

# Managing Workplace Diversity

A Contemporary Context

Nirmal Kumar Betchoo



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Nirmal Kumar Betchoo

# **Managing Workplace Diversity**

A Contemporary Context



Managing Workplace Diversity: A Contemporary Context

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# Preface

This book titled “Managing Workplace Diversity: A Contemporary context” is based on today’s workplace context regarding diversity focusing on the global environment. It is a known fact that diversity is gaining more importance nowadays than ever before given that the world better accommodates people with differences since it has been transformed into a global village, a term that looked distant in the past but looks more apparent today than ever before. This calls for the acceptance of differences which are, in essence, the elements of diversity. Traditionally, diversity could mainly focus on gender, age and ethnicity issues but there are new concepts like HIV/AIDS workers, dual-career couples, mobile workers, etc. that have become part of the workplace and have their role to play in society.

The existing and new diversity paradigms has called the author to consider writing on diversity using a concise approach but which truly represents the context. The work has stemmed from the author’s teaching of “Management of Diversity” to students over the past ten years with the inception that texts on diversity are quite rare or simply inadequate both in terms of content and ease of understanding. Either issues of diversity form part of broad-based management texts or they are high-level peer-reviewed articles which are research-based duly supported by facts and figures. Little has been seen of texts on diversity that are easy to assimilate, simple to understand with facts on today’s context. This textbook humbly contributes to understanding diversity based from a management perspective with an inclusion of management and human resource management as elements worth noting in the effective approach to diversity.

Information has been developed both from journals and textbooks with special reference to internet-based documentation namely from blogs that are written by professionals and whose contributions are widely acknowledged and referenced throughout the texts. There is a special chapter that addresses new paradigms in workplace diversity that are likely to impact on today’s workplace.

To create a good learning experience, case studies have been included in each chapter. They either support the existing literature or simply add on new information through real-life examples in the text. They also highlight how case studies can relate to what is being taught and learnt. There are practice questions that help the student and reader focus on the key issues discussed per chapter covered.

A special section has been allocated to the use and interpretation of statistics relating to diversity. In order to support literature, numerical data is important and this is where statistical data sometime help in better gauging a theory and interpreting the information provided in a particular context. The contexts chosen vary since they cover both advanced nations and emerging economies with recently-gained information.

Objective tests that cover the different chapters along with a range of essay-type questions conclude this book with particular reference made to the aspects discussed in this book. By doing the different exercises, the student is expected to master the different concepts of diversity and have a clearer idea of it. This is what this book intends to achieve while, once again, assuming that it remains to the point, neither too brief and nor too elaborate. The aim was to present diversity in management in an easy-to-read and understand approach.

# 1 Introduction to Management of Workplace Diversity

## Introduction

Diversity management is an important concept that is universally applied to the workplace. Earlier, countries could claim to be ethno-centric in their approach by having a homogeneous race at work with the style of sameness. If you just watch a typical American soap, it speaks of burgers, college lifestyle, American stereotype of hero, etc. This means that stereotypes tend to give an image of what one society is and how it might differ from others or the s-called rest of the world. This image is no truer today especially when one speaks of a globalised world—a concept developed since the 1990s and so-widely accepted today in all communities of the world.

Marshall McLuhan spoke in the 1960s of a global village with increased speed of communication and the ability of people to read about, spread, and react to global news quickly (Mc Luhan, 1964), while management writers like Ohmae (1999) commented on the borderless world with excellent opportunities to trade without fear. These ideas better illustrate today's workplace with its high level of diversity. It includes firstly people of all races combining their effort to reach the corporate goals of the firm. People can then be of different gender; male and female, where they contribute more than ever before to their organisation with and without role differences. Next comes the age factor. A company is also like a family with people of different ages. They work together and collaborate to the wellbeing of their firm.

In diversity management, one can also come across physically handicapped or disabled workers. Although they face a lot of discrimination due to their physical problem, they have nowadays more rights and opportunities to work. Engaging them in the work community proves to be beneficial both to them and the business. One can also speak of social class differences that are broadly overcome but can vary in terms of importance among different cultures. The movements in class might also explain how diversity can address organisational issues.

Then comes the foreign employee. There are two trends that are identifiable. Firstly, people from the developing world moved in large numbers to rich countries that were their former colonists. Secondly, top executives are moving to developing nations to sell their managerial expertise. Foreign employees might also invoke the issue of cultural diversity and tolerance.

There are part-timers to consider in diversity management. When economies are in dire difficulties, new forms of employment do arise and part-timers have a key role to play in it. Their expertise and contribution plays a key role in addressing the work problem through their diversity.



This book also covers the aspect of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transexual workers (LGBT) as an inherent part of diversity. Being in the firm while facing the risk of stigmatisation, LGBT should have their role to play within the business. They are crucial to the firm's success. Acceptance of diversity also covers the issue of race relations which are easy tough to manage despite struggles won in many parts of the world.

There are also wider issues of diversity discussed in this book and they have been addressed within today's evolving environment of workplace diversity.

### **The Concept of Workplace Diversity**

Diversity is generally defined as acknowledging, understanding, accepting, valuing, and celebrating differences among people with respect to age, class, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, race, sexual orientation, spiritual practice, and public assistance status (Esty, et al., 1995).

Managing diversity means acknowledging people's differences and recognising these differences as valuable. It enhances good management practices by preventing discrimination and promoting inclusiveness. Good management alone will not necessarily help an individual work effectively with a diverse workforce. While the traditional notion of workplace diversity may refer to representations of various races, genders and religious backgrounds, today's concept of workplace diversity is broad-based. Besides these classical variables, considerations are also made on personality, age, style, skills, education, background, etc. The focus of workplace diversity now lies on the promotion of individuality within an organisation, acknowledging that every person can bring something different to the business.

An organisation that is committed to a diverse workforce is one that aims to harness a pool of individuals with unique qualities, seeing this combination of differences as a potential for growth rather than opportunities for conflict. Attached to this commitment is also an intention to nurture and develop the potential of each individual.

Organisations must understand that managing diversity is much more than gaining knowledge on race and gender issues. Managing diversity should be viewed as providing a perspective that can enhance creativity and growth. The discipline provides a way of thinking that allows us to view our organisational activities through a more objective eye.

### **The need for businesses to embrace diversity**

Diversity means empowering people. It makes an organisation effective by capitalising on all the strengths of each employee. Diversity is also understanding, valuing, and using the differences in every person. Simply enforcing government regulations is not the best way to embrace diversity. To obtain that competitive edge companies need to create great work teams by using the full potential of every individual.

Embracing diversity is the first item for building teams. Every team building theory states that to build a great team, there must be a diverse group of people on the team. Choosing people like oneself to be on teams is similar to inbreeding – it multiplies the flaws. While on the other end of the continuum is having an assorted group of individuals which diminishes the flaws of others.

Internally, organisations promote diversity and manage increasingly heterogeneous workforces, accommodate and integrate employees with different value and belief systems and combat a range of different forms of discrimination with both organisational and societal consequences (Groschl, 2011).

Externally, organisations have to manage demands from governmental, consumer and lobbying sources for the implementation of anti-discrimination policies and laws, and for attracting and integrating employees from minority or historically disadvantaged groups (Groschl, 2011). These demands and activities affect the review and revision of organisational culture, HR policies and practices and ethical standards.

### **Diversity: A fad or a reality today?**

Is managing diversity another fad such as teamwork, downsizing, or re-engineering? Ideally, organisations are interested in Diversity because it represents a new problem for them to deal with? One thing is certain: diversity, especially workforce diversity is an issue most organisations have already or will need to address in the very near future.

There are some reasons to explain why firms are interested in managing diversity.

Firstly, the workforce in many nations is becoming more diverse. Kerby and Burns (2012) state that our nation and our workforce are both becoming more diverse. The share of people of colour in the United States is increasing; more women are entering the labour force; and gay and transgender individuals are making vital contributions to our economy, while being increasingly open about who they are. To that end, businesses that embrace diversity have a more solid footing in the marketplace than others.

Secondly, the fertility rate in the traditional industrial powers is not great enough to replace their existing populations. This means that immigration is going to be a factor in those societies and a key issue that organisations within those societies will need to deal with.

Thirdly, organisations are also beginning to emphasise the importance of cross-functional teams. This is important because different work functions and different departments can have different cultures. Hence, the ability to adapt to different cultures has an advantage for organisational activities.

Next, there is a growing emphasis on global marketing and multinational business operations. As evidence of the globalisation effect, in 1960 less than 10 per cent of U.S. firms faced competition. La Spada (2010) states that today, in a global economy, where cultural diversity is stimulated with the purpose of avoiding the phenomenon of homogenisation, favouring instead the integration of different cultures, economic development would not only be culturally sustainable. The existence of diversity of cultures, tastes and preferences could assure a variegated demand for products that would slow down the danger determined by the saturation of markets and such diversity could be also the source of a constant process of innovation that would maintain incentives to investment.

Organisations must understand that managing diversity is much more than gaining knowledge on race and gender issues. Managing diversity should be viewed as providing a perspective that can enhance creativity and growth. The diversity concept provides a way of thinking that allows managers to view their organisational activities through a more objective eye.

Diversity is the similarities and differences of people found in our workplace, workforce and marketplace. It includes many characteristics that may be visible such as race, gender and age, and it also includes less obvious characteristics like personality style, ethnicity, ability, education, religion, job function, life experience, life style, sexual orientation, geography, regional differences, work experience and family situation that make us all similar to and different from one another.

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## **Benefits of Workplace Diversity**

According to Greenberg (2008), an organisation's success and competitiveness depends upon its ability to embrace diversity and realise the benefits. When organisations actively assess their handling of workplace diversity issues, develop and implement diversity plans, multiple benefits are reported such as:

### ***Increased adaptability***

Organisations employing a diverse workforce can supply a greater variety of solutions to problems in service, sourcing, and allocation of resources. Employees from diverse backgrounds bring individual talents and experiences in suggesting ideas that are flexible in adapting to fluctuating markets and customer demands.

### ***Broader service range***

A diverse collection of skills and experiences (e.g. languages, cultural understanding) allows a company to provide service to customers on a global basis.

### ***Variety of viewpoints***

A diverse workforce that feels comfortable communicating varying points of view provides a larger pool of ideas and experiences. The organisation can draw from that pool to meet business strategy needs and the needs of customers more effectively.

### ***More effective execution***

Companies that encourage diversity in the workplace inspire all of their employees to perform to their highest ability. Company-wide strategies can then be executed; resulting in higher productivity, profit, and return on investment.

### ***Attract and retain talent***

Andrade (2010) states that talent can add a competitive edge to any organisation. Feeling included and appreciated increases loyalty and feeling of belonging. Language skills pool is increased and propels organisation forward either to compete in the International global world or to increase its diverse customer base.

Businesses are recognising the need and importance of investing in diversity and inclusion as part of their overall talent management practices and to continually challenge their organisations to make the connection between those principles and their corporate performance. Diversity is especially crucial in today's global marketplace, as companies interact with different cultures and clients. The payoffs touch every area of the business by potentially resulting in increased creativity, increased productivity, new attitudes, new language skills, global understanding, new processes, and new solutions to difficult problems, greater agility, better market insight, stronger customer and community loyalty, innovation, and improved employee recruitment and retention (Andrade, 2010).

### **Challenges to managing diversity**

There are challenges to managing a diverse work population. Managing diversity is more than simply acknowledging differences in people. It involves recognising the value of differences, combating discrimination, and promoting inclusiveness. Managers may also be challenged with losses in personnel and work productivity due to prejudice and discrimination and complaints and legal actions against the organisation (Devoe, 1999).

Diversity-related challenges are present in almost every workplace, whether they are giant corporations or small business operations. The globalised business world has increased the need for individuals from all walks of life. Holt (2015) states that conflict is a natural part of this process and, as long as it is handled in a healthy way, can bring a group of employees closer together. Challenges are what improve employee relationships and promote diversity, if handled correctly. If handled incorrectly, a company could fall apart, face lawsuits and spend more time resolving conflict than being productive. These challenges, when handled in a healthy way, push people to grow, improving productivity and employee relationships, decreasing workplace tension and resulting in a positive place to work.

### **The managerial and psychological challenge**

Managerially managing diversity is challenging because by opening ourselves and our organisations to the perspectives of individuals and groups who have had less managerial voice in the past we can step outside the traditional frame of decision making. Managers have to deal with different types of people and different visions. It is not the same compared to a structure where values are common or homogeneous.

Psychologically managing diversity is challenging because of issues such as personality, perception, attitudes, and values. These are issues where all people differ individually like responses to different individuals. Individual differences are largely responsible for stereotyping, discrimination, and prejudice. Companies might greatly underestimate the power of memory and past experiences. This issue might influence the manager's response to individual differences.

### Case Study 1: The Importance of Diversity in Management

As the marketplace for goods and services becomes increasingly global, businesses must understand and embrace diversity in their brands as well as in their work forces. Simply having a diverse employee population is no longer enough, according to Forbes; for a company to succeed in today's challenging economy, it must not only meet the needs of a multifaceted marketplace, it must respect different cultures, ideas and philosophies.

#### Innovation

One of the biggest reasons to employ a diverse work force is the broad base of cultural experience that will drive innovation. Whether an employee is management, mid-level or entry level, when everyone in the work force has a similar background, the creative process that drives innovation and problem solving is similar. A new perspective that does not match this "group think" is more likely to improve the business in a unique way.

#### Attracting Talent and Customers

Premier industry business talent prefers to work for or with a company that has a diverse work force. Customers also prefer to buy goods and services from diverse companies, too. These are two reasons that Forbes says to be truly successful in the global marketplace, a business must be authentically diverse. That means a company must develop a new model that embraces diversity as a central growth enabler.

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### **From Recruitment to Strategy**

Companies that embrace this authentic diversity will find that having only the requisite number of “minorities” in the workplace is not enough. Instead, according to Forbes, companies are developing “chief diversity officer” roles that touch more than just recruitment and human resources. These officers will instead have greater control over areas such as strategy, marketing and sales. Companies that have diversity among the management staff will more easily fulfil the needs of a broad customer base.

### **Cultural Intelligence**

Perhaps the most compelling reason to employ a diverse work force is cultural intelligence. When fellow employees and customers are diverse, the opportunities not just to learn but to appreciate what values other cultures hold sacred are limitless. Adopting these values as part of the business’ core message and product fosters understanding between the cultures. When a business operates with diversity in mind, the opportunity for shared value – both in profit and society is greatly expanded.

Adapted from: *Bigelow, L. (2015) The Importance of Diversity in Management, Demand Media.*

### **Questions:**

How might the innovation concept apply to diversity management? How might new employees from a different background challenge groupthink and better contribute to diversity? Why is cultural intelligence likely to increase in diversity and how does it affect management?

### **A model for Diversity**

#### The Four Layers Model

According to Amelio (2015), the Four Layers Model can help the manager understand that diversity comprises many characteristics of people at work, not only a few. The diversity-mature manager will seek to understand these factors and dimensions of diversity to ensure he is bringing out all aspects of an individual’s talents and abilities in support of the organisation’s mission and goals.

### **Personality**

This includes an individual’s likes and dislikes, values, and beliefs. Personality is shaped early in life and is both influenced by, and influences, the other three layers throughout one’s lifetime and career choices.

### Internal dimensions

These include aspects of diversity over which we have no control (though “physical ability” can change over time due to choices we make to be active or not, or in cases of illness or accidents). This dimension is the layer in which many divisions between and among people exist and which forms the core of many diversity efforts. These dimensions include the first things we see in other people, such as race or gender and on which we make many assumptions and base judgments.

### External dimensions

These include aspects of our lives which we have some control over, which might change over time, and which usually form the basis for decisions on careers and work styles. This layer often determines, in part, with whom we develop friendships and what we do for work. This layer also tells us much about whom we like to be with.

### Organisational dimensions

This layer concerns the aspects of culture found in a work setting. While much attention of diversity efforts is focused on the internal dimensions, issues of preferential treatment and opportunities for development or promotion are impacted by the aspects of this layer.

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## FOUR LAYERS OF DIVERSITY



\*Internal Dimensions and External Dimensions are adapted from Marilyn Loden and Judy Rosener, *Workforce America!* (Business One Irwin, 1991) From *Diverse Teams at Work*, Gardenswartz & Rowe (2nd Edition, SHRM, 2003)

The usefulness of this model is that it includes the dimensions that shape and impact both the individual and the organisation itself (Amelio, 2015). While the “Internal Dimensions” receive primary attention in successful diversity initiatives, the elements of the “External” and “Organisational” dimensions often determine the way people are treated, who “fits” or not in a department, who gets the opportunity for development or promotions, and who gets recognised.

A manager who wants to understand diversity and be an effective manager of a diverse team needs to pay attention to all these layers of diversity with the goals of using both differences and similarities to enrich the work environment and bring us closer to our mission.

### Theoretical Contributions to Diversity Management

The *radical approach* to promoting equal opportunities was adopted by individuals who held strong political and ethical values and recognised the historical disadvantage that certain groups, such as women, ethnic minorities and disabled persons, experienced in employment (Jewson and Mason 1986). The supporters of this approach advocated positive discrimination and affirmative action as their methods for change (Adler and Izraeli, 1988).

Jewson and Mason (1986) identified two distinct approaches to promoting equal opportunities in employment. These were the liberal and radical change approaches. The proponents of *the liberal approach* argued that women and men were essentially the same and that sex equality would be achieved once employment policies and procedures became identical for both sexes (Cockburn 1989). The liberal approach was identified with its “business-case” arguments, which were propounded in the 1990s to achieve sex equality at work. These practitioner-based arguments aimed at convincing a managerial audience that equality and diversity were financially beneficial to their organisations.

Cockburn (1989) asserted that the radical approach was “retrogressive in further dividing the already divided powerless groups.” She also pointed out, that, although the use of a radical approach could promote the relative position of one disadvantaged group, it did not promise any improvement in the structures that perpetuate inequalities at work.

Cockburn (1989) argued that the liberal approach was not able to reach its targets and that the radical approach, while boosting the interests of some disadvantaged groups such as women, ethnic minorities and disabled workers, did not challenge the employment structures that upheld sex discrimination. Instead, she proposed a *transformational change approach* with a short and a long-term agenda.

Kandola and Fullerton (1998) in their book *Diversity in Action: Managing the Mosaic* state that “the basic concept of managing diversity accepts that the workforce consists of a diverse population of people. The diversity consists of visible and non-visible differences which will include factors such as sex, age, background, race, disability, personality and work style. It is founded on the premise that harnessing these differences will create a productive environment in which everyone feels valued, where their talents are fully utilised and in which organisational goals are met.”

(Adapted from: Is the practice of equal opportunities management keeping pace with theory? Management of sex equality in the financial services sector in Britain and Turkey, Mustafa F. Özbilgin)

### Practice Questions

1. Why is diversity management considered as an important issue at the workplace?
2. What are some changes taking place in organisations that may call for better consideration regarding diversity?

3. Identify some benefits of diversity management.
4. What could be some challenges that diversity managers could face at work?
5. How is diversity management managerially and culturally challenging?
6. The most compelling reason to employ a diverse work force is cultural intelligence. Discuss this statement.
7. What are the key internal dimensions in the four layers of diversity?
8. What is the basic concept behind the radical view of diversity? Why is it challenged?
9. How does the liberal view of diversity management impact at work?
10. How are the perceptions of Kandola and Fullerton regarding diversity management more applicable in today's context of diversity management?

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## 2 Gender Issues in Workplace Diversity

### Introduction

The issue of discrimination at work is commonplace in most parts of the world. This comes quite often when women are considered as part of today's workforce. This is a sea change that has taken place worldwide seen from images from the media and activities undertaken by women today. This chapter addresses the gender issue by paying particular attention to women in business. Long ago, we all knew of the traditional family illustrated with the father as the bread winner, the mother as the one who did the household chores and looked after the children. Women were submissive in the initial part of modern history confronted to minimised roles and influence at work. This obviously changed with time and women are now at the forefront of organisations; a few having leading roles to play in business.

At the political level, the representation of women is limited with a few clichés of great ladies like Indira Gandhi (India), Golda Meir (Israel), Margaret Thatcher (UK), just to mention a few. Some have been making the news in the social arena like Mother Theresa. Unlike men, the success of women in society can be said to be countable in number terms while it is all too difficult to account for the contribution of men at work. Every society has its heroes and the male gender is often portrayed as the hero.

Traditional societies in the developing world have usually given the impression that men are more important to women. In China, there are villages whereby there is a majority of males. The same applies to tradition-rooted India where baby girls were claimed to be killed in the wait for male children. There are exceptions however within the developing world in some African societies where women have a greater role to play and this applies exceptionally to matriarchal societies. Else, male dominance is paramount be it the industrialised or the developing nation. Even today in the USA, there is still the wait for a female to become the president of the world's first economic power.

Why is there so much discrimination when it comes to gender while it is necessary for society to have the same proportion of men and women? Why is there discrimination when both genders have more access to higher education and have the same achievements? Why are women still considered to be weaker in achievement compared to men? Why does the stereotype of women working as clerical officers or secretary so omnipresent at work?

This chapter raises the issue of gender from the perspective of the role and influence of women in today's diversity. It evidently covers the emancipation of women including the inevitable outlook on Simone de Beauvoir's "Deuxième Sexe" as an intention to clearly see how women deserve their role in society. Examples are taken from various sources to enrich the reader's experience of efforts undertaken to give women their due right and expectations within diversity and to welcome their achievements.

Despite all positive things said in favour of women, there is still a high level of discrimination and this affects the workplace. Women, in general, are less paid for the same job that they undertake with men in certain spheres of life. Promotional opportunities in top management positions can still be barred for women or simply patriarchal organisations might not favour accepting women to break the "glass ceiling" and expect themselves as leaders or captains of industry. But the argument here is that case studies do reveal that women can do as well as men or even better. Once again, it is the disparity among nations, their archaic structures, the lack of support from central government, the lack of education and health care to women, which are impending issues concerning their discrimination. The perception of the "male-dominated" society still permeates across all cultures.

Attaining perfect equality is not possible and this has been claimed in scholarly articles selected in this chapter. There is a need to better consider the issue whereby deep barriers could be overcome, where women could be given more chances to succeed and where 'sexist' issues should be overcome.



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### **Traditional roles in society**

Tradition broadly establishes roles and intentions of people. Starting from dressing habits to activities in the family to gifts like balls for boys or dolls for girls, tradition has an overwhelming presence in shaping the role of men and women in society. Newbie (2009) comments that the traditional roles of men and women were established to ensure the power of the head of household. Historically speaking, that head of household was always male. But the rapidly developing world has brought about many changes into the traditional roles of both men and women. People have been socialised to expect men to be brave, industrious and domineering, whereas women have been expected to be submissive, timid and nurturing. Nowadays, however, women do not have to rely on their husbands anymore to provide a financial support for the home and in many cases they become breadwinners and head of the home themselves. Thus, these changes have resulted in male losing his image and ego as the dominant gender in society.

Women are the inherent part of our society and cannot be neglected due to their less power and authority. They are created as a companion for men and men have to make her walk with them in the course of life. Gicki (2013) states that women play roles as a mother, a sister, a daughter, a wife. They play their roles with great responsibilities in upbringing of a healthy solid society, but she is in our so called modern world, still living in chains.

### **Woman as a basic unit of society**

The basic unit of society is a woman. As woman makes a family, family makes a home and homes make a society. So we should never think that a society would come into existence without the contribution of women. We all know that without education, no development is possible. Here we have forgotten that the very first and best school of a child is its mother's lap (Gicki, 2013). A good healthy society does not automatically emerge on its own and stands firm but it needs to be emerged and for its emergence women play a pivotal role. From behavioural to health education women have their hands in. These all are the basic fundamentals of a good society and women are the main contributors in building up a strong society.

### **Women's Movement**

It is interesting to start by speaking of women's movement which initially developed in forward-looking nations, particularly in Scandinavian countries where the rights to vote started as early as the 1925 for women while this was passed on much later to the United Kingdom, around the fifties and its colonies by the late 1960s. The first women's movement grew out of the context of European revolutions during the 18th and 19th century. Whereas it mainly focussed on fighting for access to education and political participation (women's right to vote), the new women's movement in the second half of the 20th century drew its strength especially from the struggle for sexual and reproductive rights of freedom and equal opportunities in all areas of society. While this second phase of the organised women's movement in the US has to be seen in a context with the black civil rights movement, e.g., in West Germany it stemmed from the student movement.

## **Feminism**

The term “feminism” is increasingly found since the early 20th century, when it was used as a synonym for the women’s issue and female emancipation endeavours. Today, feminism can be assumed as a political movement as well as a critical trend in the philosophy of science that deals with power, power relations and domination. Currently, we find different national and cultural developments on the conceptual level and concerning its self-image. So instead of talking about feminism, it seems more apt to talk about “feminisms”. Its different orientations (including liberal, Marxist, autonomous, deconstructive, differential and equality feminism) originate from heterogeneous theoretical paradigms, but their smallest common denominator is “the complete realisation of the emancipation of women”. It was mainly in the course of the second women’s movement and its march through the institutions that feminism got universally established, became increasingly academic and further developed through critical women’s and later gender studies (Neusüß and Chojecka, 2008).

The second half of the 20th century significantly changed the status of women: the right to contraception, to divorce, the right of control over her body, demands for gender equality in professional life, respect, sharing of responsibilities, etc. May 1968 in France, the hippie years in the USA, the walk for liberty by Martin Luther King in 1965 followed earlier by Rosa Parks have already been triggers for the advancement for equality and gender. Since the early 21st century, important laws promoting equal access for men and women to political and administrative functions have been enacted (France.fr, 2015).

## **Gender**

“The fundamental transformation that took place in Beijing was the recognition of the need to shift the focus from women to the concept of gender, recognising that the entire structure of society, and all relations between men and women within it, had to be re-evaluated. Only by such a fundamental restructuring of society and its institutions could women be fully empowered to take their rightful place as equal partners with men in all aspects of life. This change represented a strong reaffirmation that women’s rights were human rights and that gender equality was an issue of universal concern, benefiting all. (UN org, 2010).”

Gender equality is achieved when people are able to access and enjoy the same rewards, resources and opportunities regardless of whether they are a woman or a man. Many countries worldwide have made significant progress towards gender equality in recent decades, particularly in areas such as education. However, women continue to earn less than men, are less likely to advance their careers as far as men, and are more likely to spend their final years in poverty. At the same time, some men find it more difficult to access family-friendly policies or flexible working arrangements than women (Commonwealth Government of Australia, 2014).



The aim of gender equality in the workplace is to achieve broadly equal outcomes for women and men, not exactly the same outcome for all individuals. To achieve this requires:

- workplaces to provide equal remuneration for women and men for work of equal or comparable value
- the removal of barriers to the full and equal participation of women in the workforce
- full and genuine access to all occupations and industries, including to leadership roles for women and men
- elimination of discrimination on the basis of gender particularly in relation to family and caring responsibilities for both women and men

Achieving gender equality is important for workplaces not only because it is “fair” and “the right thing to do”, it is also vitally important to the bottom line of a business and to the productivity of a nation.

Advancing gender diversity is a key focus area that organisations should look to, armed with the knowledge that there is still significant progress to make before most workplaces achieve true gender equality. Gorman (2014) suggests that at organisations where leaders are active and engaged in diversity programs, more women are present throughout the organisation, in top leadership roles, and there is more equality in talent flows between men and women. Another key driver of gender diversity is that active management of talent creates more favourable results than traditional diversity programmes that are put in place to support women’s needs.

Organisations that actively manage pay equity vs. making passive commitments ensure that women and men have equal access to profit and loss responsibilities, and proactively support flexible work arrangements driving gender equality at a greater rate than those with traditional diversity programmes.

### **Women’s emancipation**

When women’s emancipation movements initially emerged, they were usually closely connected to political and social opposition movements. In liberation movements and revolutions in which men and women jointly exerted themselves for basic rights, national independence, and a constitutional charter, the position of women was also on the agenda. Some men, although not the majority, were prepared to accept women as companions with equal rights. Women availed themselves of the additional scope for action which materialised during periods of social upheaval. There arose new forms of feminist involvement in the form of societies, journals, and alternative lifestyles.

Women's emancipation movements developed early in those countries where socioeconomic change was already advanced, and soon had a mass following. The emergent industrial and civil society resulted in a closer interaction among all classes. In the last decade of the nineteenth century women's associations with widely different goals increasingly united on national and international levels. This consolidation was the result of intensified communication which encouraged the exchange of ideas and accelerated developments in the different national women's movements.

### **Insight: Rosa Parks-Feminist and Activist**

Although this portrait depicts more a fighter of civil rights in the United States in 1955, it also latently covers the theme of women emancipation with the ardour of a feminist activist whose legacy is still widely passed on and respected by generations that have succeeded.

### **Rosa Parks and the Montgomery Bus Boycott**

Rosa Parks rode at the front of a Montgomery, Alabama, bus on the day the Supreme Court's ban on segregation of the city's buses took effect. A year earlier, she had been arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a bus.



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On a cold December evening in 1955, Rosa Parks quietly incited a revolution – by just sitting down. She was tired after spending the day at work as a department store seamstress. She stepped onto the bus for the ride home and sat in the fifth row – the first row of the “Coloured Section”.

In Montgomery, Alabama, when a bus became full, the seats nearer the front were given to white passengers. Montgomery bus driver ordered Parks and three other African Americans seated nearby to move to the back of the bus.

Three riders complied; Parks did not. After Parks refused to move, she was arrested and fined \$10. The chain of events triggered by her arrest changed the United States. The Montgomery bus boycott triggered a firestorm in the South. Across the region, blacks resisted “moving to the back of the bus.” Similar actions flared up in other cities. The boycott put Martin Luther King Jr. in the national spotlight. He became the acknowledged leader of the nascent Civil Rights Movement.

Source: *US History.org*.

Feminist issues regarding rights have not only inspired the rich nations. In Mauritius, an island-nation in the Indian Ocean, the following case study sheds light on how feminist movements led to the emancipation of women in this country.

#### **Case Example: 21st century movement activism in Mauritius**

The 21<sup>st</sup> century witnessed a shift in the energy and focus of many women’s organisations towards lobbying for feminist issues within the formal political sphere as they became more closely aligned with global women’s movements. This era was also marked by greater collaboration between women’s organisations and alliance building. A number of new feminist oriented women’s organisations were formed during this period which lobbied for a greater presence of women in parliament. These women’s organisations joined international feminist networks and have benefited from financial support, foreign expertise and training. With such support, most of these women’s organisations are civil society based, autonomous and are not linked to religious and political bodies. There has been increased support for activism on the question of women’s representation in parliament from regional and international feminist networks (Ramtohul, 2011).

There is therefore a need for greater linkages with women at the grassroots as the latter have not identified with the cause of increasing women's political representation. The issue of formal politics has also proved to be highly divisive among the various women's organisations in the country due to competing political ideologies, women's multiple identities and conflicting demands on their loyalty. Ramtohul (2011) states that intersectionality is a major obstacle to the endeavours of women's organisations seeking to enhance women's political space. Women are often sympathetic to the feminist demand for more women in parliament but are loyal to the political parties that their families support. This problem has led to hampering the efforts of the women's groups that brought the issue of women's political representation to the public scene and lobbied for political parties to allocate a greater number of tickets to women candidates. Hence, on the issue of women's representation in parliament, there is need for sensitisation to be done at all levels and greater collaboration among the different groups of women.

### **Simone de Beauvoir's concept of the "Other"**

The original French edition of Simone de Beauvoir's landmark feminist philosophical work of 1949, "Le deuxième sexe", unprecedentedly raised the question of woman: who is she, really? This dynamic question endures after centuries of struggles for equality (Parker, 2011). Beauvoir asked, why should a woman feel internally compelled to answer this question not in relation to her own lived singularity – as she exists for herself – but instead according to ill-fitting myths?

Simone de Beauvoir (1949) in her seminal book "The Second Sex", stated that what peculiarly signalises the situation of woman is that she – a free and autonomous being like all human creatures – nevertheless finds herself living in a world where men compel her to assume the status of the Other. They propose to stabilise her as object and to doom her to immanence since her transcendence is to be overshadowed and for ever transcended by another ego (*conscience*) which is essential and sovereign. The drama of woman lies in this conflict between the fundamental aspirations of every subject (ego) – who always regards the self as the essential and the compulsions of a situation in which she is the inessential. How can a human being in woman's situation attain fulfilment? What roads are open to her? Which are blocked? How can independence be recovered in a state of dependency? What circumstances limit woman's liberty and how can they be overcome? These are the fundamental questions on which de Beauvoir would fain throw some light. She was interested in the fortunes of the individual as defined not in terms of happiness but in terms of liberty.

### **Highlight: 1975: Year of the Woman**

The United Nations (U.N.) designated 1975 International Women's Year. The U.N. charter had long stated that the global organisation is dedicated to human rights with no discrimination based on sex. During the 1970s, feminism was gaining momentum as an international social and political movement (Napikoski, 2015). The U.N. General Assembly declared International Women's Year and organised the first World Conference on Women, held in Mexico City during the summer of 1975.

After the conference, the U.N. expanded the recognition of International Women’s Year by declaring 1976–1985 the U.N. Decade for Women. This highlighted the need for women’s rights and asserted a U.N. commitment to equality. Some critics perceived the declarations as political gestures rather than productive action. The U.N. also established a Voluntary Fund for the U.N. Decade for Women, which became UNIFEM, to further work on women’s issues.

TIME’s 1975 Women of the Year cover celebrated the changing roles and diversity of American women and proclaimed that “enough U.S. women have so deliberately taken possession of their lives that the event is spiritually equivalent to the discovery of a new continent.”

Although TIME selected and profiled a dozen remarkable women in various fields as symbolising the new consciousness of women, it found the truly exceptional development to be the change in “the status of the everyday, usually anonymous woman, who moved into the mainstream of jobs, ideas and policymaking.” Women have continued to make steady gains in the corporate and professional world over the past quarter-century, but while progress has been impressive in some areas, the overall pace has slowed from that heady time in the mid-70s, to the discouragement of some (Levinstein, 2015).

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## **Case Study 2: The Role and Place of Women in Sub-Saharan African Societies**

According to the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and much literature published on developmental issues, the poorest person on earth lives somewhere in Sub-Saharan Africa and is probably a woman. The purpose of this paper is to consider the role and the place of such a poor woman from her own perspective.

### **African Women as Mothers, Spouses and Educators**

From a current observation of African society, women are generally banished from the public spheres of power. When they are urged to participate in the political life of their countries through civil and political authority, for instance, they often become indebted to the chief to whom they owe their promotion. Women can pay back this debt in a humiliating way. Outside of the political arena, however, African women demonstrate their merits in another way. This ambivalent role is disclosed through the figures of mother, spouse and educator. Through these eminent and unique roles, whereby women hold the indispensable function of life giver and peacekeeper, they exercise the power to protect life in dignity and pride more so than anyone else in African society.

Firstly, as a mother, the woman has a privileged relationship with her son, despite whatever the son becomes. This ascendancy of the son lasts forever and the mother can usefully use her prerogative to advise or even to command her son. In most cases, the son listens to his mother more than he does his father. She is the foundational pillar upon which all the family and community structures rely. The African mother is more than a “domestic cook” in charge of managing the household. In a way, she manages the entire community and is more efficient than any “First Lady” or Mme Minister.

As a personage in the shadow of her son, the African mother indirectly exercises her power through her motherly attributes. There is an African depiction of the process of decision making where the role of the woman as mother is omnipresent, in contrast to the Western traditions of relationships of power. In her capacity as mother of the most influential persons in the society, she is respected and feared, as well as honoured and admired. Nowadays, women of great importance still play a deciding role in the construction of their society. There are some African societies that are marked by matriarchy where the obvious political influence of the mother, source and principle of power, is recognised.

Secondly, as spouse, the African woman is not just a female: she is a partner equally involved in the process of building the family, the nucleus of the community. The subjugation she suffers from today on the grounds of her being the “weak sex” is falsely determined by the difference in role from men which is only slight. In effect, her role as a responsible spouse, in partnership with her husband, is possible if both are trusting in each other. The ideal is that husband and wife become friends: one taking the advice of the other into consideration. This is possible only through communication. Here again the African difference is disclosed by “invisible spaces” of communication.

The third specific attribute of the African woman is her role as an educator. Education entails not only the teaching of human and cultural values, but as mothers and educators, women lead their sons and daughters on the road to a good life. Genuine education involves the shaping of character through the example of the educator. This challenging aspect of the role of the African woman requires that she live a life worthy of imitation. In African tradition, women are the first pedagogues in the sense that they are the first to lead their children. It is this attribute that explains why African women are capable of doing anything they can to sustain a disrupted family.

They do whatever possible to meet the needs of their family, as they assume their unique role as educator when men abdicate their responsibility. They sacrifice their lives, if necessary, in order to educate their children. With economic bankruptcy and the collapse of many African institutions, women try to maintain life in many African countries, through daily food supply to the long-term investment by way of paying education fees for kids. If African communities are surviving the economic crisis, it is largely due to the ingenuity of women who are still fulfilling their roles while men are run away from their duties. The question, then, is to know who ultimately retains the legitimacy of power in African societies in order to make development possible.

Abridged and adapted from: *Dimandja, A.L., (2004) The role and place of women in sub-Saharan African Societies, Globalaging.org.*

### **Questions**

Why do political barriers affect the emancipation of women in Africa? How does empowerment help African women perform quite well in the African society? What are the merits of women as educator in their traditional societies? What ideas can be developed about gender in sub-Saharan Africa?

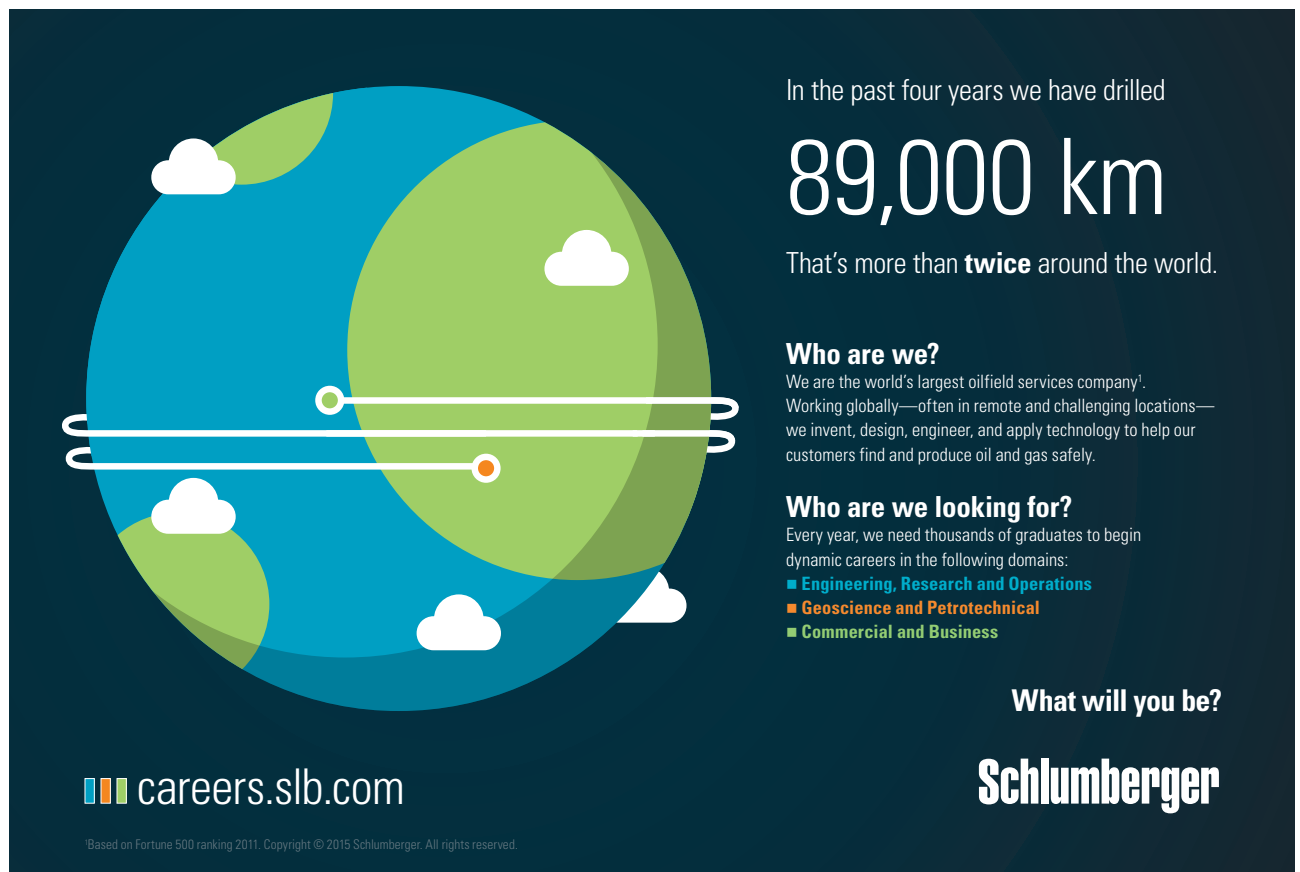
### **Women in contemporary society**

Today, women are considered to have equal rights; but, is it really true? Old stereotypes still exist in many things. Women have worked hard for the rights that exist. They have made huge strides in changing the way society looks at them from the past. In the past, women were to stay at home, take care of the housework, the cooking, the baking, the laundry, and teach the children by raising them with chores, discipline, and help with their homework. Husbands were expected to come home from work, have dinner on the table, and the house neat and clean for them. Times have changed, though. Many women work outside of the home or even in the home for pay. With today's economic status, most families need two pay checks to make ends meet. Other women have a college degree and want to put it to use or continue in their careers. Although family may be important to them, self-improvement and being able to help provide for the family may be of a concern. Globoke (2013) states that with this shift in work situation, many women ask their husbands for help with the housework and the children – and are scrutinised for it. It is not always an easy situation for a woman to be married, work, and have a family; but, it is quite often a choice that is made.

### Women and the glass ceiling

Around the world, in most developed nations, women are missing from the top of business corporations, despite the business case for gender diversity in decision-making, despite the fact that women make major purchasing decisions as consumers, and most surprisingly, despite the fact that 68 women have led their countries as presidents and prime ministers, and eleven countries have selected at least two women as president or prime minister (Singh, 2007).

The “glass ceiling” is a concept from the 1980s describing an invisible barrier that blocks the access of women to the top – they can see where they want to get to, they can see their male peers going through. Yet apart from a few who have emulated the traditionally linear male career path, somehow the women do not make it through to the board. The statistics indicate some evidence of a glass ceiling although it appears to be located at a higher level than before, as women have now achieved around a third of middle management positions in many countries. Singh (2007) states that there are still many barriers blocking women’s career paths to leadership positions. Some of the barriers are related to the women themselves, some to their organisations. But many are to do with the interaction between individual and organisation, where the experiences at work are different for women because they are not represented at higher levels of the organisation.



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A few salient points are worth noting from Singh's view (2007):

- Women are seen as essentially different from men in terms of their need for connection to others, and their preference for working in a humanistic, social and inclusive way for the common good of the organisation and society.
- Women also make career choices that lead to their lower position in the hierarchy. They reportedly do not plan their careers, they attribute their career successes to good fortune and failures to their own shortcomings.
- Women often do have different values to their male colleagues, and do not want a male lifestyle.
- Despite their obvious visibility in the workplace, women somehow become invisible as management potential. Our research on impression management shows that women are modest about their achievements, they tend not to want to push themselves forward, and their strategies for gaining visibility and recognition are based on delivering high performance and commitment.

### **Conclusion**

This area of diversity comprises essentially women who are at the core of gender issues. Seen from the issues covered, the equality concept is not yet over nor will it come to a perfect end since society remains anchored in its values with differences that are welcome both physically and psychologically. What is interesting in diversity is that there is ample opportunity to welcome openings between the genders and accept that each one of it will have its role to play correctly and in an egalitarian way in society. Issues in sexism have to be properly dealt with, blatant discrimination has to be criticised or condemned while seeing the benefits of integrating such diversity at work is welcome in any part of the world.

