**Affective and behavioral aspect of cultural diversity from the experimental perspective**

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# Introduction

Culture is something that influences our behavior and shapes our identity. In general, culture refers to the values, beliefs, behaviors, norms and language that is passed from one generation to other. The term cultural diversity is a behavior or belief that recognizes the presence of different groups in the society or workplace. Cultural diversity has seven different actions. These actions are recognition of diversity in culture, respect the differences in culture, acknowledging the contribution of different cultural experience, valuing each other, empowering people to achieve their highest potential and celebration the unity rather than tolerating each other. Cultural diversity is a great thing as it allows us to evaluate everything around us (Popescu, A, Borca, C, Fistis, G & Draghici, F, 2014). People set their culture as a benchmark to judge other culture. Despite of this fact, cultural diversity is of great important because we generally found people from various racial, cultural and ethnic groups in our educational institution or workplace. We learnt from each other and develop a sense of cooperation and collaboration. This learning enables us to understand our world from different perspective and eliminate negative stereotype. In addition, it also helps us to reduce gap between different cultures, respect and trust.

# Discussion

Diversity is considered to be an action. However, when we combine diversity with culture, it becomes a feeling. In any organization, the changes do not always take place from top to bottom level. It can happen at any level in between. The workforce that we are having now days in a mixture of various ethnics groups, genders, ages, lifestyles and religious. The following are some of the types of cultural diversity in the workplace.

* Race and Ethnicity: Although, these two terms are interchangeable, but they are different forms of cultural diversity. Race is related to biological heritage and includes features such as hair type, skin color etc. on the other hand, ethnicity is related to personal culture of the individual.
* Language: Language can lead to communication barriers within the organization, but it can provide benefits to the organization at the time of dealing with international clients. The multilingual staff can ensure clarify of information transfer between the organization and clients.
* Gender: Women contribute to nearly half of the population in the world and thus, they needs equal representation in the workforce. In order to increase gender diversity, the organization needs to address the barriers faced by both genders. The organization also needs to address issues such as gender pay gap where women are paid less.
* Age: Organization generally involves in the age bias at the time of hiring employees. For example, they exclude old age people from the entry level job. They also hire employees in the basis of their experience and thus, discriminate against young candidates. However, gender diversity is needed if the organization wants to work on creative ideas.
* Religious: There are multiple religious that the employees in the organization have. In order to achieve diversity in the workplace. The employees should be allowed to wear religious garments such as hijab and religious symbols such as bracelets and necklaces.

Few months back, I went for the interview in a start-up company. Before starting the interview process, the management explains a brief about the company, its growth and about their goals and visions. The HR informed all the candidates that hiring the right candidate is their topmost concern. For finding the right candidate, there should be a perfect balance between recruitment plan, leadership skills and hiring technology. She also made a statement that by hiring the candidate means meaning diversity in our team. According to her experience, the chances of making better business decision increases if there is cultural diversity in the team than it would be otherwise. She took an example of her company and told us that their team has members of different age groups and from different culture and thus, 93% of the decisions taken by the company in the past were successful, leading to the growth I the company. According to her, 62% of the workforce in the company and sex members of the digital executive team is from foreign countries. In fact, the company also reserves certain proportion of the seats for females. They motivate high performing women to move into the digital team, even if they lack the skills required in the digital team. This helps the women to gain new skills and push themselves. She also argued that diversity in their company has created an atmosphere where all the employees are free to come up with their views and work with other department as well. The turnover in their company is low due to the concept of cultural diversity adopted by them rather making the male dominated in the company. The openness to culture and gender diversity is the main reason that leads to exponential growth even in their start-up company (Hiemstra, A. M. F., Derous, E., & Born, M. P, 2017). The company is also planning to introduce competitive technical products by focusing on potentials rather than the skills. As far as their interview process is concerned, she told us that the company eliminates some of the biases in their hiring process. For example, they did not discriminate against the pregnant women, disabled, body art, religious symbols and older candidates.

This incident that happened in my life of cultural diversity in working seems to have a long lasting impact on my personal growth. It increases my morale, familiarize me with different perspectives and increase my relationship with my colleagues and society as a whole. The theories related to cultural diversity in the workplace were introduced in 80s for the purpose of increasing diversity in the workplace (Lillevik, W, n.d.). The Research Based Theory of Diversity Management focuses on the impact of diversity on the resources available to the organization. The organizational resources are categories into four categories such as physical capital, human capital, financial capital and corporate capital resources. From the business point of view, the diversity leads to advantage to the organization in comparison if the organization employees homogenous workforce. It leads to growth in the innovative strategies and thus, growth in the financial performance. The Institutional Theory of Diversity Management explores the idea that the organization having diversity in their regulations and norms trends to develop innovative and unique administrative structure. The Practitioner Approach to diversity management discusses how the cultural diversity in the organization affects the productivity level (Masuda, T, Mesquita, B, Tanida, S, Ellsworth, P, Leu, J & Veerdonk, E, 2008). This approach also helps the organization to understand the need of diverse customer and satisfy their needs. Understanding customer need together with the employee’s productivity can lead to economic success.

