

WORK FORCE DIVERSITY: IMPACT OF DIVERSITY WITH REGARD TO GENDER IN IT SECTOR IN INDIA

Rajesh Kumar, Dr. Arti Gaur

Abstract— Today's business world diversity issues are considered important and are projected to become even more important in the future because to increasing differences in our population. Workplace diversity refers to the differences that people bring with them to their jobs on the basis of gender, age, race, ethnicity, culture or professional background. Those differences have a direct and/or indirect influence on the work done. Workplace Diversity also refers to the variety of differences between employees in an organization. Diversity encompasses race, gender, age, ethnic group, personality, cognitive style, tenure, organizational function, education background etc. Diversity not only includes how people perceive themselves, but how they perceive others. Those perceptions affect their interactions with others. To function effectively for an organization, professionals need to deal effectively with issues such as communication, adaptability and change. Importance of diversity will increase significantly in the future. Organizations need to recognize the importance of diversity and are ready to spend resources on managing diversity in the workplace now.

Managing workplace diversity is one of the challenges for human resource managers in India in IT industry. Old days are gone when most people in the office looked the same, spoke in the same manner and had the same outlook in life. Now things are somehow change

Index Terms— Work force diversity, Impact of diversity, IT sector

I. INTRODUCTION

WORKFORCE DIVERSITY

Managing diversity is one of the crucial challenges counter by the organizations. In present's work environment, co-workers are likely to be of different with respect to gender, age, religion, colour, cultural background, race, thought, experience and ethnicity. They also differ in terms of lifestyle, attitudes, values, beliefs, behaviours, expectations, skills and experiences. These issues are not just regarding discriminatory practices but they modify the nature and demands placed on leadership and management and bring into focus the concept of diversity. How well managers are prepared to invest in the concept of diversity will impact not only on work issues but also on sensitivity to customer's

Manuscript received Nov 14, 2014

Rajesh Kumar, Ph.d. Scholar, Deptt. of Business Administration, C.D.L.U., Sirsa, India

Dr. Arti Gaur, Asst. Professor, Deptt. of Business Administration, C.D.L.U., Sirsa, India

needs, legal compliance, business' ethical issues and profitability.

Diversity management is a strategic process to manage a diverse workforce including the fight against stereotypes, prejudice and all kind of discrimination due to the individual perceptions and assumptions in the manner to maximize the benefit and minimize barriers of different opinions, behaviour and attitudes of human beings within an organization.

Today's diversity issues are considered important and are projected to become even more important in the future because to increasing differences in our population. Organizations need to focus on diversity and look for ways to become totally inclusive organizations because diversity has the potential to increase productivity and competitive advantages (SHRM, 1995)¹. Stephen G. Butler, co-chair of the Business-Higher Education Forum, United States of America believes that diversity is an invaluable competitive asset that any country cannot afford to ignore (Robinson, 2002)². Managing and valuing diversity is an important part of effective people management, which can improve workplace productivity (Black Enterprise, 2001)³. Demographic changes (increasing importance of women in the workplace, organizational restructurings and legislations to provide equal opportunity to men/women) will require organizations to revise their management practices and develop creative approaches to manage human resources. Changes will increase work performance and customer satisfaction.

Diversity signifies that there are important and valuable differences between people in the organization. It is generally accepted that there are some differences that are ascribed from birth and cannot change like gender, caste, ethnicity, race and physical abilities. Class is also from birth but in a growing economy, it can change over time. Some other differences like educational background, language, geographic location, religion or political beliefs can also be acquired. The dimensions of diversity vary across countries and cultures and in any given location can change over time. Diversity is closely connected to another term that we see commonly today, which is 'Change'. Managing diversity in the workplace is an essential part of change management. If Indian companies have to compete in today's changing global marketplace, it has to learn to manage diversity.

II. IT SECTOR IN INDIA

Information Technology industry is one of the fastest growing sector in India. Indian IT industry has built up brand equity for itself in the global markets and IT industry in India comprises of software industry and information technology enabled services (ITES), which also includes business process outsourcing (BPO) industry. India is developed as a leader in software development and has built a favourite destination for IT-enabled services. Today, Indian

Information Technology companies such as Tata Consultancy Services, Wipro, Infosys and HCL are renowned in the global market for their IT prowess (<http://www.iloveindia.com/economy-of-india/it-industry.html>)⁴.

In the last two decades, the Indian Information Technology industry has contributed to Indian economic growth in terms of GDP, foreign exchange earnings, per capita income and employment generation

(<http://uimt.net/training/ptu/career.php>)⁵. The current role of IT/ITES industry in India's economy is well known now. The sector is proving to be the major growth pillar within the services industry, which in turn drives several economic indicators of growth in the country.