### **Practice Questions**

1. Why were women earlier limited to household chores?
2. What does the term "feminism" mean?
3. What is the contribution of Simone de Beauvoir in relation to the woman?
4. What factors help women gain better access to job opportunities?
5. What is the relevance of using female icons as illustration of women's emancipation?
6. Identify sectors where women enter "male jobs" and how this reflects an important change?
7. Briefly explain some key steps of female emancipation in your country?
8. How far the cliché of the submissive African woman applies today? Refer to Case Study 2.
9. What is the "glass ceiling" and why is it a barrier to women?
10. What affirmative action can a company take to better promote the role of its female workforce?

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# 3 Age Issue in Workplace Diversity

## Introduction

An organisation comprises an array of individuals with differences in age. This is common for established or the said “mature” organisations that boast their long-term existence to a combination of both young and old workers. Employees themselves go through a stage of their existence on entering the marketplace young, maturing over the years through work and experience and eventually retiring as they enter old age. Since the world’s population is ageing faster than ever before, older workers might have to stay longer in their organisations. Some countries have raised the retirement age from 60 to 65 while it is up to 67 in advanced nations.

A few issues immediately come to the mind when one speaks of age as a diversity component. What is the general perception that we have of an aged worker? Just think of somebody getting old, having more wrinkles on the face, grey-haired and likely to be in poorer health than his younger counterparts? This is a cliché that we tend to have of old people but also of the mature employee working for his last few years in the business. The old worker can be considered as one who is weakened by health ailments, age and relative problems. Having spent more time at work than others, the aged worker looks to be less effective. This is just a perception not a reality.



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The second issue might come from change and innovation. Evidently, young workers fall in the better side on being dynamic, innovative, forward-looking and open to change while this might look less possible for the older worker. Here again, there is a perception of superiority or better adaptability to changes. Is this particularly true when one could also address the generational issue discussed in a later chapter?

Next comes the question of recruitment. In a situation of high unemployment, younger workers are given better chances to come back to work compared with the older ones. This is something commonly agreed whereby a majority of older workers get more time and effort to gain their past positions or even accepting to work for lower wages.

The issue of age discrimination can also affect promotion in organisations. If the First In, First Out (FIFO) concept is widely applied, it means that the older worker logically leaves the firm first due to age. Equally, this might also mean that the more experienced and aged worker should benefit from promotion. This is another essential question when it comes to dealing with age diversity. Some companies might favour younger managers to give an image of youthfulness to their business while older workers could suffer from discrimination on not being given the promotion.

Stories and evidences from work experience tell that age adds to diversity and its success where a combination of various employees of different ages could blend in and provide the most appropriate solution to the firm. Some companies believe that the old worker is sage and hence capable of transferring his excellent experience and work attitude onto the younger ones. Others might believe that the freshness of the younger employee adds value to the organisation with novel ideas and vision for innovation and adaptability.

This chapter addresses the issue of age from the point of view of older workers who might become more sizeable in the future as communities age. It states that age differences do matter at work but there is a need to overcome discrimination. This might be written in the company's code of conduct but unfortunately paid lip service. It is imperative to value and reward the experience of the old worker while believing in his excellent contribution in today's workplace diversity.

### **Integrating Family life cycle with work**

It would firstly interesting to develop the age concept through the traditional family life cycle depicted more often in consumer behaviour than other courses so as to have a good picture of where the employee is likely to be at work.

Traditionally the life cycle, illustrated a progression of stages through which families passed; it comprised stages, starting from bachelorhood (single), to married (couple), to family growth (Parenthood: birth of children), to family contraction (grown up children leaving home for studies or employment) to post parenthood (all children leaving home) to dissolution (single survivor: death of one of the spouses).

Based on these, the traditional FLC can be synthesized into five basic stages, which may be mentioned as follows:

- Stage I: Bachelorhood: Young single adult (male/female) living apart from parents and into a livelihood.
- Stage II: Honeymooners: Young married couple.
- Stage III: Parenthood: Married couple with at least one child living with them at home.
- Stage IV: Post-parenthood: An older married couple with no children living at home. Children have left home for studies or for employment.
- Stage V: Dissolution: One surviving spouse.

The same concept applies to age patterns at work. Stage I and II refer to the initial stage of ageing at work. Employees in this category might be unskilled or semi-skilled but they are quite young (18–25) depending upon the time that they might spend at school, particularly for higher education.

Parenthood is the most important stage at work where the employee is working to raise his family and contribute financially to it. Here, expenditure might even exceed income. Workers want to stay in their jobs or seek higher revenue. This can be more between the age range 30–45.

Post-parenthood normally affects older workers those in the age range 60–65 and already having their own children at work. The last stage will rarely comprise the workforce as people at that level normally retire from work.

### **Young employees in diversity**

Young firms disproportionately employ young workers, controlling for firm size, industry, geography and time. The same positive correlation between young firms and young employees holds when we look just at new hires. According to Ouimet and Zarutskie (2013), young employees in young firms earn on average higher wages than young employees in older firms. Further, young employees disproportionately join young firms with greater innovation potential and that exhibit higher growth, conditional on survival. These facts are consistent with the argument that the skills, risk tolerance, and career dynamics of young workers are contributing factors to their disproportionate share of employment in young firms.

Hardy (2013) states that younger companies tend to have workers with less time at the firm, which is partly an effect of being new and hiring intensively in recent years. Facebook's median worker has been with the company just 1.1 years, while Intel, I.B.M., Oracle and others come in around six years. Other factors are also in play, however. "The firms that are growing or innovating around new areas tend to have younger workers," said Katie Bardaro, the lead economist at PayScale. "Older companies that aren't changing with the times get older workers."

### The Middle-Aged Worker in diversity

Another important component is the middle-aged worker which can comprise a substantial part of the company. Express UK (2015) claims that by 2020 it is estimated that up to a third of the nation's workforce will be 50 or older so the more skilled they are the better it will be for Britain's economy. According to MetLife 63 per cent of adults aged 50 or over say they are considering retraining so they can carry on working well into what was previously retirement age. For many this is because of the financial implications of giving up work but others want the stimulation of employment, the company of colleagues or 'a sense of purpose' said MetLife.

For some this will mean learning new skills such as basic computer coding to stay up to date in their current job and stave off any forced early retirement. But for others it will mean learning something completely new to continue in full or part time employment or start up a business of their own.

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### **The Old worker in diversity**

A third category of worker is the old worker. A research paper from EEO Trust (2008) comments that employers define “older” in a range of ways. The most typical definition is “55 years and over”. However, this varies in different sectors. In sectors where there are heavy physical demands, it is more likely that they are thinking of workers aged 50 and over. In high-earning professions, where significant numbers of people are choosing to step away from their full-time jobs in their fifties, fifty also is seen as a benchmark for categorising older workers. Some organisations think about ‘older’ as people in the last five to ten years of their paid employment. Others do not think about age, rather length of service.

Organisations find it useful to define “older” in a way that is relevant to them to help them monitor their workforce and carry out workforce planning. Apart from that, the definition will not necessarily be very important. Older workers are as varied in their aspirations, abilities and availability as any other group of workers (EEO Trust, 2008). The variations among older workers mean that they are unlikely to respond in a uniform way to initiatives, options or strategies that employers use to attract and retain older workers.

### **The importance of age diversity**

All of the indications are that more people will need to continue working later in life. This is because on the one hand pensions are decreasing in value and on the other, people are becoming more likely to still have financial obligations such as mortgages or child/student support, later in life.

Because there are also fewer younger people available for work. Employers will need to consider how they can best become an employer of choice for older workers and how they can retain older workers in an increasingly competitive market place. Employers will need to review their HR practices and procedures and arrangements for training to ensure compliance with the Employment Equality Regulations, but also to ensure that all employees including younger and older workers are respected and valued in a workplace that is attractive, responsive to their needs and optimises their opportunity to contribute (diversiton.com, 2015). For some organisations this will mean a significant culture change.

The elderly today differ from older adults in the past in important ways. First, the experience of old age in America is marked by unparalleled diversity. Public discussion of the old-age population refers to this age group as the “elderly” or “seniors” as though this is a homogenous category (Seltzer and Yahirun, 2013). These terms mask the considerable diversity in the characteristics and experiences of those in this chronological age group.

Each person brings a history of his or her experiences from early life and midlife into old age. The histories are shaped by whether a person is male or female, how much schooling and income the person has, race-ethnicity, and nativity. Seltzer and Yahirun (2013) state that these characteristics and the life histories shaped by them continue to affect individuals' experiences in later life.

With the ageing of the population, it is now more important than ever to encourage experienced workers to remain in the workforce and to pass their skills and knowledge onto others. The long-term success of any business depends on the ability to tap into a diverse body of talent, knowledge and skills. Age-friendly recruitment practices can widen the applicant pool to help a company find the best person (Department of Employment, 2014).

Losing experienced staff to retirement can also affect an organisation. In addition to the costs of recruiting and training new staff, there is also the lost knowledge of a business and clients. Mature-age workers have built up knowledge and skills during their time in the workforce, and using these skills in workplace mentoring programmes can reduce staff turnover, train other employees and increase staff morale. Mature-age workers can save your business money on absenteeism, training and recruitment.

### **Discrimination against old workers**

Age discrimination in employment removes or restricts the individual's freedom to exercise his right to work. Discriminatory measures can oblige workers at a set age to leave work early, or exclude them from applying for Jobs or from training and employment promotion schemes after a certain age. Older workers are broadly defined as those aged over 50. Discrimination starts at different ages. For example, discrimination in recruitment starts from around 40, whereas early exit from work affects large numbers from 55 onwards (Drury, 1993). In the USA, the law forbids discrimination when it comes to any aspect of employment, including hiring, firing, pay, job assignments, promotions, layoff, training, fringe benefits, and any other term or condition of employment (EEOC, 2014). This law protects people who are 40 or older from discrimination because of age. The law also makes it illegal to retaliate against a person because the person complained about discrimination, filed a charge of discrimination, or participated in an employment discrimination investigation or lawsuit.

Cavico and Mujtaba (2010) state that with the increasing age of the workforce, the presence of age bias in society generally, together with the fact that the consequences of unemployment fall more harshly on older people, make the topic of age discrimination in employment a very significant one- legally, ethically, and practically. Moreover, as "older" employees get even older, their pension and health care costs concomitantly increase for their employers, thereby making older employees more "attractive" targets for workforce "downsizing."



### Direct and indirect discrimination

Two types of discrimination can be identified:

Direct discrimination measures targeted at older workers based solely on grounds of age, and on no other factors, such as abilities or health. These measures use specific age limits to exclude older workers from, for example, training and employment schemes, or from applying for jobs.

Indirect discrimination measures which are not directly age-specific, but which have a disproportionately negative impact on older workers, compared with other age groups. This hidden discrimination usually has the most widespread negative impact on older workers in employment.

### Case Study 3: Age: At Issue in the American Workplace

People who experience age discrimination in the workplace are generally older workers. As improvements in health care and fitness continue to extend our lifespan, men and women are choosing to stay in the workforce beyond the standard retirement age. For younger workers, discrimination shows up more often as a reluctance to take young people seriously or in their assignment to work projects with low organisational and/or career impact. This practice reduces their mobility and ability to advance in their careers.



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Although younger workers do face discrimination, litigation against companies for discriminatory practices is more common with older workers. While only about 20% of all complaints filed with the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) are for age discrimination, settlements and jury awards are substantially higher in such cases than in those of race, sex, or disability discrimination.

Each generation views the world from a unique perspective. Being 20 in the year 2003 is a very different experience from being 50 in that same year. By the same token, being 20 in the year 2003 is very different from being 20 in the year 1973. While this is a simple and obvious concept, part of our difficulty in relating to one another across generations is that we do not keep this unique worldview in mind. We have a tendency to view the world through our lenses without regard to the changes and challenges facing each one of us. By valuing each other's different experiences, we can develop a basis for dialogue and learning.

For those of us who are in our 50s and 60s, we are staying in our jobs in record numbers. Most people continue to work part-time even after retiring. The number of people between 50 and 65 will increase at more than twice the rate of the overall population. Companies will become increasingly dependent on the quality, skill, and work ethic of older employees. Some corporate leaders are already realising they can act to reduce or eliminate age discrimination and the more subtle forms of bias through effective management. Although few if any companies are offering major ongoing educational programmes designed to prevent age discrimination or deal with intergenerational issues in the workplace, several national corporations have added these subjects to their diversity statements.

Age discrimination takes several forms. Older workers not encouraged to pursue job-related education, training, and promotional opportunities, create an environment in which older workers may see themselves ignored, and excluded. With their responsibilities reduced, they ultimately feel pressured to leave the workplace. Jokes about age, talk of rejuvenation, side-tracking of resumes of those over 45, and downgrading of performance abound. Perceptions about image, adaptability, attitude, health, and productivity may indirectly contribute to that negative environment. As with other forms of discrimination, a negative, exclusive environment is not a place where men and women deliver their best work. When attempting to create an inclusive environment, all workers should be seen as valuable and contributing based on their merit and regardless of differences.

Young adults are not immune from the pressures of age discrimination. While their youthfulness is prized and coveted, very often their contributions to the workplace are muted by stereotypes of immaturity and inexperience. It is not uncommon for young adults to experience being restricted to jobs with low levels of responsibility, often on a trial basis, in order to prove themselves to older workers and supervisors. Very often, these same young people arrive to the workplace with superior education as compared to older colleagues. They also bring with them enriched life and workplace experiences and yet are discounted in this way. What is needed is real progress against age discrimination at both ends of the age continuum.

Abridged and adapted from: *Buccigrossi, J. and Robinson, M. (2003). Age: At Issue in the American Workplace*, wetWare, Inc.

### Questions:

What perceptions are visible when comparing a young person in 1973 and 2003? Are there examples of modernity and youth to contemplate? What happens to workers when they grow older? Refer to paragraph 5. What are inherent weaknesses of young workers despite the strengths that they might show?

### The Value of Old Workers

James (2013) explains that it is first essential to dispel the myth that senior citizens are just too old for the workplace. Today workers, for the most part, do not retire at 60 anymore. But that is not just because they cannot afford to – it is because 60 is not old anymore. Today's 50-, 60- and 70-somethings not only need to work, they want to work, and they are fully capable of doing so. In fact, the average health of today's older worker is no worse than that of their younger counterparts, and by some measures is better. A 2012 AARP survey asked Americans aged 35 to 80 to rate their overall health and happiness, and found responses generally increasing with age. Other surveys have found adults over 65 reporting lower levels of depression, loneliness, and other mental health problems than their younger peers. The perception that people over the age of 60 are somehow mentally or physically unsuited for the workplace is as outdated as a fax machine.

But it's not just that older workers are not risks or burdens to organisations. They are, in fact, a benefit. Numerous studies have shown that older workers are the most satisfied with their jobs and the most engaged of all age groups, which any manager can tell you leads to higher levels of presenteeism and productivity. They very often bring relevant experiences, strong attention-to-detail, and resilience built from years on the job that their younger peers may be less likely to offer (James, 2013).

Yet, the perception remains that older workers are not up to the job or not worth hiring. Nearly a quarter of all cases brought to the United States Equal Employment Opportunity Commission in 2011 claimed discrimination on the basis of age. Older workers are routinely passed up for promotions, forced out of jobs, or simply not given the chance in the first place. These kinds of ageist attitudes do not just hurt older workers; they hurt the entire organisation. A recent survey conducted by the Boston College Sloan Centre on Ageing & Work found that a perception of bias in the workplace against older workers generates lower senses of engagement among both older workers and younger workers. That's right, even the perception that older workers are being discriminated against has a negative outcome for the company, across the board.

According to James (2013) it is high time for employers and employees alike to rethink our perceptions of older Americans in the workplace. Older workers are more than up to the job, they often bring unique skills and outlooks no one else can offer, and discriminating against these workers not only hurts them, it hurts the entire company.

Adapted from: Huffington Post, 2013.

### Managing older workers in diversity

There is a major shift in the workplace. For the first time in history, businesses regularly are managing workforces with four generations of employees. Employers are operating with workers from their early 20s to their late 70s, or beyond.

Denver (2012) comments that managing this growing age diversity is one of the biggest workplace challenges today – and one that employers highlighted in The Denver Post’s Top Workplaces 2012 section have given special attention. Generations in the workplace today include Millennials, who range in age from about 16 to 31; Generation X, about 32 to 47; baby boomers, about 48 to 65; and Traditionalists, roughly 65 and older. No longer are workers routinely retiring at 62, 65 or 67. Some stay on because they like to work. Others have seen their retirement accounts decimated in recent years or never were able to save enough to consider retiring.

Multigenerational workplaces can bring out the best – and worst – in companies and their employees. Older workers can convey wisdom gained from decades of experience. Younger ones have fresh ideas and technical skills. Denver (2012) claims that yet the two groups often do not coalesce for the benefit of themselves and their employers.



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### **Young managers in diversity**

Contrary to the common perception, it is young people who suffer most from age discrimination at work rather than older workers, new British research has suggested. A poll by insurer Royal & Sun Alliance has found that 14 per cent of young people aged under 25 years old felt discriminated against in the workplace because of their age. They felt their progression had been hindered because they were perceived as too young to take on extra responsibility (Paton, 2006).

Young managers might be competent in their fields bringing the desired human capital to their respective organisations. With the latest qualifications and skills required in the job market, they are capable of shouldering key positions in business. Here again, they might be subject to discrimination probably because of their lack of exposure to business realities, lack of experience and possibly weak contacts with older managers or board level representatives. This could explain why among top managers, young managers are broadly fewer at the board level.

### **Conclusion**

This topic on age diversity explained how ageing affects the population of rich countries but this might equally be a phenomenon for developing countries where health and earnings have improved thereby lengthening the lifespan of people. An ancient Egyptian adage told that a woman is already old at 28 but this might be an awkward picture today. People are ageing more nicely today. But at the employment level, things might not be too good. The unemployment condition emphasises a lack of job availability and the older ones are usually subject to discrimination. When they lose their first job, it is usually more painful for them than the younger workers to get a job since they will ask for decent and fairly high salaries to cope with their situation. Comparatively, one can speak of the young generation within diversity and explain that they are also affected. Youth unemployment is common and the choice of seeking low-paid jobs is also high for them. Then, what about representing the young manager at the executive level—they are rare so far. And this also adds to the complexity of diversity regarding age.

### **Practice Questions**

1. Identify the key stages in parenthood and compare them with the ageing structure in firms.
2. Why are companies less keen to re-employ old workers?
3. What improvements might have been taking place regarding old employees at work?
4. What are the key attributes of the old worker in diversity?
5. How can training keep up the employability of the old worker?
6. What contribution can old workers bring to younger employees at work?
7. What are the qualities of young managers in diversity?
8. On what grounds young managers can be discriminated?
9. Why is it unfair to discriminate young managers at work?
10. What affirmative action can managers develop regarding age diversity at work?

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# 4 Generation Issue in Workplace Diversity

## Introduction

A knowledge of generational issues is important today at work. Based from the previous chapter that considered age diversity to be an essential aspect of managing diversity, this chapter goes slightly beyond the last chapter in that it focuses on the generational issue. This has been a classification made by western authors to delineate various generations that have existed and that may have both similarities and contrasting differences.

At one time, we spoke of old and young generations. This might be an issue back in the 1970s when those espousing the pop culture tended to show themselves as a group having a different identity from the past one that was involved in the first two World Wars of the past decade. The image made of the old generation; those born in the 1920s onwards, is that they were traditional in approach with an inclination on family standards and values. Large families with numerous children would be advisable at a time when the economies were scantily industrialised.



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The World Wars decimated the populations in large numbers. There was a global intention following the Marshall Plan in the USA in the post-war period to bring people back to work with the slogan: “Lay down the axe; fling by the spade; Leave in its track the toiling plough (Bryant).” This needed manual labour in the fields and there was a population boom after the Second World War. Incidentally, children born during that period ranging 1946–64 were known as baby boomers, a generation that impacted on humanity for decades and that moved alongside with modernity, openness and high levels of freedom.

The tendency of sophistication moved on after the baby boomer generation with Generation Y shaping the workforce and society. This comprised individuals having wider education and being more apt for secondary and tertiary education. This generation was better than the previous one on being more technically advanced than baby boomers and more likely to espouse technology and developments.

The offspring of baby boomers could be Generation Y born between 1980 and 2000. This generation entered the Internet age and the fast developing computer world. Generation Y is technologically savvy and the ones to use more modern computer-based applications for working and living. They are shaping their world in a more sophisticated way than ever before. Next comes, the generation as from 2000 which will later impact on the work environment.

This chapter addresses the generational issue from the three main perspectives namely Baby boomers, Generation X, Generation Y with slight reference to the old generation to firstly find out how they might differ in approach to the work environment and secondly see how they could bring their contribution to workplace diversity. It aims to see how generations can co-exist at work and how well they can manage through such an interesting concept as diversity. It can be evidenced that the present generation is more educated than the previous ones but faces the challenges of culture change, organisational restructuring and adaptation while it operates in an environment faced with modernity. It also bases its future on the values transmitted from parents that formed the past generations like baby boomers. There is both an element of challenge and conflict.

### **Insight: Four generations seen from different perspectives**

It has become apparent over recent decades that a paradigm shift has occurred with how people view their working lives. Today’s workforce does not look, think or act like the workforce of the past nor does it hold the same values, have the same experience or pursue the same needs and desires.

With the rapid and widespread introduction of new technologies changing the workplace along with the aging of the population signalling impending changes in the size and composition of the labour force there has become a heightened interest in the future of work (Lyon et al, 2011).



During the next 25 years, the economic, political and social environments of most organisations in industrialised societies will become increasingly more diverse. This in turn will be reflected in the workforce, which will become more diverse with respect to age, gender, ethnicity, beliefs, values, attitudes and behaviours. Therefore, traditional business models that were developed as a one size fits all hold little credence with today's workforce.

This increased workplace diversity has meant organisations understanding of diversity has needed to evolve. There has been a shift from race and gender relations and an exclusive emphasis on observable differences or demographic diversity to include the multitude of differences that constitute the identity of individuals and affect their behaviour. Therefore, in organisations, diversity has been expanded to include differences in behaviours, attitudes, core values, functional specialisation, organisational level and work style, all of which effect work behaviour. It is thus reasonable to expect organisations to address generational diversity.

Although huge numbers of young people today are starting their working lives in one of the least welcoming labour markets in modern history, those with the right skills have never had it so good. Employers have become convinced that they are at the start of a period of famine, and that the best talent has to be won at almost all costs. The Economist (2013) points out that in some rich countries older workers are retiring later, so bosses have a wider range of ages to manage. But as firms seek to be more meritocratic with promotions, older staff can be dismayed to find that their years of service no longer guarantee advancement; and that as digital skills become more important, younger workers are speeding past them.

The notion of "generation" as a way of understanding differences between age groups is widespread in society today. Members of a generation are linked through shared life experiences, which create a bond tying members together in to what have been termed "cohorts". A cohort however, is not merely a summation of a set of individual histories but has a distinctive composition and character. This can be thought of as a generational personality.

A review of the literature showed that there are currently four generational cohorts in today's workplace. Popular press rhetoric generally refers to these as "Veterans", "Baby Boomers", "Generation X" and "Generation Y".

### **Veterans**

Veterans, also referred to as "the Silent Generation", "Matures" or the "Traditional Generation" were born between 1925 and 1942, and are the oldest generation in the workforce today with many having already retired.

According to Lyon et al (2011), veterans grew up in the aftermath of tough economic times and were raised in a society that stressed morality, obligations, social norms, tradition, loyalty, self-denial and hard work as inherently valuable and one's duty. Growing up between two world wars and the Depression, scarcity and learning to go without, were commonplace.

In the workplace, Veterans respect authority, accepting the traditional executive decision-making command model of management believing in its effectiveness. They value the paternalistic employment relationship, safe working conditions, job security, and benefits organisations offered. Veterans derive satisfaction from doing their jobs well and have built their work ethic on commitment, responsibility, and conformity as their ticket to success.

Veterans believe in lifetime employment, company loyalty and paying one's dues in order to gain respect, power, status and corporate seniority. However, as a generation, they are now facing the challenge of co-workers with diverse values, lifestyles, and demands, burgeoning technology and non-traditional managers.

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### **Baby boomers: A unique generation in the last century**

Baby boomers who were born between 1943 and 1964 are the next oldest and generally the largest generational cohort in the workforce today. The post-war baby boom in New Zealand and in fact around the world created the most positive, doted upon generation the world had ever seen. Boomers were raised in an era of phenomenal national wealth and expansion claiming the world by right of inheritance and believing that every other generational cohort should follow their lead.

Boomers are fiercely competitive having had to fight for everything due to the sheer number of their peers competing against them. As they became young adults they saw a redefinition of gender roles and family constellations and major social upheaval and change. Boomers' adulthood has been uniquely characterised by dramatic social changes including the women's movement, an increasingly technological and service orientated workforce and a shift toward a global economy (Lyon et al, 2011).

Gursoy et al (2008) describe the traditional Baby boomers as workaholics who rarely job hop. They are dedicated, diligent, self-motivated employees who expect to be promoted based on their seniority and loyalty. Baby boomers are self-absorbed soul searchers striving for self-realisation. Lyon et al (2011) Boomers formed or joined self-help movements in drives implementing every fad management program on the market hoping it would be the quick fix they were looking for. Characterised by an attitude of self-immersion, an impatient desire for self-satisfaction and a weak sense of community, Boomers tend to work more from emotion and intuition than objective reason.

Lyon et al (2001) report that in the workplace boomers are characterised as workaholic, strong willed employees who are concerned with both work content and material gain. Their work has often become their personal lives and the key to their personal identities. Baby boomers, born between 1946 and the mid-1960s, are not slacking off as they age; they are seen as hard-working and productive (The Economist, 2013). They tend to be driven, willing to go the extra mile with the motto "live to work". On the job, boomers expect to arrive early and to leave late; seeing visibility as the key to success. However, in return Boomers expect promotions, titles, corner offices, and reserved car parking spaces.

Having excellent interpersonal and communication skills, Boomer excel at consensus building, mentoring, and effecting change. They use their keen appreciation for democracy and teamwork to form task forces to accomplish projects and goals.

### **Generation X**

Generation X'ers were born between 1965 and 1981 and after Baby boomers is the next largest generational cohort in the workplace today. Whilst the title "Generation X" can be traced back to the author Douglas Coupland who wrote about late boomers and gave them the title "Generation X", the ubiquitous usage of the name can be attributed to media moguls who popularised the phrase during the mid-1990s.

Xers grew up predominantly as “modern” kids in dual-income families where their parents were absorbed in consumerism. Xers therefore grew up teaching themselves what worked and what didn’t and as a result they are a very independent generation. Being affected by their parents’ skyrocketing divorce rate and inability to balance their work and family life, Xers vowed never to make the same mistake. Hence, Xers want quality of life, expecting balance and placing boundaries on the infringement of work on their personal lives living by the motto “work to live” and not “live to work”.

Being brought up in the information revolution shaped the way Xers learn, think, and communicate. Comfortable with the new technology, Xers have easily mastered the art of generating and analysing the huge amounts of facts and figures required in today’s workplace. As a result Xers have learnt to value diversity: diverse nationalities, diverse family constellations, and diverse technology.

Lyon et al (2011) explain that Xers learnt early on that loyalty was not a two way street, and that the “cradle to grave” job security of previous generations was a thing of the past. Xers therefore provide “just in time loyalty” doing a good job in return for employers meeting their job demands. Xers expect to be able to maintain career security and enhance their marketability through challenging jobs in which they are constantly learning. In order to do this, Xers seek alignment with organisations that value their competencies, reward productivity rather than longevity, and create a sense of community.

Xers are pragmatic, hardworking, ambitious, selfish, and determined to succeed financially. As a generation they are collectively saying “no” to traditional management approaches in the workplace. They expect to be trusted to get the job done and being given the freedom and flexibility to set their own hours to do so. They also demand a technologically up-to-date work environment, competent, credible managers and co-workers, and managers who coach and mentor rather than command and micromanage (Lyon et al, 2011).

Xers are also determined individualists, fiercely independent and expect their entrepreneurial spirit to add value to current operations. To retain Xer employee’s employers need to offer variety, stimulation, and constant change to maintain their interest. To inspire Xers motivation managers need to reward innovation, make public displays of success, support personal growth, create opportunities for satisfying team work and personal responsibility and create a culture of fun. The individualistic Gen X cohort expects to be appreciated and rewarded as soon as they have achieved their organisational goals. When they have problems, they prefer to talk directly to their bosses for quick solutions. Unlike the Boomers, Gen X employees are not afraid to job hop because they are confident that each leap them in a higher position that pays more (Altimier, 2006). The Economist (2013) points out that the middle ranks of Generation Xers, who might be expected to be battling their way up the corporate ladder, are viewed as the best team players.

## **Generation Y**

Generation Y referred to as “Nexters”, “Millennials”, Generation “Why?” and the “Internet Gen”, were born between 1982 and 1994 and are the youngest generation in the workforce today, with most yet to enter.

Generation Y are coming of age during a shift back towards virtue and values, are closer to their parents than Xers, show more concern for religion and community and due to recent economic expansion are more optimistic and positive. As a result they are generally more relaxed and confident in their abilities than previous generations.

Growing up Generation Y was over-supervised with lives packed full of parental attention, structure, chaperones and after school programs leaving very little unplanned free time. As a result they expect employers to provide structure in the workplace and can sometimes lack spontaneity.

Lyon et al (2011) point out that Generation Y, like Xers, are highly educated and technologically savvy seeing work that is not a learning experience leading to something better as a dead end and to be avoided. Sometimes referred to as the “Why” generation, they are also not afraid to voice their concerns and opinions and question authority. Having a keen sense of fairness and fair play in the workplace, they believe rules are rules and expect bosses to enforce them and not bend them. Though comfortable with authority, generation Y sees that that authority must be competent and have integrity. Contrary to some negative perceptions about Gen Y employees, they are comparatively more cooperative, better team players, and more optimistic about the future than their Baby Boomer and Gen X colleagues (Zemke et al., 2000). The authors claim that Gen Y employees are confident, civic-minded, and fast learners who are easily motivated by prompt praises and recognition. They dislike inflexible work schedules and rigid policies and procedures that control them. Gen Employees would remain longer in organisations that invest in sophisticated technologies and make their jobs interesting, challenging and entertaining.

Maintaining a healthy balance between their personal and professional lives and valuing family and friends above all else is also paramount to Generation Y. In the workplace the team is very important to Generation Y. They are used to being organised into teams to get things done and being evaluated as a unit. Hence, they are comfortable with being remunerated as a group.

## **Implications for Organisations**

In their study on generations in New Zealand, Lyon et al (2011) mention that organisations are finding that retaining and managing today’s generations has become more demanding than supervising the more compliant workers of yesterday. From the duty, honour, tradition and loyalty mantra of the Veteran generational cohort to the individualistic, authenticity, techno savvy generation Y cohort, the different faces of the New Zealand workforce need to work together.

Kroll (2009) explains that managing four generations at work has become a key topic in human resources, experts say. The interest has been fuelled not only by the mix of worker ages, but also by the potential for intergenerational conflict as workplaces experience layoffs and other cutbacks during the recession.

To maintain or gain competitive advantage, organisations must value diversity by developing new strategies that recognise employee's values and attitudes. It is becoming apparent that failing to value the ways that emerging generations are different from the "Establishment", leads to reduced productivity and ultimately stymied organisational growth. Thus understanding the values and attitudes of each of these generational cohorts will lead to more effective management, motivation, and retention of a diverse workforce.

### The present generational workforce in the USA

Ernst & Young conducted its survey not just for clients; the consultancy felt it needed to understand generational challenges in its own workforce. In America its staff are young: 62% are from Generation Y, 29% are from Generation X and just 9% are baby-boomers. To get them to work together rather than glowering at each other across their cubicle dividers, the firm is encouraging them to do voluntary work in cross-generational teams. Millennials may be cool with this; their older peers not so much.



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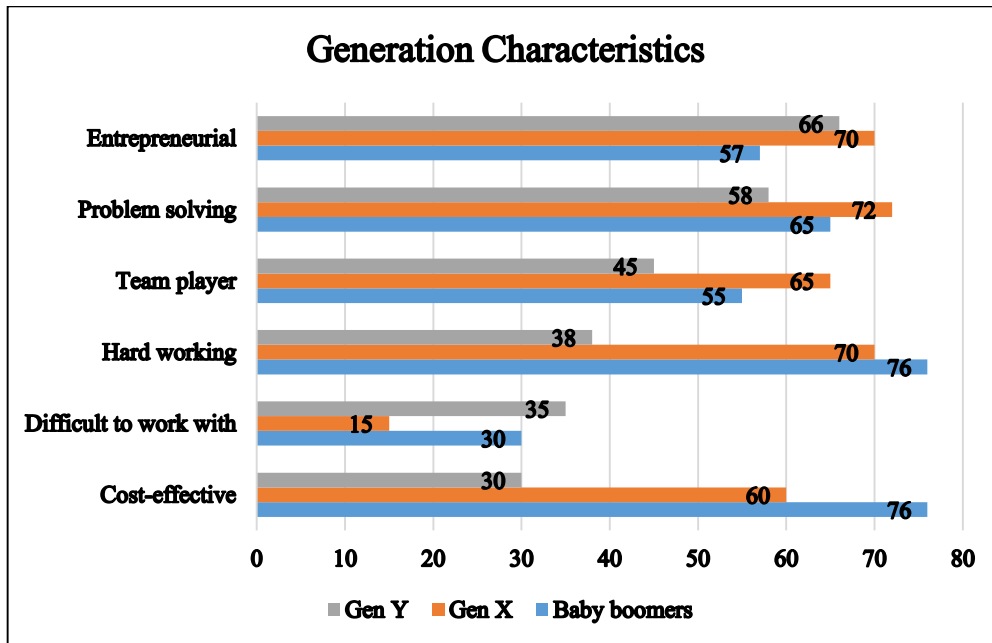
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Source: The Economist Newspaper, 2013.

### Dealing with generational diversity

Dittmann (2005) states that generational differences sometimes may cause clashes in the workplace, especially among workers on teams. For example, boomers may believe gen Xers are too impatient and willing to throw out the tried-and-true strategies, while gen Xers may view boomers as always trying to say the right thing to the right person and being inflexible to change. Traditionalists may view baby boomers as self-absorbed and prone to sharing too much information, and baby boomers may view traditionalists as dictatorial and rigid. And, gen Xers may consider millennials too spoiled and self-absorbed, while millennials may view gen Xers as too cynical and negative.

Comparatively, Kroll (2009) points out that those varying frames of reference can greatly influence work perspective. Traditionalists, shaped by a country uniting behind the war effort, tend to be loyal employees who respect authority. Baby Boomers, who came of age in a time of unprecedented economic prosperity, are often driven to succeed. Gen Xers, often latchkey kids who came of age to see fading job security in a wounded economy and rising divorce rates, have a sceptical outlook. Millennials, who grew up with the Internet and other technological advances that revolutionised society, shun respect for the status quo.

Deal (2007) agrees that the justifications for intergenerational conflict is weak and believes that individuals from all generations have more similarities than dissimilarities. They share several common family values such as honesty, love, happiness, a sense of worth, respect, and conscientiousness that shape their work values and expectations. All employees want their peers and superiors to value them and they want to work in a safe and harmonious place.

### Addressing the challenge of generational diversity

Communication is vital in order for businesses to be successful. American corporations have been slow to recognise the importance of generational changes in the workplace and have not planned effectively to prevent a demographic meltdown (Lindborg, 2008). Next, Generational diversity training is a critical element to the success of today's workforce. Generational diversity training that includes a focus on this is important to effectively deal with all employees. Just as blended learning captures all valuable mediums to accommodate different learning styles, such concepts should be implemented to address the various learning and work styles of different generations. Mentoring can be used to leverage generational diversity. Yamamura and Stedham (2007) stated that mentorship could be an effective, informal method to bridging the gap between generations. New professionals should be paired with experienced mentors who can provide practical guidance and support. Schlimbach (2010) also stated that generations can learn from each other and with each other, using the potentials, knowledge and experience of both. With the knowledge explosion of our time, classical knowledge hierarchies dissolve. Therefore, intergenerational learning in the context of mentoring has to be understood as stimulation to self-reflection and an exchange of knowledge rather than an imposition of opinions and directives. Leveraging generational diversity and creating an environment conducive to constructive employee interactions and improved employee morale must become ultimate goals.



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#### **Case Study 4: Managing generational diversity in the workplace**

Managing and responding to generational differences and challenges requires the same skills needed to deal with other diversity issues. This would include moving beyond superficial awareness, adapting communication styles, and effectively managing different needs and expectations.

##### **Move beyond superficial awareness**

Organisations need to move beyond a superficial awareness of the generational gap, and seek actions that attract and embrace the next generation. Members of Gen Y are not easily forced into the confines of pre-existing programmes. Instead, leaders must develop initiatives that embrace new employees, and train them on the values and expectations of the organisation. It is equally important to listen to the ambitions and ideas of employees, and attempt to adapt their expectations to their work environment. If done well, the different generations will self-organise around issues, and create innovative ways to extend their contributions.

##### **Agree on a common set of goals and objectives**

Organisations and leaders should create awareness and communicate a common set of vision, mission, goals and objectives which allows everyone in the organisation to understand exactly where their role and responsibilities fit within. A workforce that embraces inclusiveness, instead of tolerating generational differences, will tend to achieve higher productivity, and hence increased revenue.

##### **Adapt communication styles**

Managing 'generational diversity' is only partly about knowledge; it is mostly about communication. It is the process of asking and engaging in more effective conversations within an organisation as well as with clients that will help to piece the generational puzzle together.

##### **Review compensation and benefits structure**

Organisations that once embraced a "one size fits all" approach to rewards must shift gears as they consider the options provided to each generation of employees. Benefits in the areas of money and non-monetary incentives are viewed quite differently by employees of different generations.

### **Develop future leaders with a multi-generational and inclusive perspective**

Leaders in even the most traditional organisations need to make room in their talent pipeline for successors who are not like themselves. In some organisations, building and nurturing a multi-generational workforce which includes Baby boomers, Gen X and Gen Y will be a critical challenge but it should be viewed as an opportunity to advance intergenerational diversity. In addition, progressive organisations should look at building leadership bench strength made up of people who are adaptable, innovative, and able to transfer their skills effectively across borders and cultures – critical traits for success in the global marketplace.

Source: *Understanding and Leveraging Generational Diversity for Organisational success, Kelly services.*

### **Questions**

Why is it important to consider that generation gaps are not merely superficial? How can managers deal with younger generations like Gen Y at the workplace? What is the implication behind developing future leaders with a multi-generational and inclusive perspective? How challenging is it to achieve this perspective?

### **Practice Questions**

1. What are the four main generations of employees at work?
2. What were key values of the veterans?
3. How is the baby boomer perceived as a unique generation?
4. What differences exist between the young and the old baby boomer?
5. How can it be said that Generation X is more oriented to technology than the baby boomers?
6. What advantage might Generation Y have in terms of education and income advantage?
7. What are the key characteristics of Generation Y employees?
8. How does the generation gap affect diversity at work?
9. How can communication overcome generation gaps at work?
10. How may mentoring and succession planning bridge differences between older and young workers today?

## Conclusion

An increase in the age and generational diversity in the workplace has prompted the exploration of the ways in which employees co-exist and function. Legas and Sims (2011) state that there is a lack of understanding when addressing generational diversity in today's U.S. workplace, which could be disastrous for companies wanting to increase economic wealth through human capital. Generational issues will have more influence at work since older workers, those forming part of baby boomer generation, have started to retire since 2006 and will gradually leave the place of work by 2024. There will be the latest generation coming to the job market namely those being born as from 2000. There will not apparently be major differences between Gen Y and the new ones but there are contrasts between baby boomers and the rest. In reality, baby boomers claimed themselves as the modern generation; those who fought in the Vietnam War, the group that flocked Woodstock in the 1960s, the generation that saw the pop culture and the disco generation. The main difference could be in terms of technological differences. New generations at work find using the computer as something conventional while older generations had to get tuned to using computers and later developed products and services from it. The organisation structure has changed as well. Companies tend to be more flexible and they operate "around the clock" making today's generation enter a workforce that is more demanding and competitive. There is somewhere a higher need for material comfort today as today's generation might be more willing to reap benefits of a good career and high living standards quicker than in the past. This chapter does not cover several situations of generational issues but claims that the central ideas remain the same regardless of country situations. In Nigeria, for instance, known as Africa's most powerful nation in 2015, there are various classes of employees and generations as well. Their aspirations grow as the country gets economically better off but this is just part of one side of the coin. The next chapter builds upon the knowledge earned in this one and reflects on the social class concept which is also another aspect of diversity but more in an invisible way.

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# 5 Social Class in Workplace Diversity

## Introduction

As every individual wants to move up the ladder in his life in quest for a better living, he seeks moving to a higher social class. The class concept is common to any society and is marked with inequalities are high in certain societies. Where classes are well differentiated, they speak of themselves. The elite class forms part of the select few, rich and fortunate people capable of aiming for the highest living standards and benefiting from the material wealth that they boast over others. This class also gets the envy from the other classes which are weaker in terms of wealth, influence and admiration in society.

Traditional societies have established notions of social class illustrating how the chieftains were respected in their groups and how others had to toil and provide their leaders with what they needed. This idea is also analogous to a community of bees with a queen and her numerous slaves or workers. Coming back to the human society, issues about social class are changing in the course of time as people tend to aim for higher living standards.

The basic question that underlies the class system is to whether finance remains the foundation in determining which class one belongs to. This is obvious to a large extent where the richest people belong to the upper class and those at the lowest rung belong to the working class. This might further be explained through the duties or occupations held by each class. At the highest level, people find themselves mostly in leading positions as Chief Executives or top government jobs. Those at the middle level confine themselves to junior managerial or executive positions, undertake white collar-jobs and get fairly decently paid. At another level, there will be those categories of people working for their companies and being subject to activities which are more of a physical nature. With meagre wages and a difficulty to make both ends meet, the low class or the working class is the one that is most subject to the hardships of existence.

There is an evidence today that people from the working class and the middle class are seeking upward mobility. This has brought about a shift in paradigm where there is an increase in the middle class with clear aspirations for better and more decent living standards. The case of China and India as emerging markets is interesting whereby with a substantial working class reaching up to 25 million per country, there is growing evidence of higher consumerism and material comfort. Though these figures remain weak with respect to their native populations, they do represent a condition of mobility that is of interest to western managers.

The issue of social class is well entrenched in traditional India with the concept of caste that determines since birth where an individual is in society. This is a contrasting illustration where there are illustrations of blatant discrimination with the lowest caste known as the Dalits. Similar situations might exist, say, in China with the Uyghurs. Even in India, social mobility is slightly getting better in the lives of Indians and partly overcomes the barrier of caste.

This chapter portrays social class within diversity. This is something that should not be neglected since employees of different social groups add to the diversity of an organisation. With aspirations for better existence, there are efforts undertaken by each and every one to get more qualified and move up the ladder. There is a contrast however. The rich are getting richer and the poor are becoming poorer with higher levels of disparity among them. Is this problem clearly addressed?

### **Types of classes in society**

Social class refers to a group of people with similar levels of wealth, influence, and status. Hartcourt (2014) provides a basic illustration of social classes in today's society by paying attention to the main types of classes that exist in the current societal structure.

#### **The lower class**

The lower class is typified by poverty, homelessness, and unemployment. People of this class, few of whom have finished high school, suffer from lack of medical care, adequate housing and food, decent clothing, safety, and vocational training. The media often stigmatise the lower class as “the underclass”, inaccurately characterising poor people as welfare mothers who abuse the system by having more and more babies, welfare fathers who are able to work but do not, drug abusers, criminals, and societal “trash”.

#### **The working class**

The working class are those minimally educated people who engage in “manual labour” with little or no prestige. Unskilled workers in the class – dishwashers, cashiers, maids, and waitresses – usually are underpaid and have no opportunity for career advancement. They are often called the working poor. Skilled workers in this class – carpenters, plumbers, and electricians – are often called blue collar workers. They may make more money than workers in the middle class – secretaries, teachers, and computer technicians; however, their jobs are usually more physically taxing, and in some cases quite dangerous.

