collected will be analysed appropriately to draw the required outcome.

SAMPLE SIZE

The researcher will interview 50 employees in the organisation. Further, 5 people from the Human Resource Department will be interviewed as well. The entire interview will aim to collect relevant data that will help the research procedure.

SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The sampling technique refers to a process that makes use of various statistical analyses to analyse the large number of data that has been collected by the researcher (Davis*et al.,* 2016). The sampling technique that has been considered to be appropriate for this research process is the probabilistic sampling technique.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

This research procedure aims to focus on the aspect of accuracy. It is a known fact that following ethical steps contribute towards completion of tasks accurately. The ethics aspect considers two significantly important aspects which are authenticity and authorization. This research procedure aims to follow both these aspects to ensure that it abides by the ethical considerations. The researcher needs to follow certain rules and regulations to ensure that the

research procedure is ethical in nature. The following steps have been taken in order to ensure that the research procedure is ethical in nature.

- A consent letter has been sent to the employees of Huddle. Every detail has been included in the consent letter. Approving this letter will ensure that the employees agree to the terms and conditions mentioned in the letter.
- The participants will be given with the consent letters.
- The participant has the complete independence of accepting or rejecting the consent letter considering their view points.
- The employees who accept the consent letter will be interviewed.
- The researcher has no right to force them to answer any question.
- The researcher needs to follow a very transparent procedure that will provide the participants with a clear idea of what they are facing.
- The researcher needs to maintain anonymity and hence all the data that will be collected will be kept confidential to ensure that the participants do not face any issue later.

LIMITATIONS

This section will include the limitations experienced by the researcher while conducting this research. The limitations have been mentioned as follows:

- Lack of an appropriate time frame that can be followed.
- The sample size could be larger.
- Lack of appropriate resources may make the research outcome questionable.
- It was difficult to reach out the manager in-charge of Huddle.
- No response has been received so far from the company.

DATA ANALYSIS

This is the most vital section within a research procedure. The effectivity of the research analysis procedure will contribute towards the accuracy of the final research outcome. The data collection method has been considered to be primary data collection. The question that has

been selected to collect the data has been set in two parts. One part is for the employees and the other set of questions is for the employees in the human resource department. The questions has been set as such that it helps the researcher to collect the relevant data that will help to draw conclusions and get the answers for the research aims and objectives.

Questionnaire for the employees:

1. Do you support workplace diversity?
2. Which company policies contribute towards workplace diversity within the organisation?
3. Is it more effective to work together as a team or are you comfortable working as an individual?
4. What steps does the company take for people not following the company policies?
5. How is the work culture in this organisation?

Questionnaire for the human resource department:

1. How do you deal with workplace diversity?
2. How do you provide the employees with opportunities to know each other better?
3. Do you consider workplace diversity while developing new company policies?
4. Do you provide equal opportunity to candidates from any corner of the world for a specific vacant position?
5. How important is workplace diversity for the Human Resource Department in Huddle?

The data that will be collected will be qualitative and primary in nature. The responses of these questions will contribute towards collecting the relevant data that the researcher requires to conduct the complete analysis. Further, the outcome will be completely dependent on the data analysis procedure. It is significantly important that the employees comprehend these questions appropriately and hence answer them correctly to maintain the accuracy of the research procedure.

CONCLUSION

Conclusively, it could be noted that the importance of cultural diversity has been stressed in particular. Diversified workforce includes employees belonging to different gender, age, religion, ethnicity, race, cultural background, education and many others. However, while conducting the research it has been found that cultural diversity is an important criterion in enhancing the productivity of an organization. Increased productivity increases the profit margin of a desired company. It has been found that cultural diversity develops mutual respect among employees. Cultural Diversity in the workplace creates innovative ideas. An innovative idea in turn enables the employees to think out of the box. In accordance to a survey, it has been found that about 48% of the companies have been subject to higher diversification. This has influenced the organizations positively. Employee engagement is seen to be enhanced. An ideal way of understanding other culture is by acquiring knowledge about the definite culture. An employer found to be sharing their experience with other would help to increase the sense of trust among the employee members of an organization. The company which has been found to be effective in luring employees are found to be culturally diversified. Highly educated candidates have a firm belief that a diversified workforce would help in paving path towards the success. A qualified set of employees often constitute a diversified workplace. Human resource department plays an important role in recruiting appropriate candidates for the company. Companies which tend to hire employees of different cultural background remain in the good books of the people at large.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In order to maintain a diversified workforce, the employees are recommended to follow:

- The diversification of culture in the workplace starts with recruiting appropriate candidates. If the hiring process is found to be fair enough, the culture would be diversified in the workplace. The human resource personnel needs to select the candidates solely on their level of qualifications and experience. Hence they should not be further judged on issues of caste, race, creed, religion and many other factors.

- The employees working in the organization must be provided with adequate training. Training would facilitate the employees to have a deeper understanding of other

cultures. Hence, knowing the cultural background of other's would refrain them from stereotyping them.

- Socializing with the employees would help to know each other. The employees should be given a scope to interact with each other. Sharing knowledge through effective communication would help them in the long run.

- Effective Communication is one of the top priority which should be followed by every members. This helps in reducing the conflict among each other.

- The employees must respect the cultural values of other employees. This would help in eliminating the differences prevalent between them. However, they would tend to acknowledge each other. Respecting each other would reduce the likelihood of conflicts among team members of an organization.

- It is equally important for an organization to maintain its ethics, fair practices of employment and appreciation. As this would help in attracting a large number of customers for the company. Increased customers would help in creating a pool of people belonging to different cultures.

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