The Indian Information Technology industry can be classified into the following categories – Information Technology Services, Engineering Services, Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) Services and E-Business. IT Services can further be divided into information services outsourcing, packaged software support and installation, systems integration, data processing services, hardware support and installation and IT training. Engineering Services constitutes Industrial Design, Electronic System Design, Design Validation Testing, Industrialization and Prototyping. IT Enabled Services are services that use the Internet as a basic infrastructure i.e. Back Office Operations, Data Processing, Call Centers, Business Process Outsourcing (BPO), Medical Transcription etc. IT sector is attracting interest not only as a developed market but also as potential production base by MNCs. Therefore India is established as a pioneer in software development and a favourite destination for IT-enabled services. The fast growth in the sector is a consequence of access to trained English speaking professionals, educated manpower, cost competitiveness and quality telecommunications infrastructure in India. Companies operating from India are able to leverage the advantage of the Indian time zone to offer 24 x 7 services to their rest of world customers. Many world leaders including General Electric (GE), British Airways, American Express and Citibank have outsourced call centre operations to India.

III. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The objective of the study is to study the impact of diversity with regard to gender in IT sector in India.

IV. IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

With the increasing richness of diversity in the world and in the workforce, we need to expand our outlook and use creative strategies to be successful. Every organization needs to realize the full potential of all employees i.e. male and female and help to achieve its goals. We hope that proposed research will help IT sector to understand importance of workforce diversity and help them to manage the challenges faced by sector due to workforce diversity specially gender.

V. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter consists of reviews of secondary data collected from other journals, books and primary data. It also outlines the literature and relevant theoretical model reviews regarding work force diversity and employee performance and determined and defined deeply about the variables. The

determinant of variables is necessary to understand to the relationship between the independent variables (gender, age, ethnicity, and education background) and the dependent variable.

Tsui, Egan, and O'Reilly (1992)⁶ explained that the level of gender diversity impacts the performance of the group and organizational members in different ways depending on the ratio of one gender to the other and the gender of the direct manager.

Pelled (1996)⁷ this study was about Demographic Diversity, Conflict, and Work Group Outcomes: An Intervening Process Theory. This study developed a theoretical model to explain the turnover and mixed performance consequences of demographic diversity in work groups. The model also suggested that each demographic diversity variable with respect to age, gender, race, group tenure, organization tenure, education and functional background can be classified according to its level of visibility and its level of job relatedness, visibility is the extent to which the variable is easily observed by group members and job-relatedness is the extent to which the variable directly shapes perspectives and skills related to cognitive tasks. It was found that the visibility and job relatedness of a diversity variable indirectly influence how much turnover and/or performance enhancement the variable yields.

Latimer (1998)⁸ argued that diversity in terms of ethnicity, age, gender, personality and educational background promotes creativity and problem-solving capability. He suggested that groups had been found to be less risk averse than an individual's 'risky shift'. Increased diversity leads to lower levels of risk aversion and better decision-making and problem-solving capability. This arises because diversity promotes a more robust critical evaluation of the first solution to receive substantial support.

Choi and Rainey (2010)⁹ this study explored the effects of diversity and diversity management on employee perceptions of organizational performance in U.S. Federal Agencies. The three variables under investigation were diversity, diversity management, and perceived organizational performance. The study showed how managerial efforts and other contextual variables such as organizational culture, demographic characteristics of group members and supervisors moderate the relationship between diversity and organizational outcomes. Levels of diversity of 67 federal agencies have been measure and analyzed as to how diversity management affects the relationship between levels of diversity and perceptions of organizational performance.

As per study, organizational tenure not strongly affect the relationship between diversity and performance, contrary to other studies that have found significant moderating effects of organizational tenure on diversity and organizational effectiveness. The findings were that racial diversity relates negatively to organizational performance when moderated by diversity management policies and practices and team processes, however, racial diversity correlates positively with organizational performance. Gender and age diversity and their interactions with contextual variables have produced mixed results that gender and age diversity reflect more complicated relationships.

Khaled Helaly (2011)¹⁰ had explained that diversity is not only about preventing unfair discrimination and improving equality but also valuing differences and inclusion, spanning

such areas as ethnicity, age, race, culture, gender, physical disability and religious belief.