### The middle class

The middle class are the “sandwich” class. These white collar workers have more money than those below them on the “social ladder”, but less than those above them. They divide into two levels according to wealth, education, and prestige. The lower middle class is often made up of less educated people with lower incomes, such as managers, small business owners, teachers, and secretaries. The upper middle class is often made up of highly educated business and professional people with high incomes, such as doctors, lawyers, stockbrokers, and CEOs.

### The upper class

Comprising only 1 to 3 percent of the United States population, the upper class holds more than 25 percent of the nation’s wealth. This class divides into two groups: *lower-upper* and *upper-upper*. The lower-upper class includes those with “new money”, or money made from investments, business ventures, and so forth. The upper-upper class includes those aristocratic and “high-society” families with “old money” who have been rich for generations. These extremely wealthy people live off the income from their inherited riches. The upper-upper class is more prestigious than the lower-upper class.



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Wherever their money comes from, both segments of the upper class are exceptionally rich. Both groups have more money than they could possibly spend, which leaves them with much leisure time for cultivating a variety of interests. They live in exclusive neighbourhoods, gather at expensive social clubs, and send their children to the finest schools. As might be expected, they also exercise a great deal of influence and power both nationally and globally.

### **Seven classes in the United Kingdom**

People in the UK now fit into seven social classes, a major survey conducted by the BBC suggests. It says the traditional categories of working, middle and upper class are outdated, fitting 39% of people. It found a new model of seven social classes ranging from the elite at the top to a “precariat” – the poor, precarious proletariat – at the bottom.

More than 161,000 people took part in the Great British Class Survey, the largest study of class in the UK. Class has traditionally been defined by occupation, wealth and education. But this research argues that this is too simplistic, suggesting that class has three dimensions – economic, social and cultural. The BBC Lab UK study measured economic capital – income, savings, house value – and social capital – the number and status of people someone knows. The research was conducted by Professor Fiona Devine.

The traditional three classes – working, middle and upper – are no longer sufficient to contain and explain Britain’s enduring obsession, according to a new survey that offers no fewer than seven categories.

The Great British Class Survey, a collaboration between the BBC and academics from six universities, used economic, social and cultural indicators rather than occupation, wealth and education to define the new classes. Researchers found the established model of an upper, middle and working class had fragmented to such a degree that there are now seven categories ranging from the “precariat” to the “elite” (Guardian, 2013).

Bottom of the newly configured heap is the “precariat” (or precarious proletariat), who make up 15% of the population. Its members earn just £8,000 after tax, have average savings of £800, and are extremely unlikely to go on to higher education, with just one in 30 having a university qualification.

Next in the study are the “emergent service workers” – “a new, young urban group which is relatively poor but has high social and cultural capital.” They are the youngest group, with a mean age of 34 and high proportions of ethnic minority members.

The “traditional working class”, described as “not completely deprived” despite scoring low on all forms of capital, then appear. Its members tend to have properties with reasonably high values because they are, on average, aged 66. The category, making up just 14% of the total population, “is fading from contemporary importance,” say the academics.



Next come the “new affluent workers”, a young, socially and culturally active group with middling levels of economic capital, followed by the “technical middle class”, “a small, distinctive new class group which is prosperous but scores low for social and cultural capital.”

The study also measured cultural capital, defined as the extent and nature of cultural interests and activities.

The new classes are defined as:

**Elite** – the most privileged group in the UK, distinct from the other six classes through its wealth. This group has the highest levels of all three capitals.

**Established middle class** – the second wealthiest, scoring highly on all three capitals. The largest and most gregarious group, scoring second highest for cultural capital.

**Technical middle class** – a small, distinctive new class group which is prosperous but scores low for social and cultural capital. Distinguished by its social isolation and cultural apathy.

**New affluent workers** – a young class group which is socially and culturally active, with middling levels of economic capital.

**Traditional working class** – scores low on all forms of capital, but is not completely deprived. Its members have reasonably high house values, explained by this group having the oldest average age at 66.

**Emergent service workers** – a new, young, urban group which is relatively poor but has high social and cultural capital.

**Precariat, or precarious proletariat** – the poorest, most deprived class, scoring low for social and cultural capital.

The researchers said while the elite group had been identified before, this is the first time it had been placed within a wider analysis of the class structure, as it was normally put together with professionals and managers. At the opposite extreme they said the precariat, the poorest and most deprived grouping, made up 15% of the population (Devine, 2014). The sociologists said these two groups at the extremes of the class system had been missed in conventional approaches to class analysis, which have focused on the middle and working classes.

### **Social mobility**

The fact of social mobility is closely tied to facts about social inequality and facts about social class. In a highly egalitarian society there would be little need for social mobility. Thoma (2009) points out that in a society with a fairly persistent class structure there is also relatively little social mobility – because there is some set of mechanisms that limit entry and exit into the various classes. In the simplest terms, a social class is a sub-population within a society in which parents and their adult children tend to share similar occupations and economic circumstances of life. It is possible for a society to have substantial inequalities but also a substantial degree of social mobility. But there are good sociological reasons to suspect that this is a fairly unstable situation; groups with a significant degree of wealth and power are also likely to be in a position to arrange social institutions in such a way that privilege is transmitted across generations.

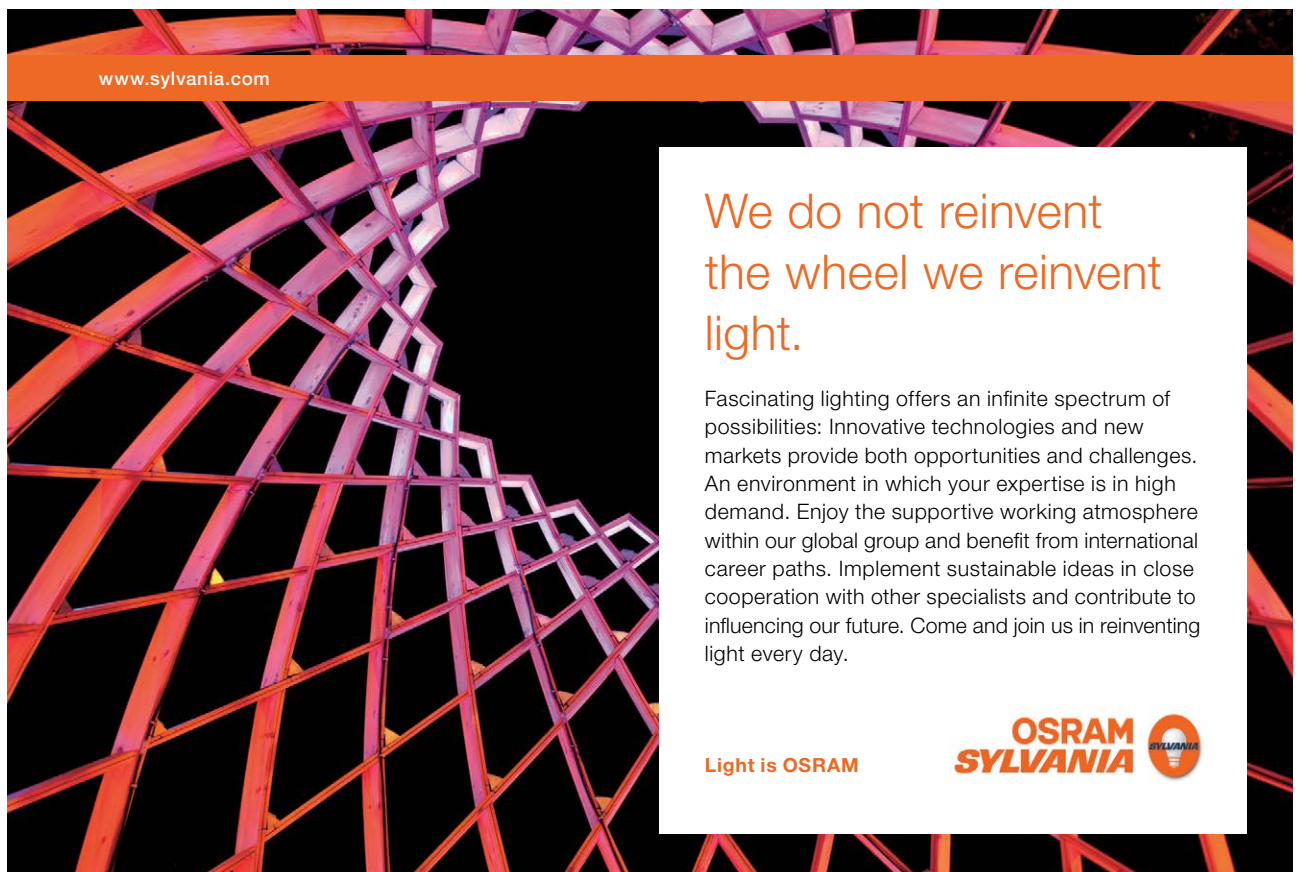
### **Case Study 5: Class as a form of social stratification**

The influence of industry on stratification system in the wider society is most clearly seen in the phenomenon of social classes. Marxists believe that industrial societies are divided into two major social classes according to ownership or non-ownership of capital or property. For Weber, class means the differences between categories or groups of persons in their “typical probabilities” of “procuring goods”, “gaining positions in life” and “finding inner satisfaction” – life chances. Thus, for Weber, class means all persons in the same class situation, whatever the basis of this and whatever its implications may be for the longer-term destiny of societies. Weber identified a number of overlapping possible bases of class situation, based on ownership and non-ownership of property and also including reference to different kinds of property and the different kinds of income that this yields (Property classes, Commercial classes, and Social classes).

Class situations, and the social classes these give rise to, may be “positively privileged” or “negatively privileged”, with various “middle classes” in between. Others who accept that there is a class division in society treat it most widely as a division between those with or without power, irrespective of whether that power is economic or not. In the latter, it then becomes a matter of contention whether the non-economic power is in fact associated with economic position, that is, to what extent there is generalised elite in society which has superior power or authority (legitimated power) in all social spheres. Thus, industrial society has its dynamic values that are factoring – in a peculiar hierarchical structure, or rearrangement of society, which is known as “social class” structure, or simply class. Occupation, income and level of educational attainment are the most important determinants of ones’ class position.

Different occupational roles carry different amounts of prestige. The order of the general evaluation placed upon them by the community follows the order in which listings of occupations usually appear, except that government officials stand higher than usually indicated. In evaluating jobs, pay is important, but so also are service to humanity, extended preparation, high moral standards, and responsibility. The prestige of people's occupations tends to correlate closely with their class standing, but class position involves more than mere occupational prestige, as it represents a method of perceiving the society by its members. Different people indifferent times and places see their fellow citizens as divided into different systems of classes, and some do not appear to use class concepts at all. Consensus is relatively poor. Yet many people on many occasions do perceive their communities or the larger society as being composed of four general strata with most of the people in two large groupings generally labelled middle class and working class with much smaller upper and lower classes above and below them respectively. The fact that we do sometimes think in terms of class is supported by evidence of our tendency to have stereotyped pictures of people with particular occupations.

In the study of work organisation, the division between large middle and working classes is particularly important; for in very broad way contemporary industrialised society may be properly perceived as encompassing two poles of political and social philosophy represented by the more successful business and professional people on the one hand and the manual workers on the other, with the remaining occupational groups distributed along the axis so formed, but tending to adhere to one of the polar positions.




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Source: Ganguly, R. (2015) Social Stratification, Stratification in Industry, Diversity in Work Place, academia.edu.

### **Questions**

Refer to the first paragraph and contrast the views of the Marxists and Weber about social class? Why is social class linked with prestige and what are the determinants of class? Why is social class viewed as a determinant of social stratification? How could you develop a polar position regarding the top and lowest social class?

### **A classless society**

Encyclopædia Britannica (2015) defines the classless society, in Marxism, as the ultimate condition of social organisation, expected to occur when true communism is achieved. According to Karl Marx (1818–83), the primary function of the state is to repress the lower classes of society in the interests of the ruling class. However, after the class struggle has resulted in the victory of the proletariat and the establishment of a socialist society, there will be no further need for such a repressive institution; with the disappearance of classes, the state is expected to “wither away.”

Marxists all over the world, believe in Karl Marx’s ideology. They believe, first, that capitalist production and capitalist society are organised for the benefit of the capitalists and against the masses; and second, that at a certain stage in the development of capitalism, the people living under it will be forced to revolt against it because their conditions will become intolerable and because there will grow up inside this society the embryo of a socialist society, united, disciplined, and organised by capitalist production itself (Libcom, 2015).

According to Libcom (2015), today this philosophy is at the crossroads. The emerging nations of Asia and Africa, which have all these years been dominated by a little corner of the globe known as Western Civilisation, are clashing head-on with that civilisation. The Marxists themselves, who have done very little since the time of Marx to understand the rest of the globe, merely pigeonholing it in their minds as colonial and semi-colonial, must now do some serious re-evaluating.

### **Integrating classes in India: Case of the Dalits**

Unlike several other lands where the dominant human cultures have tended to absorb or eliminate others, in India the tendency has been to nurture diversity, which has been favoured by the diversity of the country’s ecological regimes (Gadgil and Guha, 1992). The underlying approach to diversity and pluralism is reflected in the philosophy of the composite culture, which stresses the points of compatibility and convergence between the different strands of cultural differences.

The hallmark of this approach is the recognition, tolerance and acceptance of diversity. The existence of multiple identities, superimposed on one another, is one of the key features of pluralism in India. When demands for greater autonomy are raised in the lively debate on the balance between regional aspirations and national cohesion, both the validity and the viability of the strong-centre framework are questioned.

Dalit “untouchables” in the Indian subcontinent are largely excluded from full participation in everyday social life. They have poorer health outcomes compared to the general population, and are subject to degradation, humiliation and violent atrocities (Jadhav, 2014). Morino and Colino (2010) state that caste identities cut across religions and are all-pervasive, even among religions that reject such hierarchies as a matter of dogma. Thus, Dalits among Sikhs and neo-Buddhists are legally entitled to positive-discrimination benefits. The Ranganath Mishra Commission, which was tasked by the first UPA government (2004–09) with identifying dalits in other non-Hindu religious groups, has recommended reservation benefits for Dalit Muslims.

The reservations, or quotas, for Dalits and the Adivasis relate to three broad categories: employment, educational, and political, the first two being the most significant for the bulk of the Dalit and the Adivasi populations (Thorat et al, 2005). Fifteen percent of government jobs at all levels are reserved for Dalits, and 7.5% for Adivasis. This includes jobs in central government; in state government; and in public sector units, such as the telephone corporations and public sector steel mills. Since government is the largest formal sector employer, accounting for over 66% of all jobs in India, this is a substantial benefit. Similarly, 15% and 7.5% of the places in higher education are reserved for Dalits and Adivasis, respectively, although states can observe different quotas based on their Dalit and Adivasi populations.

## **Social Class in Diversity in sub-Saharan Africa**

### **South Africa**

Ten years after apartheid there is an emerging White population living in lower class strata (less than ten percent), it still is not comparable to the African situation in poverty. As well, a majority of the wealth (upper class) in South Africa is concentrated in Gauteng – 52%. As well, today the Gini coefficient for inequality still puts South Africa at the top with Brazil. 18 out of 45 million today have no conception of the prosperity that lies in the economy for some. Many have characterised this phenomenon as two economies in South Africa (Brown, 2004).

The direction of future social policy will no doubt have to acknowledge the disparities that exist. The history of the surrounding African nations (i.e. Zimbabwe) supports this hypothesis. Since 2000, Zimbabwe, like other African nations after independence, seeks redistribution of resources from Whites to Blacks. South Africa must find a way to resolve a complex dilemma. According to Brown (2004), social inequality is what maintains its economy but also undermines its nationalism.

## Nigeria

The social classes in Nigeria is divided into three major classes and each class is subdivided. The upper class, the middle class and the working class. The upper class is divided into upper-upper class and lower upper class. The upper-upper class comprises of the president, the people in the office of the presidency, top government officials, the wealthy royal families, formal presidents, elders in council. While the lower- upper class are made up of top military officers, top entrepreneurs, top politicians, top professor.

Moneyor (2012) claims that just like the upper class, the middle class is divided into upper-middle class and lower-middle class. The upper middle class is made up of the professors top business men, lecturers, public servants, teachers while the lower-middle class comprises of people small business men and women, police men and women. The working class, this can also be called the lower class. This is where the majority of population of people in developing countries is higher. They consist of the petty traders, brick layers, and temporary job workers.



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### **An emerging middle class in sub-Saharan Africa**

After years of headlines about Africa's poverty, its emerging middle class is now grabbing attention as a driver of growth and democracy and an expanding pool of consumers for market-hungry retailers. Consumer demand is a motor of Africa's economic and investment surge, and analysts see middle class buyers with swelling disposable income as fuelling this boom from South Africa to Nigeria and Kenya (Fletcher, 2013). Few doubted that the emerging middle class was an important group for defining Africa's economic and political course.

Simon Freemantle, senior political economist at Standard Bank and author of the report, said the prospective boom in middle class households – those earning between US\$8,500 and US\$42,000 a year – is also likely to be complemented by a swelling in the number of lower middle class households that earn between US\$5,500 and US\$8,500 annually.

According to Kynge (2013), if Standard Bank's estimates are realised, they would represent a sharp acceleration in wealth creation from the period between 2000 and 2014, when almost 6m middle class households were added in the 11 countries of Angola, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda and Zambia.

“An even greater elevation in income growth is anticipated in the next 15 years,” Freemantle said.

Adongo (2014) stresses that the notion of “Africa rising” is understandably alluring. The vision of hundreds of millions of Africans striding into the middle class, mobile phones in hand, is certainly a refreshing antidote to endless images of death and deprivation. But while there is no denying that economies are growing rapidly across the continent, this feel-good narrative risks distorting reality, making it even more difficult to develop and adopt effective policies to truly improve African lives.

### **Conclusion**

Social class still has an impact on work diversity. Despite the fact that class issues may have been overcome in advanced societies, differences do exist in developing nations. This is illustrated by the fact that there is a huge disparity in income, wealth and status among the different types of employees in organisations. Illustrations of exclusion like in India were provided in this chapter. It is noted that in a world where people move more frequently than ever from one place to the next, they start learning how other people of other cultures behave and how social class differences could be implicitly overcome. With a rise in the middle class in many developing nations, it can be understood that differences are gradually overcome without being completely removed. This allows employees in the middle class to seek higher levels of prosperity and betterment in society. The view is contrasting here. In rich countries, the middle class is getting poorer. In developing countries, namely, emerging economies, middle classes are getting richer.

In line with social class, the next chapter deals with culture which is also close to the social class concept. An example of classless society was depicted in this lesson where it was considered as utopia at a time where Marxists had a strong foothold in the activities of the firm. This concept is now outdated while it claimed lots of adherents in the past. Ideal situations of classless society will no more exist but the concept could be better interpreted if the concept of power distance could be explained. This is what the next chapter covers within workplace diversity.

### Practice Questions

1. What is the importance of class diversity at work?
2. What are the three main classifications of social class?
3. Why do class differences matter at work?
4. What is the new social class configuration in the United Kingdom?
5. Why is social class difference profound in developing nations?
6. What benefits can social class bring to diversity?
7. Why is a classless society no more practical today?
8. What developments are taking place regarding social differences in sub-Saharan Africa?
9. How may economic problems pose a challenge to social class diversity?
10. How may a harmonisation of social class differences impact organisations today?

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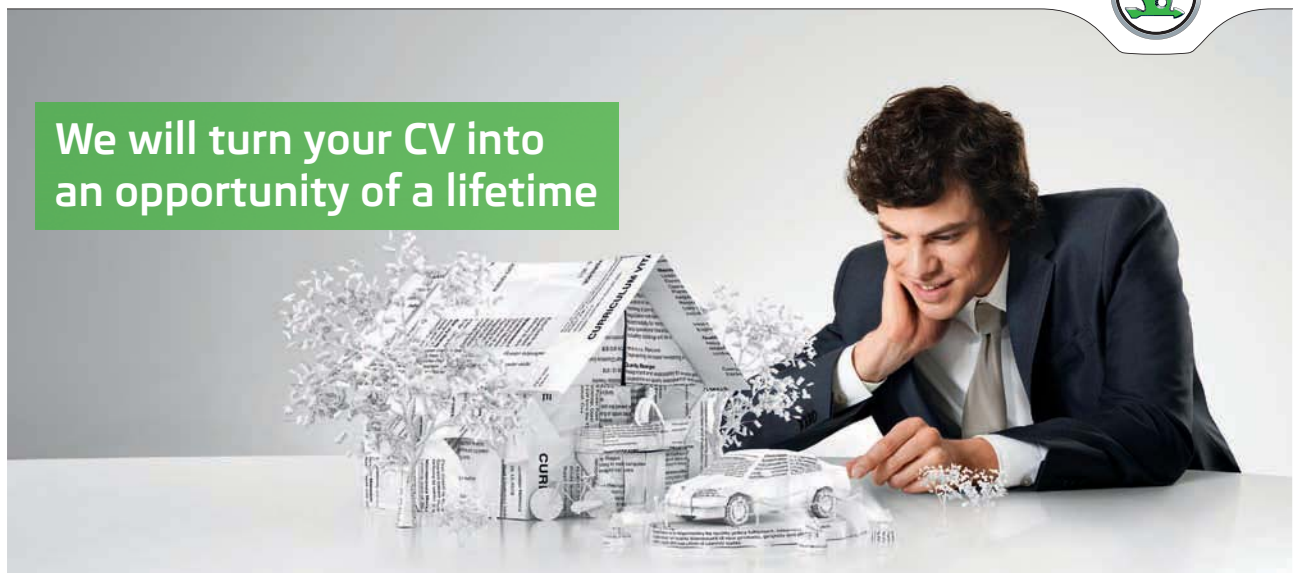
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# 6 The Impact of Culture on Workplace Diversity

## Introduction

Culture is broadly described as the set of norms, values, beliefs, rites and language that are followed by a group of people. Culture does not exist in isolation although one can speak of a highly-cultured human being. This sharing of values and beliefs makes one group distinctive from the other one hence contribute to diversity among communities worldwide. This is evidently wealth that one can consider in the form of the various cultural manifestations and practices undertaken globally.

Next, it is interesting to see how culture blends within the work environment. All managers are eager to see their business prosper. From an ethnocentric perspective of the organisation to a polycentric one which is more visible today than ever before, managers have to deal with people from different cultures. This challenge just increases when companies start their operations abroad and engage themselves in multinational operations.

Logically, businesses must find out some or many benefits from cultural integration. Since companies trade beyond their traditional barriers, they will have to consider the importance of culture. A case study included in this chapter focuses on Coca-Cola, the world famous soft-drink bottler, on its endeavour to embrace diversity through cultural integration. Already, Coca-Cola does it with its various advertisements targeted for different audiences whereby the differences in culture are overcome by the corporate vision of the multinational.

Culture is not merely understanding one from a certain point of view and assuming that overcoming differences among different people working together will certainly eliminate such gaps and favour good work opportunities among the workers. This is not an easy task and the need for sensitivity or diversity training should be an all-inclusive element for a firm's sustainability within its diversity programme.

This chapter also covers two contrasting views of culture through the 7-step model of Trompenaars with the one of Hofstede. Both models are different in terms of the elements that they consider but similarities exist such as how cultures could be perceived as individualistic or common. There are also similarities in terms of long-term orientation and time synchronisation. Basically, these two models of culture apply to an international context but they impact on workplace diversity. A good understanding of both models, albeit their weaknesses, help the student have a good grasp of cultural implications in diversity from a conceptual perspective.

Culture will remain a pending issue in business seen from what is generally taking place in the world with numerous strife being caused by religious and cultural differences. It is up to managers to see how sensitive issues relating to culture can be best approached and how they can avoid prejudice to people from different cultures. Getting all cultural differences on board does matter and this is where there is a need to find out harmony among the workers. Companies claiming themselves as culturally open are those which are more likely to succeed than others. It is right time to scorn off negative values on culture and rather think how one can talk business globally by valuing differences and making the best of individualities in the cultural melting pot.

### **Managing Cultural Diversity in the Workplace**

From our increasingly diverse domestic workforce to the globalisation of business, cultural competence is arguably the most important skill for effective work performance in the 21st century. What is cultural diversity in the workplace? Culture refers to the values, norms, and traditions that affect the way a member of a group typically perceives, thinks, interacts, behaves, and makes judgments (Alpert, 2015). It even affects perceptions of time, which can impact day-to-day scheduling and deadlines. Cultural competence, in brief, is the ability to interact effectively with people from different cultures. This ability depends on awareness of one's own cultural worldview, knowledge of other cultural practices and worldviews, tolerant attitudes towards cultural differences, and cross-cultural skills.

The more different cultures work together, the more cultural competency training is essential to avoid problems. Cultural problems can range from miscommunication to actual conflict, all endangering effective worker productivity and performance. Developing cultural competence results in an ability to understand, communicate with, and effectively interact with people across cultures, and work with varying cultural beliefs and schedules. While there are myriad cultural variations, Alpert (2015) suggests some essential differences at the workplace below.

#### ***Communication***

Providing information accurately and promptly is critical to effective work and team performance. This is particularly important when a project is troubled and needs immediate corrective actions. However, people from different cultures vary in how, for example, they relate to bad news. People from some Asian cultures are reluctant to give supervisors bad news – while those from other cultures may exaggerate it.

#### ***Team-building***

Some cultures – like the United States – are individualistic, and people want to go it alone. Other cultures value cooperation within or among other teams. Team-building issues can become more problematic as teams are comprised of people from a mix of these cultural types. Effective cross-cultural team-building is essential to benefiting from the potential advantages of cultural diversity in the workplace.

### *Time*

Cultures differ in how they view time. For example, they differ in the balance between work and family life, and the workplace mix between work and social behaviour. Other differences include the perception of overtime, or even the exact meaning of a deadline. Different perceptions of time can cause a great misunderstanding and mishap in the workplace, especially with scheduling and deadlines. Perceptions of time underscore the importance of cultural diversity in the workplace, and how it can impact everyday work.

### **Cultural Diversity trends and examples**

Cultural diversity is a form of appreciating the differences in individuals. The differences can be based on gender, age, sex, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and social status. Companies have realised the value in acquiring a diverse workforce.

Lombardo (2013) identifies certain trends and examples that are likely to affect today's workplace from a cultural point of view. They are as follows:

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### **The growth of minority workforce**

Today's workforce is made up of a very diverse population of individuals from every part of the world, which creates dynamic multiracial and multicultural organisations. Such diversity brings with it many differences in skills, abilities and experiences. Because modern companies value having a very diverse workforce themselves, they ensured that human resources recruited a minority representation within the corporation. This created an atmosphere where different viewpoints and ideas came out of brainstorming sessions and were welcome. Labour Program (2013) points out that Canada is one of the most ethnically diverse countries in the world. According to the 2006 Canadian Census, visible minorities in Canada make up 16% (5,068,090) of a total population of 31,241,030 and 15% (2,811,390) of a total workforce of 18,418,100. Between 1996 and 2006, the visible minority population grew 59% and its workforce grew 76% compared to 3% and 12% respectively for people who are not members of a visible minority.

### **A growth of stereotyping and prejudices**

This can be hard to avoid when so many different cultures come together in a work environment. Maddox (2013) explains that racial stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination reflect the human tendencies to conceptualise and value certain configurations of phenotypic features differently, and act on these thoughts and feelings in our interactions with members of racial categories. Many of us, particularly students of prejudice, can recruit from memory vivid examples of racial bias and its consequences. In both overt and subtle forms, stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination exhibited among individuals belonging to different racial categories has long been a significant source of social strife in American society and abroad.

### **Companies are embracing is the addition of sensitivity or diversity training**

This type of training educates all employees about cultural differences so that they can understand and appreciate each other. The purpose of sensitivity training is to teach employees how to properly act and communicate in a corporate environment. Mason and Sompayrac (2015) stress that sensitivity training is often offered by organisations and agencies as a way for members of a given community to learn how to better understand and appreciate the differences in other people. It asks training participants to put themselves into another person's place in hopes that they will be able to better relate to others who are different than they are. Topics covered in a sensitivity training session will include learning proper etiquette, appropriate terminology, improvement of communication skills, anti-bullying management styles and how to eliminate sexual harassment within a company.

### **A large increase of females in the workforce**

In fact, over the past few decades, women's participation in the workforce has grown dramatically to account for almost half of the labour force. Unicef (2015) comments that women in Malaysia have increasingly become engaged in modern sector employment, a growth that was especially marked when the expansion of the manufacturing sector was at its peak in the 1980s. Increasing female labour force participation requires balancing their competing responsibilities within the family and the workplaces. Flexible time arrangements at work, safe and high quality childcare facilities as well as "teleworking" will support increasing women's labour force participation.

### **Corporations are more open to hiring individuals with disabilities and accepting different abilities**

While still considerably underused, organisations are quickly beginning to realise that disabled workers are a vital part of the workforce. The advent of new technologies and accommodations has allowed organisations to recruit and utilise disabled workers in their labour force. Likewise, there has been an increase and appreciation for individuals with unique talents and abilities (Lombardo, 2013). Technology and an appreciation for all types of educational training and skills allowed companies to tap into a section of workers that other companies ignored.

### **An increase in the ageing employment pool of workers**

As employers seek to fill new positions or replace existing workers, they will face the boom and bust labour cycle and will need to consider how the age mix of the labour pool has changed. They may need to consider hiring either younger workers or senior workers as the pool of mature workers stabilises or shrinks. Recruiting and training less-experienced younger workers may be an option when older workers leave the workforce. Similarly, retention and possibly retraining of mature workers may become increasingly attractive (Hayutin et al, 2013).

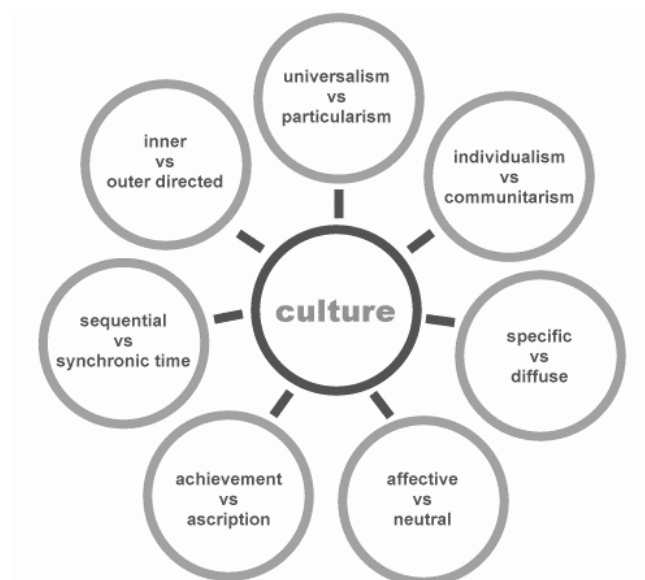
Hayutin et al (2013) point out that employed older workers are likely to be reluctant to leave their jobs in part due to financial reasons and in part due to how difficult it is for unemployed workers 55+ to find a new job. As a result, employers might think about creating more flexible work exit options that allow employees to transition out of the workplace gradually while maintaining some of their benefits and continuing to contribute to the company.

### Understanding the dimensions of cultural diversity

Diversity management is a process intended to create and maintain a positive work environment where the similarities and differences of individuals are valued, so that all can reach their potential and maximise their contributions to an organisation's strategic goals and objectives. According to Patrick and Rajkumar (2012) as the importance of diversity in the organisational context has increased manifold, most organisations would like to research on diversity – organisational culture linkage, its effect on diversity openness, and between diversity and performance both at individual and organisational levels. Organisations should design and support organisational culture that maximises the benefits of diversity, and use that culture to manage various groups of organisational members, project teams, business start-up teams, customer service response teams, and top management. It would be worthwhile if these strategies were implemented more often in IT organisations to increase workplace diversity (Patrick and Rajkumar, 2012).

### The Seven Dimensions of Culture

The Seven Dimensions of Culture is the most recognised cultural theory model co-created by Trompenaars and Hampden-Turner. The theory was first published in the aforementioned book in 1997. The theory was created to help understanding and managing cultural differences. The Seven Dimensions model was created after 10 years of active worldwide research. According to Tangient (2015), Trompenaars' theory focuses on the way people think, their foresights, behaviour and future expectations using three basic yardsticks; relationship with others, time and environment. He believed culture is a way a group of people solve problems. To a large extent, these are valid points because culture revolves around our orientation and behaviour.



*Trompenaars' Seven Dimensions of Culture*

### Universalism v/s Particularism

The dimension universalism v/s particularism is the standards by which relationships are measured. Universalist societies tend to feel that general rules and obligations are the source of moral reference. They are inclined to follow the rules, no matter the situation, and look for the single best way of dealing fairly with all cases. Additionally, they assume that their standards are the correct standards and attempt to change the attitudes of others to match theirs. On the other hand, particularist societies are those in which particular circumstances are more important than rules; the bonds of particular relationships are stronger than abstract rules.

### Individualism v/s Communitarianism

Individualism v/s communitarianism is about the conflict between an individual's desire and the interests of the group which they belong. In an individualistic culture, people are expected to make their own decisions and to only take care of their own needs. Such societies assume that quality of life results from personal freedom and individual development. Decisions are often made on the spot, without consultation, and impasses may be resolved by voting. In contrast to this, members of a communitarian society are firmly integrated into groups which provide help and protection in exchange for a strong sense of loyalty. These people believe that an individual's quality of life improves when they take care of each other. The community comes before the individual, and people are mainly oriented towards common goals and objectives. Often individualism is seen as typical of modern society, whereas communitarianism is associated with traditional societies.

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### **Specific v/s Diffuse**

This dimension concerns how the people view the picture of life and also concerns the degree of involvement in relationships. Generally people from specifically-oriented cultures analyse elements separately, then put them back together again like viewing the whole is the sum of its parts. Specifically-oriented individuals concentrate on hard facts. People from diffusely-oriented cultures are the opposite, they see each element in the perspective of the complete picture; all elements are related to each other. The elements are synthesised into a whole which is more than simply the sum of its parts.

### **Neutral v/s Emotional**

Neutral v/s emotional focuses on the degree to which people express their emotions, and the interplay between reason and emotion in human relationships. Every culture has strong norms about how easily emotions should be revealed. In culture high on affectivity, people freely express their emotions. In a neutrally-oriented culture, people are taught that it is incorrect to overtly show feelings. In such a culture, it is accepted to show one's feelings spontaneously.

### **Achievement v/s Ascription**

The dimension achievement-ascription focuses on how personal status is assigned. While some societies accord status to people on the basis of their performance, others attribute it to them by virtue of categories such as gender, age, social standing, education, and so on. Achieved status, on the other hand, refers to action and what the individual does; ascribed status refers to being who they are.

### **Sequential time v/s Synchronous time**

The time dimension has two parts, the relative importance cultures gives to the past/present/future, and their approach to structuring time. If a culture is oriented towards the past, the future is often seen as a repetition of past experiences. In a culture leans more towards the present, day-by-day experiences tend to direct people's lives. In a future-oriented culture, most human activities are directed toward future prospects. In this case, the past is not considered to be vitally significant to the future. People who structure time sequentially view time as a series of passing events. They tend to do one things at a time, and prefer planning and keeping to plans once they have been made. Time commitments are taken seriously and staying on schedule is a must. People structuring time synchronically view past, present, and future as being interrelated. They usually do several things at once.

### **Internal direction v/s Outer direction**

The internal versus external control dimension concerns the value people put to their environment. People who have an internal mechanistic view of nature usually view themselves as the point of departure for determining the right action (Provenmodels, 2014). Opposite of this are cultures with a so called "organic" view of nature which assumes that man is controlled by nature align their actions towards others. They focus on the environment rather than on themselves.

## **Hofstede model of cultural differences**

One of the most widely used frameworks for analysing cultural differences is the model developed by the eminent cultural theorist, Geert Hofstede. In this model, the differences in culture between countries have been plotted along five dimensions, which can be used as the basis for predicting the cultural differences between different countries (Management Study Guide, 2013). The model was developed after extensive research into the cultural differences between different countries and after surveys of thousands of employees in the West and the East. The five dimensions along which the cultural differences are plotted are power distance, masculinity vs. femininity, long-term orientation vs. short-term thinking, individualism vs. collectivism, and uncertainty avoidance. The model is comprehensive and exhaustive in its treatment of cultural differences across cultures.

### **Power Distance**

The power distance dimension is a literal measurement of the layers of management between an individual employee and the highest level of management. Linblad (2015) states that an individual contributor who reports to a manager who reports to a director who reports to a vice president who reports to a CEO has a power distance dimension of three, because there are three layers of management between the individual contributor and the CEO. The higher the power distance dimension, the less likely the employee is to feel that his contribution matters to the company. An organisation may flatten its organisational structure to help employees feel connected to senior leadership. This is also an interpretation of societies where ranks are given importance. Germany, for example, tends to reduce power distances by aligning workers with managers on salary issues.

### **Individualism**

The individualism dimension measures not only the degree to which an employee maintains her unique attributes, but also the degree to which she becomes integrated into the collective group. An individualist employee has loose ties to others in the organisation. She looks out for herself and perhaps for others in her small work group. A collectivist employee fully integrates herself into the organisation and demonstrates loyalty to the extended corporate “family”. In turn, she expects others in the organisation to support her. Broadly, most consumer societies are individualistic compared with past models associated with command economies.

### **Masculinity**

The masculinity dimension measures the organisation’s personality against masculine and feminine stereotypes. A company with a masculine culture operates assertively and competitively, and a company with a feminine culture comes across as more modest and caring. Employees tend to model their behaviour after their companies’ leaders (Lindblad, 2015). If the leadership team is competitive, employees may be encouraged to compete with one another or to beat out the company’s competitors. If leaders are caring, employees are more likely to behave with tolerance and compassion. Empowering women to aim for higher positions can affect the perception and lead to a less sexist organisation.

### Uncertainty Avoidance

Hofstede's uncertainty avoidance dimension measures employees' comfort with unstructured environments – unknown situations where surprising events may occur. In a business that lends itself to structure, such as a factory, the culture calls for rules that establish structure to promote safety and efficiency. In a creative environment, such as a design house, the culture encourages flexibility and problem-solving (Lindblad, 2015). Employees may not feel comfortable with either extreme, and an employee who likes to plan every minute of her day will quickly get frustrated in an organisation with a low uncertainty avoidance dimension. Companies in financial sectors are less risk-averse and hence may be less prone to avoid uncertainties. (E.g. Lehmann Brothers in 2008)

### Long-Term Orientation

The long-term orientation dimension is associated with eastern culture and dates to the time of the Chinese leader Confucius. It measures long-term values, such as perseverance and thrift, against short-term values such as respect for tradition, fulfilment of social obligations and avoiding personal embarrassment. Employees with a high measure of long-term orientation respond well to a hierarchy-based organisational structure where leaders are highly respected. Employers with a low measure of long-term orientation demonstrate personal stability and observe customs such as reciprocating favours and gifts from others (Lindblad, 2015).

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### Case Study 6: Coca-Cola and cultural diversity



The Coca-Cola Company's global diversity mission is to mirror the rich diversity of the marketplace it serves and be recognised for its leadership in diversity, inclusion and fairness in all aspects of its business, including workplace, marketplace, supplier and community, enhancing the Company's social license to operate.

Diversity is at the heart of Coca-Cola's business. It strives to create a work environment that provides all its associates equal access to information, development and opportunity. By building an inclusive workplace environment, it seeks to leverage its global team of associates, which is rich in diverse people, talent and ideas. Coca-Cola sees diversity as more than just policies and practices. It is an integral part of who it is as a company, how it operates and how it sees the future.

As a global business, Coca-Cola's ability to understand, embrace and operate in a multicultural world – both in the marketplace and in the workplace is critical to its long-term sustainability and, specifically, impacts its ability to meet its 2020 Vision People goals. Many people across the company continue to work diligently to help Coca-Cola advance in its diversity journey and build its practices on diversity, inclusion and fairness. The multinational also includes its associates in the process. Coca-Cola garners their feedback through formal surveys and informally through their participation in its business resource groups, various diversity education programmes and its Resolution Resources Programme, where associates can work to resolve issues they face in the Coca-Cola Company.

Coca-Cola's inclusive culture is defined by its seven core values: leadership, passion, integrity, collaboration, diversity, quality, and accountability. The central promise at The Coca-Cola Company is to refresh the world in mind, body, and spirit, and inspire moments of optimism; to create value and make a difference. Two assets give it the opportunity to keep this promise – people and the brand.

The Coca-Cola Company leverages a worldwide team that is rich in diverse people, talent and ideas. As a global business, its ability to understand, embrace and operate in a multicultural world, both in the marketplace and in the workplace, is critical to its sustainability.

Coca-Cola's diversity workplace strategy includes programmes to attract, retain, and develop diverse talent; provide support systems for groups with diverse backgrounds; and educate all associates so that they master the skills to achieve sustainable growth.



Coca-Cola works hard to ensure an inclusive and fair work environment for its associates, all of whom undergo diversity training on a regular basis. Coca-Cola finds ongoing dialogue leads to better understanding of its colleagues, suppliers, customers, stakeholders, and ultimately, to greater success in the marketplace.

Source: Adapted from: *The Coca-Cola Company Official website*.

### Questions

How might it be challenging for the Coca-Cola Company to manage leadership in diversity, inclusion and fairness in all aspects of its business? How might this be difficult to achieve in a multicultural and globally diverse environment? From the diagram provided above that illustrates a charter for Coca-Cola to attain diversity, review the cultural elements that can help the company attain its goals.

### Practice Questions

1. Why is culture important to an organisation's diversity?
2. How can communication help in bringing diversity at work?
3. What is the importance of teams in diversity?
4. How may sensitivity training help overcome diversity challenges?
5. How do universalism and particularism affect culture in different societies?
6. How might specific and diffuse components affect diversity at work?
7. Contrast individualism and collectivism in Hofstede's model.
8. Why should power distance be reduced and how is it achieved?
9. Compare Trompenaar's model of individualism to that of Hofstede.
10. How might a company like Coca-Cola really need to favour cultural diversity?

### Summary

It is important for managers to value cultural diversity in their organisations. Two important models of cultural diversity are Trompenaar's and Hofstede's dimensions of diversity. Trompenaar's seven dimensions of culture focus on seven dimensions: Universalism versus particularism, Individualism versus communitarianism, Specific versus diffuse, Neutral versus emotional, Achievement versus ascription, Sequential time versus synchronous time and Internal direction versus outer direction. The five dimensions of Hofstede's model are power distance, masculinity vs. femininity, long-term orientation vs. short-term thinking, individualism vs. collectivism, and uncertainty avoidance.

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# 7 The Foreign Worker in Workplace Diversity

## Introduction

An important aspect of workplace diversity is the foreign worker. Such a worker is defined as somebody who comes from a different country to work in a host country. This was quite common in the past where earlier colonists needed labour and they called for foreign labour through their own colonies. For example, the British Commonwealth countries comprised 52 colonies and the United Kingdom could find a pool of labour from its earlier dependencies. This practice worked out in areas like the military or nursing and eventually spread to other areas, more particularly, where labour was scarce. This could apply to catering services, working in retail companies, etc. This also occurred in France which invited its own people living in its former colonies namely Algeria, Morocco and parts of the French-speaking African nations.



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Foreign labour was needed in jobs that were lowly-valued by the local people. As the rich countries progressed economically, there was an upward mobility in classes and jobs chosen by the local people while lesser important jobs could be taken up by people coming from the developing world in quest for better living in Europe or America where “the grass looked to be greener.” This perception still exists in some poorer parts of sub-Saharan Africa where people want to flee poor living conditions and move to Europe where they can be free from persecution, genocide and other ills of society. The impending war issue in Syria has caused the displacement of millions of Syrians across the border. At the same time, it has caused a lot of inconvenience to the neighbouring countries.