The affective aspect deals with the emotions and feelings that are brought about something such as hate or fear. Studies have found out that the cultural diversity has positive impact on the emotions and feelings, and the same is the case with me. Culturally diverse workforce has their own beliefs, thoughts, opinions, trends, values and customs. When these people are brought together in a group, they work collectively and cooperatively (Kulkarni, S, 2012). Since diversity bring people having talent together for achieving common objective, the productivity of each employee increase as they learn from each other. This increase in productivity, in turn, has positive benefit to the organization. The organization gains through the knowledge that the employees apply to their work. Cultural diversity also increases creatively among different members of the group, and this creativity help the employees to come up with effective solutions of the specific problem. It also enhances employee engagement. The employees share their personal experience with each other and this increase their engagement and motivates each other for the growth of the company (Patrick, H & Kumar, V, 2012). The employees got an opportunity to spend their time with the people different background that they may not be familiar with. As a result, the employees learn new cultures and eliminate negative emotions such as homophobia, racism etc.

The behavioral aspect of the cultural diversity in workplace includes all the responses of an individual to adopt his/her behavior. The employees from different background have different way of analyzing things and thinking from different prospective. This is impossible to achieve if all the employees belongs to same background. Also, employees from diverse background can help the organization in provide reliable and vast knowledge (Kastanakis, M. and Voyer, Benjamin G, 2014). Another effect of the cultural diversity is the ability of the employees to overcome the shock that the business may experience when they enter to the global market. This is one of the important behavioral aspects achieved from cultural diversity become companies in modern world try to expand on global scale. When the organization has diverse work force, it can easily attain knowledge from them and use it to achieve the objectives. Diverse employees are also helpful to the organization as they can inform the management about the culture and beliefs of their own country. Some of the studies found out that the organizations are less in favor of having a diverse workforce as they have to incur cost on providing training and familiarizing them with the laws of their own country. Cultural diversity also helps the organization in developing new business model, introducing new products, prepare market plan, create new ideas and assessing market trends.

At the time of hiring employees, the employers consider the professional skills of the candidates. People coming from different background have their own skills that they can use in their workplace (Ayega, E & Muathe, S, 2018). For example, for working in a project of the foreign companies, the organization needs employees who are familiar with both foreign and domestic culture and tradition. We need to be brings diversity in our work opportunities and meetings. Bringing diversity is possible by bringing all the people together coming from the diverse background. The aim of this inclusivity is to create a feeling that every employee is included in everything the organization do. In addition to increasing morale, it has positive impact on the employees’ performance. Studies have shown that the people who hide their real identity experience a decline in their professional performance. We need to allow each employee in the organization to express their individuality and come up with different point of views.

Cultural diversity is important for the worldview for various reasons. First, cultural diversity helps to develop colorful ideas needed at the workplace. It is difficult to think out of the box with people having limited ability and push you towards the right direction (Amaram, D, 2007). However, we are able to introduce ourselves with new approaches when we work with people with different skills. Second, cultural barriers help us to eliminate language barriers. Language is one of the important barriers at the time of meeting and dealing with foreign barriers. But, when we have a person in our team who is familiar with culture and language of the people we are meeting, the chances of success also increases. Third, cultural diversity helps to attract talents. Studies have shown that cultural diversity is vital in the job seeking process (Seymen, O, 2006). This implies the chances of hiring top talent also increases. Forth, diverse culture increases productivity among employees. It is very common to observe that stable team is produce when we are working in homogenous environment. However, diverse team helps in increasing the productivity and this, in turn, leads to economic benefits.

# Conclusion

Cultural diversity is one of the important issues faced by the employers and employees in the organization. Cultural diversity means difference in the language, religion, nationality, ethnicity and race. Although, media and literature as explained the importance of cultural diversity in work place, but my personal incidence related to cultural diversity has made me to learn lot of skills and influence by behavior in positive way. It seems to be a difficult task to bring together people from different background in a team, but once we are able to do so, the probability of success increases beyond imagination. Together with clear mission and leadership, the entire team and company will achieve the progress.

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