Jackson and Joshi (2004)¹¹ the study was about multi-attribute, multilevel analysis of team diversity and sales performance. This article demonstrated that an improved understanding of the relationship between team diversity and team performance can be reached by considering the combined effects of team diversity and demographic social context. The three aspects of the social context would moderate the effects of demographic diversity on performance: the combination of diversity dimensions within a team, the demographic characteristics of the team manager and the demography of the work unit. It was found that a team performance was lowest for teams with a combination of relatively high tenure diversity and high gender diversity and high ethnic diversity. It was found that there is a significant relationship between team performance and three dimensions of diversity-gender, ethnicity and tenure-in combination.

VI. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study proposes to cover leading companies from IT sector of India. The sample included in the study was drawn from different places of India. The sample size of the research consisted of 243 managers and executives working in different areas in IT companies at top level and middle level in the organization.

VII. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY

Hypothesis of the study is as follows:

“There is no significant difference between opinion of male and female in the workplace with respect to workplace policies in IT sector.”

VIII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Instruments for Data Collection

Primary data were used to achieve the objective taken up in the study. For primary data collection, questionnaire was prepared with the help of experts from management.

The questionnaire was individually made available to respondents through e-mails, by Indian post, by courier, by hand according to availability of respondents. The respondents were approached at their respective work place or residence and their willingness to participate in the study was sought and objectives of the study were made clear to them. It was explained to the respondents that these items of information were needed for research purpose only and will kept confidential. So respondents were requested to provide genuine and correct view. If any of the respondents has doubts in the mind were duly taken care of and answered properly so that they could give the correct view. All relevant information pertaining to subject was recorded.

Sample Design

1) Area of the study:

The sample will be selected from those places where IT companies are situated throughout India i.e. Gurgaon, Delhi, Noida, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Chandigarh etc.

2) Population:

In order to fulfil the objective respondents i.e. male and female included in the study, employees from top level and middle level were taken for the study.

3) Sampling method:

Non-probability sampling technique will be used as Convenient Sampling technique and will be adopted to choose the IT companies. Every sincere effort will be taken by the researcher to avoid bias in the selection of respondents.

4) Statistical tools used

The analysis for the questionnaires was divided into two parts viz, descriptive inferences and statistical inferences. To achieve the objective of the study frequencies, ANOVA and Semantic Differential Scale was used and tables and charts were made using SPSS 16.0 version software package.

IX. RELIABILITY OF DATA

Reliability analysis is important and widely used in measuring the accuracy of a study. Below are the descriptions of how coefficient alpha is labelled.

Table 1 Internal Consistency (Coefficient Alpha)

Coefficient alpha	Level of reliability
0.8-0.95	Very good reliability
0.7-0.8	Good reliability
0.6-0.7	Fair reliability
< 0.6	Poor reliability

Source: Adapted from Hair, Money, Samouel and Babin (2003). Essential of Business Research Methods. Wiley International Edition: Leyn Publishing LLC,(page 172).

Table 2: Reliability Test

Sr. No.	Constructs	Coefficient Alpha
1	Questionnaire: Impact of diversity with regards to gender	.892

Source: Data generated by SPSS version 16.0

From the table 2, the Cronbach’s alpha was used to test the internal consistencies and stability of the multi-item scale. The closer the Cronbach’s alpha to value of 1 the higher the internal consistency of the particular item.

The constructs which is “Impact of diversity with regards to gender” show coefficient alpha at 0.892. Questionnaire gives a very good reliability. In conclusion, the reliability coefficient (coefficient alpha) of all examined constructs in the questionnaire is acceptable. The constructs shows a Cronbach’s alpha more than 0.6 which signifies the consistency and reliability of the questionnaire.

X. RESPONDENT DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Scope of the study was 250 respondents but 243 responses were received from respondents from IT sector in India as below:

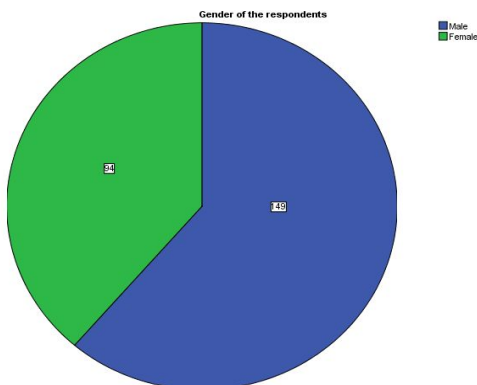
Table- 3 : Gender (in years) Wise Analysis of the Respondents

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	149	61.3	61.3	61.3
	Female	94	38.7	38.7	100.0
	Total	243	100.0	100.0	

*Source: Primary Data
(Generated by SPSS version 16.0)*

Figure- 1: Gender (in years) Wise Analysis of the Respondents



*Source: Primary Data
(Generated by SPSS version 16.0)*

Both Table and Figure above shows that 61.3% respondents are male and 38.7% respondents are female. In other words, from the 243 respondents, 149 of them are male while the remaining 94 are female.