In a similar way, the scenario has affected the past colonial powers like England, France, Spain or Portugal, the latter to a lesser extent. These countries that boasted high levels of economic prosperity are now in dire difficulties with slow economic growth, high levels of unemployment and a more fragile social structure with regards to the threat of terrorism. England and France were among the first nations to start thinking critically of immigration by restricting entry to foreigners following campaigns made by opposition parties that rallied with the dissatisfaction expressed by local people in terms of employment opportunities. This measure might be in favour of the past colonial powers but has been the source of illegal immigration from poor people who still put it in mind that Europe is still an Eldorado for them in case if they cross the Old Continent’s borders. The problem faces directly Italy where people from sub-Saharan Africa, in particular, Eritrea, flock to mainland Europe through this country. The same applies to the Moroccan border that looks upon neighbouring Spain and where lots of illegal immigrants are in the wait for better living standards.

Clearly, immigration has become an issue of contest in Europe or in the United States where the entry of foreign people poses a problem. The USA offers a “green card” to attract people while Europe is more in favour of selective immigration as a means of attracting talented labour and not unskilled labour. This conversely affects the developing nations where there is a brain drain of talented people who are more economically better off in their new country compared to their homeland.

The issue of foreign workers has an impact on diversity. Although, they might be looked down upon by the home people as ‘invaders’ and potential job seekers, foreign labour can be both a necessity and evil. Right-winged groups like the Front National in France and similar ones throughout Europe may go against immigration but this might be needed. Some European nations like Germany or Italy have a growing ageing population and they need young people for jobs that cannot be undertaken by the local people. In such sectors, foreign labour is needed and adds to diversity in terms of talent and skills that could be needed in Europe. An argument could be how to effectively manage foreign labour and not think of exploiting it for meagre salaries and indecent work conditions.



### **The importance of migrant labour**

The movement of people can be considered from different perspectives. Traditionally, people from poorer nations leave their home country to work in richer environments. They can be termed as migrant workers. Migrant workers are considered an economic utility, especially for secondary labour markets such as that of long-term care. The dynamics of migrant workers across the globe are governed by interacting macro, state level, and micro, personal level, factors. On the macro level immigration policies, historical and current political and economic links between countries play a crucial part in such dynamics (Hussein et al, 2012). There is also a reversal in worker movement where top managers from the rich countries might in turn move to the emerging economies. The case mentioned in the next paragraph illustrates the first tendency of immigration.

### **From the Commonwealth to the United Kingdom**

An important aspect of foreign workers in United Kingdom's history of immigration can be recalled from the mass movement of people from Commonwealth nations-earlier dependencies or colonies of the UK-to England in the 1960s. Earlier, the British government encouraged the enrolment of foreign workers in the form of military assistance to their coloniser during the Second World War. Pioneers from Mauritius assisted the British Infantries in Egypt, Sudan, Kenya and some other strategic locations in Northern Africa.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the UK had often met labour shortages by recruiting from the Commonwealth, countries formerly part of the British Empire (Hussein et al, 2012). In 1963 the Conservative Health Minister, Enoch Powell, launched a campaign to recruit trained doctors from overseas to fill the manpower shortages caused by National Health and Safety (NHS) expansion. Some 18,000 of them were recruited from India and Pakistan. Powell praised these doctors, who he said, 'provide a useful and substantial reinforcement of the staffing of our hospitals and who are an advertisement to the world of British medicine and British hospitals.' Many of those recruited had several years of experience in their home countries and arrived to gain further medical experience, training, or qualification. In 1968, the recruitment of overseas doctors was fuelled again by the predictions of further medical shortages by the Todd Committee, which recommended expanding medical schools (Jones and Snow, 2011).

Jones and Snow (2011) argue that exceptions to immigration controls were made for essential and well-qualified staff, hence both nurses and doctors were exempt from the immigration controls imposed in the 1960s. In general, the men and women who came to work in the NHS were welcomed throughout this period of political agitation. Their professional status distinguished them from the mass of migrants, most of whom were classified as unskilled. In spite of his later vocal opposition to black and Asian immigration in general, Health Minister Enoch Powell championed the recruitment of overseas nurses in the early 1960s.

As historian of the NHS, Charles Webster suggests, this apparent anomaly was perhaps because the immigration of nurses not only “provided a plentiful supply of cheap labour, reduced wastage, and undermined the shortage argument” but also ‘strengthened his hand in pressing for a strong line against the nurses’ pay claim, which itself was his chief weapon in his wider campaign to induce colleagues to adopt a more aggressive approach to the control of public sector pay (Jones and Snow, 2011). Immigrant nurses were therefore an expedient means of providing political leverage. However, Alexis and Vydelingum (2007) found that many ‘overseas’ or migrant nurses recruited to work in the UK National Health Service (NHS) were initially motivated by desires to improve their status and prospects but were disappointed to find that career progression is not so readily available in the less professionalised social care sector.

Focusing on older people’s care services (by far the largest element of the care sector), the difficulties facing social care employers in the UK and the options taken up by some to recruit migrant workers are frequently reported (Rubery et al 2011).

### **From rich countries to emerging economies**

Another tendency might be the movement of top managers or executives to the East. The fact that China has grown by more than 150% over the past fifteen years makes it become a prospective ground for foreign managers. Consider Dubai as a top destination for business in the United Arab Emirates and see how they are willing to accommodate foreign workers in their environment that could be considered world class but stands well in the developing part of the world.



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Chinese companies are hiring more and more western and western-trained executives – and at an increasingly senior level. Ivo Hahn, the boss of Xecutive, a headhunting firm based in Hong Kong, has placed 20 such individuals with mainland firms in the last year, compared with none at all the year before. Diana Yang, at the Beijing office of Hewitt, a human-resources consultancy, says Chinese companies have become more aggressive at hiring expatriates for top jobs as well as for technical positions. “The Chinese have the will and the cash to attract western talent,” says James Harris, managing director for China at Hays Executive, Britain’s biggest recruitment company (The Economist, 2006).

Top managers at western companies, on the other hand, had few incentives until recently to jump ship. That they are starting to do so reflects two things. First, Chinese firms are becoming more respectable: some, such as CNOOC, Baosteel and Lenovo, are among their industries’ global elite. Second, a growing number of foreign managers, many of whom have worked in China for years, are excited about the country’s future and want to stay.

Western multinationals are investing ever bigger hopes in emerging markets. They regard them as sources of economic growth and high-quality brainpower, both of which they desperately need. Multinationals expect about 70% of the world’s growth over the next few years to come from emerging markets, with 40% coming from just two countries, China and India. They have also noted that China and to a lesser extent India have been pouring resources into education over the past couple of decades. China produces 75,000 people with higher degrees in engineering or computer science and India 60,000 every year (The Economist, 2010).

### **India and foreign labour**

Compared to China, India has beforehand allowed the migration of foreign executives to its economy. The tragedy of Union Carbide (1984) points out the existence of foreign business in that important emerging market. Nowadays, through the development of its information and communications technology (ICT) sector, Indian companies are more open to western management ideas and bring their knowledge and culture to their business. In the same way, India high power-distance culture is either an asset or a liability for the foreign manager. A high power-distance culture means that workers prefer authoritative and hierarchical forms of management. They also respond favourably to close supervision. Managers who demonstrate a high “power figure” type of behaviour are more likely to gain the respect of subordinates. Clear and direct orders are preferred. In order to enthuse and motivate workers, clear job descriptions and detailed instructions are needed (Vedpuriswar, 2006).

There are interesting facts about Indians working abroad. Citehr.com reveals that Indians, although warm welcoming to foreign labour are doing quite well abroad while having integrated the international workforce.

34% of MICROSOFT employees are Indians  
28% of IBM employees are Indians  
17% of INTEL employees are Indians  
There are 3.22 Million Indians in America  
38% of Doctors in America are Indians.  
12% of Scientists in America are Indians.  
36% of NASA employees are Indians

Source: Citehr.com

### Case Study 7: Rich countries woo highly skilled migrants

Rich countries are increasingly competing to recruit highly skilled immigrants to meet labour shortages in key industries like IT. But are poor countries losing out? While many countries are trying to limit the number of asylum seekers permanently settled on their shores, they are simultaneously trying to increase the number of people with specific skills and high levels of education and skills whom they want to encourage to move there.

In Britain, for example, around two-thirds of foreign workers who came into the UK in 2002 (103,000 out of 160,000) are classified as being in professional or managerial occupations, a considerable increase compared with 10 years ago. And while definitions of what constitutes “highly skilled” varies, using the broad yardstick of being educated to degree level and above, increasing numbers of university graduates from developing countries are heading for greener pastures abroad.

According to Professor Richard Black of the Sussex Centre for Migration Research, a substantial proportion of African graduates now live outside the continent. One estimate suggests that 60% of Gambia’s university graduates, 25% of graduates from Sierra Leone, and 10% from Kenya, are now US residents.

#### Who is coming?

Highly skilled migration has always existed, of course. But until recently, it mainly consisted of high-powered bankers and multinational company executives who were seconded from one rich country to another. Now new sectors have become more prominent, and developing countries more important. The IT industry, especially in its Silicon Valley heartland in the US, has become dependent on Indian and Chinese software engineers. And the new workers are increasingly coming on a temporary or contingent basis, even in professions like accounting, with shorter assignments abroad and no guarantee of a return.

### Competing countries

According to Professor John Salt of University College London's Migration Research Unit, competition between countries over attracting skilled migrants has become more intense. The US and the UK have created special immigration schemes to attract them, competing with existing schemes that have existed for some years in Australia, Canada, and New Zealand.

In Germany, a new "green card" scheme has been introduced to recruit foreign IT specialists and to train 250,000 domestic specialists by 2005. The new approach involves the governments working closely with employers to work out where labour shortages exist, highly tailored to specific requirements by industry – and then to fast-track admissions on a temporary basis.

California IT employers, for example, pushed hard for an expansion of the US H1B temporary visa scheme, which at its peak admitted 193,000 workers per year. Less successful have been attempts to attract entrepreneurs, with many countries offering free immigration for business people with assets over \$1m.

Source: Adapted from: Schifferes, S. (2004) *Rich countries woo highly skilled migrants*, *bbc.com*.

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## Questions

Which category of foreign workers are needed in rich countries? Why are the skills of foreign employees needed? What are the cost-benefit implications of bringing foreign workers to work in rich nations? How does this situation affect the future of developing nations? What contribution might foreign employees bring to workplace diversity in rich countries?

## The contribution of foreign workers to host countries

Seven of the world's ten richest economies by real gross domestic product (RGDP) per capita are in Asia and the Middle East, and all have sizeable populations of foreign migrant workers (FMWs) that have contributed greatly to growth. The proper handling of FMW involvement in an economy is crucial for continued prosperity.

Three key facts are relevant to FMWs' contribution to the success of these economies. First, the phenomenon of relying on migrant workers is not new. At various times in history, fast-growing economies have relied on migrant workers to exploit the momentum of the economic opportunities that have come their way. Second, the high employment growth rates for the economies in question are a recent phenomenon, as the rates have been lower in the past. And third, migrant population proportions can drop sharply as illustrated by Kuwait, Qatar, and the United Arab Emirates (Tan, 2013).

## Top 10 Economies by RGDP Per Capita and Migrants as Proportion of Population

Economy	Rank	Migrants as proportion of total population (2010)	Average Annual real GDP growth (2006–2010)
Qatar	1	74.2	16.6
Luxembourg	2	34.2	1.9
Macao, China	3	55.1	12.2
Singapore	4	38.7	6.6
Norway	5	9.9	0.8
Kuwait	6	76.6	2.6
Brunei	7	37.1	0.7
United Arab Emirates	8	43.8	3.2
United States	9	13.8	0.7
Hong Kong, China	10	38.8	4.0

Source: databank.worldbank.org

### **Contribution of foreign workers to diversity**

As workforce demographics shift and global markets emerge, workplace diversity inches closer to becoming a business necessity instead of a banner that companies wave to show their commitment to embracing differences and change. Employees reap tangible and intangible benefits from workplace benefits, not the least of which include respect from co-workers and business gains.

Mayhew (2015) states that a diverse workplace offers more than exposure to employees from different cultures and backgrounds. Employees learn from co-workers whose work styles vary and whose attitudes about work varies from their own. This is particularly true for employees within multigenerational work environments. Traditional-generation workers learn new technology and processes from workers who belong to the tech-savvy Millennial generation. Likewise, Generation X employees learn from exposure to the assertive, go-getter work ethic typical of many Baby Boomers.

### **Complementing Singapore's resident workforce with foreign workers**

Singapore needs to have calibrated levels of immigration and foreign manpower. The improving educational profile of Singaporeans will result in fewer workers who will take on lower-skilled jobs, which are nonetheless still necessary to support higher-skilled and better paying jobs.

These include lower-skilled jobs in the construction sector which are necessary to meet its infrastructural needs, as well as those in the eldercare and healthcare sector which will likely see an increase given its ageing population. There will thus be a continued need for foreign workers to support and complement its resident workforce, as well as to meet the social and healthcare needs of Singaporeans.

The Singapore government will elaborate more on the role played by foreign workers. It shall recognise that no single strategy will be sufficient to address our demographic challenges. All three strategies – supporting productivity improvements, encouraging greater resident labour force participation and a calibrated foreign manpower policy – must be used in combination to help offset the natural decline in our citizen workforce (MTI Singapore Occasional Paper, 2014).

### **Acculturation: Thinking of Diversity and Cohesion with foreign employees**

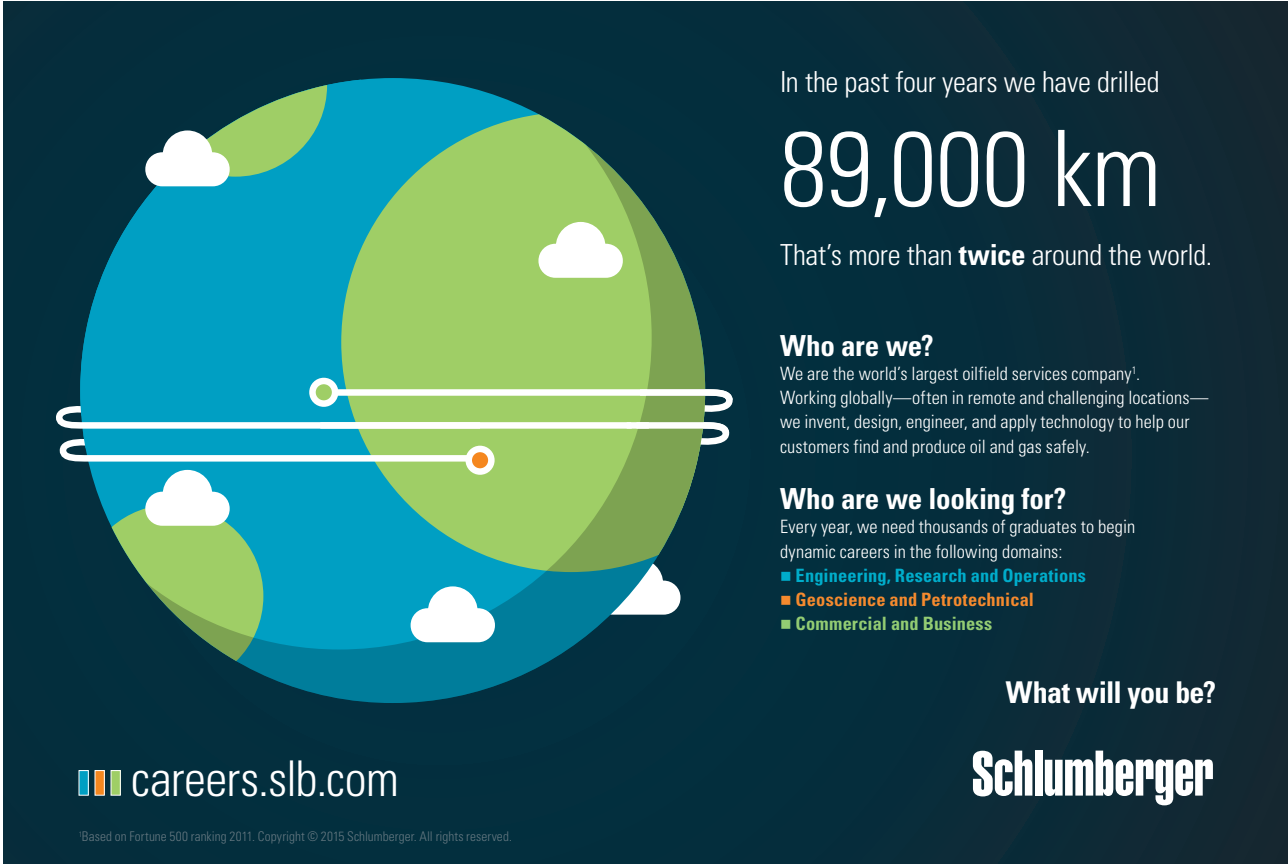
Acculturation is a process in which members of one cultural group adopt the beliefs and behaviours of another group. Although acculturation is usually in the direction of a minority group adopting habits and language patterns of the dominant group, acculturation can be reciprocal – that is, the dominant group also adopts patterns typical of the minority group. Assimilation of one cultural group into another may be evidenced by changes in language preference, adoption of common attitudes and values, membership in common social groups and institutions, and loss of separate political or ethnic identification.

Acculturation is the phenomenon that occurs “when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups” (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936). Recent research identified a bi-dimensional process of acculturation characterised by migrants or host society members showing varying levels of affinity towards their own culture, without being affected by their relationship with the new culture encountered (Berry, 2005; Navas et al., 2005).

### The relevance of multiculturalism-Three perspectives

The New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy (2005) describes multiculturalism as the view that the various cultures in a society merit equal respect and scholarly interest. It became a significant force in American society in the 1970s and 1980s as African-Americans, Latinos, and other ethnic groups explored their own history.

Three interrelated, but nevertheless distinctive, referents of multiculturalism and its related adjective multicultural which can be distinguished in public debate and discussion are: the demographic-descriptive, the ideological-normative and the programmatic-political.



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The **demographic-descriptive** usage occurs where multicultural is used to refer to the existence of ethnically or racially diverse segments in the population of a society or State. It represents a perception that such differences have some social significance—primarily because of perceived cultural differences though these are frequently associated with forms of structural differentiation. The precise ethnic groupings which exist in a State, the significance of ethnicity for social participation in societal institutions and the processes through which ethnic differentiation is constructed and maintained may vary considerably between individual States, and over time (Inglis, 1995).

In the **programmatically-political** usage multiculturalism refers to specific types of programs and policy initiatives designed to respond to and manage ethnic diversity. According to Inglis (1995), it was in this usage that multiculturalism first gained currency after it was recommended in the 1965 Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. This Report recommended that multiculturalism replace the bicultural policy based on the British and French Charter groups around whom policies for ethnic diversity in Canadian society had been organised for over a century. Since then, its usage has extended rapidly to encompass the demographic-descriptive and the ideological-normative usage.

The **ideological-normative** usage of multiculturalism is that which generates the greatest level of debate since it constitutes a slogan and model for political action based on sociological theorising and ethical-philosophical consideration about the place of those with culturally distinct identities in contemporary society (Inglis, 1995). Multiculturalism emphasises that acknowledging the existence of ethnic diversity and ensuring the rights of individuals to retain their culture should go hand in hand with enjoying full access to, participation in, and adherence to, constitutional principles and commonly shared values prevailing in the society. By acknowledging the rights of individuals and groups and ensuring their equitable access to society, advocates of multiculturalism also maintain that such a policy benefits both individuals and the larger society by reducing pressures for social conflict based on disadvantage and inequality. They also argue that multiculturalism is an enrichment for the society as a whole. The close parallels between this ideological-normative usage of multiculturalism and the United Nations' views on cultural diversity are clear.

### **The move to cosmopolitanism**

Jagannath (2013) states that in today's society there is a much needed urban cultural shift from just being a multicultural society to be able to adapt to a more cosmopolitan mind-set, particularly in western societies where people have greater access to both interact in a multicultural manner and therefore gain an opportunity towards being cosmopolitan.

Further, advances of globalisation have promoted a cosmopolitan view of the world, where travel, access to people of divergent cultures and diversity have largely risen throughout the world but a cosmopolitan society to some extent is a vision that has still not been attained or fulfilled in most societies (Jagannath, 2013).

### **Insight: France's view of selective immigration**

Below is provided an insight into the 2006 French government policy on immigration. The text has been adapted from the print edition of "The Economist". It illustrates how France wants to deal with new immigration practices that were both accepted and contested by diverging views from local and foreign workers.

"If certain people don't like France, they shouldn't hesitate to leave." With this echo of a notorious National Front slogan, Nicolas Sarkozy, the French interior minister, transformed the immigration bill that he put before parliament this week into an exercise in populism. But behind the rhetoric is a sensible change, towards a managed, high-skilled, demand-led immigration policy.

Until the mid-1970s, most immigrants to France came to work. Since the law was tightened in 1974, the inflows have changed. Today, only 7,000 permanent workers arrive a year, down from over 170,000 in the late-1960s. Three-quarters of legal entrants to France are family-related: spouses, children and sometimes extended families of those already in the country. France has a low proportion of skilled immigrants.

Mr Sarkozy's bill aims to reverse this trend, by introducing selective immigration. There will be yearly targets for three categories of incomers: workers, students and families. Skilled migrants will be encouraged through a new three-year 'talent' work permit. The bill includes measures to encourage foreign students. But it also requires newcomers to take lessons in the French language and civic education; it seeks to control family-related immigration, by clamping down on bogus marriages, and tightening up the rules to ensure that those bringing in a family have the means to pay for them; and it cracks down on illegal immigration by scrapping the automatic right to stay, granted after ten years in France illegally, and stepping up deportations.

Mr Sarkozy is unapologetic about linking France's social troubles, including last autumn's suburban riots, to immigration and the difficulty of integrating second-generation children. To accusations of mean-mindedness, he replies: 'It is not a mark of generosity to create ghettos at the gates of our big towns, where there is only hopelessness and, beyond that, crime.' He argues that, under the pretext of protecting jobs at home, France has created a system that lets in only those who have neither a job nor any useful skills.

In many ways, Mr Sarkozy is simply following the practice of other countries, notably Australia, Canada and Switzerland, as well as Britain and the Netherlands. In each case, the policy is based on a recognition that there is no such thing as zero immigration, and that a managed, skills-based immigration policy will not only control inflows but also bring benefits to host countries.

Source: The Economist (2006) *France and immigration: Let the skilled come.*

## Conclusion

This chapter covered a major aspect of workplace diversity by focusing on the foreign worker. Europe favoured multiculturalism by accepting the foreign worker who was, in turn, subject to acculturation where he decided either to abide by the rules and customs of the new country or to retain his culture while living in a supposedly secularised Europe-although religious values still predominate over many countries. It is a known fact that the foreign worker adds to diversity with regards to his skills. Rich countries are more favourable to having highly-educated and skilled workers than relying on the unskilled ones. If skilled workers go through the normal immigration route with possibilities of long-term residence, this might not be the case for the unskilled ones who, unfortunately, have recourse to illegal immigration and its impending consequences.

Rich countries are now tightening their barriers to entry thinking that problems linked with hiring foreign workers can be a threat to jobs in their economies affected by sluggish growth. On the other hand, there will still be the need to have foreign labour in emerging economies and rich nations where workplace demographics state that populations will get older and need to be replaced by foreign workers. Foreign employees at work breeds notions of hatred and racism and they might themselves suffer from social exclusion. This can exacerbate the problem of integration and create long-term irreparable damages at the community level.



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### Practice Questions

1. Why is the foreign employee important in workplace diversity?
2. Discuss the movement of foreign employees from the Commonwealth to former European powers? What was the implication behind it?
3. What are the challenges faced by the foreign worker in a different country?
4. How might foreign workers contribute to diversity in Qatar or Singapore?
5. How is a skilled foreign worker important in workplace diversity?
6. What is the relevance of multiculturalism at work?
7. What is selective immigration and how does it apply to France?
8. What is the importance of acculturation for foreign employees?
9. What could be the risks of a policy of social inclusion regarding foreign employees?
10. Briefly explain the ideological-normative usage of multiculturalism as a slogan and model for political action.

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# 8 Race Issues in Workplace Diversity

## Introduction

If men are born different, they will evidently find out differences among themselves although the broad claim is that “men are all created equal” voiced out by Thomas Jefferson in the US Declaration of Independence. Race is a visible aspect of diversity and the first one upon which people can discriminate easily. In this textbook covering gender diversity (Chapter 2), the plight of Rosa Parks in the Montgomery bus is a clear call of discrimination based on gender very similar to Mahatma’s Gandhi blows endured from a White bus conductor in South Africa during the early years of the past century.

Racial discrimination is common and may be sometimes voiced as “crime of ordinary racism” if this is directly translated from the French term “crime de racisme ordinaire.” Such a thing is common everywhere with terms used as “black” and a related number of similar terminologies used sometimes openly or discretely. Books in the 1950s mentioned the term ‘negro’ to describe people of African descent and this is no more acceptable in today’s context.

The fundamental question is that black people are the first to suffer from discrimination because of their physiological differences. Taking into consideration their ethnic ancestry, their tribal existence and the fact that Africa is still the poorest continent in the world, racism is common when such people work in foreign lands and companies. The same affects people living in countries that were colonised by the European powers and dominated by religious influences.

Racism does not limit itself to a black/white encounter at work or society. Several cultures do clearly suffer from racism. The Jews, for instance, feel a certain level of insecurity in Europe and they have historically subject to racism as in Nazi rule during World War II period. Stigmas of hatred exist even today like the “anti-Semitism.” This can also apply to minorities in countries like Iraq or Syria where people face persecution. Other examples could come from almost every country where people are discriminated on the basis of race.

Yet, race adds to the diversity of the workers. Having different races together ensures that companies favour the integration of all people of the community while they respect their differences. Employing people of different races shows that the company is an equal opportunities employer and this adds to its credibility. By opening up doors to different races, companies can claim to be multicultural and further multinational enterprises which are a symbol when it comes to thinking of different races at work.

Racial prejudices are strong however. They might crop up when minorities do not feel 'included' within the firm. The issue can be exacerbated when people are hired or recruited singly on the basis of race. This, in turn, raises concern from other employees and calls for affirmative action. All over the world, companies are cautious of being treated as 'racists' with regards to their recruitment practice. By allowing other people of different races to get aboard, they overcome the problem of racial prejudices.

This chapter focuses on racial issues from various perspectives. Firstly, it delves into the racial problems and barriers affecting countries earlier in the last century. It reviews the dark period of apartheid which kept South Africa away and "segregated" from the rest of the world. It explores the concept of Black Economic Empowerment in the same country and purports how and why racial prejudices should be overcome to better espouse diversity at the workplace.

### **A brief account of Apartheid in South Africa**

The book "Racism and Apartheid in South Africa" (Unesco Press, 1974) explains how apartheid was implemented in South Africa. When the Nationalist Party came to power in 1948, post-war nationalism was preparing the way for independence in most African countries. These currents naturally influenced Africans in South Africa. The groundwork for apartheid had been prepared by a long period of settlement by Europeans which the war years had consolidated, although they also helped to call the whole system in question. Nationalist Party policy, based on apartheid and the continuation of white domination, appealed to some idealists who could not stomach African equality but hoped for a way out of the impasse that would allow both separation and equality. The party promised the rural white population that more attention would be paid to the problems of agriculture; to the poor whites in towns it promised further restrictions on black competition; and to all Afrikaners, urban and rural alike, it promised the end of British supremacy.

Apartheid is an Afrikaans word meaning separateness. The government has recently shown a preference for the term 'separate development'. The apartheid policy involved the following:

The consolidation and extension of legislation governing the separation of blacks, whites and Coloureds. Bringing indirect rule via the chiefs and traditional special structures up to date in such a way as to inhibit the rise of an African nationalism. Emphasis on Afrikaner economic and social control.

Racial separation through the medium of separate social institutions (language, culture, education) controlled directly by the government or through the selective use of State finance.

To ensure the continuation of white supremacy, while at the same time controlling the pace and direction of African nationalism.

To guarantee the expansion and competitiveness of South African business (Afrikaner in particular) by means of a lowly paid, docile and highly mobile reserve of African workers.

Zion (2013) points out the difference between apartheid and racism.

**Apartheid** is viewed as an official form of racial segregation formerly practiced in the RSA involving legal and economic discrimination against non-Whites. A policy or practice of segregating groups. The condition of being separated from others- segregation. The policy of strict segregation and political and economic discrimination against non-Whites practised (past) in the republic of South Africa.

A social policy of racial segregation involving political and economic and legal discrimination against people who are not Whites; the former official policy in South Africa. Apartheid is a crime against humanity: Ironically, if there are no people then that crime cannot be perpetuated as we see in the Orania case.



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Sources: Keuzegids Master ranking 2013; Elsevier 'Beste Studies' ranking 2012; Financial Times Global Masters in Management ranking 2012

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Zion (2013) relates **racism** as views practices and actions reflecting the belief that humanity is divided into distinct biological groups called races and that members of a certain race share certain attributes which make the group as a whole less desirable, more desirable, inferior or superior. There is no distinction of the terms: Racial discrimination and ethnic discrimination and superiority based on racial differentiation is scientifically false, morally condemnable, socially unjust and dangerous, and there is no justification for racial discrimination, in theory or in practice anywhere.

### **Racism: An Ongoing Issue in the United States**

Coming to the United States, racism is considered as an ongoing matter in Daily life although this stems from some past history in the most powerful nation of the world. In 1951, more than half a century ago, the most basic dreams of African Americans were deferred. Segregation was mandatory in the old South. Discrimination was legal everywhere in America, whether in housing, education, or employment. Blacks were not just separated, but isolated, marginalised, restricted to the worst jobs and most dilapidated neighbourhoods, the most dismal schools.

For many, the racism just sagged, like a heavy load. It destroyed hope that hard work would be rewarded. The deferred dreams of that era seldom produced explosions, because the state had a very efficient system of terror. Blacks who resisted were likely to be lynched, jailed, or otherwise destroyed (Kuttner, 2014).

It is a testament to sheer grit, tenacity and courage that large numbers of blacks managed to get educations, raise families, start businesses, enter professions and demand inclusion in civic life at all.

Driver (2014) stresses that racism is so ingrained in the American experience that no one who has grown up here is free of it – white, black, or anyone else. Until we acknowledge that, describe it, and share it across the racial divide we are not free. The legacy of slavery is still costing some blacks their lives, others their livelihoods, and most their full measure of dignity. As for us whites, that legacy, usually unacknowledged, costs us our full measure of honesty and leaves us woefully unprepared for the end of white privilege that lies in our future no matter what.

Brooks Thistlethwaite (2015) argues that racism is a delivery system for unjust political and economic power. Racism, defined as racial prejudice allied with political and economic power, is a widespread, historically rooted system.

Racism as a system of prejudice backed up with power is how white Americans have accrued economic privilege, and sustained that privilege through divisive politics. Ironically enough, many white Americans fail to see that this racist political privilege mostly delivers economic benefits to the actual ‘powerful on their thrones’ and facilitates an economic strangle-hold on everybody else. But with ‘everybody else’ divided by race and class, no coherent political challenge can be mounted.

### **Millennials and Racism**

The fact that millennials perceive themselves as uniquely tolerant may make them more likely to practice or accept discriminatory behaviour. “A representative panel of Americans interviewed immediately before and after the election of Barack Obama reveals a roughly 10 percent decline in perceptions of racial discrimination, Nicholas A. Valentino and Ted Brader (2011), wrote in a 2011 in the journal *Public Opinion Quarterly*.”

“But the dramatic change in perceptions was clearly symbolic. Valentino and Brader (2011) found that ‘declines in perceived discrimination were associated with increases in negative opinions of blacks and heightened opposition to both affirmative action and immigration.’ A large body of research supports this finding. For instance, a 2009 study by Vincent Hutchings “scant evidence of a decline in the racial divide” from 1988 to 2008 on policies that would alleviate racial inequality. Even more startling, Hutchings (2009) noted, “Younger cohorts of whites are no more racially liberal in 2008 than they were in 1988.”

Mach (2014) states that in real life, there is no such thing as a “Not-Racist” – just a whole lot of people like us who are trying to navigate the complex problem of American racism. Knowing this, our job as people who care about these issues is to educate others with more compassion and less hatred. Millennials already have a more progressive outlook on race than our predecessors – to make a serious impact, it’s a more progressive look on racism that we’ll need. In a survey, 91% of 18–24 year olds strongly believe in racial equality, and 73% of them think that having “open, constructive conversations about bias would help people become less prejudiced.

The symbolism associated with the election of the first Black president certainly represents a milestone in American history. Right up until election night, many people thought such a day would never arrive in this country. According to Hutchings (2009) divisions between Blacks and Whites on explicit – and some implicit – racial policy matters have not declined significantly in the last twenty years. Although White supporters of Barack Obama are more liberal than other Whites, they remain significantly less supportive of, and less likely to prioritise, liberal racial policies compared to African Americans. In short, it is simply too soon to reach firm conclusions about the meaning of the Obama presidency (Hutchings, 2009). It can however be concluded with some confidence that, at least for now, the racial perspectives of White and Black Americans in the important domain of politics have not begun to converge.

### **Racial discrimination in Europe: Who are the most affected?**

The manifestations of discrimination in employment vary depending on a number of factors, often closely linked with the national and local contexts, the population most likely to fall victim to discrimination in a given context, the education and skill-level of the individual, the degree of vulnerability of the individual as well as whether trying to access the labour market or already within the work force, among others. Pfohman et al (2013) identify the classes of employees who are more vulnerable to racial discrimination based on their report for the European Network against Racism (ENAR) Shadow report.

#### **Roma and Travellers**

Roma and Travellers are identified the most consistently across the national Shadow Reports as victims of labour market discrimination on the ground of ethnicity. Moreover, Roma women are also said to suffer multiple disadvantages. They have a disproportionate share of work in the family and have limited access to day-care institutions for their children.

#### **Muslims**

Among those experiencing discrimination on the ground of religion or belief, Muslim people (and especially Muslim women) tend to experience the most severe labour market discrimination, as evidenced by the Shadow Reports of Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Spain, Turkey and the UK.

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Moreover, existing stereotypes reinforce negative images of Muslims as a threat to society. Muslim men are perceived as “backwards” and Muslim women wearing headscarves are considered ‘oppressed’. Such imagery has been strengthened in a number of EU Member States by parties like the Golden Dawn in Greece or the True Finns in Finland, among others.

### **People of African descent/Black Europeans**

According to the Shadow Reports of the UK, Ireland and Bulgaria, Black people experience more discrimination based on their skin colour. For instance in Ireland, the results of the Special 2010 Equality Module of the Quarterly National Household Survey showed that discrimination is most experienced by Black Africans and Ethnic Minority EU individuals.

### **South Africa’s Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE)**

Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) aims to ensure that the economy is structured and transformed to enable the meaningful participation of the majority of its citizens and to further create capacity within the broader economic landscape at all levels through skills development, employment equity, socio economic development, preferential procurement, enterprise development, especially small and medium enterprises, promoting the entry of black entrepreneurs into the mainstream of economic activity, and the advancement of co-operatives (The Economic Development Department, 2015). Black economic empowerment – or broad-based black economic empowerment, as it is technically known – is not affirmative action, although employment equity forms part of it. Nor does it aim to take wealth from one group and give it to another. It is essentially a growth strategy, targeting the South African economy’s weakest point: inequality (South Africa Info, 2015).

Black economic empowerment is an important policy instrument aimed at broadening the economic base of the country – and through this, at stimulating further economic growth and creating employment. B-BBEE needs to be implemented in an effective and sustainable manner in order to unleash and harness the full potential of black people and to foster the objectives of a pro-employment developmental growth path.

Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) is the South African Government’s set of policies intended to bring about the involvement or participation of previously disadvantaged communities (PDCs) into the mainstream economy. The definition of PDCs is people of colour, women of all races, and the disabled (UKTI, 2015).

The Government is seeking to achieve B-BBEE by:

- increasing the number of PDCs who manage, own and control businesses,
- facilitating the ownership and management of such businesses by communities, workers and other collective enterprises,
- boosting human resource and skills development,
- achieving equitable representation in all categories and levels of the workforce,
- promoting preferential procurement which would involve the purchase of goods and services with a strong B-BBEE score,
- encouraging investment in enterprises that are PDC-owned or managed.

### **Case Study 8: Black economic empowerment has not worked well. Nor will it end soon**

The controversy is one of many to dog the Africa National Congress (ANC) policy of 'black economic empowerment' (BEE). When apartheid ended in 1994, the ANC promised to make black South Africans richer. To this end, it has promoted the transfer of stakes in white-owned businesses to a new class of black investors. Change at the top, it was claimed, would foster change further down by removing blockages to the hiring and promotion of blacks.

Few blacks had been able to accumulate capital under apartheid, so stakes were typically sold at a discount and financed by loans, often from the companies themselves, many of which judged it wise to woo influential black shareholders. The transfers were originally voluntary, but the ANC, impatient at the slow pace of change, now uses state power to speed them up.

One of the accelerators is the award of licences in mining, telecoms and other regulated sectors. If a firm is not sufficiently 'empowered' – i.e., if too few of its shares and jobs are in black hands – it will not win or retain an operating licence. State-backed lenders favour black-owned businesses. State-owned enterprises in transport and energy favour black-owned suppliers.

Various laws add to the pressure. The Employment Equity Act of 1998 obliges bigish firms to try to make their workforces racially 'representative'. Those that employ more than 50 people are required to report at least every other year on their progress towards making their staff 75% black, 10% coloured (mixed race), 3% Indian, and so on, at every level from shop floor to boardroom. Failure to show 'reasonable' efforts at compliance can result in fines of up to 900,000 rand (\$97,000).

Businesses with an annual turnover above 35m Rand are also expected to obey a 2003 act which called for 'broad-based BEE'. This set targets for black ownership as well as the promotion and training of black workers. Private firms can bolster their empowerment rankings by buying from black-owned suppliers or by helping to set them up.

### Not going anywhere

The lot of poorer blacks, however, has not improved much. Many are frozen out of the workplace altogether. The unemployment rate among blacks is 28.5%, compared with 5.6% for whites. If those who want work but have given up looking for it are included, the jobless rate is a whopping 41.6% for blacks compared with 7.5% for whites.

Some believe the policy has been essential, if flawed. 'The reality is that without BEE there would not have been the same level of black participation in the economy,' says Martin Kingston of Rothschild, which advises companies on BEE. But the gains must be weighed against the policy's unintended consequences.

Pitifully few black South Africans have grown rich by creating entirely new businesses, perhaps because it seems so much easier to make money by acquiring stakes in existing firms. The collapse in stock prices in 2008 left many would-be tycoons with assets that were worth less than the loans taken out to buy them.

In BEE deals, political connections often matter more than business skills. A costly bureaucracy has grown up to enforce racial targets, which even black-owned firms have to contend with. Posts are left vacant for want of qualified black staff. Some businesses re-employ white professionals as freelance consultants to plug skills shortages without falling foul of the law.



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The binding constraint on greater black participation in the economy is education, says Lucy Holborn from the South African Institute of Race Relations, a think-tank that has called for BEE to be scrapped. The proportion of professionals who are black is 36%, fairly close to the share of degrees held by blacks, which is around 40%. But that falls short of the 75% share of the total workforce who are black. It is no good setting quotas if there are not the skilled workers to fill them, says Ms Holborn.

Few business folk or politicians have echoed the call to junk BEE. The ANC is not about to lose power and no sensible business wants to offend it. Far from scrapping BEE rules, the government is seeking stiffer penalties for firms that flout them.

Source: *The Economist* (2013) *Fool's gold*, 27<sup>th</sup> April 2013

### Questions

What was the threat affecting Blacks in South Africa especially when they were not empowered after apartheid? Why is a lack of education a binding constraint for the achievement of Blacks in South Africa? What contradiction is there between companies seeking qualified Black people and the government's threat to those companies not adopting it?

### Overcoming racial discrimination at work

Nicholson (2012) states that although a good portion of people do not want to admit it, racism and discrimination still take place today. In fact, they are still pretty big issues. Societies have made leaps and bounds since the school of thought from the past, but there is still a long way to go. One of the areas where people are struggling with racism is in the workplace. This is unfortunate since this is where most of us spend the majority of our day. When someone faces racism in the workplace, it can really start to take a toll on their work, their health and their overall attitude.

Nicholson (2012) suggests a series of steps where there might be some affirmative action to combat racism at work.

### Be Part of the Solution

As a member of the office and a co-worker, one has a good deal of power. If an employee is not the one dealing with racist issues first-hand, then he should make sure that he is doing what he can to combat it. If there is someone in office that makes racist jokes and claims they are 'light-hearted' and have no malicious intent, one should not laugh. When people make these kinds of jokes, they are looking for attention and a laugh from fellow co-workers. There is no need to participate. Instead, one should pretend like having no idea what they are talking about or that the respected employee just simply does not understand the joke. A blog post from Penelope Trunk suggested asking this particular person to explain the joke. This combats the issue without causing a direct confrontation.

### **Discuss the Issue First**

If somebody experiences racism in the workplace, there is a need to talk to the offenders them first. As stated earlier, they may not be aware of the fact that they are hurting the person. By addressing the issue right off the bat, a trustworthy should tell person that what they are saying is wrong and that it is actually bothering you. By saying nothing, in a way, one encourages a person to continue.

### **Refer to the Boss/Manager/Supervisor**

If addressing the issue does not seem to work and the righteous employee has made a true attempt to tell this person how they are offending him, then it is time to take action. No one should have to deal with racism in the workplace and the wrongful person needs to be told that what he is doing is absolutely wrong and perhaps illegal. No matter what the degree, racism is racism and there is no place for it in the workplace – or anywhere really. Be sure you yourself are not engaging in this inappropriate behaviour.

### **Affirmative action**

The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) forwards a charter to combat racism at work. CUPE (2015) maintains that it must continue to build and maintain solidarity with workers in developing countries to fight the corporations and international financial institutions that exploit workers. In particular, it must fight the federal government's current plan to give the World Trade Organisation (WTO) the power to dictate Canada's social and economic policies, undermine our public services, and increase the exploitation of workers around the world. In providing education and tools to its members about the dangers in this latest round of trade talks, we must expose the racist policies of the WTO, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, and their role in perpetuating racist employment practices on a global scale.

### **A Charter to develop anti-racism education for members, leaders and staff**

We must continue to develop courses to help all members understand the systemic and class-based nature of racism. In particular, the union should focus on countering the myths that sustain racism and divert attention away from the real cause of the problems we are facing (for example, that immigration is a threat to our member's job security and the cause of the economic problems we now face). We must show our members that at the root of racism is an unfettered, globalised, free market system that profits by exploiting all workers and super-exploiting some.

We must continue to integrate an anti-racism component into all of our campaigns and our education programmes into our training programmes for shop stewards, and all our leadership development courses, for example. We must take every opportunity to build solidarity and sensitise members about the nature, prevalence and destructive effects of racism in the workplace.



The union must also develop anti-racism training and materials for leadership and staff. This anti-racism training should include how to respond quickly and effectively to complaints about workplace racism. It should emphasise handling problems using an activist approach, rather than a strictly legal approach. We want employers to feel immediate pressure to remedy situations of racism, instead of doing nothing until complaints run their course through a grievance or complaint procedure.

Source: CUPE (2015)

### Conclusion

Racial issues are still common at the workplace. Race is one of the visible aspects of workplace diversity where the individual can be discriminated in terms of colour. In direct discrimination, it is usually the concept of colour skin, ethnic belonging and physical make-up that can be the first elements used to discriminate people. Globally, Black people suffer a lot in terms of racial discrimination. This chapter focused on two important geographical locations, namely the USA and Europe, to speak of racial diversity although racial discrimination is common in almost every country in the world. Next comes the issue of indirect discrimination where jobs might be reserved for a family or kin, activities may be more appropriate to one type of people to another one, governmental or power positions are implicitly reserved for one category of people.

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South Africa's Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment is a salutary measure to provide equal opportunities at work to the Black majority of the country long time characterised by the apartheid regime. The opening of South Africa to all people is a message sent to the world explaining that racial discrimination does not have its say at work or in a modern or civilised society. To combat racial discrimination, employees must themselves be advocates of affirmative action for racial inclusion. Practical examples including a charter for such action is briefly described in this chapter.

### Practice Questions

1. Why is racism a hot topic in workplace diversity?
2. How far can it be said that racism is implicit at work?
3. How has the racism issue evolved during the Obama administration as from 2008?
4. Who are the most racially discriminated people in Europe?
5. What is the meaning of Broad-based black economic empowerment?
6. How far black empowerment has been successful in South Africa?
7. Why is there is a need to have affirmative action on racial issues at work?
8. What is the importance of a charter referring to racial diversity at work?
9. What are the benefits of racial diversity at work?
10. How can you as an employee become an advocate of racial diversity?

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# 9 The Disabled Worker in Workplace Diversity

## Introduction

Being a disabled worker could immediately mean that the person in question is different from others who are viewed as “normal”. This perception has existed at all times in history where disabled people have been subject to direct discrimination and held away from the daily routine of society. Despite advancements made by the governments of most countries, discrimination is still common. However, it is to be noted that under the umbrella of the United Nations, many nations have ratified conditions where they expect to provide better treatment to the disabled employee and provide him with an opportunity for inclusion. Modern societies are developing a positive frame of mind with respect to this particular area and lots of workers will agree that discriminating the disabled is something contrary to work practice today.

In reality, companies should mainly check the degree of disability of an individual. The fact that a person can use his intellect correctly despite a physical disability will surely allow him/her to work without any difficulty in office. It remains to be seen how the percentage of disability is to be interpreted. This might tend to be somewhat subjective.

This chapter starts with defining the term “disability” from various sources namely the dictionaries available and they allow anybody to find out similarities and close differences among the different terms used. Broadly, the term “disabled worker” is better suited to others and this is what is better used in this chapter.

There are interesting perspectives of disability in society. Two recent views have been considered, in particular, beliefs about deeds in a past life and references made to the disabled in the past with a useful citation of illustrious thinker, Paul Longmore. From there onwards, the lesson also explores the views of the disabled namely social, medical and the rights view. These are contrasting and today’s context might better relate to the rights view of disability.

It might be difficult to gauge how the disabled worker could be performing at work. Findings from a survey among 1000 employers in the United States in 2007 point out tangible benefits like better perception of the workforce, higher levels of productivity, lowered absenteeism, lower risks of accidents, etc. just to highlight that negative perceptions of the disabled worker should be eliminated at first sight.

Despite arguments that suggest that employers and employees are willing to accommodate the disabled worker in his work environment, there are threats of stigmatisation like harassing the employee, talking bad about him or even making wrongful jokes of him. Legislations passed in different environments – UK in this chapter-state that authorities are bringing about reinforcements to ensure that the disabled worker is enough protected from direct or indirect discrimination.

It is also important to note that to better accommodate the disabled worker in the work environment, employers need to provide them with the right opportunities to work correctly like specially-designed equipment, adapted tools and technology, lighter workload and the need to benefit from rest and treatment wherever applicable. These are the initial questions that managers might ask before having “onboard” the disabled employee.

### **Terms used to describe the disabled worker**

There are various terms that can be used to describe workers with disability in the organisation. Terminologies have changed in the course of time from “handicapped” up to “other abled employees” or at times “people with other abilities”. It is interesting to see how the disabled workgroups reacted and accepted to be known as “disabled” rather than an emotionally-toned “other able” where they stated that otherwise able could prove an “ability” component that would be discriminatory from those who are potentially able. The following terms are defined below.

### **The Handicapped**

The Free Dictionary states that although handicapped is widely used in both law and everyday speech to refer to people having physical or mental disabilities, those described by the word tend to prefer the expressions disabled or people with disabilities. Handicapped may imply a helplessness that is not suggested by the more forthright disabled. It is also felt that some stigma may attach to the word handicapped because of its origin in the phrase hand in cap, actually derived from a game of chance but sometimes mistakenly believed to involve the image of a beggar.

### **The Disabled Worker**

Oxford Dictionaries defines the word “disabled” came to be used as the standard term in referring to people with physical or mental disabilities in the second half of the 20th century, and it remains the most generally accepted term in both British and US English today. It superseded outmoded, now often offensive, terms such as crippled, defective, and handicapped and has not been overtaken itself by newer coinages such as differently abled or physically challenged. Although the usage is very widespread, some people regard the use of the adjective as a plural noun (as in the needs of the disabled) as dehumanising because it tends to treat people with disabilities as an undifferentiated group, defined merely by their capabilities. To avoid offence, a more acceptable term would be people with disabilities.

### People with disabilities

British Columbia (2015) defined a person with Disabilities designation identifies a person with a physical or mental impairment who is significantly restricted in his or her ability to perform daily living activities either “continuously or periodically for extended periods” and, as a result of these restrictions, requires assistance with daily living activities. Assistance could come from another person, an assistance animal or an assistive device.

### Differently-abled people

Wisegeek (2015) defines differently abled as a euphemistic term for someone who might formerly have been classed as disabled, handicapped, challenged, or having special needs. It can apply to people with predominantly physical or mental challenges. The description is thought to be more politically correct in some circles because it recognises that even if people have mental and/or physical impairments, they still have abilities, contrary to the picture painted with the terms disabled or handicapped.

The model adopted by the World Health Organisation (2002) in its International classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF) defines disability at three levels:



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### ***Impairment***

Problems in a body structure, such as structures related to movement, and functioning of the body or body part, such as neuromuscular or skin functions.

### ***Activity limitations***

These limitations are defined as “difficulties an individual may have in executing activities.”

### ***Participation restrictions***

Such restrictions include “problems an individual may experience in involvement in life situations.”

### **Perspectives of disability in society**

From a historical point of view, persons with disabilities were completely rejected by some cultures, in others they were outcasts, while in some they were treated as economic liabilities and grudgingly kept alive by their families. In other settings, persons with disabilities were tolerated and treated in incidental ways, while in other cultures they were given respected status and allowed to participate to the fullest extent of their capability (Munyi, 2012).

Munyi (2012) states that from a cultural point of view, there are many specific circumstances that have influenced the living conditions of persons with disabilities, not to mention people’s attitudes towards them. History shows that ignorance, neglect, superstition and fear are social factors that have exacerbated isolation of persons with disabilities.

Paul K. Longmore, Professor of History and founding Director of the San Francisco State University Institute on Disability, was one of the first historians to study the social history and experience of people with disabilities. A respected scholar and author of numerous publications on the disability rights movement and disability history, Longmore delivered keynote addresses and presentations at conferences across the country and mentored academics, activists, and artists from diverse backgrounds and disciplines (Online Archive of California, 2013). An important depiction of Longmore regarding disability is compellingly inspiring.

*“The depiction of the disabled person as ‘monster’ and the criminal characterisation both express the varying degrees the notion that disability involves the loss of an essential part of one’s humanity. Depending on the extent of disability, the individual is perceived as more or less subhuman.” – Paul Longmore*

In Hunchback of Note Dame, Disney’s 1996 film retells the classic Victor Hugo story of a deformed hunchback man living in Paris’ Notre Dame Cathedral. The French word, Quasimodo means half formed – named because he has a physical disability – a hunched back and facial features. Both are quite noticeable when first seeing Quasimodo.

### **Disability and karma: A heated debate**

Another perspective of disability open discussed and widely known to the public was Glen Hoddle, former England Football team manager, where he said in an interview the link between disability and karma. According to BBC News (1999), Glenn Hoddle was widely criticised for apparently suggesting disabled people were paying for their sins in a former life. In the Times interview, Hoddle reportedly outlined his religious belief in karma – the concept that your current existence is affected by actions in an earlier life. He stated that “The karma is working from another lifetime.” The comments were reported in an interview in The Times newspaper, and sparked adverse comments from the world of sport and disabled groups.

Glenn Hoddle’s comments on karma, reincarnation and disability should have attracted little attention. The belief that disability is the result of past life karma is held by Hindus, Buddhists and other religionists. According to Sharma (1999) if Hoddle, UK’s national football team coach, had been winning a few more games, the nation might have ignored his comments. However, The Times newspaper made them a national issue, resulting in his termination. The misinterpretation was clearly stated by Anne Rae, chairperson of the British Council of Disabled People. “Hoddle’s views have angered and frustrated those Disabled People who understand that these medieval beliefs underlie much of the (unspoken) justification for prejudice and discrimination against us.”

Plattner (2011) views disability as an opportunity. Buddhism, the concept of Karma explains a cause of disabilities. The disabled person receives the Karma of past life. Strictly seen, the disability is the result of committed mistakes in past life. However, this is not all. Disability also includes the parents, the therapists and cares of the disabled person. For them and other people around the disabled person, the disability offers a chance to develop charity what results into a good karma for next life. The Dalai Lama, leader of the Tibetan Buddhism, sees a lot of potential in disabilities. They help us to lead an unselfish and graciously life.

### **Models of Disability**

The Michigan Disability Rights Coalition (2015) depicts disability according to models of interpretation. They are not a chronological development of disability knowledge but rather a perspective of it through three main aspects; social, medical and rights model. Models of Disability are tools for defining impairment and, ultimately, for providing a basis upon which government and society can devise strategies for meeting the needs of disabled people. They are often treated with scepticism as it is thought they do not reflect a real world, are often incomplete and encourage narrow thinking, and seldom offer detailed guidance for action. However, they are a useful framework in which to gain an understanding of disability issues, and also of the perspective held by those creating and applying the models.



### The Social Model of disability

The Social Model views disability as a consequence of environmental, social and attitudinal barriers that prevent people with impairments from maximum participation in society. It is best summarised in the definition of disability from the Disabled Peoples' International: 'the loss or limitation of opportunities to take part in the normal life of the community on an equal level with others, due to physical or social barriers (The Michigan Disability Rights Coalition, 2015).

The social model has been developed by disabled people in response to the medical model and the impact it has had on their lives. Under the social model, disability is caused by the society in which we live and is not the 'fault' of an individual disabled person, or an inevitable consequence of their limitations. Disability is the product of the physical, organisational and attitudinal barriers present within society, which lead to discrimination. The removal of discrimination requires a change of approach and thinking in the way in which society is organised (The Michigan Disability Rights Coalition, 2015).

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### **The Medical Model of disability**

According to The Michigan Disability Rights Coalition (2015), the Medical Model holds that disability results from an individual person's physical or mental limitations, and is largely unconnected to the social or geographical environments. It is sometimes referred to as the Biological-Inferiority or Functional-Limitation Model. The Medical Model places the source of the problem within a single impaired person, and concludes that solutions are found by focusing on the individual. A more sophisticated form of the model allows for economic factors, and recognises that a poor economic climate will adversely affect a disabled person's work opportunities. Even so, it still seeks a solution within the individual by helping him or her overcome personal impairment to cope with a faltering labour market.

### **The Rights Model of disability**

The Michigan Disability Rights Coalition (2015) explains that in more recent times, however, the notion of 'disability' has come to be conceptualised as a socio-political construct within a rights-based discourse. The emphasis has shifted from dependence to independence, as people with disability have sought a political voice, and become politically active against social forces of ableism. Disability activists, in engaging in identity politics, have adopted the strategies used by other social movements commanding human and civil rights, against such phenomena as sexism and racism.

### **Accommodating the disabled employee at work**

The Office of Disability Rights, Washington DC, provides below a checklist to accommodate disabled employees. This is not an exhaustive one but essential points are covered.

#### **Flexible leave policy**

Changing a regular workschedule or establishing a flexible leave policy may be a reasonable accommodation unless it would cause an undue hardship. Modified work schedules may include flexibility in work hours or the work week, or part-time work.

Flexible leave policies should be considered as a reasonable accommodation when people with disabilities require time off from work because of their disabilities. The agency is generally not required to provide additional paid leave as an accommodation, but should consider allowing use of accrued leave or leave without pay, where this will not cause an undue hardship.

#### **Safer devices to work**

Purchase of equipment or changes to existing equipment may be effective accommodations for people with many types of disabilities. There are many devices that make it possible for people to overcome existing barriers to performing functions of a job. These devices range from very simple solutions, such as an elastic band that can enable a person with cerebral palsy to hold a pencil and write, to high-tech electronic equipment that can be operated by head or mouth movements by people who cannot use their hands.

### **Training benefits**

Reasonable accommodation should be provided, when needed, to give employees with disabilities equal opportunity to benefit from training to perform their jobs effectively and to advance in employment.

### **Integrated setting**

Employment activities must take place in an integrated setting. Employees with disabilities may not be segregated into particular facilities or parts of facilities. This means that architectural barriers may have to be removed or altered to provide structural accessibility to the workplace.

The Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS, 2015) further points out that if an employee has a disability that is making it difficult to work, employers should consider what reasonable adjustments they can make in the workplace to help or schedule an interview with the employee to discuss what can be done to support them. This could be as simple as supplying an adequate, ergonomic chair or power-assisted piece of equipment. Reasonable adjustments also include re-deployment to a different type of work if necessary.

### **Communication facilities**

Individuals with communication disabilities (e.g., vision, hearing, and speech disabilities) should be able to communicate effectively with others as needed for their job duties and should have access to information needed for the job. Identifying the needs of the employee in relation to specific job tasks will determine whether or when an interpreter, reader, or other communication access provider may be needed.

### **Reassigning the disabled employee with a light duty**

Reassigning an employee with a disability to a light duty job might be required as a reasonable accommodation, depending on how an employer's light duty program is designed. If an employer reserves certain jobs for light duty, rather than creating light duty jobs as needed, the employer must reassign the employee to a vacant, reserved light duty position as a reasonable accommodation if

- the employee cannot perform his/her current position because of his/her disability, with or without a reasonable accommodation;
- the employee can perform the light duty job, with or without a reasonable accommodation; and
- the reassignment would not impose an undue hardship.

This is because reassignment to a vacant position and appropriate changes to an employer's policy are forms of reasonable accommodation required by the Anti-Discrimination Act (ADA), absent undue hardship. There is, however, no requirement to create a light duty position or any other position under the ADA.

### Disability Discrimination-A UK Perspective

The Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS, 2015) states how the Equality Act 2010 in the United Kingdom provides better cover to the disabled worker under discrimination.

### Key points

- The Equality Act 2010 provides disabled people with protection from discrimination in the work place.
- Employers must make reasonable adjustments to accommodate a worker with a disability.
- Disabled employees are protected from harassment at work.
- Employers should have polices in place to prevent discrimination.

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It is unlawful to discriminate against workers because of a physical or mental disability or fail to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate a worker with a disability. Under the Equality Act 2010 a person is classified as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

The Equality Act 2010 provides disabled people with protection from discrimination in a range of areas, including in employment.

This means that employers:

- must not directly discriminate against a person because of their actual or perceived disability, or because they associate with a disabled person.
- must not treat a disabled person less favourably for a reason related to his or her impairment, unless that treatment can be justified for example an employer may reject someone who has a severe back problem where the job entails heavy lifting.
- must not have procedures, policy or practices which, although applicable to all workers, disproportionately disadvantage those who share a particular disability, unless these can be justified.
- must make reasonable adjustments in the recruitment and employment of disabled people. This can include, for example, adjustments to recruitment and selection procedures, to terms and conditions of employment, to working arrangements and physical changes to the premises or equipment.
- must not treat an employee unfairly who has made or supported a complaint about discrimination because of disability.

Disabled employees are also protected from harassment. Harassment is unwanted conduct related to disability which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

### **Case Study 9: The Benefits of Disability in the Workplace**

Opportunity Works was founded in an attempt to improve employment of people with disabilities. It would be reasonable to presume that companies would be reluctant to hire employees that would cost them more than other options. This is reasonable as we have seen trends to move manufacturing and call centre operations to other countries. Within the country, companies have gone radical and taken measures to do things such as setting policies not to hire smokers or overweight people. Right? So, surely this is part of the problem. The perception that people with disabilities cost more than your average Joe.

According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce report, “Leading Practices on Disability Inclusion,” hiring people with disabilities is good for the bottom-line. The report has case studies from companies such as 3M, PepsiCo, Merck and AT&T. All companies in the report cite the benefits and importance of hiring people with disabilities. But, it does not clearly address the costs versus benefits of hiring people with disabilities.

According to the U.S. Department of Labour, Job Accommodations Network annual report, “Workplace Accommodations: Low Cost, High Impact” which concludes “workplace accommodations not only are low cost, but also positively impact the workplace in many ways.” This report found that more than half of requested workplace accommodation cost absolutely nothing for the companies to implement. Some examples of these accommodations include scheduling flexibility, allowances in dress code rules or allowing somebody to sit (or stand) when other positioning is customary.

Employers reported that providing accommodations resulted in such benefits as retaining valuable employees, improving productivity and morale, reducing workers’ compensation and training costs, and improving company diversity. The report also found that other accommodations had an average cost of \$500. How much is that cost compared to the cost of employee turnover? It is clearly much less expensive to provide the accommodation than to have an employee leave. But what about concerns about that applicant that is not yet an employee?

A study of DePaul University found company representatives stated that people with disabilities did not apply directly with them, but through disability service agencies. It also stated that company representatives “expressed concern with some agencies for not remaining in contact. They stressed that ongoing communication was key to successful partnerships between employers and disability employment agencies.”

What are the benefits of hiring people with disabilities? “...Participants noted low absenteeism rates and long tenures. They also described their employees with disabilities as loyal, reliable, and hardworking. An additional benefit to hiring people with disabilities was the diversification of work settings, which led to an overall positive work environment.”

“Hiring a diverse workforce includes hiring people with disabilities. This is a good business decision. I believe executives understand that. Executives want diversity and employees who are loyal and provide value to their companies. I started this company to help other companies reach those goals within their workforces. We can achieve this by providing employees well suited to the jobs in which we place them and ensuring our customers receive exceptional customer service and proven value. This is a business model to address a social problem. In the current times trending to fewer government services, a business model is the most reasonable way we can adequately address this problem. The days of looking to the government to help those most in need are behind us.”

Abridged and adapted from: Owen, J. (2012) The benefits of disability in the workplace, Forbes, 5<sup>th</sup> December 2012.

## Questions

What are the accommodations that businesses should make for the disabled employees? Is there a reason to say that accommodations make it possible to work profitably? What is the reason behind the application for jobs through employment agencies by the disabled employee? What are the benefits of employing a disabled worker?

## Evaluating the contribution of the disabled worker

Do work groups that include people with disabilities underperform, outperform, or perform equal to groups that do not contain people with disabilities? According to Linkow et al (2013) no substantive research that examines the relationship between having a disability and group or team performance was identified in the course of this investigation. The relationship between diversity and group performance has historically been a mixed bag, with some studies reporting higher group performance and others reporting lower. Because people with disabilities have typically had to make more adaptations and accommodations to be successful in their work lives, they may well bring a wider range of perspectives and problem-solving repertoires. According to Loy and Baptiste (2007), a certain range of benefits were perceived by employing disabled employees in the USA. The survey was conducted on 1000 employers in the USA.



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### Practice Questions

1. What are the different terms used to define the disability of workers?
2. Why are the terms linked with subtlety?
3. How should an employer not discriminate disabled workers?
4. From the perspective on disability, what progress has been achieved today?
5. What are the three main views of disability?
6. What accommodations must an employer made regarding the disabled worker?
7. What are the benefits of employing a disabled worker?
8. How does legislation protect the disabled worker from discrimination?
9. How may employing disabled people improve company morale?
10. Why is it necessary to protect the disable worker from harassment?

### Conclusion

This chapter addressed the issue of disability which is another visible aspect within the diversity model. From what can be read and evidenced from the lesson, it is clear that, after facing centuries of discrimination and stigmatisation, modern societies are getting more open and positive on the disability discrimination issue. Practically, most countries have adopted the inclusion of disability diversity in their national strategies and attempted to consider disabled people as part and parcel of the workforce. Depending upon their ability to work, disabled employees can be effective for their respective organisations provided that they are well accommodated at work and benefit from conditions within which they can give their best.

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# 10 The Part-Timer in Workplace Diversity

## Introduction

Part-time jobs have existed since a long time and could be traced back up to the early days of the industrial revolution dating back to 1870. As a result of the rise in the number of tasks undertaken in industry, companies had recourse to additional labour to fill in gaps in demand for products ordered by customers. This had immediately the effect of bringing additional labour to companies which could not be found at the workplace. Incidentally, women, children and even people working for themselves were called to provide that needed additional labour to work. Once such labour needs was fulfilled, organisations reverted to their existing workforce to complete the daily duties.

From this standpoint, one should note that part-time occupation was not initially formalised. It was like providing assistance to a businessman whenever there was a need for that or simply give a helping hand to the person on and off, usually for a token or sometimes unpaid work. This has developed quite rapidly through the progress made by industrial work where maintenance tasks had to take place after normal working hours. It was there that additional labour was required and that fulfilled the needs of the organisation. From then, certain sectors went to operate twenty-four hours a day and they needed people 'on the run'. This called for part-time labour wherever gaps were identified.

Part-time labour is essential. It should not be mixed up with idle labour although part-timers can undertake tasks when full-timers are away from work. This has become common phenomenon today given that, firstly, jobs are scarce worldwide and people may need to do extra work to meet their ends and, secondly, the nature of business has evolved at a much greater pace due to the automation of work where specialised labour may be direly needed. This calls once again for the importance of part-time labour at work.

The question that may arise from there onwards is the need to consider part-timers as an element of diversity. In this case, part-timers do not form part of the visible aspect of diversity except in rare cases where their dress code might differ from that of full-timers. They are important at work because they can complement the tasks that are normally difficult to perform than full-timers. Secondly, part-timers look to be available labour that is ready to work at short notice. They have a good contribution in this sense.

In workplace diversity, part-timers need to be considered as part and parcel of the workforce. They contribute to one or several organisations by supplying labour to undertake tasks that are often difficult to do. They can assist in solving the problem of absenteeism and acute labour shortage despite the fact that they are working under contract and their services may be terminated at any time. Despite this, part-timers can be people having specific and non-specific human capital while they contribute to the benefit of any organisation where they contribute their part in terms of specialised services.

This chapter explores the nature of the part-time, the benefit that part-time occupation can bring to organisations, the need for part-time labour in today's unpredictable nature of the economy and job availability. It further stresses the need to value the contribution of the part-timer in diversity and consider that suitable treatment, support and motivation of such staff, could be something to amply assess in business. There are various categories of part-timers and the different ones do understand their importance at work. Considering part-timers as idle labour or supply labour of lesser importance might be contrary to the development of diversity at work. These are important issues for managers and they have to deal with them accordingly.



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### **Defining the part-time job**

A part-time job is a position that requires employees to work a lower number of hours than would be considered full time by their employer. Employees may work 35 hours a week or less, or work below a pre-determined amount of hours set by an employer, or less, in a given week. Part time workers include students, parents, retirees, and other workers who do not want or need the time commitment of a full time position.

Doyle (2015) states that there are no legal guidelines that determine whether or not an employee is a part time or full time employee. A determination of whether an employee is working part time depends on the company's policy and practice of defining employees and the hours required to be considered full time. The standard for full time was typically 40 hours a week in the past, however many employers consider employees as working part time based on a different schedule i.e. under 30 hours or 35 hours a week, etc.

Having part-time/full-time definitions that are insufficiently specific can lead to a problem of interpretation, if the workplace gets busy for more than a week or two at a time, and employees who are hired as part-timers have to work 40 or more hours several weeks in a row. Such employees might begin to think of themselves as full-time employees and expect full-time benefits.

Findlaw (2014) comments that part-time employees are typically paid on an hourly basis, and must comply with company rules, policies, and obligations, such as performance goals, safety rules, and company business practices. Even so, part-time employees generally have limited or no company benefits, such as health benefits, vacation and sick time, paid holidays, and unemployment compensation, among others, unless required by state labour laws and/or company policies.

The Texas Workforce Commission (2011) declares that full-time employees are those who are regularly assigned to work at least 40 hours each week. Part-time employees are those who are regularly assigned to work less than full-time. While part-time employees may occasionally work 40 or more hours in a particular workweek, or in a series of workweeks, that by itself will not change their regular schedule. However, the company reserves the right to change the regular schedules of employees at any time. In such a case, the company will give affected employees as much advance notice as possible of their new regular schedules and will advise employees of the effect of such changes on their eligibility for company benefits.

### **International comparability of part-time jobs**

van Bastelaer et al (1997) describe that owing to the influence of employment policy measures and collective agreements and the lack of international standards for part-time work, the object of this report is to review the international comparability of the data on such work, taking into account its specific characteristics in member countries. According to a definition proposed by the International Labour Organisation, part-time work is defined as regular employment in which working time is substantially less than normal.

The same idea is expressed in the statement that a job is part-time when the number of weekly working hours is considerably less than the number of hours in a full-time job. Accordingly, part-time is defined in relation to full-time employment.

The normal number of working hours in a full-time job depends on the statutory provisions in force and the normal working hours stipulated in collective agreements by industry and occupation. In the case of firms not subject to collective agreements, the normal hours used as a reference to define a full-time job could be those generally applicable to the job concerned.

### **A comparative assessment of part-time jobs in selected European countries**

Where collective agreements exist, part-time employment is usually defined as being at least a half-day of work per week less than the number of days worked full-time. According to van Bastelaer (1997) in a standard five-day week, part-time work therefore must be less than nine-tenths of the hours worked full-time. Following are some examples of statutory or collective agreement definitions of part-time work:

In France, an employee's monthly working hours must be less than four-fifths of statutory or normal hours; the same rule applies to employees on or/training programmes but on the basis of annual hours.

In Spain, a job is part-time if working hours do not exceed two-thirds of those worked in an equivalent full-time job, taking into account the collective agreements or working practices in the firm concerned.

The United Kingdom and Ireland apply a cut-off rate of 30 hours a week.

### **Temporary, Seasonal Employees and Freelancers**

Temporary employees, often referred to as 'temps', are typically hired to cover for absent employees (such as those who are on maternity or disability leave) and temporary vacancies, or to fill gaps in a company's workforce. Temporary employees may be hired directly or through a temporary staffing agency in which case the temp is *on lease* with the staffing company, but not an employee of the client company that uses its services.

Findlaw (2014) explains that temporary employees may be hired to perform work in a range of industries, such as clerical, labour, education, information technology and healthcare. Some temporary jobs may lead to permanent employment where appropriate in which case the temp agency may charge a fee if the worker is hired permanently. More often, however, companies hire temporary employees for a specific business purpose while avoiding the cost of hiring regular employees.

Temporary employees may work full or part-time, and may work for more than one agency at a time. Although not typically eligible for company benefits, some temporary agencies offer health care and other benefits to their temp employees. In an economic downturn, temporary employees are often the first to go, making it less of an ideal job for job security.

### Seasonal Employees

Another definition close to the part-time employee could be the seasonal worker. Findlaw (2014) explains that, seasonal employees are hired to work on a part-time basis by companies that need extra help during a particular season, typically the Christmas season. For example, large retailers, such as Wal-Mart, Toys 'R' Us, and Best Buy, hire thousands of seasonal employees each year to account for the increased shopping demands of the season. Seasonal employees may be hired within several industries, such as retail, hospitality, customer service, shipping/handling, and sales, and are entitled to minimum wage and overtime.

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Seasonal jobs can offer out-of-work employees the opportunity to earn income to pay down bills, for example, or earn money for holiday gift giving. In addition, since many seasonal jobs can be performed on evenings and weekend, regular employees can earn a second income for a certain period of time as a seasonal employee (Findlaw, 2014).

### **Freelancer**

Dictionary.com (2015) describes freelancers as people working on a contract basis for a variety of companies, as opposed to working as an employee for a single company. Freelancers are often considered to be self-employed, and have the freedom to pick and choose their projects and companies they would like to be associated with. A common profession for freelancing is writing; a writer then has the ability to submit their work to many different places, without being tied to any one company in particular.

Goudreau (2013) comments that freelancers and independent workers are a growing cadre of the U.S. workforce. They already account for an estimated 16 million workers. Marketing is one of the highest-paying freelance gigs. Jobs like marketing coordinator, marketing manager and project manager feature estimated earnings of \$46 to \$52 an hour, and workers are responsible for creating brand strategies, overseeing multi-media campaigns and managing client relationships.

Creative fields continue to lead the pack in freelancing, with writing, graphic design and social media offering a wealth of good-paying freelance jobs. In addition, a few surprising freelance careers emerged, including business project management, insurance inspection, accounting and web development in locations around the country.

### **The growth of part-time jobs in society**

A working paper of the University of South Wales (1997) reveals that over the past 20 years the workplace and labour markets of industrialised societies have undergone profound change. Some of these changes are the culmination of trends underway throughout the post-war period while others are more recent. Overall, these changes amount to a significant growth in fractured, volatile and contingent forms of employment and an associated shift in forms of work organisation. The changes which are about to be described have been experienced by almost all industrialised countries although there are sometimes wide variations in the degree to which countries have experienced a specific shift, say for example a growth in part-time employment.

Part-time employment has increased in recent decades in most industrialised countries, stabilising or declining only in some countries where comparatively high rates have been reached (O'Reilly and Fagan, 1998). The main forces driving these changes are enterprises' requirements for more flexible modes of work organisation to enhance their efficiency in the context of economic restructuring and globalisation. However, there is another, subsidiary pressure in play from the labour supply. O'Reilly and Fagan (1998) mention that some workers are seeking out part-time or even "unsocial" schedules such as night or weekend work in order to combine employment with other time-consuming activities – such as women raising children, or young people participating in education. In contrast, some other groups of workers take jobs where very long hours or "overworking" are the norm, perhaps in exchange for higher earnings.

### **Benefits from part-time employment**

Part-time employees offer businesses many advantages over full-time employees, but also pose some disadvantages. Kokemuller (2015) explains how part-time employment benefits the firm.

#### **Costs**

One of the most recognised benefits of using part-time employees is lower costs. Companies typically pay part-time employees an hourly wage and can schedule them for whatever number of hours the company desires. Additionally, part-time employees often receive no benefits. Even those that work a lot may qualify only for retirement benefits. This lack of benefits saves companies significantly when compared to the total compensation packages paid to full-time or regular employees.

#### **Flexibility**

A second key benefit of using part-time workers is flexibility. The company has no obligation to schedule part-timers for 40 hours a week if the workload does not require it. Thus, managers only need to schedule when work is needed. Workers and the company often like the flexibility of part-time scheduling from the standpoint that it allows for work on varying days and times. Many businesses use part-time workers to fill evening and weekend hours not covered by full-time workers.

#### **Commitment**

A common drawback of part-time workers is their lack of commitment relative to full-time workers. Full-time workers that rely on the consistent income and benefits typically buy in to the organisation more strongly and feel a deeper attachment. Part-time workers usually have less commitment because they spend less time at the company and find it easier to leave because of the lack of full-time income and benefits. Thus, losing part-timers to other jobs is more common.



## Knowledge

Part-time workers, especially those that work more temporarily or seasonally, usually have less knowledge and familiarity with the company because they work less. This can affect employee performance on both tasks and service. Customer-driven organisations may notice less successful sales and service with part-time employees that do not become as familiar with approaches to selling and servicing the needs of the company's customers. Training can help offset these issues, but part-timers take longer to gain experience than full-time workers.

### Case Study 10: Ending stigma of part-time working “would benefit all”

On the face of it, working part time is still very much a “women's issue”, and bad for career progression. But that is by no means the end of the story. Far more women than men work part time: more than 40 per cent of female employees in the United Kingdom, are part-time compared with 12 per cent of men, according to the Office for National Statistics. The impact on work status, using earnings as a proxy, is huge: median gross hourly earnings of part-time employees in 2013 were 36 per cent less than those of full-time employees.

A wider range of people is working part time today than in the past. “The world of work has moved on and part-time has evolved as more professionals aspire to be “agile” in their working patterns,” says Kate Grussing, managing director of Sapphire Partners, a search firm specialising in diversity on boards and in executive roles.



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“While most part-timers are still women who are mothers, the proportion of both men and non-parents has grown, and that is a good thing. The world of work does not necessarily fit into five-day-a-week packages.”

Second, the notion of part-time and full-time jobs is being challenged by the changing nature of work. With communications technology enabling ‘anywhere, anytime’ work, sticking to rigid schedules and locations is becoming irrelevant in many roles.

Tom Schuller, visiting professor at London’s Institute of Education, argues that it is time to “dethrone” the full-time work model. He takes particular issue with the binary division between full and part time. “It is crazy to lump people doing 29 hours a week in the same category as those doing six hours a week,” he says.

He has coined a “Paula Principle” (a mirror of the Peter Principle) that “most women work below their level of competence.” This highlights the paradox of female outperformance at school and university, and women’s greater participation in training and adult learning, versus their lower earnings and career progression. What needs to happen, he believes, is for more men to work part time.

Individuals also need to be smart about what is happening in their organisation and their team, and to address clients’ needs when planning a cut in hours. At the same time, they should be prepared to decline non-priority tasks to avoid working the equivalent of a full-time job for part-time pay.

From the employers’ perspective, one important step is to reframe “part-time” as a team resourcing issue rather than a personal lifestyle preference, says Ms Gascoigne. “Work does not come in full-time lumps. Tasks and relationships can be redistributed among a team.”

Another step is to advertise far more high-level jobs as part-time or flexible. Some say this would be a breakthrough, especially if organisations simultaneously highlighted senior part-time role models of both sexes. “Too many women candidates feel they have to lie and pretend that a lack of flexibility is not something they care about – and then six months into the job they have to tell their employer that they need it,” says Ms Grussing.

“Organisations should say that they have promoted someone to partner or to a senior executive role who is part time. It is material information for those looking up the ladder wondering how they can make it work.”

Adapted and abridged from: *Maitland, A. (2012), Ending stigma of part-time working ‘would benefit all’, Women in the Workplace, Financial Times, 26<sup>th</sup> February 2014.*

## Questions

What factors might state that the world is shifting from the traditional work pattern to a modern one? What does this mean to part-time occupation? What is the perception that people might have of part-time occupations? From the information in this case study, how can organisations value part-time work?

## University students and part-time jobs

It is common pattern to evidence that university students, all around the world, are opting for part-time jobs and are, to some extent, reconfiguring part-time employment. They might officially be on industrial placement or they might opt for a part-time job while they are studying at college. This has become more common in times of crisis. Today, students are working hard, a new study finds, taking on part-time and even sometimes full-time jobs to avoid racking up more debt while in school. According to Fottrell (2013) nearly four out of five U.S. students – including those in high school, community college, online college, or traditional college or university – work while in school, a survey by Citigroup and Seventeen magazine found, with the average working student putting in 19 hours a week during the school year. The cost of tuition has risen dramatically in recent years for most educational institutions, studies show. The cost of undergraduate tuition – including room and board – surged 42% in the past 10 years (adjust for inflation) to \$13,600 at public institutions for the 2010–11 academic year; it rose 31% to \$36,300 at private non-profit institutions over the same period, according to the U.S. Department of Education's National Centre for Education Statistics.

## What is the myth behind part-time occupation?

In their article: Shattering the myths of part-time jobs, Inman and Enz (1995) state that the widely held belief that part-time workers have less commitment, less competence, and less willingness to work hard than full-time workers may be the result of historical stereotypes and self-fulfilling prophecy. Gaze (2001) further points out that Developing a legitimate paradigm for part time work has the potential to undermine the male stereotype of the ideal worker (the worker who does not have domestic responsibilities to distract them from 100% commitment to their job), which is currently the measure of success and commitment for a worker. The benefits they bring to the firm are twisted into an indictment of their abilities and attitudes. Those views may become institutionalised in the firm's recruiting, training, and management practices and compensation policies. Thus the actions of managers may make it more likely that part-timers will respond negatively.

### Equal treatment for part-time jobs

ACAS (2015) stresses that part-time workers have the right to be treated no less favourably than comparable full-timers. This means they should:

- receive the same rates of pay.
- not be excluded from training simply because they work part-time
- receive holidays pro-rata to comparable full-timers
- have any career break schemes, contractual and parental leave made available to them in the same way as for full-time workers
- not be treated less favourably when workers are selected for redundancy.

An employer will need to objectively justify the reason why they treat part-time staff differently, and show the reason can meet a genuine business need. An example of objective justification would include a part-time worker who is denied health insurance, even though a comparable full-time worker has one, because of the disproportionate cost to the organisation of providing the benefit. If a part-time worker thinks they are being treated less favourably they should first discuss the issue with their line manager, they can ask for a written statement from their employer.

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### **Integrating the part-time job within workplace diversity**

The European Social Charter (2014) advocates that part-time work can be a working formula offered to employees by the company. It is not considered by the company to be a sign of disinterest in professional activity. When considering a time formula chosen by the employee which has been accepted by the line managers, under the guise of seeking a balance between a private life and professional activity, it is likely to favour the professional efficiency of employees who have adopted this organisational mode for their working hours.

The part-time employees must benefit from the same training as full-time employees as well as the same opportunities for development and for geographical and operational mobility. Generally, the line manager must ensure that the organisation and the workload of a part-time employee is compatible with their working hours. Within the commercial activities, business and targets must be adapted to efficient working hours.

Alongside, the European Social Charter (2014) claims that particular attention should be directed to the pay of part-time employees, the majority of whom are women, in order to ensure that these employees enjoy comparable development to that of full-time employees carrying out comparable responsibilities, by offering them career development pathways in positions whose working hours can be shown to be compatible with the organisational needs and constraints of the company.

### **Conclusion**

Part-time occupation has gained importance since societies got industrialised. There were more activities than ever before for people to undertake. People could be involved in part-time occupations either to provide their specialised talent to the company or to get additional income to better run the household. Part-time occupation has also become a work pattern since there are categories of people in emerging sectors who prefer part-time to full-time jobs. The element of work flexibility suits part-timers as they can benefit from more free time and independence compared to full-time workers.

Over the years, new forms of industrial structures have called for new types of part-time occupation filling every aspect of society. From baby sitters to back-office maintenance, part-timers have their part to play in business. It can be generally said that part-time occupation might better suit women than men partly in relation to their need to raise their family, care for the new-borns and engage themselves in maternal care. Unfortunately, women may have to accept lower pay and less attractive work conditions compared to their male counterparts.

An important aspect of part-time occupation is to see how it can be integrated with the full-time occupations. The immediate questions that arise are: Do part-timers get equal opportunities as full-timers if there is a promotional pathway? Are part-timers viewed as important elements of the firm? Do part-timers espouse the same culture? These are aspects that ask for the inclusion of the part-timer and appreciate that he contributes significantly to the betterment of his firm while he deserves to be highly valued within diversity at work.

### Practice Questions

1. What are the main characteristics of part-time jobs?
2. How have part-time jobs become a feature of workplace diversity?
3. How does the working condition of a part-timer differ from that of a full-timer?
4. Explain the following terms: freelancer, seasonal and temporary worker.
5. What are the advantages of recruiting a part-timer?
6. What could be the challenges of recruiting a part-timer?
7. Do firms genuinely protect a part-timer?
8. What type of discrimination might a part-timer face at work?
9. Why are women more involved than men in part-time jobs?
10. Why is it necessary to integrate part-timers within diversity?

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# 11 Management and Leadership in Workplace Diversity

## Introduction

A reasonable question regarding diversity at work is who is the person managing or overseeing diversity? This is essential because it is the company manager who will have to work with people of diverse backgrounds in a more sophisticated and complex environment than ever before. Based from earlier views of diversity (see chapter One), today's workplace has to accept that diversity is something visible, common almost everywhere and that requires capable managers of addressing diversity issues. Some might immediately call for a diversity manager who can be a workplace sociologist or psychologist. Whether it is something dealing with organisational behaviour issues, the role and importance of a manager is always felt.

Good managers are people who are advocates of diversity. They should not be individuals who just see one side of the coin, develop prejudice and stereotypes of the different people around them and make complacent remarks. Rather than being ethno-centred, managers need to have balanced opinions of people, keep as far as possible their neutrality at work, and make enforcements upon those who curb diversity. It is a known fact that diversity managers are apt in solving challenging workplace issues while they come out enriched with experience while working with a culturally diverse environment.

The issue of change can be of paramount importance to managing diversity. Managers will be exposed to environments where people from different cultural backgrounds work. Far from the homogeneous work pattern, the new organisation can claim for organisational development. Managers have to very able in managing cultural shifts by applying the concept of change management in the most effective and responsible manner.

Management is the practice of dealing with people and seeing that work is done through people. In workplace diversity, managers are expected to carry out their basic functions of planning, organising, leading and controlling while ensuring that these key functions are aligned with diversity. There will be issues like change where diversity can manifest itself say, an organisation that opens up to an international workforce, a multinational operating in different geographical locations, etc. These are conditions where the manager has to demonstrate how effectively he can use concepts of diversity and ensure that employees fit in effectively within the organisational culture.



Next comes leadership. Though leading is a function of management, leadership in diversity is another essential component. Leading means to provide guidance and support employees and through a diverse workplace environment, all workers must comply by the leadership of their managers. Alongside, there is the motivational factor which is important to keep the spirits of the employees alive. These evidently depend upon the abilities of leaders to motivate their subordinates and see how well they get inspired with the vision of their leaders.

There are certainly several cases of leaders who bring about high levels of motivation and performance from their teams but the difficulty might arise when teams comprise people coming from different backgrounds with their particular differences. This could be in itself a challenge to diversity but clearly, excellent managers are also excellent leaders and they show their prowess in managing diversity. Leaders have to display the right attitude, the desire to lead, the need to be intellectually capable and equally the ability to inspire their fellow colleagues to embrace diversity while moving on the right path.

This chapter addresses the management and leadership issue with case illustrations and explanations of them in different contexts. Effort is taken not to deeply go through management or motivational theory but rather a selection of theories and practices in both areas to address the diversity issue. The student will have a general idea of how to integrate management issues with that of diversity.

### **Planning for diversity**

Planning for diversity is a first managerial function that needs to be addressed in the organisation. The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (2004) in its Comprehensive diversity management plan explains that an affirmative employment plan includes four Guiding Principles that embody the principles of diversity management. They include:

Creating a working environment that is free of discrimination, including harassment, and is accessible to individuals with disabilities;

Ensuring that agency policies, processes, and procedures provide all employees the opportunity to participate in mission accomplishments, and to compete fairly and equitably for career enhancement and advancement;

Employing a competent and highly skilled workforce, consistent with the national labour market, and enabling employees to accomplish the agency's mission by providing support, tools, and a positive environment; and

Recognising, appreciating and valuing diversity, thereby establishing trust, respect, and concern for the welfare of all employees within the agency.

### Organising for diversity: Cross-functional teams

Kelchner (2015) views the organisational function of managers in diversity through cross-functional teams include members from different areas of the business, which creates a group of members with diverse educational backgrounds, skill sets and talents. The diversity of the group allows the group to share ideas and skills to reach the objective of the team. For example, if the team is developing a system to reduce defects, team members with engineering skills and knowledge can develop new tools and equipment to reduce defects while members from production can provide input on the efficiency of the new tooling or equipment.

The diversity of a cross-functional team gives it an advantage when evaluating a problem from all angles, but it can also create conflict among the group. Kelchner (2015) explains that team members may have difficulty understanding the viewpoint of other members of the group. For example, if team members with an engineering background create a tool or new method for production and the production team members provide negative feedback, it may create conflict.

### Control function in managing diversity

Control is best described as the process of measuring performance, comparing it with the standards of acceptable performance and taking corrective action in case of deviation. Below is provided a chart to explain the issue of control in diversity based on the author's personal source.



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Area of control in diversity management	Standards of performance	Control mechanism
<b>Recruitment</b>	Recruiting from the community, accepting minorities and the disabled as key element of the firm's recruitment charter.	Ensure that the different communities in social diversity are represented at work wherever applicable.
<b>Promotion and reward</b>	Check that reward structures impact on workplace diversity.  See that promotion is made on merit and exceptions.	Take corrective action if minorities are not included in company's promotion and reward schemes. Adopt an all-inclusive tactic of workplace diversity.
<b>Communication</b>	Ensure that the right attitudes, tones and style are used in communicating to all employees in the firm.	Check for vocabulary and bring corrections wherever applicable. For example, the male gender is used but addresses all types of employees.
<b>Employee attitudes</b>	Have a charter of ethics and good governance regarding employee behaviour at work.  Create a discrimination-free workplace or maintain 'kick racism away' campaign.	See that the codes of conduct are strictly respected and employees do not make hurtful comments on others. Enforce disciplinary action in case of direct discrimination and unpleasant remarks.