Study the impact of diversity with regard to gender in IT sector in India

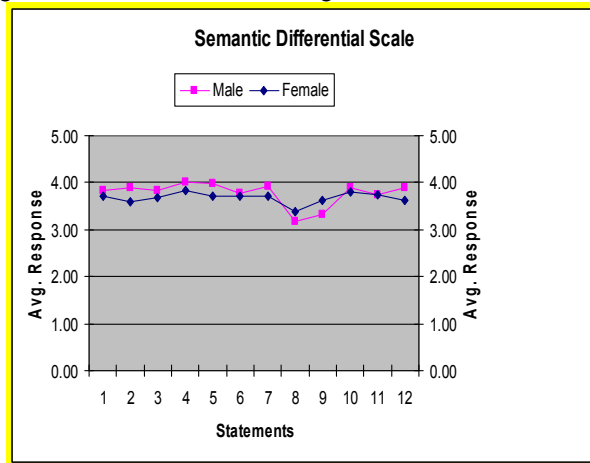
For considering the effect of gender twelve statements related to work force diversity were being studied.

Table-4: Impact of diversity with regard to gender in IT sector in India

Gender (243)					
Sr. No.	Statements	Male (149)		Female (94)	
		Rank Score	Average Response	Rank Score	Average Response
1	The employees have not been discriminated by employer while hiring on gender basis.	572	3.84	350	3.72
2	The organization does a good job of attracting and hiring women.	581	3.90	337	3.59
3	Opportunities for growth and advancement exist for women in our organization.	571	3.83	347	3.69
4	A career development that includes women is encouraged within our organization.	597	4.01	360	3.83
5	Women are involved in the organization’s decision making as much as men.	594	3.99	349	3.71
6	The physical environment of my organization assists male and female to discuss their issues privately.	563	3.78	349	3.71
7	The organization’s training and development program is developed to meet the requirement of the male and female both.	585	3.93	348	3.70
8	The performance criteria for success are expected to be higher for men than for women.	471	3.16	319	3.39
9	My boss happens to be of the opposite gender. I think our relations will Improve.	494	3.32	340	3.62
10	Fair treatment is given to all employees, whether they are male or female.	578	3.88	358	3.81
11	Being a women working with this organization is good.	558	3.74	352	3.74
12	I am positive about gender diversity in this workplace.	579	3.89	340	3.62

Source: Field Survey

Figure-2: Analysis of Impact of diversity with regard to gender in IT sector in India using Semantic Differential Data



Source: Field Survey

To test the impact of diversity with regard to gender in IT sector, we formulated below hypothesis and tested:

H0: ***There is no significant difference between opinion of male and female in the workplace with respect to workplace policies in IT sector.***

From differential scale figure no. 2, it is concluded that there is no significance difference between opinion of male and female in the workplace with respect to workplace policies in IT sector. Opinion of respondents is same irrespective of their gender. Their response is same for 12 statements given in table no. 4.

CONCLUSION

The study revealed that there is no significance difference between opinion of male and female in the workplace with respect to workplace policies in IT sector. Opinion of respondents regarding workplace policies is same irrespective of gender.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The study will help the manager to study the impact of gender factor in the organization and help managers to make policy to manage the diverse workforce specially w.r.t gender. Gender diversity's successful management will now become an important business issue for company practitioners.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

No study is complete and there are always chances of improvements in the universe. The study is based on the data collected through a sample survey and, therefore, sampling errors cannot be ruled out, notwithstanding the fact that all care has been taken to keep it free from biasness as explained in the sampling procedure. Due to time and cost constraints, it was not possible to go for larger sample size and thereby produced an exhaustive work. Some of the respondents were unwilling to open up while giving information because of disclosure of organization study and qualitative nature of the study. The scope of the study had to be limited to the some companies in IT sector with a view to carry out an in depth analysis within stipulated timeframe and resources available within the researcher.

DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Although the present study has shed some light into diversity with respect to gender at work, there are several limitations that must be kept in mind. First, the participants of this study were selected from a professional group of human. The response to the questions asked might not be free from their personal biasness. Second, the study is based on workplaces in India; hence the findings might not be applicable to other countries. Third, future studies should also incorporate equal samples for the gender groups and work sectors. The uneven sample sizes used in the study reduced the power of the statistical analysis and only allowed on a non-parametric test to be conducted. Lastly, the emphasis on gender in this present study as an important diversity issue has undermined other workplace diversity issues such as age, educational qualification, ethnic group, religion all which are factors that can affect human resource development practices.

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