Nelson (2015) provides some more information on evaluating the effectiveness in diversity. He supports the need to consistently evaluate the diversity and motivational initiatives performed at your company. This can be done with a variety of methods. For example, a diversity manager can analyse the degrees of diversity within specific departments matched with the overall moods and rates of efficiency within those departments. It also can be helpful to distribute diversity surveys to the employees. This is an excellent way to learn how valued various groups feel within your company. By regularly evaluating the diversity initiatives in the workplace, a manager can ensure that its staff is competitive and valued on a personal level (Nelson, 2015).

### Change management in diversity managers

Tatli and Özbilgin (2009) focus on the agency of diversity managers who assume the leading role in the strategy making, design, delivery, implementation, and monitoring of diversity initiatives, which affect organisational change. Their aim is not to “unpack” the interplay between various configurations of organisational approaches and personal interventions in the process of diversity management, but rather to explore the scope and content of the diversity managers’ agency power, resources, and strategies which manifest in their organisational change efforts.

Integrating diversity and organisational change efforts can enhance the success of most types of organisational change. All major organisational change involves a cultural change, and a diversity effort is cultural change at its core. According to Lapid-Bogda (1998) it requires an organisation to search its collective soul and focus on essential aspects of its culture: seminal values; organisational demands for conformity in thought, interpersonal style, and action; power structure and power dynamics; employee participation; and inclusion/exclusion issues, to name a few.

The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM, 2015) views the Lewin's calm water metaphor to organisational diversity as follows:

Lewin's Three-Step Change Process (1951)

**Unfreezing:** reduce forces maintaining the organisation's behaviour at its present level, often done by showing discrepancies between behaviours desired by organisation members and those behaviours currently exhibited.

**Change:** shift behaviour to a new level by intervening in the system to develop new behaviours, values, and attitudes through changes in structure and processes.

**Refreezing:** stabilise the organisation at a new state of equilibrium by using mechanisms the new state, i.e., cultures, norms, policies and structures.

### **Team Effectiveness**

Lapid-Bogda (1998) states that team effectiveness has even clearer diversity connections. For a team to develop and be effective, its members must find productive ways to both elicit and manage individual and subgroup differences. In any group development model, there is always some version of a "storming" stage fairly early in a group's development. The group must navigate this troublesome phase successfully to evolve toward more productive phases of development. Successful navigation cannot occur if differences are submerged or conformity is forced upon diverse members. To be effective means to acknowledge differences and to utilise them creatively to gain the team's objectives.

### **Organisational cultural shift**

In the case of a complex organisation change (for example, going from a production-driven to a marketing-driven focus or moving toward Total Quality), a fundamental shift in organisational culture must occur. A cultural change of this magnitude and complexity poses a major challenge for most organisations because of the ambiguity involved and the enormity of the task (Lapid-Bogda, 1998). An understanding of diversity enables organisations to find ways not to insist on conformity in a major change process, but to encourage employees to contribute, to take a fresh look, and to continuously evolve.

### Leadership and diversity management

Theories of leadership have neglected diversity issues. Chin (2010) comments that as the population within the United States and in countries throughout the world becomes increasingly diverse, the contexts in which leadership occurs within institutions and communities will also become increasingly diverse. Attention to diversity is not simply about representation of leaders from diverse groups in the ranks of leadership. Attention to diversity means paradigm shifts in our theories of leadership so as to make them inclusive; it means incorporating explanations of how dimensions of diversity shape our understanding of leadership. It means paying attention to the perceptions and expectations of diverse leaders by diverse followers and to how bias influences the exercise of leadership. Although leadership theories have evolved and reflect changing social contexts, they remain silent on issues of equity, diversity, and social justice. Theories of leadership need to be expanded to incorporate diversity if they are to be relevant for the 21<sup>st</sup> century amidst new social contexts, emerging global concerns, and changing population demographics.

Michaels (2015) stresses that a company's leadership defines the culture of an organisation. Senior leadership is responsible for ensuring that communication and company culture trickle downward to middle management and individual contributors in the company. Whether the concept is employee engagement, diversity management or anything else, senior leadership needs to actively pursue it, and believe in it, for it to succeed in the organisation. Senior-level managers have the most reach and power within an organisation, and their ideals travel downward throughout the organisation.



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### **Case Study 11: Managing Diversity from a Leadership Perspective**

A strong link exists between leadership and diversity. Leadership is about empowering people; bringing out the best in others. You bring out the best in people by making them feel accepted, respected and connected. When people feel good about themselves and the organisation, they perform better individually and as part of a team, resulting in an organisation that performs better. These are the same objectives and desired results of diversity strategies.

Merck has integrated its diversity initiatives with a leadership model designed to “promote and develop the leadership skills of all Merck people.” This model includes: accepting all differences and integrating all ideas, treating all employees with dignity and respect, and promoting collaboration with others and building effective working relationships. By using leadership as a way to foster and maintain diversity, Merck has been able to weave diversity into the fabric of its culture. These same values are embodied in the diversity strategies of many of the Top 50 Companies for Diversity and can be summarised as acceptance, respect and connection.

#### **Acceptance**

There was a time in this country’s history when it was a liability to be different; the objective at that time was assimilation. The thought was that our strength came from being the same. In light of a global market and economy, that concept is no longer applicable. Marcus Buckingham, in his book “Go Put Your Strengths to Work”, states that “true teamwork only occurs when a complimentary set of strengths come together in a coordinated whole.” Most teambuilding theories work from the same premise. With assimilation we lose individuality and that set of complementary strengths, and thus we lose the power of the team. By contrast, we gain more strength by accepting people with differences; differences in opinions, cultures, beliefs and education. If a person feels accepted they will be more motivated to support the organisation’s goals and mission.

#### **Respect**

The Golden Rule states we should treat people the way we would want to be treated. With so much diversity in our society, that rule often gets people into trouble. Not everyone wants to be treated the same way. In today’s world, respect includes treating people the way they want to be treated – what Dagit calls, the Platinum Rule.

Each and every person has something unique and special about them. Respect is also demonstrated by first acknowledge in then valuing those unique qualities and ultimately utilising the differences of individuals toward a common goal or mission. Some people show their gifts openly while others need a little more prodding. In order to bring these gifts to the surface, it sometimes requires taking the time to get to know people and listening to their viewpoints without letting ego or personal bias get in the way.

## **Connection**

The difference between a group of people and a team is connection. A group of people may work in the same office but they work independently, without interaction or reliance on each other. Individuals in the group are focused on achieving their own goals, and the goals of the organisation are secondary, if they come into play at all.

A team, on the other hand, is a group of individuals with common goals and objectives. They help and aid each other, working together toward the accomplishment of those goals and objectives. When people feel connected they can turn a group of disconnected individuals into a cohesive team striving toward the same goals. In this way each person, and thus the team, performs better and everyone benefits.

Using leadership skills to promote these simple values can have an incredible impact in creating an environment where everyone, regardless of who they are, where they were born or their educational background, feels welcomed and supported. This is an important key not only to managing diversity, but to retaining all employees.

## **Questions**

How does the concept of leadership model designed to “promote and develop the leadership skills of all Merck people” impact on effective management of diversity leadership? How does team building create better acceptance of workers? What is the importance of valuing the individual at work? How does the creation of a team foster leadership and diversity at work?

## **The Transformational Leadership Style**

In assessing the leadership styles of managers in diversity, the two latest but common styles of leadership area addressed here. Transformation leadership is often identified as the single most effective style. The style was first described in the late 1970s and later expanded upon by researcher Bernard M. Bass. Some of the key characteristics of his style of leadership are the abilities to motivate and inspire followers and to direct positive changes in groups. Cherry (2015) states that transformational leaders tend to be emotionally intelligent, energetic, and passionate. They are not only committed to helping the group achieve its goals, but also to helping group members fulfil their potential. Research has revealed that this style of leadership is linked to higher performance and improved group satisfaction than other leadership styles. A study also found that transformation leadership was linked to improved well-being among group members.

### Application to workplace diversity

This style applies better to organisations that are flexible and open to change. Companies that operate in competitive environments are likely to have transformational leaders. In diversity, transformational leaders must pay respect to the culture of their employees and try to bring and mould them in their business so that they will better respond to change or evolution. The valuing of differences and the effort of converging the differences will be an added value to diversity management.

### The Transactional Leadership Style

The other style is transactional leadership which views the leader-follower relationship as a transaction. By accepting a position as a member of the group, the individual has agreed to obey the leader. In most situations, this involves the employer-employee relationship and the transaction focuses on the follower completing required tasks in exchanged for monetary compensation.

One of the key benefits of transactional leadership, according to Cherry (2015) is that it creates clearly defined roles. People know what they are required to do and what they will be receiving in exchange for completing these tasks. It also allows leaders to offer a great deal of supervision and direction if it is needed. Group members may also be motivated to perform well in order to receive rewards. One of the biggest downsides is that the transactional style tends to stifle creativity and out-of-the-box thinking.

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### **Application to workplace diversity**

This style might be more applicable to diversity in established organisations-local or foreign-where there is a culture of productivity and reward. Transactional leaders are more likely to succeed when their employees coming from a diverse environment might not communicate too well but can follow the directives. Foreign employees might be initially more open to this situation but eventually, as their business flourishes, transactional leadership might no more apply.

### **Motivation in diversity**

In line with leadership, motivation is another key aspect to discuss in this chapter. It starts from an unfulfilled need to searching behaviour, creating desire, taking the appropriate action to fulfil the need and be ultimately capable of overcoming frustration. This might apply to workplace diversity by encouraging all forms of the diverse workforce to feel motivated. This is basically a satisfaction-dissatisfaction issue if compared with Herzberg's classical two-factor motivation-hygiene theory. Employees might initially cater to the workplace basics namely the hygiene factors and ultimately move to the intrinsic ones.

Diversity managers are expected to create motivation among their staff. This is particularly achievable if all employees embrace diversity and feel part of the team. It is also up to the diversity manager to create conditions whereby the employee feels at home while working (Mc Gregor's Theory Y). The concept of rewards needs to apply correctly and ethically when one deals with motivation in diversity. A chart provided in this chapter explained the need for inclusion when one thinks of rewarding in diversity.

Morgan (2015) claims that many people think diversity in the workplace refers mainly to gender and race, but diversity also refers to differences in age, culture, religion, sexual orientation and physical ability. The contemporary perspective on workplace diversity also recognises individual differences in temperament and other personal qualities. All this creates quite the challenge for managers who must motivate their staff.

### **Managing diversity**

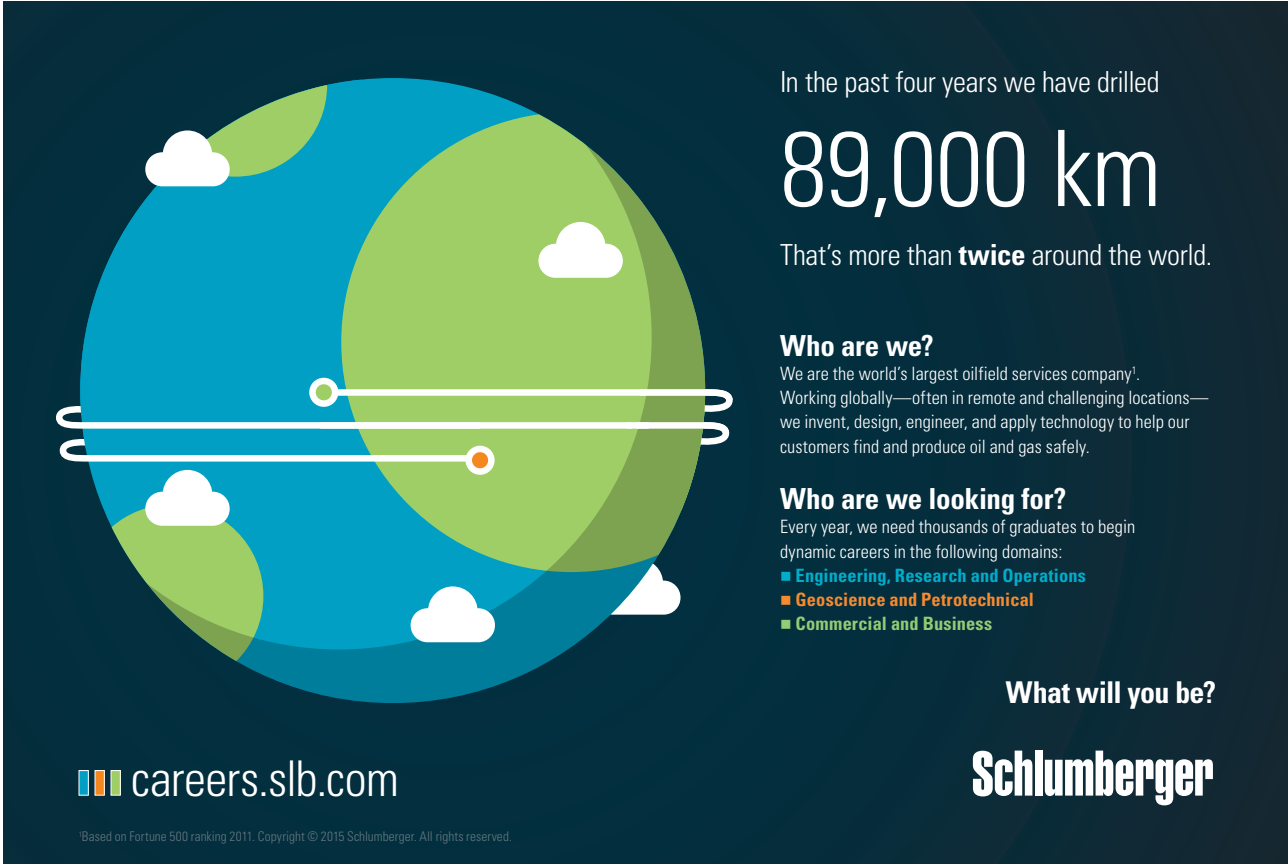
Understanding motivation requires understanding how to manage diversity. Every employee has his own background, beliefs, attitudes, values and way of thinking. One might be motivated by financial rewards, another by perks, still another by job quality. To further complicate matters, motivations change as employees' age or change roles. Rather than treat everyone the same or apply broad assumptions, managers must understand what makes each employee unique and build on those strengths (Morgan, 2015).

### Never assume

Managers should never assume they know what works for everyone. They must pay attention to what employees say and do, which often reveals an employee's work ethic, drive and sensibilities. According to Morgan (2015), it should not be assumed, for example, that all employees like to be praised publicly. Some are shy. Others balk at public praise because of religious or cultural beliefs. When in doubt, ask employees what simple things you can do to help encourage and motivate them.

### Tap into teamwork

Teams, particularly those comprised of people from diverse backgrounds, offer more perspectives and ideas than any one person. Building a teamwork culture into your workplace reinforces the idea that various perspectives are valued. Morgan (2015) comments that the key to building motivated teams is to foster openness, mutual trust, respect and commitment to the ideas being presented. When individuals feel they are contributing, they are more likely to see a project through to the best of their abilities.



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### **Motivating different generations**

With as many as four generations working together, understanding what drives each is important. According to Rosa Schmidt of the Rutgers University Centre for Management Development, Millennials, born between 1980 and 2000, have a strong focus on civic duty, a need for achievement and the ability to multitask. Members of Generation X, born between 1960 and 1980, want to learn and be challenged. Baby Boomers, born between 1943 and 1960, want to be valued for their contributions. Those born between 1922 and 1943 tend to be hard workers who respect authority. It is important that managers understand the needs and priorities of each type of employee and understand what motivates them (Morgan, 2015).

### **Conclusion**

This chapter explained the managerial approach to diversity based from the key management functions of planning, organising, controlling and leading. Diversity managers must understand how to set objectives and goals for their employees where their plans must correctly anticipate problems that might be affected by the non-inclusion of the diverse workforce. Organising for diversity mainly concerns managing change and organisational development. Change is both an advantage and a challenge for diversity managers but the benefit that they obtain from developing human resources in this context is important. Employees adapt to change successfully within diversity. Another aspect dealt with leadership through a comparison of transactional and transformational leaders. The leadership styles will differ according to contexts though transformational leadership might claim better value in diversity management. By empowering workers to perform better within a structure that praises diversity is something of paramount importance to a firm's success. Finally, the concept of motivation in diversity was briefly addressed. Motivation aims at bringing satisfaction both through intrinsic and extrinsic rewards. It is an imperative for the diversity manager to consider the importance of employee motivation in diversity management.

### **Practice Questions**

1. Why should managers practise diversity?
2. How can planning relate to managerial diversity?
3. How does organising for change impact workplace diversity?
4. What control mechanisms can be applied to diversity?
5. Do managers need to adopt an autocratic style of leadership to manage diversity?
6. How might teamwork impact on management of diversity?
7. What is the importance of transactional leadership in diversity? Where does it apply?
8. Where could transformational leadership apply to workplace diversity?
9. Why should workers be motivated at work?
10. How might Herzberg's theory of motivation apply to diversity?

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# 12 Human Resource Management in Workplace Diversity

## Introduction

After assessing the importance of management and leadership in diversity, this chapter appraises the importance of the human resource management function in diversity. Scholars have regularly made the link between human resource management and diversity stating that it is up to human resource managers to seek responsibility in diversity management. Human resource management could be defined as that specialised management function dealing with recruitment and selection, training and development, performance management and employee welfare with the perspective of bringing the best talent in the organisation to achieve the corporate goals of the firm. Human resource management is now viewed as pivotal to a firm's advancement with the need to place human resource policies and practices atop the organisations agendas.



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Recruitment is one of those important aspects that managers and leaders consider as part of their diversity management strategy. It is said that the quality of recruitment will impact the organisation. High calibre managers are likely to influence the firm's future direction and sustain its development in the competitive environment in which we are living today. Big companies are already seeking highly qualified employees which they believe are the resources that should be tapped and developed in the company. Recruitment can also be viewed as the first step in the development of talent in the firm.

Recruitment is a three-step exercise where talent is initially located from a certain environment where labour is available. It is then identified where the company streamlines the type or quality of labour that it needs. Finally the company has to attract the employee by offering him or the conditions where the worker can develop his talents.

Recruitment is expensive if the best talents in diversity have to be sourced out. It requires time and patience to scrutinise the potential employees, find out what they can best offer and contribute to the firm and find out the gaps between the existing skills and what could be done to improve them by bridging such gaps.

Training is another key aspect of human resource management and this impacts on diversity at work. Training aims at the improvement of knowledge, skills and attitudes needed for the job. In a diverse workforce, training aims at bringing a potential for high performance level in firms. This will be much dependent on the outcomes of diversity training. In such a case, trainers are expected to show to what extent they can embrace diversity while inculcating the rights tools to their trainees. The effectiveness of training programmes in diversity will be a critical factor in bringing diversity and high level of commonality among the employees.

Performance management is also a key component of human resource management. From an initial perspective, it was said that engaging a diverse workforce bring high levels of performance. To ensure that performance is maintained and consistently improved in the organisation, it is essential to think of reward strategies that benefit diversity. Employees who are rewarded on bases of equality and fairness regarding their contribution are surely the better advocates of diversity.

Employee welfare could also be addressed regarding workplace diversity. The provision of welfare facilities at work coupled with employee benefits adds great value to the human resource management function while at the same time sees that diversity is respected regardless of differences. Welfare might mean the engagement of employees in social activities of the firm but also how the company caters to the welfare of its employees. The provision of pensions, healthcare benefits, recreational facilities, etc. are illustrations where human resource management can positively contribute to diversity.

## Recruitment and Diversity

A company's diversity plan should cover a number of areas, all of which point toward using differences in skills, experience and ideas to reach the company's business goals. Recruitment is one aspect of that plan, but it should also include retention practices, diversity training for management and line staff, community outreach and workplace flexibility arrangements, among other things. Managing growth in workforce diversity and increasing the representation of women and minorities is a critical human resource management strategy of recruitment and selection for most organisations (Thomas and Ely 1996).

In recruiting for diversity, Ogunjimi (2015) suggests a series of key steps. Firstly, a company should determine whether internal employees can be groomed for the positions they want to fill first. Businesses must design materials, such as brochures and websites, to attract the type of employees specified in their diversity recruitment plan. Ogunjimi (2015) stresses that managers must boast their company's commitment to diversity, employee perks and flexible work arrangements. They can next determine which processes they will use to find candidates, what criteria will be used to select candidates and the hiring budget. At this stage, employers must begin sourcing, that is, reviewing contacts to see whether they can recommend candidates based on their insider knowledge of their company's needs.

The Department of Veteran Affairs (2010) states that diversity is the cornerstone of effective human capital management in the century. In order to become a high performing organisation in this millennium, businesses must tap into the rich diversity of talent, skills, and perspectives of their increasingly global community. To assist in this effort, hiring officials are encouraged to proactively engage in recruitment outreach, to utilize varied recruitment sources, and to consider special hiring authorities/appointments and internship programs when filling positions.

### Key questions regarding recruitment in diversity

While recruiting for diversity, human resource managers may find themselves in a compromising position regarding diversity. There might be a variety of questions being raised and they have to be correctly addressed. The MDB Group (2014) has identified a checklist worth considering prior to recruiting a diverse workforce. The arguments are listed in the box below.

- Difficulty attracting a sufficiently-diverse set of candidates.
- People of different, non-majority cultural backgrounds are not being selected to fill open positions.
- Representation of Women, People of Colour, or other non-majority groups is low in parts of, or the entire organisation.
- A lawsuit settlement requires improvements in the organisation's diversity recruiting strategy.
- It takes a long time to create diverse slates of candidates.
- Need for more-effective metrics by which to manage the organisation's diversity recruiting work.
- The Board of Directors has asked what is being done to improve diversity and inclusion in the organisation.

Diversity recruitment and retention plans are major tools for effecting lasting changes in the workplace. Meeting the diversity challenges for the recruitment and retention of a diverse workforce can be difficult because of systemic obstacles, lack of cultural knowledge, resistance to change, and acknowledged and unacknowledged intolerance (University of Vermont Workforce Diversity Recruitment, 2013). Retention is an additional key component to the success of diversifying the institution's workforce. An intact retention effort creates and sustains the change that enables an inclusive and respectful workforce to flourish. Accordingly, businesses must create an environment where everyone feels appreciated and accepted. This environment supports diversity and fosters mutual respect, and in turn will improve retention levels of diverse members of an organisation.

### Selection and Diversity

Selection is the process – based on filtering techniques that ensure added value – of choosing a qualified candidate for a position. Selection is the process of choosing a qualified person for specific role who can successfully deliver valuable contributions to the organisation. The term “selection” can be applied to many aspects of the process, such as recruitment, hiring, and acculturation. However, it most commonly refers to the selection of workers (Boundless, 2015).

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The University of Bristol (2014) in its recruitment and selection strategy claims that there is still a need to ensure discrimination and stereotyping play no part in the recruitment and selection process. But as important is valuing differences between people and understanding the positive benefits for the University of employing a diverse range of talented people. A positive approach to diversity allows an employer to select the best person for the job based on merit alone and free from bias on the grounds of factors such as age, disability, gender or race that are not relevant to the person's ability to do the job.

The interview process serves two primary purposes namely allowing the search committee to assess candidates' qualifications for the desired position and secondly, allowing candidates to assess their interest in employment. The University of Iowa selection checklist (2015) highlights key issues that are worth asking at the time of selecting candidates for diversity.

- Avoid compartmentalising questions about fairness, equity, and affirmative action as if they were separate from issues regarding effective management, leadership, and planning.
- Make a conscious effort to share responsibility for questions regarding diversity ensures that diversity issues will be raised regardless of the gender and racial makeup of the search committee.
- Identify questions which address specific areas of concern for the department/unit such as retention, recruitment, or conflict resolution.
- Identify quantifiable information about the candidates' work in the areas of diversity and inclusion.
- Solicit information from the candidate about specific studies, policies, procedures, or programs they have initiated to further develop the campus or workplace as a diverse environment, and ask for a statement of initiatives they would propose if appointed.

### **Training and Diversity**

The most widely used tool among organisations in managing diversity is training (Cox and Blake, 1991). The purpose of diversity training is to give awareness to workers and facilitate the integration of diversity in organisations. In addition, organisations also value diversity training as a platform to make better decisions on diversity policy. Cox and Blake (1991) remark that it is important to treat training as an on-going education process rather than one-shot seminar. As such, organisations need to develop training programmes that cover all levels of workers in the organisation. The training should be a continual process, which includes new workers and existing workers.

Diversity training in the workplace is extremely beneficial to an organisation. Aside from the benefits to the employees and clients and customers, employers that offer diversity training in the workplace could have an easier time making a case for the organisation in a discrimination suit. If an organisation is making a concentrated attempt at maintaining a diverse team, including offering non-mandated diversity training in the workplace, that organisation will likely look more favourable to a judge than an organisation that does not make this effort.

Workplace Answers (2015) explains that employees who receive thorough diversity training in the workplace are more likely to:

- Build relationships with co-workers who are of a different gender, culture, socio economic status and/or background.
- Approach challenges with clients or customers in a more creative way, understanding that different people see things different ways.
- Feel valued as an employee by management if he or she happens to be a different race, gender, age, etc. than the majority of the other employees in the organization.

In addition to the benefits employees will receive from diversity training in the workplace, there are benefits to clients and customers as well. Clients and customers prefer to work with organisations they feel connected to in some way, and the more diverse an organisation is, the more clients or customers that organisation will be able to reach. Organisations that have a more diverse team will also be able to offer a wider variety of services, as the different backgrounds of each person allows for different sets of skills.

High quality diversity awareness training is one Human Resource function that enhances the effective integration of diverse group members. Awareness training builds a common understanding of the value of diversity, assisting in building social cohesion so that it improves individual and organisational outcomes. According to Shen et al, (2009), education and training should be tailored to the specific needs of the organisation, division, level, team or individuals. Critical to the success of education and training is the important step of linking training to the strategic objectives of the organisation.

### **Benefits of diversity training**

Workplace diversity training is an investment benefiting employees, hence an investment in the company. Cultural awareness serves as a bridge between employees whose paths might not otherwise cross. Holt (2015) explains that diversity training benefits a workplace by allowing employees to let their guards down and build healthy business relationships, as well as decreasing at-work bullying and discrimination. The plans turn complacent employees into passionate, well-adjusted and comfortable employees by decreasing non-work-related pressures, according to the Greater Rochester Diversity Council. Diversity training further improves the quality of work put out by employees. It produces a happier staff and, in turn, increases productivity.

### **Performance Appraisal and Diversity**

Employee Performance Management is defined as a process for establishing a shared workforce understanding about what is to be achieved at an organisation level (PeoleStreme, 2013). It is about aligning the organisational objectives with the employees' agreed measures, skills, competency requirements, development plans and the delivery of results. The emphasis is on improvement, learning and development in order to achieve the overall business strategy and to create a high performance workforce.

An effective Performance Management process establishes the groundwork for excellence by:

- Linking individual employee objectives with the organisation's mission and strategic plans. The employee has a clear concept on how they contribute to the achievement the overall business objective,
- Focusing on setting clear performance objectives and expectations through the use of results, actions and behaviours,
- Defining clear development plans as part of the process, and
- Conducting regular discussions throughout the performance cycle which include such things as coaching, mentoring, feedback and assessment.

### Performance Metrics in diversity

Diversity historically has been considered a soft skill and part of the human resources domain. Traditional or foundational metrics include numbers related to workforce representation, dollars spent with women and minority businesses, and the documentation of diversity activities and training. Brenman (2012) comments that as diversity has been redefined as a strategic business advantage, measurements have become more sophisticated with quantitative and qualitative measurements tied to business goals. Metrics today measure revenue growth, improved productivity, leadership accountability and a financial return on investment. Diversity is now being measured with the same kind of scrutiny that business operations have always used.



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Performance metrics include employee satisfaction and diversity that address different dimensions of employee satisfaction: business issues, diversity, empowerment, job and company, quality, reward and recognition, stress, workgroup and teamwork, and workload. Assessment by experts can help determine non-quantifiable results (Brenman, 2012). Proxy measures can also be used when it is difficult or impossible to measure direct or core results.

### **Providing feedback on performance**

In diversity management, it is important to provide feedback to employees. Performance metrics state that evaluation of employees with regards to diversity have provided interesting results. The HR Council, Canada (2015) explains that positive feedback involves telling someone about good performance. Employers must make this feedback timely, specific and frequent. Recognition for effective performance is a powerful motivator. Constructive feedback alerts an individual to an area in which performance could improve. It is descriptive and should always be directed to the action, not the person. The main purpose of constructive feedback is to help people understand where they stand in relation to expected and/or productive job and workplace behaviour.

Often, it is the positive and supportive feedback that is most readily and easily shared, while finding the right way to provide constructive feedback to address a particular performance issue can be more daunting. If an employee is not meeting performance expectations, managers need to provide constructive and honest feedback. It is important to do this when an issue first arises – before it escalates into a significant problem.

Regarding diversity, an absence of feedback or simply a poor feedback mechanism might have some effect on minorities. Philippe (2014) advocates that “one size does not fit all” in performance management if you want to maintain a productive diverse workforce. Many employees in the minority groups feel that they must do so much more than their non-minority counterparts to receive the same level of recognition. Effective orientation and integration starting at hiring plays a huge part in long term success. Managers of people in minority groups need to be made aware that performance management must take into consideration differences; and if a minority employee is not performing well, the root cause for that outcome can often be misdiagnosed. To ensure a diverse, productive, and engaged workforce, performance management must be seen as a multi-faceted tool that capitalises on differences (Philippe, 2014).

### **Case Study 12: Setting Performance Metrics in Workplace Diversity at Sodexo**

Sodexo, based in Gaithersburg, Md., recently ranked sixth on Diversity Inc’s list of top 50 Companies for Diversity. Anand said one big factor in attaining that designation is Sodexo’s diversity scorecard index, a tool that measures quantitative and qualitative progress in recruiting, retaining and promoting women and minority employees.

Sodexo's qualitative metrics have "rigour around them, are measurable and get at the behaviour change and outcomes we are after," Anand said. These include good faith efforts to build a diverse and inclusive workplace and include measures such as diversity-related training participation rates, networking group participation, and achievement of diversity council objectives, affirmative action goal attainment, and the like.

In 2002, Sodexo made the strategic decision to begin holding managers and executives accountable for diversity when it began linking scorecard results to a significant portion of management bonuses that can range from 10 to 15 percent of the total bonus for managers and 25 percent of the total bonus for the executive team.

She noted that bonuses for diversity and inclusion efforts are "decoupled from the finances of the company" and paid regardless of company financial results in any given year.

"We believe that this is a long-term commitment and a journey," Anand noted. 'If sales are down or if the economy is poor, you can't stop your focus on diversity and inclusion or you'll lose ground and traction. If anything, such times are when organisations really need to focus on diversity and inclusion because doing so perhaps can help to pull you out of a downturn or a sales slump.'

As for the results, Anand said the percentage of minority employees at the company has increased 23 percent since the diversity scorecard and accountability programme was implemented, while the percentage of female employees has risen 11 percent.

Source: *Brennan, M. (2012) Diversity Metrics, Measurement, and Evaluation.*

## Questions

Why is the use of metric to measure performance linked with diversity difficult? What are the positive outcomes of performance management in diversity? How may bad economic conditions affect the performance scores of employees? How have minorities reacted in relation to performance evaluation metric at Sodexo?

## Employee Welfare and diversity

Employee welfare is a term including various services, benefits and facilities offered to employees by the employers. The welfare measures need not be monetary but in any kind/forms. This includes items such as allowances, housing, transportation, medical insurance and food (JetHR, 2013). Employee welfare also includes monitoring of working conditions, creation of industrial harmony through infrastructure for health, industrial relations and insurance against disease, accident and unemployment for the workers and their families. Through such generous benefits the employer makes life worth living for employees.

### How Employee Welfare benefits the organisation

The features of employee welfare must be firstly known before we can consider how it should impact on workplace diversity. Jet HR (2013) explains the key features of employee welfare.

- Employee welfare is a comprehensive term including various services, facilities and amenities provided to employees for their betterment.
- Welfare measures are in addition to regular wages and other economic benefits available to employees under legal provisions and collective bargaining.
- The basic purpose of employee welfare is to improve the lot of the working class and thereby make a worker a good employee and a happy citizen.
- Employee welfare is an essential part of social welfare. It involves adjustment of an employee's work life and family life to the community or social life.
- Welfare measures may be both voluntary and statutory.

### Employee Welfare and Diversity: Case Examples

This section concludes this chapter on employee welfare and the management of diversity. A few case examples illustrate how three selected international companies cater to providing welfare while working with a diverse and culturally-varied workforce.

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### ***Sony and work-life balance***

Sony promotes a variety of career support measures for employees trying to balance the demands of child care (or nursing care) and work. Of particular note, Sony holds forums and seminars for employees featuring messages of support for work-life balance initiatives from top management. One example is the Working Parent Forum, during which female and male employees with experience in combining work and child rearing share personal experiences (CSR Reporting, 2012). Another is the Fathers' Forum, which provides an opportunity for male employees to consider how they can better participate in child rearing and features a panel discussion by male employees with direct experience.

### ***Global Diversity and Inclusion at Microsoft***

At Microsoft, management believes that its continued success depends on the diverse skills, experiences, and backgrounds that its employees bring to the company. To help foster diversity and inclusion, Microsoft has a rich community of Employee Resource Groups (ERG) and Employee Networks (EN). These organisations provide career development, support, networking opportunities, mentoring, community participation, product input, and assistance in activities that promote cultural awareness. Their programmes include speaker series, scholarship programmes, community service, development conferences, and heritage celebrations (Microsoft, 2015).

## Conclusion

Human resource management has close links with diversity management in that all the key functions of the discipline deal with diversity. Recruitment and selection must embrace diversity since potential employees come from a global environment with differences in terms of race, culture, religion, beliefs and values. It is common to see organisations recruiting foreign people given that they have the abilities to work correctly. Training and development are other important areas of human resource management. Both managers and employees should be provided with training in diversity where they will learn to better cope with different employees and see that people feel included within the work environment. The problem arising from lack of training might state that employee still consider personal differences at work and hold prejudicial statements of others.

Performance appraisal has its say in the context of human resource management for diversity. Performance management can be undertaken by selecting one of the different methods like 360 degree feedback, the written essay, self-appraisal or modern performance management systems. Yet, performance metrics are modes of assessing how well diversity is integrated into performance. For instance, what about the particular requirements of a group? How to value others in a context of appraisal. The end result could be that employees feel included in diversity if their differences are valued in the management of performance.

Another area of human resource management in diversity could come from employee welfare. Large established companies value employee welfare in that it brings a greater sense of belonging to the organisation. By providing adequate benefits, facilities at work, fringe benefits, healthcare, companies might ensure good work life balance in diversity which is in turn something of added value to the organisation.

## Practice Questions

1. How does human resource management impact workplace diversity?
2. What is the relation between effective recruitment and diversity?
3. How can a human resource manager use suitable questions on selecting for diversity?
4. Why is it important to train managers in diversity?
5. What is the challenge of training managers in diversity?
6. How can training in diversity help develop an inclusive workforce?
7. What is the importance of using metrics in performance management?
8. How can a manager integrate employee welfare with diversity?
9. How can companies use corporate social responsibility as part of welfare diversity?
10. What challenge could exist by developing employee welfare in diversity?



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# 13 LGBT Issues in Workplace Diversity

## Introduction

If an individual was considered “gay” in the past, he/she would be subject to criticism, more in the form of mockery. This was broadly viewed as ‘uncatholic’ in societies where people were expected to follow the common norms and mores like growing up, getting married and having children according to society’s established ways of living. Anything viewed outside this context would be highly criticised hence discarded by most of the members. This unconventional behaviour could be associated with people liking and living with those of the same sex-whether they could be both men and women. This later included people who are transgender like a male-looking individual having female genital organs or vice-versa. There are also people who could love both men and women known as bisexuals.

Coming back to the discussion dealing with diversity, it can be generally claimed that organisations ignore the issue thinking that all workers are at least “morally correct”. Any behaviour that would go against conventional ones would be immediately looked down upon. But how is this possible at the workplace when people might be overly hesitant to state that their sexual behaviour is totally different from the rest? It can be broadly known male employees who have a more feminine attitude than others could be considered as “sissy” and be the centre of mockery or fun with the other colleagues.

Being gay, lesbian or transsexual are terms that are usually less spoken at work although progress has been made on this issue regarding the need to overcome discrimination and see things in a positive manner. It is essentially the effort of pressure groups or non-governmental organisations that have been at the forefront of claiming that people can live in the way they like and have their sexual behaviour as intimately as possible without causing any trouble to the workforce. It is a known fact that homosexuals might have their own attitude to living and sexual activities yet, there are illustrations to show how well they have performed at work.

The problem is that most societies-advanced or developing-show hindrance towards the lesbian, gay, homosexuals, etc. with the belief that their sexual behaviour is antisocial hence reprehensible for society. In this way, discrimination is omnipresent and the pressure of being stigmatised by those who claim to be “normal” might be overwhelming. Else, nations have also incensed the debate by stating clearly and openly that it is morally wrong to be engaged in other behaviour apart from heterosexual one. Countries like France and the United Kingdom might still show hindrance and have laws to criminalise non-heterosexual behaviour while developing nations like Uganda or Sudan have stated that there is lapidating or even stoning if people are caught behaving differently from what is normally permitted by law and religion.

There are efforts undertaken by organisations that show responsibility and accountability in this aspect. Some companies clearly mention that they will fight back discrimination and stigmatisation against those likely to offend and criticise homosexuals and people classified in the related context. It is however right to say that sexual differences are already discriminated but are not likely to impact at work. People of any gender or behaviour might act privately according to their will but have no effect on affecting the other workers. Rather, they feel highly discriminated and even prevented from opportunities to progress at work. This is where the importance of respecting diversity arises and how we should welcome such employees within diversity.

This chapter along with the next one covers contemporary issues in diversity by welcoming new types of diversity that are broadly spoken but not considered with enough importance. In this contemporary context of workplace diversity, new types of diversity do impact globally and need to be effectively addressed else they might remain issues without a proper outcome.

### **Definition of LGBT**

International Spectrum (2015) defines the acronym refers to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender. Although all of the different identities within “LGBT” are often lumped together (and share sexism as a common root of oppression), there are specific needs and concerns related to each individual identity.

Bua (2014) explains that for anyone under 30, it may be difficult to imagine a time when the gay-rights movement was not operating at a milestone-a-minute pace. Just 45 years ago gays had little choice but quietly rise above the separate-but-inherently-unequal pre-Stonewall era. People who lived during these times were warriors on the front lines of history, but today the pace of change threatens to wash away the past in the eyes of a new generation.

### **A brief history of LGBT**

Morris (2015) provided an account of the history of LGBT. Some of his key findings and arguments are discussed. The author states that most historians agree that there is evidence of homosexual activity and same-sex love, whether such relationships were accepted or persecuted, in every documented culture.

### **Europe and homosexuality**

There was little formal study of homosexuality before the 19th century, however. Early efforts to understand the range of human sexual behaviour came from European doctors and scientists, including Sigmund Freud and Magnus Hirschfield. Their writings were sympathetic to the concept of a homosexual or bisexual orientation occurring naturally in an identifiable segment of humankind, and Freud himself did not consider homosexuality an illness or a crime (Morris, 2015).

### **United States and homosexuality**

Morris (2015) comments that in the United States, few attempts were made to create advocacy groups supporting gay and lesbian relationships until after World War II, although pre-war gay life flourished in urban centres such as Greenwich Village and Harlem during the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s. Greater awareness, coupled with Senator Joseph McCarthy's investigation of homosexuals holding government jobs during the early 1950s, led to the first American-based political demands for fair treatment in mental health, public policy, and employment.

### **Advances in the 1950s and 1960s**

The primary organisation acknowledging gay men as an oppressed cultural minority was the Mattachine Society, founded in 1950 by Harry Hay and Chuck Rowland. Other important homophile organisations on the West Coast included One, Inc., founded in 1952, and the first lesbian support network, Daughters of Bilitis, founded in 1955 by Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin. Through meetings and publications, these groups offered information and outreach to thousands. These first organisations soon found support from prominent sociologists and psychologists. In 1951, Donald Webster Cory published *The Homosexual in America* (Cory, 1951), asserting that gay men and lesbians were a legitimate minority group, and in 1953, But it would not be until 1973 that the American Psychiatric Association removed homosexuality as an 'illness' classification in its diagnostic manuals. Bederman (2010) coins that in 1952, the Immigration and Naturalisation Act of 1952 explicitly forbade to those with "psychopathic personality" – which the PHS assured Congress included "homosexuality or sexual perversion" – from entering the country, or becoming citizens. Throughout the 1950s and 60s, gay men and lesbians continued to be at risk for psychiatric lockup and jail and for losing jobs or child custody when courts and clinics defined gay love as sick, criminal, or immoral. Bederman (2010) further points out that between 1946 and 1967, hundreds of LGBT persons were arrested each year for sodomy or attempted sodomy, and thousands for lesser offences like "cruising," propositioning an undercover policeman or woman, wearing sex-inappropriate clothing and being present in a gay or lesbian bar during a raid. Newspapers routinely printed the names of those arrested, who frequently lost their jobs as a result.

### **The gay liberation movement**

Morris (2015) comments that the gay liberation movement of the 1970s saw myriad political organisations spring up, often at odds with one another. Frustrated with the male leadership of most gay liberation groups, lesbians formed their own collectives, record labels, music festivals, newspapers, bookstores, and publishing houses and called for lesbian rights in mainstream feminist groups like the National Organisation for Women (NOW). Expanding religious acceptance for gay men and women of faith, the first out gay minister was ordained by the United Church of Christ in 1972. Other gay and lesbian church and synagogue congregations soon followed.

### 1980s through today

Through the 1980s, as the gay male community was decimated by the AIDS epidemic, demands for compassion and medical funding led to renewed coalitions between men and women as well as angry street theatre by groups like AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP) and Queer Nation. Morris (2015) comments that enormous marches on Washington drew as many as 1 million gay rights supporters in 1987 and again in 1993. Celebrity performers, both gay and heterosexual, have been among the most vocal activists, calling for tolerance and equal rights.

As a result of hard work by countless organisations and individuals, helped by Internet and direct-mail campaign networking, the 21st century heralded new legal gains for gay and lesbian couples. Same-sex civil unions were recognised under Vermont law in 2000, and Massachusetts became the first state to perform same-sex marriages in 2003. With the end of state sodomy laws (*Lawrence v. Texas*, 2003), gay Americans were finally free from criminal classification. Gay marriage is now legal in the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, and Canada, although the recognition of gay marriage by church and state continues to divide opinion worldwide.

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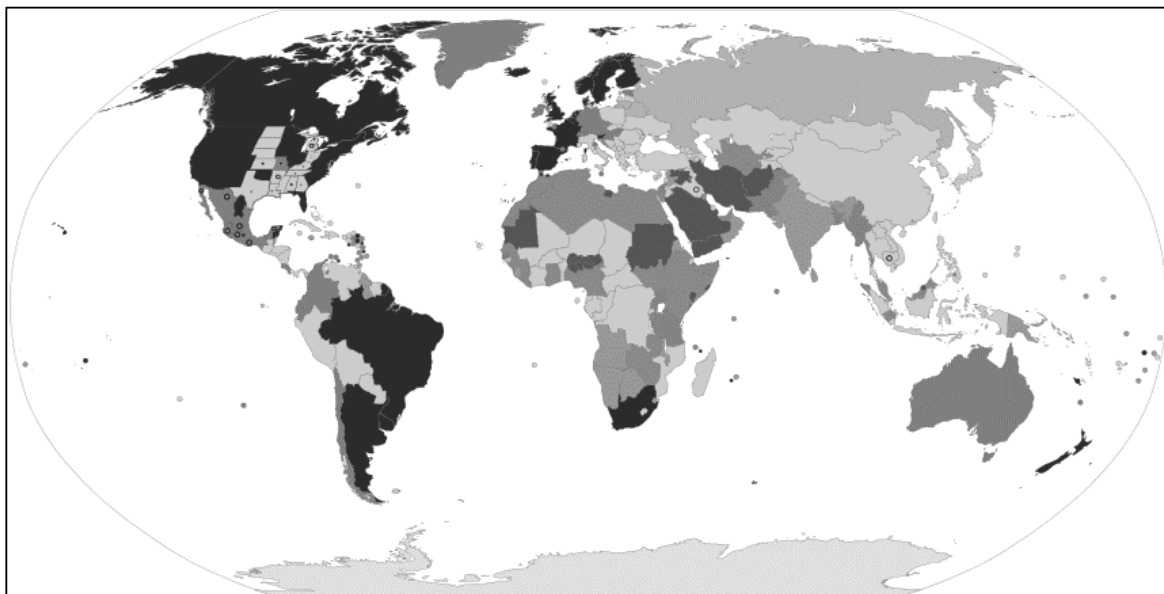
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### Gay rights in developing countries – Views of African leaders

The Economist (2010) states that Some 80 countries criminalise consensual homosexual sex. Over half rely on “sodomy” laws left over from British colonialism. But many are trying to make their laws even more repressive. A draconian bill proposed in Uganda would dole out jail sentences for failing to report gay people to the police and could impose the death penalty for gay sex if one of the participants is HIV-positive. In March 2010, Zimbabwe’s president, Robert Mugabe, who once described gay people as worse than dogs or pigs, ruled out constitutional changes outlawing discrimination based on sexual orientation.

In many former colonies, denouncing homosexuality as an “unAfrican” Western import has become an easy way for politicians to boost both their popularity and their nationalist credentials. But Peter Tatchell, a veteran gay-rights campaigner, says the real import into Africa is not homosexuality but politicised homophobia. George Kunda, Zambia’s vice-president, lambasted gay people, saying they undermined the country’s Christian values and that sadism and Satanism could be the result.



An illustration of the world’s view on LGBT

Darkest shading represent nations that are more tolerant to LGBT issues and grey shadings represent countries where there is law enforcement and imprisonment. Countries like Uganda, Sudan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Mauritania, among others may enforce death penalty.

Source: GNU Free Documentation

South Africa was the first country anywhere to ban homophobic discrimination in its constitution. It is the only country in Africa to allow gay marriage. In April 2008 Eudy Simelane, a South African football player who was a lesbian, was gang-raped and stabbed to death. Two men were convicted of her murder but, in his sentencing, the judge denied that Ms Simelane's sexuality played a part in the crime (The Economist, 2010).

The Economist (2010) concludes that hopes rose a little in June 2009 when India overturned its 149-year-old sodomy law but since then the global trend seems to have been in the opposite direction. Campaigners argue the proposed laws have implications beyond gay rights. How countries treat one particularly vulnerable group is a good measure of how they will act towards the rest of their citizens.

### A selection of developing nations and their attitude to homosexuality

Country	Status	Penalty or sanction
Iran	Illegal	Death for men, slashes for women
Malaysia	Illegal	Fine, imprisonment up to 20 years
Morocco	Illegal	Fine, up to 5 years prison
Nigeria	Illegal under sharia	Death for men, 50 lashes for women, elsewhere 14 years of prison
South Africa	Legal since 1994	Beatings, rape or murder outside penal sanctions
Uganda	Illegal	Life imprisonment
Zimbabwe	Male illegal	Up to one year prison

Source: *International LGBT and Intersex Association (2010)*

### LGBT and workplace diversity

For companies seeking to incorporate LGBT equality into their workplace inclusion and diversity strategies, there are two critical areas where small changes can have a significant impact: Recruitment and Retention.

#### Recruitment

LGBT employees who work just as hard as their non-LGBT counterparts face multiple barriers to fair and equal treatment – barriers that make it harder for LGBT workers to find and keep good jobs; and barriers that prevent LGBT workers from accessing the same job-related benefits as their non-LGBT co-workers, putting LGBT workers and their families at risk (Map, 2015). Freedom to Work (2013) supports the idea that LGBT workers face discrimination that makes it harder for them to find and keep good jobs, earn a living, and provide for themselves and their families. This discrimination includes:

#### *Bias and Discrimination in Recruitment and Hiring*

LGBT workers can put their job prospects at risk if they disclose that they are LGBT while looking for work.



### ***On-the-Job Inequality and Unfair Firing***

An LGBT employee may be in a workplace that is blatantly hostile, one that condones anti-gay or anti-transgender jokes and slurs, and/or one where employers look the other way and allow a discriminatory climate to flourish. A 2011 survey found that 58% of LGB workers and 78% of transgender workers had heard offensive remarks or jokes at work. A different survey found 26% of transgender workers were unfairly fired because they were transgender and 47% said they had experienced an adverse job outcome, such as being fired, not hired, or denied a promotion (Freedom to work, 2013).

### ***Wage Gaps and Penalties***

In addition to job and workplace discrimination, LGBT employees face wage disparities that make it harder for them to provide for themselves and their families. Polls show that individuals who self-identify as LGBT are more likely to report incomes of less than \$24,000 per year, and are less likely to report incomes of more than \$90,000 per year, compared to their non-LGBT peers (Freedom to work, 2013).

Regarding recruitment, Combs (2012) suggests that a company's approach to talent acquisition must include an eye toward diversity, including taking into consideration the state of LGBT issues in the U.S. and abroad. Some methods to demonstrate a commitment to inclusion and diversity, especially when looking to attract talented candidates who are LGBT include:



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- Highlighting the policies and benefits relevant to LGBT employees on their websites (especially in the career section), including global programmes and how they may differ from those in the U.S.
- Implementing campus recruiting programs and highlighting inclusion and diversity information in outreach and education efforts.
- Partnering with LGBT student-focused, on-campus organisations that connect employers with LGBT undergraduate and graduate students.
- Communicating LGBT-friendliness through outreach programs and awards or by sponsoring LGBT non-profit community organisations.
- Participating in events such as the Out & Equal Workplace Summit, an annual conference where more than 2,500 individuals, human resources professionals, diversity managers, employee resource group leaders, and allies share best practices and formulate strategies based on their commitment to LGBT equality in the workplace.

## Retention

Combs (2012) states that once diverse job candidates have been recruited, it is vital to have a workplace environment in which all employees are treated fairly and respectfully, have equal access to opportunities and resources, and can contribute fully to the organisation's success. Organisations recognised for exceptional inclusion and diversity practices often have programmes that include:

- Establishing LGBT employee resource groups to provide leadership and growth opportunities for LGBT employees and serve as a vehicle to educate leaders about issues important to LGBTs in the workplace. Such groups also serve as ambassadors to the LGBT community.
- Mentoring and leadership development programs for diverse employees, including LGBT, as well as programmes to educate senior leaders and employees in general about diversity issues.
- Including LGBT content in inclusion and diversity training.
- Creating partnerships with LGBT non-profit organisations to demonstrate commitment to LGBT issues and offering volunteer opportunities relevant to these communities.

Organisations leading the pack with their inclusion and diversity efforts are realising the tremendous benefits and opportunities afforded by tapping into pools of skilled workers, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or background. Actively taking steps to embrace diversity will help organisations establish themselves as not only welcoming LGBT workers, but also realising the positive impacts of diverse workforces: higher degrees of employee engagement.

## Case Study 13: LGBT Inclusion and Diversity in the Workplace

In today's fast-changing environment, the companies best positioned to outperform their competitors are those that consistently recruit and retain top talent. With an estimated 7 million lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) employees in America's private sector, employers that are slow to create LGBT-friendly workplaces risk missing out on a substantial pool of skilled talent. Moreover, the consequences of alienating workers are significant. Losing and replacing the more than 2 million American workers who leave jobs due to unfair treatment and discrimination costs employers an estimated \$64 billion each year.

In 2012, it is legal to fire someone for being gay or lesbian in 29 US states. Not surprisingly, LGBT job seekers pay particular attention to which employers are known for having a diverse workplace, including treating LGBTs equally and fairly. One tool at a company's disposal is the annual *Corporate Equality Index* (CEI), published by the Human Rights Campaign, which evaluates companies on factors ranging from their non-discrimination policies to the strength of their benefits programs for LGBT employees. In 2012, 190 businesses were recognised as being a "Best Place to Work for LGBT Equality" by scoring 100%.

Research shows these factors make a difference to where LGBTs choose to work. When it comes to making career decisions, 83% of LGBTs surveyed indicate it is important that their employer offer equal health-insurance benefits to all employees. This is especially true for transgender employees, since many of the medical costs associated with transitioning procedures are not covered by the majority of employer-provided insurance plans.

Factors outside of the workplace also impact where LGBTs choose to work. While there are no U.S. federal mechanisms to prevent workplace discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity and expression, there have been advances regarding marriage equality and relationship recognition in various states. Six states and the District of Columbia allow same-sex couples to marry, and nine more recognise broad domestic partnerships and civil unions. In a recent survey, 68% of LGBTs said they would prefer a job with an employer in a state where same-sex marriages are recognised over an employer in a state that doesn't recognise them.

Source: Combs, W. (2012) *LGBT Inclusion and Diversity in the workplace*, *Diversity MBA Magazine*.

## Questions

What are the choices of LGBT workers regarding employment? How does affirmative action for recruitment of LGBT impact on organisations? What aspects do companies need to develop to ensure that they protect transgender employees? How does the "decriminalisation" of transgender or gay issues empower LGBT employees to secure better chances in workplace diversity?

## LGBT inclusion: Safety, Acceptance and Equality

Woods (2011) states that as diversity change practitioners, it becomes a reality to put inclusion into practice. Mickens (1994) outlined three areas of concern for LGBT inclusion: safety, acceptance and equality. These concerns continue today to provide a useful framework for thinking through inclusive policy, awareness and skill-building, and workplace culture change.

LGBT inclusion can be explored by asking what needs to be in place to promote:

- **Safety** from ridicule, harassment, bullying and violence
- **Acceptance** to foster understanding, goodwill and relationship building
- **Equality** to ensure non-discrimination, recognition of full lives and respect for the integrity of relationships and families

As with other aspects of inclusive policy, it is important to think through how policy becomes practice, how inclusion will be communicated, implemented and supported. Diversity and inclusion often pushes us beyond our comfort zones. Managers are asked to dismantle backlash, to recognise stereotypes, and to keep an open-mind for learning from the experience of diverse others. They are challenged to re-examine their own identities, to surface deeply rooted assumptions, and to learn new ways to understand the complexity of human reality, including their own (Woods, 2011). When working with employee and management, the same skills and approaches that are useful with other dimensions of diversity are useful here. A workplace environment guided by expectations for work relatedness, fairness and respect is well suited for advancing recognition and inclusion of LGBT people.

### Conclusion

The LGBT issue is contemporary in approach compared to the traditional school of diversity that comprised age, gender, ethnic differences, etc. There is a little more consideration today where certain companies are duly considering this aspect and empowering employees in this category to better express themselves at work. Discrimination is still quite high in this field despite the fact that employers are attempting to include LGBT employees at work. It is the stereotype that companies and employees develop and which might be the key reason to discriminate LGBT workers. Globally there are more demonstrations of LGBT groups to explain that they also form part of diversity, that their rights must be respected and that any form of stigmatisation should be overcome. Lastly, an inclusion strategy like safety, acceptance and equality greatly encourages companies to better embrace diversity regarding LGBT.

### Practice Questions

1. What does a transgender employee mean?
2. What accounts for the rise of LGBT at work?
3. Why do societies traditionally reject 'uncatholic' attitude?
4. Is it important to have religious opinions on LGBT at work?
5. In what ways can LGBT employees be discriminated at work?
6. How might managers approach the LGBT issue in diversity?
7. Draft a brief charter regarding the inclusion of LGBT at work?
8. What types of pressure might LGBT workers face in their jobs?
9. Explain LGBT inclusion with regards to Safety, Acceptance and Equality.
10. What is the relevance of mentoring and training in the inclusion of LGBT at work?

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# 14 HIV/AIDS Workers in Workplace Diversity

## Introduction

By hearing the word AIDS some thirty years ago, people felt like being affected by society's worst illness - something pest like - and that was likely to be reprimanded at the first instance. The individual affected by the disease was isolated and treated with minimal care including nursing that was rudimentary. To this end, the affected person died on being rejected by society. AIDS was known in French term like *l'Épée de Damoclès* (Damocles Sword) like impending death without any possibility of escaping it. Then came some research about AIDS stating that HIV could be one of those factors likely to affect the individual first while AIDS could develop over time, say up to eight years.

These are all known facts about AIDS which has up to now made 25 million victims worldwide. Research findings state that the virus could have existed back to the 1950s before being better recognised as from the 1980s when it could be accepted that the virus was transmitted from primates to men and firstly affected the homosexuals. It was quickly voice as 'gay cancer' and was subject to high stigmatisation. The fact that Hollywood star, Rock Hudson along with colleague Elizabeth Taylor voice the actor's ailment through AIDS got a global reception illustrated with compassion and better understanding.



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The development of antiretroviral medicine since the 1990s has changed society's perception of AIDS and the involvement of the United Nations (UNAIDS) at the global level has developed much greater concern about the pandemic. Through safe sexual behaviour using condoms and avoiding used intravenous needles, AIDS might not be transmitted. In the same way, the use of appropriate drugs will lower the long-term spread of AIDS and become a palliative to it. Although no remedy has been yet discovered, thoughts about AIDS have evolved and moved a long way ahead.

All the explanation and known facts given so far help putting the reader within the context of AIDS as a pandemic and brings him/her to the workplace while being better informed. There is however the need to see deeper in the picture. AIDS affected people form part of the workforce and have to struggle to earn a living. In sub-Saharan Africa, some countries have their male populations decimated up to 25% and even beyond that. There is a dearth of labour in such countries while this affects the economy as a whole. Countries like Botswana, South Africa, Uganda and Kenya are seriously at threat with large populations of the workforce affected by AIDS.

Coming to the workplace, AIDS employees are the first ones subject to discrimination. There has been a recent case in Mauritius where a Cameroon student was disallowed to study in the country and a first ruling of the Courts states that such discrimination is unfair. To this end, it is worth stating how most societies look down upon people affected by the disease without supporting such workers. Discrimination is everywhere while companies that claim pursuing diversity objectives claim that they are doing their utmost best to avoid discrimination and to include such workers by providing them with the necessary support.

This assumption looks grin if a concept like stigmatisation affects AIDS workers in the same way as LGBT ones (discussed in the previous chapter). Stigmatisation directly discriminates AIDS workers whereby others want to stay away from them, leave them to their own and even show disrespect to them. There are also governments that clearly state that AIDS is the fault of "sinners" and this exacerbates the debate onto integrating AIDS workers. There is usually this contradiction between writing statements of affirmative action for AIDS workers and enacting positively towards them. This is where the debate remains unsolved despite the fact that developments regarding eradicating AIDS or longer and healthier living through AIDS looks to become true today.

### **Genesis of HIV/AIDS: Key facts**

UNAIDS (2000) states that goes without saying that HIV/AIDS is as much about social phenomena as it is about biological and medical concerns. Across the world, the global pandemic of HIV/AIDS has shown itself capable of triggering responses of compassion, solidarity and support, bringing out the best in people, their families and communities. But the disease is also associated with stigma, ostracism, repression and discrimination, as individuals affected (or believed to be affected) by HIV have been rejected by their families, their loved ones and their communities. This rejection holds as true in the rich countries of the north as it does in the poorer and developing countries of the south.

The AIDS Institute (2015) claims that scientists identified a type of chimpanzee in West Africa as the source of HIV infection in humans. They believe that the chimpanzee version of the immunodeficiency virus (called simian immunodeficiency virus or SIV) most likely was transmitted to humans and mutated into HIV when humans hunted these chimpanzees for meat and came into contact with their infected blood. Over decades, the virus slowly spread across Africa and later into other parts of the world.

The earliest known case of infection with HIV-1 in a human was detected in a blood sample collected in 1959 from a man in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of the Congo. (How he became infected is not known.) Genetic analysis of this blood sample suggested that HIV-1 may have stemmed from a single virus in the late 1940s or early 1950s (AIDS Institute, 2015).

Farrand (2007) explains that in June of 1981 a report was published by the CDC of five men in Los Angeles who had been diagnosed with PCP with no identifiable cause. This is sometimes referred to as the “beginning” of AIDS, but in light of the information we now have it would be more accurately named the beginning of awareness of AIDS in the United States. The disease was known by several different acronyms and names, such as ‘GRID’ (gay-related immune disorder), the more inclusive “CAID” (community-related immune deficiency), and the pragmatic if not particularly sensitive “Gay Cancer.” In 1982 public health officials began to use the term “acquired immunodeficiency syndrome,” or AIDS, to describe the occurrences of opportunistic infections, Kaposi’s sarcoma (a kind of cancer), and *Pneumocystis jirovecii* pneumonia in previously healthy people. Formal tracking (surveillance) of AIDS cases began that year in the United States. In 1983, scientists discovered the virus that causes AIDS. The virus was at first named HTLV-III/LAV (human T-cell lymphotropic virus-type III/lymphadenopathy-associated virus) by an international scientific committee. This name was later changed to HIV (human immunodeficiency virus).



The AIDS Institute (2015) reports that for many years scientists theorised as to the origins of HIV and how it appeared in the human population, most believing that HIV originated in other primates. Then in 1999, an international team of researchers reported that they had discovered the origins of HIV-1, the predominant strain of HIV in the developed world. A subspecies of chimpanzees native to west equatorial Africa had been identified as the original source of the virus. The researchers believe that HIV-1 was introduced into the human population when hunters became exposed to infected blood.

### Current Worldwide HIV/AIDS Crisis

Swierzewski (2007) states that the AIDS epidemic continues in Africa and much of Asia, where antiretroviral therapy is not available and health care is seriously inadequate. Over 95 percent of AIDS cases and deaths occur outside the United States. AIDS is the fourth leading cause of death worldwide, the first cause of death due to infectious disease, and has surpassed malaria as the first killer in Africa. There are more than 2.2 million AIDS cases reported worldwide, and 33.6 million people are living with HIV/AIDS. More than 16 million people have died from AIDS. According to the NIH, AIDS caused 2.6 million deaths in 1999 and more than 3 million deaths in 2000. There is an evidence of the slowing of the spread of AIDS in advanced countries like the USA where the percentage goes to below 5% of the active population while this can alarmingly climb up to 25% in sub-Saharan African countries.

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### HIV/AIDS & Sub-Saharan Africa

AIDS is the leading cause of death in southern Africa. Sub-Saharan Africa makes up one-tenth of the world's population, but two-thirds of the world's HIV-positive population and more than 80 percent of all AIDS deaths occur there. In 1999, nearly 70 percent of the 5.6 million new HIV infections occurred in sub-Saharan Africa (Swierzewski, 2007).

AVERT (2015) states that in the mid-1980s, HIV and AIDS were virtually unheard of in southern Africa. Now, it is the worst affected region and widely regarded as the “epicentre” of the global HIV epidemic. In 2012, Swaziland had the highest HIV prevalence rate of any country in the world (26.5 percent). HIV prevalence is also particularly high in Botswana (23 percent) and Lesotho (23.1 percent). With 6.1 million people living with HIV – a prevalence of 17.9 percent – South Africa has the largest HIV epidemic of any country. The remaining countries in southern Africa have a HIV prevalence between 10 and 15 percent.

Various factors have contributed to the current AIDS crisis in Africa, including the following:

- The likelihood that the **HIV** virus originated in Africa and spread and evolved before preventative actions could be taken.
- A fierce denial on the part of many Africans, including presidents of nations, that **HIV** causes **AIDS**, that sex education is necessary to stop its spread, and that **Western** medicine or science can be trusted.
- The inability to pay for the expensive antiretroviral drugs.
- The malnourishment and poor health of many Africans.
- Unemployment, labour migration, and displacement as a result of conflict have also contributed to the **HIV** epidemic in this region (Levinsohn, 2011).

### Selected Countries in sub-Saharan Africa and HIV-affected adult working population

Country	Adult (15–49) HIV rate
Angola	2.0
Botswana	24.8
Lesotho	23.6
Mauritius	11.5
South Africa	17.8
Swaziland	25.9
Zimbabwe	14.3
Sub-Saharan Africa average	5.0

**Source:** AVERT (2009). *Sub-Saharan Africa HIV & AIDS statistics*.

### **HIV/AIDS and workplace stigmatisation**

Stigma and discrimination present major challenges to the successful implementation of workplace HIV/AIDS programmes (Stewart et al, 2003). Stigma is defined as a social process that marginalises and labels those who are different, and discrimination is defined as the negative practices that stem from stigma, or “enacted” stigma. In the workplace, employees may suffer from HIV-related stigma from their co-workers and supervisors, such as social isolation and ridicule, or experience discriminatory practices, such as being fired from their jobs. The fear of negative reactions from colleagues and employers may discourage workers from undergoing voluntary counselling and testing and seeking available prevention and care services.

Visibility and openness about HIV/AIDS are prerequisites for the successful mobilisation of government and community resources to respond to the epidemic. Because they fear stigma and discrimination, people living with HIV/AIDS may be deterred from being open about their serostatus (UNAIDS, 2000). Piot and Seck (2001) add that HIV-related stigma may well be the greatest obstacle to action against the epidemic, for individuals and communities as well as political, business and religious leaders. An all-out effort against stigma will not only improve the quality of life of people living with HIV and those who are most vulnerable to infection, but meet one of the necessary conditions of a full-scale response to the epidemic.

#### **Case Study 14: Pfizer and HIV/AIDS Workplace Policy**

Pfizer recognises the magnitude and severity of the development of HIV/AIDS epidemic worldwide. As a global health care company, Pfizer is committed to the development of policies and the implementation of programs by its global workplace sites on HIV/AIDS non-discrimination, awareness, prevention and health support.

While programmes may be locally based and designed to meet local conditions, the overarching policy of HIV/AIDS non-discrimination, awareness, prevention, and health support applies to all employees of the Company and its subsidiaries.

To this end, Pfizer workplace sites globally should seek to develop local programmes and policies to adhere to the following guidelines:

## **Non-Discrimination**

Consistent with Pfizer's pre-existing company-wide global policy on non-discrimination, it is the policy of Pfizer to provide a work environment for its employees that is free from harassment and/or discrimination. Colleagues who engage in acts of harassment and/or discrimination are subject to corrective action that may include termination of employment. Accordingly, colleague situations related to HIV and AIDS are governed by the following principles:

- Pfizer will not and does not discriminate against colleagues or applicants having, perceived as having, living with or otherwise affected by HIV or AIDS.
- Pfizer treats HIV/AIDS the same as other illnesses in terms of all of our employee policies and benefits, including health and life insurance, disability benefits and leaves of absence.
- In accordance with applicable laws, Pfizer provides reasonable work accommodations when needed for qualified individuals.
- All colleagues must adhere to our non-discrimination policy. Colleagues who refuse to work with, withhold services from, harass or otherwise discriminate against another colleague because of his/her having HIV/AIDS, being perceived as having, living with HIV/AIDS, or being otherwise affected by HIV/AIDS, will be subject to discipline and/or other corrective actions.

Pfizer maintains an "open-door" policy. Colleagues who feel they have been discriminated against as a result of having, being perceived as having, living with or being affected by HIV/AIDS, and those who have any other related concerns, are encouraged to utilise the Open Door Policy.

## **Questions**

Why should Pfizer promote an overarching policy on discrimination, awareness and health support in relation to HIV/AIDS? Discuss Pfizer's key principles regarding the promotion of principles regarding AIDS at the workplace? What is an 'open door' policy regarding AIDS and how can this help fight back stigmatisation against HIV/AIDS workers?

Source: *HIV/AIDS Workplace Policy, 2002–2015 Pfizer Inc.*

## **Implementing policies regarding HIV/AIDS in diversity**

Stewart et al (2003) evoke possible activities to promote workplace stigma-reduction might include training for managers, peer educators, and counsellors, and devising strategies to address secondary stigma. The commonly reported interaction between workplace and community-based stigma calls for a coordinated response, such as offering workers and their family members a choice of using counselling services in either the community or workplace.

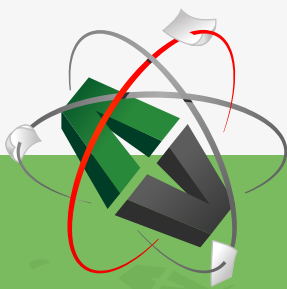
Pfizer alternately recognises that some workplace sites, because of size, geography, multiple lines of business, or other issues, may develop differing implementation schedules for the effectuation of the policies and programmes outlined in this statement. In no event, however, is any line of business or workplace site exempt from this commitment to HIV/AIDS non-discrimination, awareness, prevention, and health support for the Company's employees and their eligible dependents. Further to effectuate the purposes of this policy:

Programmes should be adapted to comply with local laws. They should strive to be culturally sensitive and conform to local customs and practices, to the extent such customs and practices are consistent with good science, medical knowledge, information and practice.

Training is essential for the successful implementation of programs and policies related to **HIV/AIDS** in the workplace. Local management is responsible for budgeting for, designing and implementing an appropriate and effective training programme consistent with the overall policy. Training should cover the basic principles of this policy and plans for communication of the policy to local colleagues.

Local management is encouraged to promote awareness of this policy to local business partners, other enterprises and, where considered appropriate, enter into partnerships with them in order to jointly pursue effective policies concerning **HIV/AIDS** prevention and treatment. Local management is further encouraged to share best practices within the Pfizer organisation.

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### **Development of a workplace policy on HIV/AIDS**

Once an institution has determined the nature of the probable impact, it is important to establish a framework within which a response can be implemented. A workplace policy provides a framework for action to reduce the spread of HIV and AIDS and manage its impact. It defines an institution's position on HIV and AIDS, and outlines activities for preventing the transmission of the virus and providing care and treatment for staff (and sometimes their dependants). It also ensures that the response is balanced, activities complement each other, and resources are used most effectively (National AIDS Council Zimbabwe, 2010).

### ***The ability to be hired with HIV/AIDS***

According to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW, 2015) employers cannot fail to hire qualified people simply because they fear the individual will become sick in the future. The hiring decision must be based on the individual's ability at the current time. In addition, employers cannot decide against hiring qualified people with HIV/AIDS because they are afraid of higher medical insurance costs, worker's compensation costs or absenteeism.

### ***Recording HIV status in employee file***

The Anti-Discrimination Association (ADA) requires that medical information be kept confidential. The information must be kept apart from general personnel files as a separate, confidential medical record available only under limited conditions.

### **Employer's request about an applicant's or employee's HIV status**

An employer may not ask or require a job applicant to take a medical examination before making a job offer. Neither can an employer ask about a disability or the nature or severity of a disability before making a job offer. An employer can, however, ask about the ability to perform specific job functions vital to the position (NASW, 2015). HIV-positive status alone, without some complication, can almost never be the basis for a refusal to hire after a post-offer medical examination. An employer may make a job offer conditional on the satisfactory result of a post-offer medical examination or inquiry if this is required of all new employees in the same job category.

### **Employer's provision of health insurance to an employee with HIV/AIDS**

The ADA prohibits employers from discriminating on the basis of disability in the provision of health insurance to their employees and/or from entering into contracts with health insurance companies that discriminate on the basis of disability. Insurance distinctions that are not based on disability and that are applied equally to all insured employees do not violate the ADA.

### **“Reasonable accommodation” for HIV/AIDS workers**

NASW (2015) comments that a “reasonable accommodation” is any modification or adjustment to a job, application process, or work environment that will enable the qualified applicant or employee with a disability to perform the essential functions of a job, or enjoy the benefits and privileges of employment. For example, if an HIV-infected person required two-hours off, bimonthly, for doctor visits, an employer might allow him/her to make up the time by working late on those days. An employer is not required to make an accommodation if it would impose an undue hardship on the operation or business.

NASW (2015) further points out that an employer is only required to accommodate a “known” disability of a qualified applicant or employee. An employee must make the employer aware of the need for a “reasonable accommodation”. If the employee does not want to disclose that he/she has HIV or AIDS, it may be sufficient for the employee to say that he or she has an illness or disability covered by the ADA and needs specific accommodations. However, the employer can require medical documentation of the disability.

### **The validity of health and safety issues for refusing to hire or retain a person who has HIV/AIDS**

According to NSAW (2015), this is valid but only under limited circumstances. If it is shown through objective, medically supportable methods that an individual poses a “direct threat” and can cause substantial harm in the work place, it is possible that an employer can decide not to hire or retain an individual due to his/her medical status. However, transmission of HIV will rarely be a legitimate “direct threat” issue since it is medically established that HIV can only be spread through the transmission of certain body fluids and not through casual contact.

### **Integrating HIV/AIDS employees at work**

Bashir (2011) suggests that, there must be a comprehensive policy at government level for protection of People Living with HIV/AIDS (PLHA) in the workplace while at organisational level policies must address grievances of PLHA by providing them job security and better health facilities. Since the major source of stigma comes from co-workers, extensive training sessions and awareness campaigns should be launched highlighting that HIV/AIDS does not spread through routine day-to-day contact at the workplace.

The Ghana AIDS Commission (2004) purports that the development of appropriate workplace policies and programmes however, need to be guided by a consistent national framework, aimed at providing guidelines for addressing HIV/AIDS-specific issues at the workplace. It must also provide a basis for translating the broad guidelines into specific workplace policies and for filling existing gaps in the labour legislation.

Talja (2005) supports the statement that policies are needed in order to combat stigma and discrimination of HIV/AIDS-positive people. Local NGOs, governments, bilateral – and multilateral organisations should cooperate in different areas. The most accurate work that is needed is to improve the underlying causes like poverty, lack of education, lack of healthcare and cultural power relations. These are no minor tasks that have to be accomplished but it is vital in order to fight consequences like stigma and discrimination. Coherence in the development work is essential for a progress on every level and area that is concerned.

### **Recommendations on how workplaces can support HIV/AIDS workers**

Workplace HIV programmes require initial upfront cost. But they can quickly pay for themselves through the economic benefits of keeping HIV-positive workers healthy. However, if workers do not access or stick to services, the costs of HIV management, and the costs to business in general, increase. Scott et al (2011) provides 10 concrete recommendations on how workplaces can support HIV-positive employees so that they access and adhere to treatment and stay healthy.

- Develop and publicise a Workplace HIV/AIDS policy.
- Run a workplace HIV testing and Counselling programme tailored for high uptake.
- Develop an HIV management Strategy for employees.
- Make confidentiality a priority.
- Bring management onside.
- Help HIV-positive employees visit the clinic.
- Adjust duties for HIV-positive employees when necessary.
- Help workers take their medications.
- Provide a platform for peer educators.
- Help keep HIV-positive workers strong through supporting good nutrition and addressing infections.

Scott et al (2011) maintain that if workplaces make an upfront investment in HIV testing and management, they can play an important role in alleviating the suffering caused by HIV in the years to come. For example, large-scale workplaces which provide treatment services for workers (e.g., Anglo American) are making efforts to extend treatment to spouses and dependents of workers, including prevention of mother to child transmission of HIV. These efforts have been widely commended in the international media and serve as the gold standard for ethical employee healthcare (Scott et al, 2011). Evidence suggests that this upfront investment in HIV management will be paid back many times over through supporting HIV positive staff to remain healthy and productive for many years. Investing in the health of one's employees is not just an ethical duty. It is also good business.



## Conclusion

AIDS is now considered as a pandemic while the term was related to epidemic in its initial stages. Some 33 million people live with AIDS at the global level and this is more prevalent nowadays in sub-Saharan Africa than in other parts of the world. Coming to workplace diversity, there are many workers having HIV-AIDS status but who live in constant fear of being rejected or denied from a job opportunity. Through advancements in medication, safe sex behaviour and support from government and NGOs, there is greater acceptance of HIV-AIDS workers in organisations. There is still a high level of stigmatisation which encourages direct discrimination of other employees against HIV-AIDS workers. Companies must develop affirmative action to better engage such workers in their diversity. This could comprise firstly, accepting the HIV-AIDS worker as an integral part of the work community, providing moral support to such discriminated workers, make provisions for treatment and rest and equally inform all the employees on myths and realities about AIDS. Businesses might generally explain that they are likely to empower people to accept and be tolerant towards HIV-AIDS workers but it remains always difficult to apply it in reality. An encouraging factor comes from developing nations that have been instructed by NGOs, the United Nations and supranational organisations like the European Union to be more tolerant towards AIDS workers. Some countries have devised charters and affirmative action and the result remains to be seen.



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### Practice Questions

1. How do perceptions about AIDS vary between advanced and developing nations?
2. What progress has been made with regards to AIDS at the societal level?
3. What does “stigmatisation” mean regarding HIV-AIDS workers?
4. Why is an affirmative action needed vis-à-vis HIV-AIDS workers?
5. Why is firing an employee stating his HIV status discriminatory?
6. Why is it important for governments to support diversity by accommodating HIV-AIDS workers?
7. Why are punitive measures against the HIV-AIDS workers discriminatory?
8. What medical or protection cover can a business provide to HIV-AIDS workers?
9. Contrast the choice of declaring or not an HIV-status to the employer.
10. How could existing employees better approach the AIDS issue at work?

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# 15 New Paradigms in Workplace Diversity

## Introduction

This chapter on workplace diversity focuses on new workforce paradigms in contemporary society. These types of diversity might already exist in society but they are actually coming to prominence in several parts of the world. These might not necessarily look like the visible aspects of diversity. They are rather invisible, incipient and yet they do have an effect on work. Such new aspects include; dual-career couples, single parents, telecommuters and mobile workers.

Dual-career couples are a reality today where couples might work for the same organisation. It is something that could apply to couples working in universities but might also stretch to other white collar jobs like information technology related jobs. This encourages the couple to work together, doing either a similar task or a different one in the same company and having similar aspirations at work. Dual-career couples must get enough support from management so that the couple can co-exist without fear at work and contribute to workplace diversity. Expatriates might want to have the same organisation to work and this could be a suitable arrangement for both people involved. The other element in such diversity comes from the fact that the dual-career couple has to raise children and see that there is proper work-life balance. What could be worse in this scenario could be competition between the couple for advancement and promotion at work. Dual-career couples are more present today than before in societies where the level of education improves and both gender benefit from reasonably good education.

Single parents appear to be another contemporary aspect of workplace diversity. Single parents are usually widows, divorced people or individuals who choose free union and decide to live separately. This phenomenon is common in developed countries but could also be a feature in developing nations where due to tragic circumstances, only one parent will have to look after his/her children. Women might be much disadvantaged as they have to rear a family and earn a living altogether. Organisations have the responsibility to shoulder single parents while at the same time avoid discriminating such people. The provision of special support such as counselling could be of great help.

Telecommuters represent another new element of diversity especially when companies argue that people can work from home. This could further support the concept of flexitime where people are not stuck to rigid office hours. In this context, telecommuters work away from the office and yet they contribute positively to their firm. Though the desire to work independently falls in favour of the telecommuter, there is still the challenge of working away from the company, feeling less secure when support and counselling is not available from management. Worse, workers in this category might not 'feel' like really working. Telecommuters add a new dimension to diversity on being empowered people but their cause concerning recognition and inclusion must be heard.

This chapter also focuses on mobile workers who could be in the same line as telecommuters but are different in the sense that they are away from work and yet they always keep moving. Three types of mobile workers are explained in this lesson while it is a known fact that mobile workers face a higher level of disturbance on being both on and off site. It is up to managers to see how to come to their support and allow them fully participate in their company's goals.

These new paradigms will keep influencing the workforce further in the future as a result of the digitalisation of work and also societal changes regarding the way in which people live. Obviously, such things must not be lightly considered by managers. They must learn how to deal and cope effectively with this relatively new category of workers in our diversity.

### **Dual Career Couples in Workplace Diversity**

Dual-career family, a term introduced by Rapoport & Rapoport (1976), denotes a family structure in which the husband and wife simultaneously pursue active careers and family lives. More recent definitions describe the dual-career couple as two people who each have a career and a shared relationship (Arnold, 1997). Dual-career couple has been defined as "a situation in which both people in a marriage or relationship have a job (Cambridge Dictionaries, 2015)."

One of the most significant changes in our society in the last several decades has been the entry and continued presence of women in the working population (Schlumberger, 2015). Families in marriages in which both spouses work are now the largest single group of families in the workplace. According to the US Bureau of Labour Statistics, 60% of all marriages are dual-career marriages; these couples make up 45% of the workforce. Carter (1997) explains that over the last ten years, the number of dual-career couples employed in the United States has grown to three million, representing approximately 20 percent of all employed couples. As a result of these changing demographics, work/ family programmes have become more commonplace in the last five years.

To function effectively in the workplace, partners in a career couple must be able to negotiate a balance between the demands of work and family. So family-friendly policies make good business sense. Proactive corporate programs – including child and elder care, flexible benefits, job sharing, part-time work, telecommuting, parental leave, personal time and employee assistance programmes – all have reflected the changing perspective of corporate interest and involvement (Carter, 1997).

### Reasons for dual-career couple hiring

A study by Stanford University in 2008 highlights three key reasons for taking a new look at couple hiring.

#### *Excellence*

A study undertaken by Schiebinger et al (2008) suggests that couples more and more vote with their feet, leaving or not considering universities that do not support them. Support for dual careers opens another avenue by which universities can compete for the best and brightest. A professor of medicine in our survey commented that talented academics are often partnered, and “if you want the most talented, you find innovative ways of going after them.”

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### ***Diversity***

Schiebinger et al (2008) state that over past decades, universities have worked hard to attract women and underrepresented minorities to faculty positions and, in many instances, are meeting with success. The new generation of academics is more diverse in terms of gender and ethnicity than ever before. With greater diversity comes the need for new hiring practices. Institutions should not expect new participants to assimilate into current practices built around old academic models and demographics. This undermines innovation, opportunity, and equity. New hiring practices are needed to support a diverse professoriate – and one of these practices is couple hiring.

### ***Quality of Life***

Faculty today are a new breed determined more than ever to strike a sustainable balance between working and private lives. Couple hiring is part of a deeper institutional restructuring around quality-of-life issues. To enhance competitive excellence, universities are increasingly supporting faculty needs, such as housing, child care, schools, and elder care, in addition to partner hiring. Attending to quality-of-life issues has the potential to contribute stability to the workplace (Schiebinger et al, 2008). Faculty may be more productive and more loyal if universities are committed to their success as whole persons. While often costly up front, assisting faculty address the challenges of their personal lives may help universities secure their investments in the long run.

### **Benefits and drawbacks of dual career couples in diversity**

From a purely economic viewpoint increasing numbers of dual career couples, as well as, parent employees is considered to be a positive tendency, because this will positively contribute to the level of tax revenues and value creation and ultimately, increasing standard of life within a national economy (Dudovskiy, 2012). Moreover, dual-career couples and working parents may achieve significant results in their workplaces and this contribute to the level of their self-fulfilment.

On the other hand, Dudovskiy (2012) states that dual-career couples and working parents might be subjected to pressure in their attempts to balance their work and family responsibilities. And this pressure is even greater when dual-career couples have a child or children and the pressure is associated with the child care when both parents are at work and a sense of guild felt by some working parents for not being able to spend enough time with their children.

Dudovskiy (2012) concludes that dual-career couples and parent employees have additional family responsibilities on top of their professional responsibilities. Balancing both of these responsibilities proves to be a highly challenging task to accomplish and may cause pressure and stress for employees that will consequently lead to lower performances at work, as well as, issues in maintaining good family relationships. Companies need to be proactive rather than reactive in terms of assisting their employees to deal with these issues.

### **Single parents in workplace diversity**

The Free Dictionary defines the single parent as a person who has a dependent child or dependent children and who is widowed, divorced, or unmarried. Single parent family may be defined as ‘a family comprising of a single mother or father having their own dependent children.’ The single parent family is created in a number of ways, death of one parent, divorce, separation and desertion (Kotwal and Prabhakar, 2009).

Franco (2015) explains that working single parents are now the norm. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics, more than 50 percent of all single parents with children under the age of six work outside the home. In addition, a recent study showed that more than half of all new mothers remained in the job market after the birth of their babies. In short, there are now more children with working single mothers than ever before.

### **Problems facing single parents**

Kotwal and Prabhakar (2009) from their research based in India found that single mothers tended to suffer from a feeling of rootlessness and lack of identity after divorce or widowhood. This was especially true of women whose identity was formerly associated with that of their husbands. Financial crises was another standing situation with most of the single parent families. It became difficult in meeting the basic needs of children such as food, clothing, school fees, maintaining the previous standard of living and meet personal expense. Problems of single mother were linked with the up-bringing of children, their future and settling down in life. Until the time children got married and or get jobs they were dependent on the single parent, after that the problems are considerably reduced (Kotwal and Prabhakar, 2009).

### **Expectations of single employees at work**

Coleman (2005) suggests that single employees should expect and demand the same benefits as working parents. Single people have a life outside of work which, to them, is just as valuable as the personal lives of married workers or those raising children.

Employers who truly respect diversity in the workplace should re-examine personnel policies to ensure that all workers are treated equitably. With a little creativity and determination, they should be able to find the right balance between “family friendly” and “singles friendly” human resources practices.



### **Making Creative Arrangements**

Franco (2015) comments that to successfully manage work and family in these years of transition, the task of single parents is twofold:

First, single parents must do what they can to make their jobs accommodate their family responsibilities. For example, single parents can help create job arrangements, such as flexitime and job sharing that have the potential to make women's lives more balanced and productive. Although it may seem next to impossible to change the way most businesses are run, in fact, single parents can all envision how their jobs could be restructured to reflect their ideal schedules and levels of work commitment.

Secondly, mothers as single parents need to reevaluate their own family roles and dynamics to create the support systems that will make the balancing act work, even if the ideal job eludes us. All parents – men and women – have found ways of coordinating their work and family responsibilities. They need to talk it over with friends and co-workers. Pooling knowledge and resources might be, according to Franco (2015) one of the best strategies for learning how to manage work and family, achieve success and maintain sanity.

### **Integrating the single parent in diversity**

Lerner (2001) provides an explanation of better accommodating the single parent at work where services would better meet the needs of individuals and their families if such needs were not defined by one individual's diagnosis but were addressed from a family-centred perspective. That is, an individual's needs should be understood within the context of the family and community and their strengths and resources. Community-based, parent-directed, family support programmes have developed, in part, in response to dissatisfaction with the existing individual, problem-focused, segregated service delivery systems. Similarly, there has been increasing interest in programmes that promote health and strengths of families, where families are seen as having diverse assets and resources to be strengthened and developed rather than as having "problems to be managed (Lerner, 2001)."

### **Telecommuting – Another current aspect of diversity**

The Small Business Encyclopaedia (2015) describes telecommuting as the practice of working from home for a business and communicating through the use of a personal computer-equipped with modem and communications software.

The Business Dictionary alternately explains that telecommuting is the Substitution of telecommunications for transportation in a decentralised and flexible work arrangement which allows part or full time employees to work at home via a computer attached to the employer's data network. Telecommuting is suitable for well-defined and well-structured routine jobs with clear and fixed goals, and not for complex jobs with fuzzy or fluid objectives requiring personal contact.

### The popularity of telecommuting in workplace diversity

Belissent (2013) in Forrester's Workforce Employee Surveys investigated trends among information workers such as device usage, collaboration practices, workplace preferences, and attitudes about their employers. The signs indicated that the demand for workplace diversity and choice was on the rise:

- Retiring baby boomers would leave the workplace at a steady pace (around 10,000/day in the US).
- Making room for younger employees – who work differently (like video chatting rather than stopping by to see a colleague at their desk).
- Being well-connected and mobile is a given particularly for younger employees who often choose and purchase devices and work tools themselves.
- Employees increasingly chose their place of work – with fewer opting for the corporate office and more finding themselves working in a public place.
- Regular telework has gained mainstream acceptance; even the government is doing it.
- And, as the newest kid on the workplace block, co-working – regularly working in shared business environments as opposed to a cafe, the public library or a train station – is growing quickly.

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### **Case Study 15: Making place for Telecommuters in diversity**

Managers in the modern workplace may have only on-site staff, telecommuting staff – those who work remotely by computer – or a combination of both. With roots in the early 1970s Silicon Valley computer programmer workforce, telecommuting has expanded along with the growth of technology. One of the main challenges for managers in telecommuter working relationships is the lack of face-to-face interactions. Managers struggle with how to know what employees are doing if they are not able to walk into a room and see them working and with how to motivate employees that are not physically present to receive pats on the back or shake hands. Workplace goals and good leadership are keys to successful telecommuting working relationships.

#### ***Meet performance standards and work goals***

One of the top workplace goals for telecommuters is to meet performance standards and work goals. Clear performance standards and work goals are necessary to ensure that telecommuters know what is expected and have a process to follow to complete work. When clearly defined and communicated to telecommuting staff, knowing what work is required and why, how well it must be done, when it must be done and what defines completed work, contributes to a blueprint for completing the work. Work goals must be clear, measurable and well communicated, verbally and in writing in documents such as checklists, policies or agreements. Measurable performance standards must be clearly understood, obtainable, communicated and frequently reviewed.

#### ***Respect established rules and boundaries***

Successful managers of telecommuters establish and communicate rules and boundaries, such as work plans for telecommuting staff that describe the work, the timeline for doing the work, and an agreement or commitment from telecommuters about the work. Other necessary rules for telecommuting staff include rules about required and optional availability, rules about how and when to check in with managers and co-workers and rules about acceptable and unacceptable virtual behaviours, such as how work is turned in and how telecommuters should communicate with the main office. Efficient telecommuters understand and respect rules and boundaries and ask for clarifications when necessary.

#### ***Keep mutual schedules***

Although one of telecommuting's benefits is schedule flexibility, managers or team leaders and telecommuting employees need some schedule synchronicity to complete mutual work or collaborate. A specific written schedule, especially for telecommuters who work with clients such as call centre employees, is important for organisation, accessibility and successful work performance.

### ***Participate in Regular Input and Feedback***

Communication is even more important in telecommuting working relationships than in situations where everyone is in the same location. Whether on a daily, weekly or monthly basis, regular, timely communication with telecommuting employees and managers establishes trust and confidence in work teams and management. A documented weekly status update from all remote members of a project team to the manager may be enough to keep routine projects on schedule, while a daily five-minute conference call to the management team may be required on more complicated or sensitive work.

Source: *Cardenas, H. (2015) Workplace Goals for Telecommuters*

### **Questions**

How might the expectation of meeting the desired performance represent a challenge for telecommuters? How do rules and boundaries impact on the telecommuter? What is the importance of flexible work schedule and how should the telecommuter manage it? Why should managers value communication in telecommuting?

### **The economic impact of Telecommuting**

Lister and Harnish (2011) clarify the point that the majority is not ready to make the organisational culture shift that's required to manage a remote workforce. The issue of mistrust – “how do I know they're working” – is huge and not easily overcome. Management attitudes that were born in the days of sweatshops and typing pools still dominate. And even in those rare organisations where senior management unambiguously supports the concept, lack of middle management buy-in is the stumbling block.

While looming labour shortages, increased pressure from value chain partners and others to engage in sustainable practices, rising fuel prices, budget pressures and a variety of other factors will continue to make telework attractive, the cultural barriers will not be quickly overcome (Lister and Harnish, 2011).

### **Relating Telecommuting to workplace diversity**

Hamilton and Harrington (2003) comment that advances in information technology, proliferation of a global workforce, and the increased desire to balance work and family are only three of the many factors that will serve to amplify the popularity of telecommuting work arrangements. Organisations which recognise that work is something one does, not someplace one goes and which adequately prepare for the implementation of telecommuting arrangements should benefit from greater employee commitment, productivity, and job satisfaction. The challenge that Hamilton and Harrington (2003) address workplace diversity is that telecommuting concerns developing synergy and teamwork between telecommuters and their co-workers. It is often difficult to establish a mutual trusting and supportive relationship among individuals who infrequently interact face-to-face.

### A roadmap for telecommuting in diversity

Reiche (2012) in his article, “Best practice for managing telecommuters”, states that managers of telecommuters have to be effective communicators. Not that communication skills would be an unimportant asset to traditional leaders, but there are some common and often unnoticed parts of face-to-face communication that are critical yet are missing from virtual communication. For example, to make up for essential informal small interactions, which would normally take place in the hallways or lunchrooms, distance leaders should learn quick relationship building techniques and engage in short but frequent contacts with their remote team members.

Reiche (2012) further adds that managers must be able to keep to their commitments towards remote employees, otherwise they risk losing their trust and engagement. Apart from building confidence by keeping to an agreed schedule, trust can be enhanced by letting remote employees self-manage themselves.

Finally, coming back to the burnout issues, managers should be helping remote employees to set priorities and have frequent breaks. The main sources for teleworking employees to develop burnout stress stem from feelings of isolation, lack of personal contact, feelings that their work is not valued, and from difficulties in drawing clear boundaries between their work and personal life, especially when working from home (Reiche, 2012).

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## **Mobile Workers and Diversity**

Mobile workers are those who work at least 10 hours per week away from home and from their main place of work, e.g. on business trips, in the field, travelling or on customers' premises, and use online computer connections when doing so. Clevenger (2008) conceptualised three different categories of mobile workers: the constantly-mobile worker, the occasionally-mobile worker, and the hybrid-mobile worker.

### ***The constantly-mobile worker***

Many workers actually do their job while they are moving. This category includes utility meter readers going from house to house and retail workers filling orders inside a warehouse. This presents some very unique usability challenges. The constantly-mobile worker is usually task-oriented, and the ability to automate tasks by capturing, analysing, and displaying data on a handheld device can provide very dramatic return-on-investment potential.

### ***The occasionally-mobile worker***

Clevenger (2008) considers that there are other mobile workers who travel between locations, but only do their work while they are at their destination and more or less stationary. This category includes a growing number of office workers, who have seen their desktop PC replaced with a laptop, so they can take it with them to secondary offices and conference rooms, on business trips, and to home at night and on the weekends. The occasionally-mobile worker is often information-oriented, and although they are mobile, they only work when they're not moving.

### ***The hybrid-mobile worker***

This category is comprised of occasionally-mobile workers that need to be able to access information while they are on the go, instead of waiting until they get to their destination. This is probably the most rapidly growing category of mobile workers. It is much easier for them to pull a smartphone out of their pocket with one hand, and within seconds check their e-mail, appointment calendar, or contacts list. In addition, the number of mobile line-of-business applications for this worker group is growing rapidly, and a variety of solutions already exist for customer relationship management, business intelligence, and workflow automation.

## **An upcoming trend in workforce diversity**

Mobility within the global workforce is booming. According to predictions by analyst firm IDC, (Electronic Commerce and telework trends, 2000) within two years there will be 878 million mobile workers worldwide and 99 million in Europe linked to their corporate headquarters by personal digital assistants, notebook PCs and mobile phones. This population represents more than a quarter of the global workforce and is a sharp increase from the 650 million global mobile worker population in 2004.

IDC predict that the increase of mobile workers will be significantly greater than the increase in employees working from home, despite the widespread adoption of flexible working practices. Kandola (2007) states that organisations need to consider what they can do to make mobile working opportunities more accessible for women with childcare responsibilities. Possibilities include expanding mobile work options to part-time roles, and providing allowances and technology for workers to keep in touch with their families whilst working away from home. With the majority of mobile workers spending significant amounts of time away from the office, employing staff who are trustworthy and self-motivated is essential, as is the provision of appropriate technology and the recruitment of experienced managers who understand the nature of the mobile working (Kandola, 2007).

### Mobile workers in Middle East and Africa

Regarding Middle East and Africa, Kandola (2007) explains that work life balance is seen as a major challenge for this market. There are less recreational facilities available in some areas so there are fewer opportunities to relax. The boundaries between home and work life are also blurred as people can get in contact at inappropriate times, when office workers would not be expected to be working.

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### **Integrating the mobile worker**

This research conducted by Cisco systems with Kandola has demonstrated that not only is the uptake of mobile working rapidly increasing, but it is also bringing productivity benefits to organisations as well as flexibility and motivational benefits to individuals. The blueprint of the successful modern mobile worker has been described as an individual who is self-motivated, conscientious, resilient, extroverted, independent and has excellent communication, relationship building, planning and adaptability skills. An excellent mobile worker is also a worker with a skilled manager who is aware of the power of trust and communication, adapting their style to meet employee needs and building strong team relationships.

Mobile working does, however, come with a warning (Kandola, 2007). Many workers find that work-life boundaries become blurred with the possibility of 24-7 communication. Others experience isolation when they do not receive the managerial, colleague and technological support that they need. This can lead to mental health problems.

Kandola (2007) concludes that employers need to provide suitable technological solutions with the capability to allow mobile workers to both remain in contact with colleagues, family and friends when they are “on the road” as well as giving them the resources to access the information they need regardless of their location. Employers also need to educate their managers on how best to manage mobile workers.

### **Practice Questions**

1. What is the reason for a company to employ a dual-career couple?
2. What are the challenges of employing a dual-career couple?
3. Define the concept of the single parent. Provide examples of it.
4. Why should the single parent be supported by management?
5. Why has telecommuting become popular at work?
6. What are the challenges linked with telecommuting?
7. How does the concept of the mobile worker apply in today's business?
8. What challenges might the mobile worker face at work?
9. Do the new paradigms affect diversity in developing countries? Discuss.
10. Why should organisations value the new forms of diversity at work?



## Conclusion

This chapter discussed the new workplace paradigms namely the dual-career couples, the single parent, telecommuters and mobile workers. Dual-career couples represent a new norm especially in white-collar jobs like university positions or in multinationals. Employers would like to accommodate such couples but should also bear in mind that there might be some conflict in terms of career progress, competition, etc. Single parents are becoming a common phenomenon in today's fast-developing society where the nuclear family is also getting affected. Single parents face the burden of raising their kids and are usually people having a single source of income. While this raises pressure on raising the family, it could also impact the future of children. Support from management is very important here. Telecommuters work from home and are a clear illustration of flexitime workers. They are willing to work independently. Some might even face burn-out on spending too much effort independently. Their case is complex in the sense that working from home might not let them look like full-fledged employees of the firm. The case of mobile workers is also interesting where such people work on and off site but face the pressure of working independently while being always on the move. Their plight to be included in diversity should also be duly considered.

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# 16 Statistical Interpretation in Workplace Diversity

## Introduction

This final chapter on diversity specifically addresses the need for statistical interpretation from the student or the diversity practitioner. Just reading topics on diversity is not complete unless the information searched is supported by data. Bearing in mind that management students are sometimes unjustly considered as “maths illiterate”, it has been felt that they must have access to numerical data and be able to interpret the information provided. Data is used by every individual and it becomes vital for the purpose of research which is done through projects or dissertations to be undertaken by the student.

Coming to the essence of using statistical information, researchers might state that such data represents an important component in the study of diversity management. For instance, one might speak of AIDS but cannot provide concrete information about the number of people living with AIDS, the perception of employers, the effort undertaken by governments, etc. unless these are supported by facts and figures. By using numerical information, one is in a position of better gauging the information provided and making suitable use of it.

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Next comes the effort of using and interpreting information. This chapter encourages the search of numerical data in the following forms. The first level is inquiry, that is, what does a numerical figure represent and why is this an occurrence at work? The second level is interpretation of the information. It explains how to make use of the data given. For example, making an average of the different discrete data provided and see how it compares with another similar set of data. The third level is the application and interpolation of data. For instance, what is likely to happen if a trend persists? What is the consistency of the correlation between two variables?

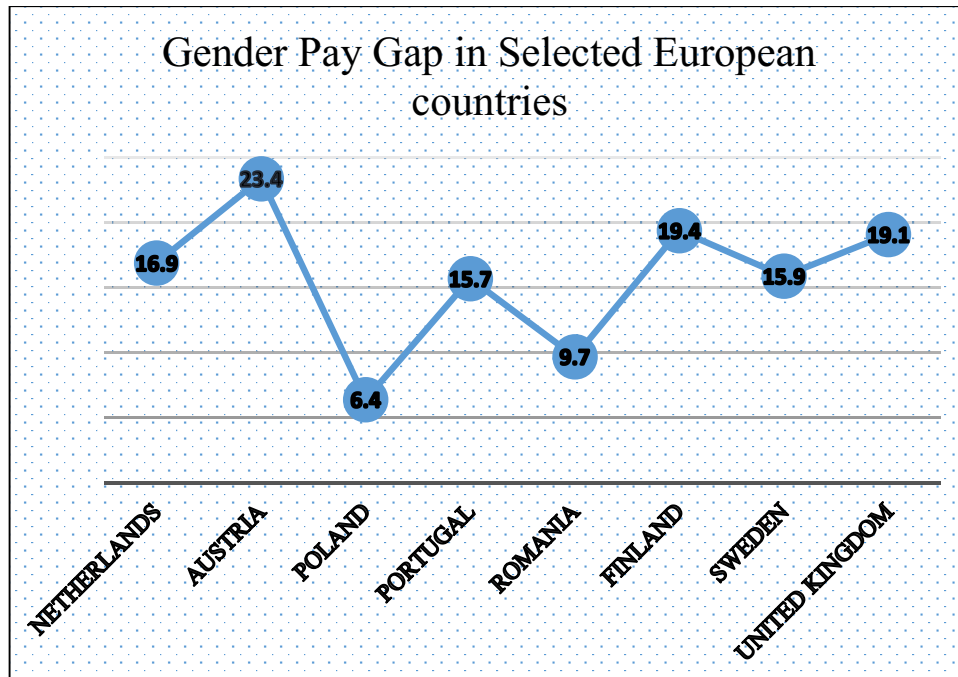
Numerical analysis of information also validates a theory in specific areas. Things cannot be generalised in diversity management since they differ from one place to another one. For example, gender differences may be higher in developing than rich nations but these must be proven in the contexts defined. There might be similarities and differences depending upon the environments and the data make the difference.

For the purpose of this course, statistics have been gathered from different contexts like the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan and developing countries. These prove to be an interesting effort in that it is far easy to gain information from US companies than businesses in the developing world. The objective of providing varied data from different contexts sheds light onto areas where information could have been difficult to gain. For instance, different views on culture between China and the USA.

Lastly, the objective of using statistical data adds spice to the individual's learning. Based from what has been learned from the text, it becomes equally challenging to use information and apply it to the situations described. The statistical data cover areas like gender, age, mobile workers, telecommuters, etc. and these are clearly identified as the core concepts of diversity. It is hoped that using facts and figures makes the work of the researcher interesting, helps him/her probe into research in the diversity context but also think more critically and logically of diversity which is, on its own, a useful contribution to the social sciences.

### **Gender Pay in Selected European Countries**

At EU level, the gender pay gap is defined as the relative difference in the average gross hourly earnings of women and men within the economy as a whole. In 2012, the EU average is estimated at 16.4%. This indicator has been defined as unadjusted (e.g. not adjusted according to differences in individual characteristics or other observable characteristics that may explain part of the earnings difference) because it gives an overall picture of gender discrimination and the inequalities in the labour market that explain gender differences in pay.



**Chart 1:** Gender Pay in Selected European Countries  
**Source:** The Situation in the EU, ec.europa.eu

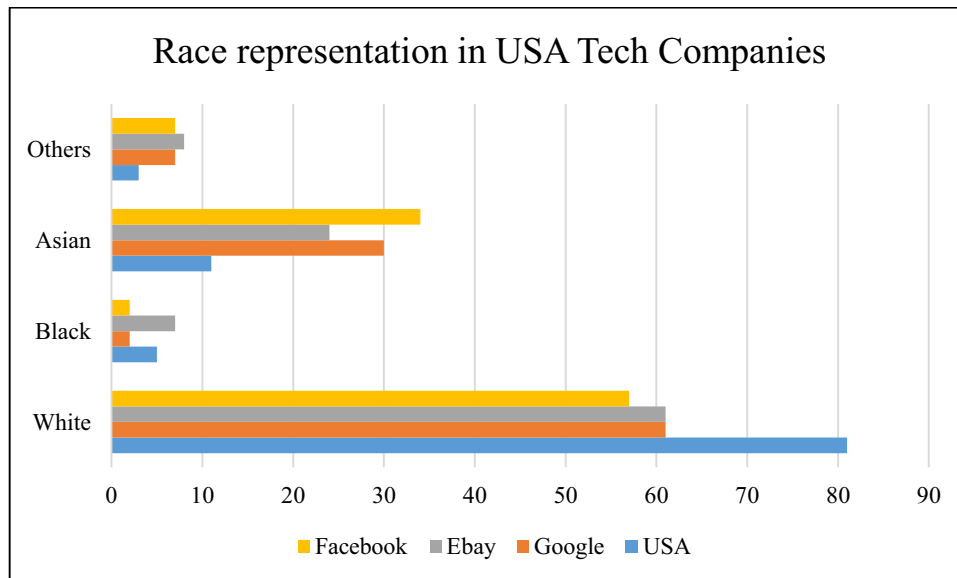
### Questions

1. The gender pay gap is not an indicator of the overall inequality between women and men since it only concerns salaried people. Why should gender pay gap be looked at in conjunction with other indicators linked to the labour market like the different working patterns of women?
2. Why is there a contrasting difference in gender pay between Austria and Poland?
3. The European Union average in terms of gender pay difference is 16.4%. How might this contrast with that of the United Kingdom?
4. A high pay gap is usually characteristic of a labour market which is highly segregated, meaning that women are more concentrated in a restricted number of sectors. How might this apply to Austria?
5. Make an average percentage of gender pay gaps for Austria, Finland, Sweden and The United Kingdom and compare it with the average value of less rich countries like Poland and Romania.

### Ethnicity in Selected American Companies

In terms of ethnic demographics, Google and Facebook trail closely behind, each with 91 percent of the company Asian or white. Hewlett Packard clocks in as the company with the highest number White people on staff: 71.5 percent. Apple looks to be the most diverse tech company, but that's because it can include its retail store employees in its data.

As a baseline for comparison, the numbers of the U.S. workforce demographics from the Bureau of Labour Statistics (BLS) are also presented. The U.S. workforce has a much larger swath of white employees than the tech companies.



**Chart 2:** Ethnicity in Selected American Companies  
**Source:** Gigaom.

### Questions

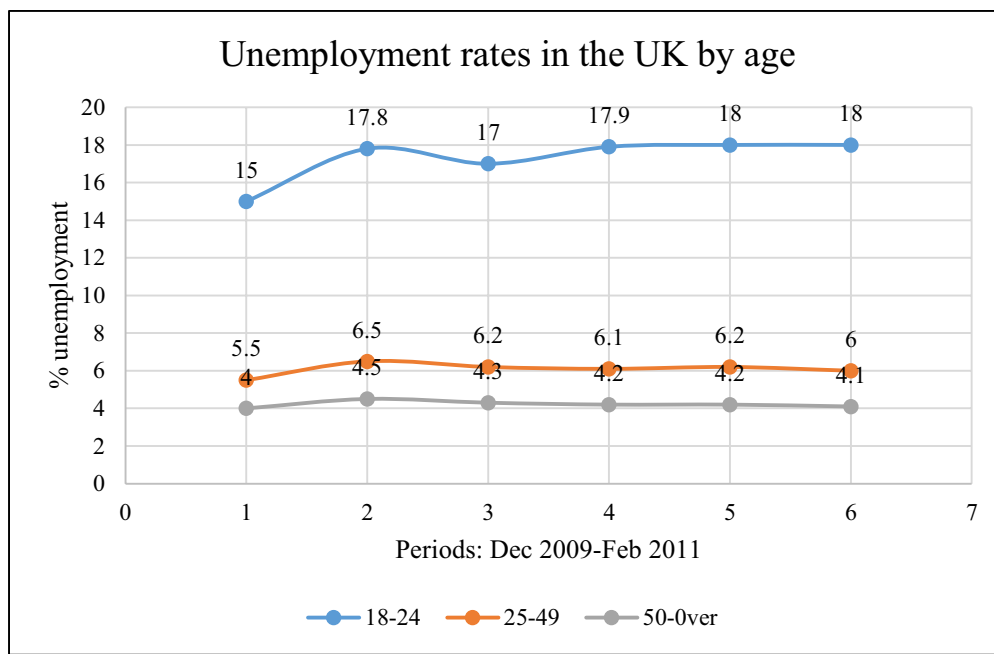
1. In line with the US population, how are the different races incorporated in the three companies mentioned in this chart.
2. Why is the black population weakly represented in the US companies?
3. What does this infer about the black population and information technology?
4. What might account for the higher level of recruitment regarding Asians in these technologically-driven companies?
5. How can Facebook account for a high level of Asian employees?
6. How might the popularity of Google impact on the recruitment of a fairly balanced diverse workforce?

Carson, B. and De Amicis, C. (2014) Eight charts that put tech companies' diversity stats into perspective, Gigaom.

### Age Diversity and Income

Official unemployment statistics show big disparity between the age groups and which affects both young and older people. The latest unemployment figures from April 2011 show that approximately 18% of young people (i.e. those aged 18–24) are unemployed. By comparison, the unemployment rate for older people (i.e. those aged i.e. those aged 50 and over) is just over 4%.

These figures also include those in full time employment and this may overinflate the figures for younger people. John Philpott, Economic Adviser for the Chartered Institute for Personnel and Development (CIPD) says it is ‘perfectly sensible’ to count students because they ‘have some influence on the degree of wage pressure in the labour market.’ But he has also said that, with student numbers rising, their inclusion “does once again magnify youth unemployment as an indicator of social distress.



**Chart 3:** Age Diversity and Income

**Source:** UK Office for National Statistics Labour Force Survey, April 2011

### Questions

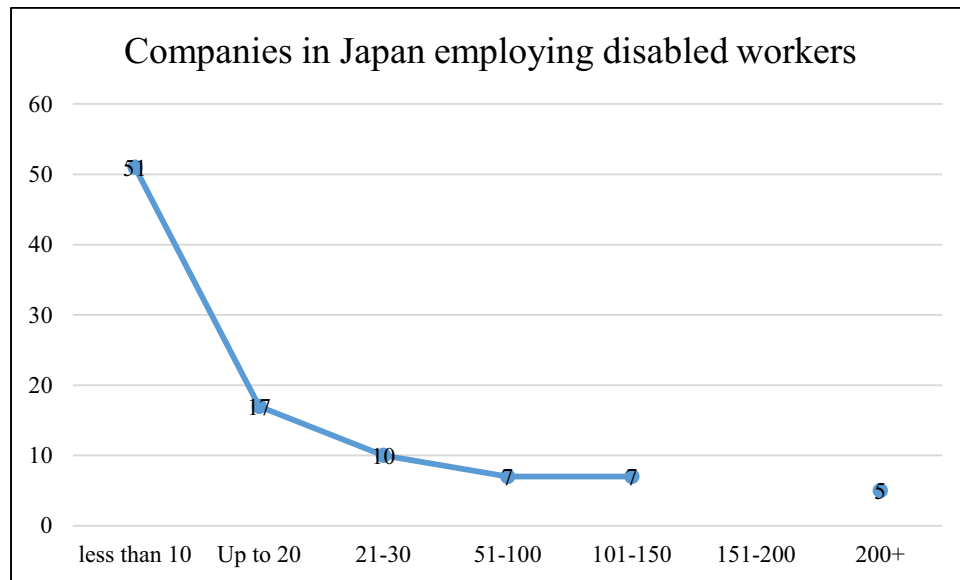
1. How does the rise in unemployment affect the younger people in Great Britain and how does it impact on diversity?
2. Given that the average age of a British citizen is 43 (2011 Statistics), what might the unemployment rate average 6% represent at work?
3. Those over 50 years of age are in the unemployment rate of roughly 4%. What does this explain of age discrimination at work for the older employee?
4. How might unfavourable economic conditions affect the unemployment percentage of those aged between 25–49 years of age?

### Disabled employees at Work

Hays Specialist Recruitment Japan KK surveyed more than 200 hiring managers across Japan in researching the development of workplace diversity and reactions to the new regulations.

The results show that more than two thirds of the responding firms have employees with disabilities, while more are working to attain a fully diverse workforce.

This survey is the second conducted by Hays in its series, Diversity in the Workplace: Thought Leadership, the first having focused on women in the workplace.



**Chart 4:** Japanese companies and the disabled worker

**Source:** Acumen (2012) The magazine of the British Chamber of Commerce in Japan.

### Questions

1. Around 51% of Japanese companies employ less than 10 disabled employees. What might this data represent?
2. Why does the figure progressively decline with a larger number of disabled employees at work?
3. 9% of Japanese companies employ beyond 100 disabled workers. In which sectors such companies could be related?
4. Why is there a need for Japanese companies to be greater involved in employing disable employees?
5. What correlation can be drawn between more disable employees at work and few firms involved?
6. Is the correlation positive or negative? Strong or weak?



### Comparative cultural dimensions between China and the United States

The chart below shows a comparative index for China (orange) and the United States (blue) regarding the five dimensions stated by Geert Hofstede. They are abbreviated in the chart as follows:

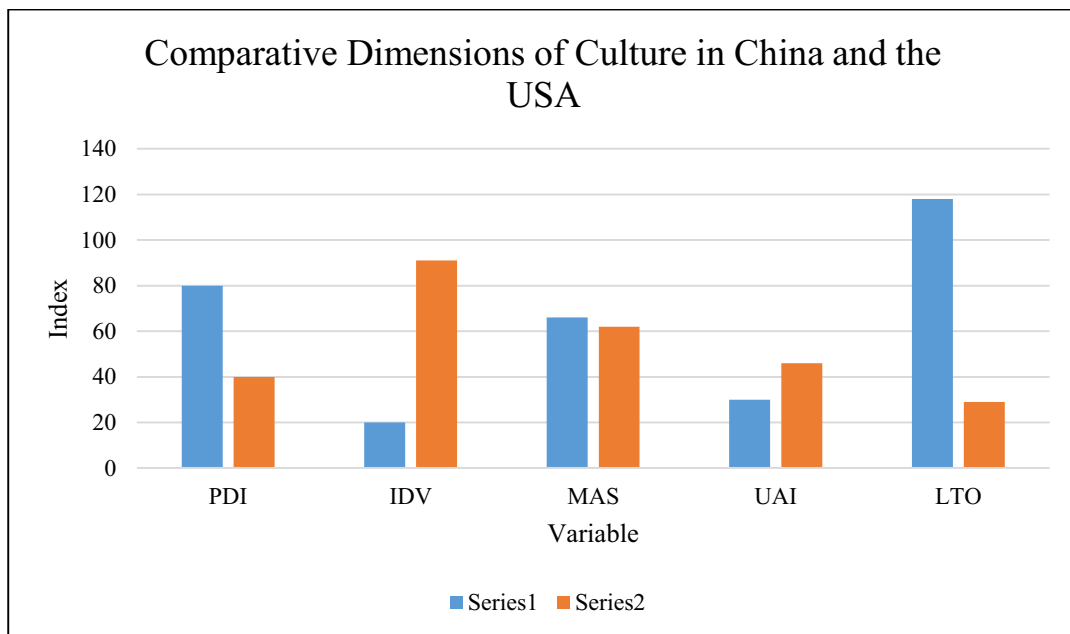
PDI-Small vs. large power distance

IDV-Individualism vs. collectivism (IDV)

MAS-Masculinity vs. femininity (MAS)

UA-Weak vs. strong uncertainty avoidance (UA)

LTO-Long vs. short term orientation (LTO)



**Chart 5:** Comparative cultural dimensions between China and the United States

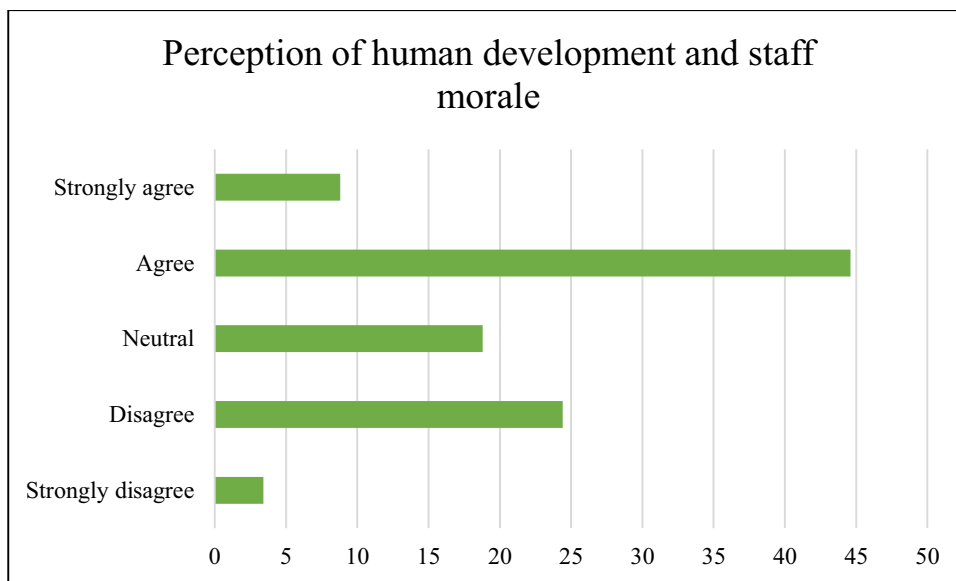
**Source:** Talentspace.blog. (2015)

### Questions

1. Why is power distance much stronger in China than in the USA?
2. What might account for that?
3. What factors state that the USA favour more individualism than China?
4. How does this compare with that of China?
5. How are masculinity/feminity in close line between China and the USA?
6. Why might union avoidance score weak in the index both for China and the USA?
7. How might China benefit from long-term orientation than the USA?
8. Calculate the average indices of both China and the USA and relate them to the strength of cultural dimensions to both countries. The mean index value can be evaluated up to 60 in relation to the scores obtained.

### Black Economic Empowerment and diversity in post-apartheid South Africa

In an empirical survey, conducted in March/April of 2010 among the top local South African businesses ranging from small, medium to large multinational companies, the perceptions, thoughts and anticipations of 500 individual managers on the impact of BEE on ten selected dimensions of business performance were sought. Alarming,ly, most of the respondents disagreed with the notion that BEE compliance would improve the performance of the companies they worked for, specifically with regard to overall and international competitiveness; service excellence and client satisfaction; quality; productivity; entrepreneurial spirit and innovation; production performance; human development; staff morale, business ethics and transparency; sales and access to markets; and financial performance.



**Chart 6:** Perception of Black Empowerment on post-apartheid South Africa, human development and staff morale

**Source:** Krüger, L.P. (2011) The impact of black economic empowerment (BEE) on South African businesses: Focusing on ten dimensions of business performance

### Questions

1. Why do few South Africans strongly agree that human development and employee morale should be strong at work?
2. A majority of South Africans agree that human development and staff morale are high in post-apartheid South Africa. How can managers view this perception?
3. Why might South Africans disagree on human development and staff morale?
4. Seen from a distribution curve, would this diagram look like a normal distribution?
5. What might account for a negative skew?
6. How could government better favour integration at work?
7. How might the high percentage of neutral respondents (18.8%) affect the process of integrating racial diversity in post-apartheid South Africa?

### LGBT and workplace diversity

The Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation Law and Public Policy (2014) aggregated a number of surveys that examined discrimination experienced by gay and transgender employees, and determined that:

15–43% of gay and transgender employees have experienced some form of either discrimination or harassment in the workplace;

8–17% were not hired or fired due to their sexual orientation;

10–28% were not promoted because they were gay or transgender;

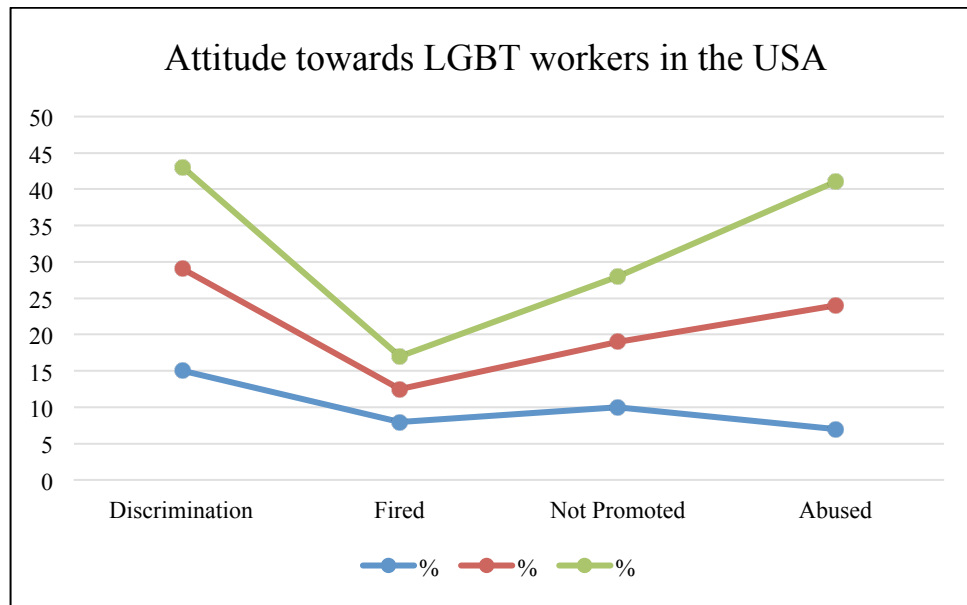
7–41% were verbally or physically abused or had their workplaces vandalised.



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**Chart 7:** Attitudes towards LGBT workers in the USA with lower, median and upper-range scores

**Source:** Catalyst (2014) – Chart (Author's work)

### Questions

1. Take the lowest percentage (blue) for each set of data given and interpret the information regarding the discrimination of transgender and gay workers.
2. Secondly, take the highest end (grey) of the range for each set of data and interpret the information regarding the discrimination of transgender and gay workers.
3. How do discrimination and abuse of LGBT workers contrast in US companies?
4. What is the importance of smoothing the range using the median curve (orange)?
5. How can the median curve provide a better interpretation of discrimination and other data regarding LGBT employees?
6. Given that the lower end would better apply to a tolerant nation, which country would you choose between Scandinavia and France? Why?
7. Given that the upper end would better apply to a less tolerant nation, which country would you choose between Malaysia and Uganda? Why?

### Foreign Worker Training in Diversity

Training in diversity is highly regarded in Singapore. According to the foreign work survey 92014) the following key issues were noted. The main areas of training were job-related skills (Work Permit holders: 96.2%) and safety at work (WP holders: 50%). More than 90% were required to pass tests at the end of their training in respect to job-related skills and safety at work. Before coming to Singapore to work, Work Permit holders indicated that they spent a median duration of 60 days and \$1000 on training in their home country. 80.5% of WP holders respectively had undergone training in Singapore in 2014 compared to 82% and 63% in 2011. The main areas of training were in job-related skills (WP holders: 71.4%) and safety at work (WP holders: 86.0%). Most were required to pass tests at the end of their training in respect to job-related skills and safety at work.

Work-Permit Holders	% trained	Need to do a test	% trained	Need to do a test
Areas of training	Before coming to Singapore		At work in Singapore	
Job-related skills	96.2	95.0	71.4	94.7
Safety at work	50.0	95.0	86.0	94.4
Culture and social norms in Singapore	14.9	87.7	13.3	83.8
Law and regulations in Singapore	25.5	64.8	29.3	60.9
English language	21.0	84.3	18.1	88.5
Others	1.8	82.9	0.9	82.9

Table: Training before and at work in Singapore for foreign workers

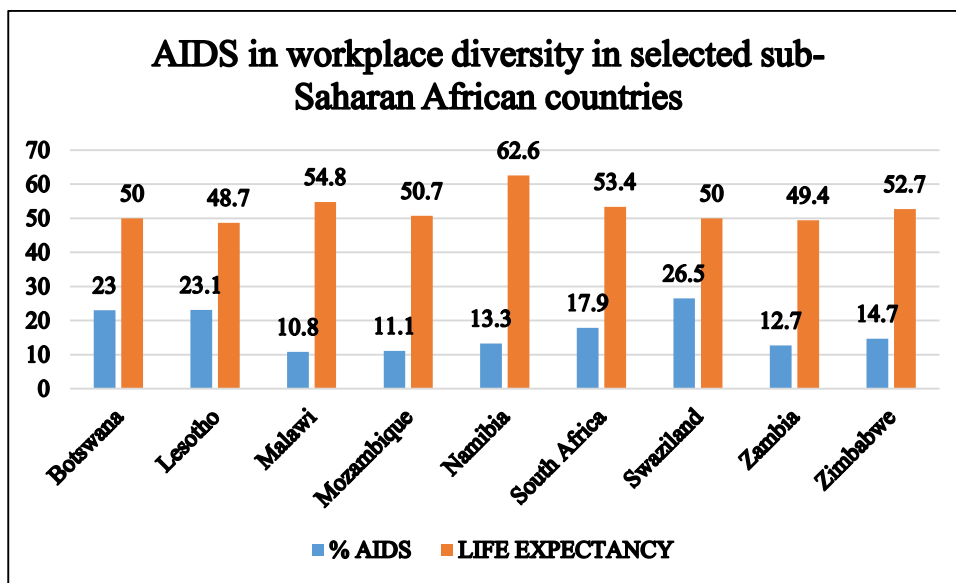
Source: Ministry of Manpower (2014) Migrant Workers' Centre, Foreign workers survey and diversity (2014).

### Questions

1. Why should foreign workers be trained prior to coming to Singapore? Why is there a need to do attest?
2. What accounts for the large percentage of job-related training for foreign workers in Singapore while they are at work? Why is there to have a test after training?
3. What may explain the contrasting difference between training on safety at work before and after coming to Singapore? Why is this so?
4. Compare the data concerning the need for English language proficiency before and while working in Singapore? What is the importance of tests for foreign workers?
5. What explains the high scores of doing a test on different areas prior and while at work in Singapore? What type of foreign employees does Singapore for its diversity?
6. Use the test percentages prior and while at work in Singapore and make a comparative mean to evaluate the differences? What can you infer from the data?

### AIDS in workplace diversity in sub-Saharan Africa

The vast majority of people living with HIV and AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa are aged between 15–49 who are in the prime of their working lives. Employers, schools and the healthcare sector are regularly training staff to replace those who become too ill to work. In 2012, a reported 4.7 percent of people in this demographic in sub-Saharan Africa were living with HIV (UNAIDS, 2013). The epidemic damages businesses through absenteeism, falls in productivity, labour force turnover, and the subsequent added costs to operations. Moreover, company costs for healthcare, funeral benefits and pension fund commitments rise as people take early retirement or die from AIDS-related illnesses.



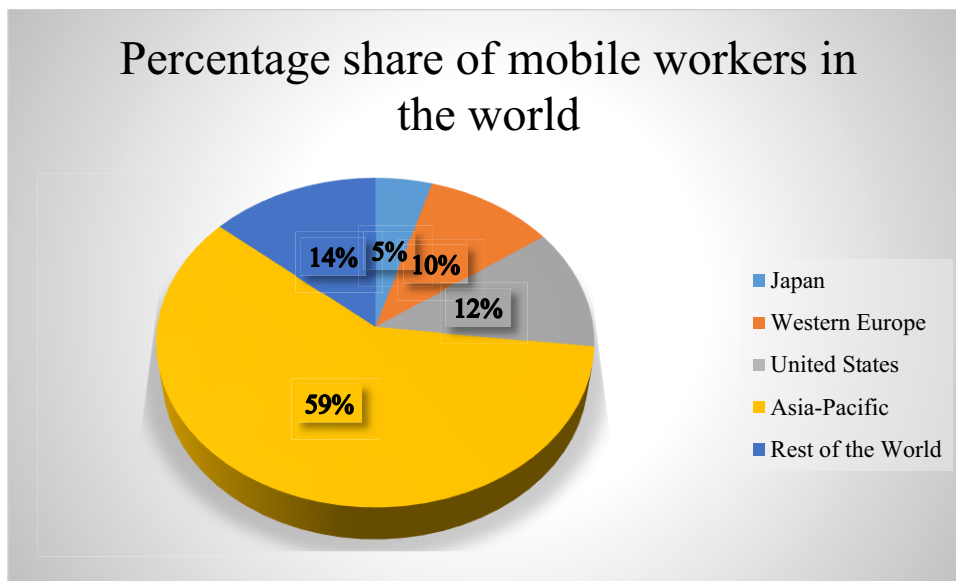
**Chart 8:** AIDS in workplace diversity in selected sub-Saharan African countries  
**Source:** avert.org (2014)

### Questions

1. How is a country like Swaziland seriously threatened by AIDS?
2. Compare the % of employees affected by AIDS and the life expectancy in Namibia? What information can be deduced from the data?
3. Compare the average % of people affected by AIDS in Swaziland, Botswana and Lesotho and the average life span of people? How are these countries seriously affected by AIDS?
4. The use of anti-retroviral drugs is bound to increase life expectancy by 5 years in sub-Saharan Africa. How will this affect countries like Lesotho, Swaziland and Zambia where life expectancy is the lowest?
5. How might a low life expectancy in sub-Saharan Africa for AIDS employees affect its diversity?
6. What actions can be undertaken by governments to improve the fate of sub-Saharan Africa's working population in workplace diversity?

### Mobile workers in workplace diversity in the world

Asia/Pacific (excluding Japan) had the largest number of mobile workers in 2009 at 546.4 million, representing 59.4% of the total mobile workforce population. The United States has the highest penetration of mobile workers at 72.2% for 2008, with 108.9 million mobile workers out of a workforce of 150.9 million. Japan exhibits penetration near that of the United States at 62.9% for 2008, with 41.8 million mobile workers out of a workforce of 66.5 million. Western Europe had 96.5 million mobile workers, accounting for nearly half (48.7%) of the region's workforce for 2008. Rest of the World had a penetration of 13.5% for 2008, representing a total of 125.7 million workers out of a workforce of 928.4 million. ROW consists of Central and Eastern Europe, Middle East, and Africa (CEMA), Latin America, and Canada.



**Chart 9:** Mobile workers in workplace diversity in the world  
**Source:** IDC (2010) Worldwide Mobile worker population

### Questions

1. What accounts for the high percentage of mobile workers in the Asia-Pacific region? Consider countries like China, South-East Asian nations and India. Why is this so? What might this explain about the pace of development of such countries?
2. Compare the movement of mobile workers in Japan and Western Europe? What does this explain of the level of economic development and the need for mobile labour?
3. The United States has the highest penetration of mobile workers at 72.2% for 2008, with 108.9 million mobile workers out of a workforce of 150.9 million. What does this imply regarding mobile workers in the US diversity? What factors encourage such diversity across the USA?
4. Rest of the World had a penetration of 13.5% for 2008, representing a total of 125.7 million workers out of a workforce of 928.4 million. What might this encouraging figure represent about the mobility of workers in Africa?

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# 17 Objective Questions

1. One benefit of workplace diversity to a firm is
  - A. retaining average talent at work.
  - B. increased adaptability.
  - C. lower service range.
  - D. Average execution.
  
2. A non-visible difference of diversity will include a factors such as
  - A. race.
  - B. disability.
  - C. work style.
  - D. sex.
  
3. Gender equality is achieved when people are able to access and enjoy the.....  
regardless of whether they are a woman or a man.
  - A. same rewards, resources and opportunities
  - B. different rewards, resources and opportunities.
  - C. same opportunities.
  - D. same resources.
  
4. The ..... is a concept from the 1980s describing an invisible barrier that blocks  
the access of women to the top.
  - A. roof ceiling.
  - B. second sex.
  - C. gender gap.
  - D. glass ceiling.
  
5. .... has the most widespread negative impact on older workers In employment.
  - A. Indirect discrimination.
  - B. Direct discrimination
  - C. Segregation.
  - D. Affirmative action.
  
6. In the United Kingdom, suffer most from age discrimination at work rather than older workers.
  - A. young workers.
  - B. middle-aged workers.
  - C. mature workers.
  - D. old workers.

7. .... is the largest generational cohort in the workplace today.
- A. Baby boomers.
  - B. Generation Xers
  - C. Generation Y.
  - D. Generation Z.
8. Generational differences sometimes may cause clashes in the workplace, especially among .....
- A. individuals.
  - B. managers.
  - C. trade unions.
  - D. workers in teams.
9. .... is a young class group which is socially and culturally active, with middle levels of economic capital.
- A. Traditional middle class.
  - B. Elite.
  - C. New affluent worker.
  - D. Established middle class.

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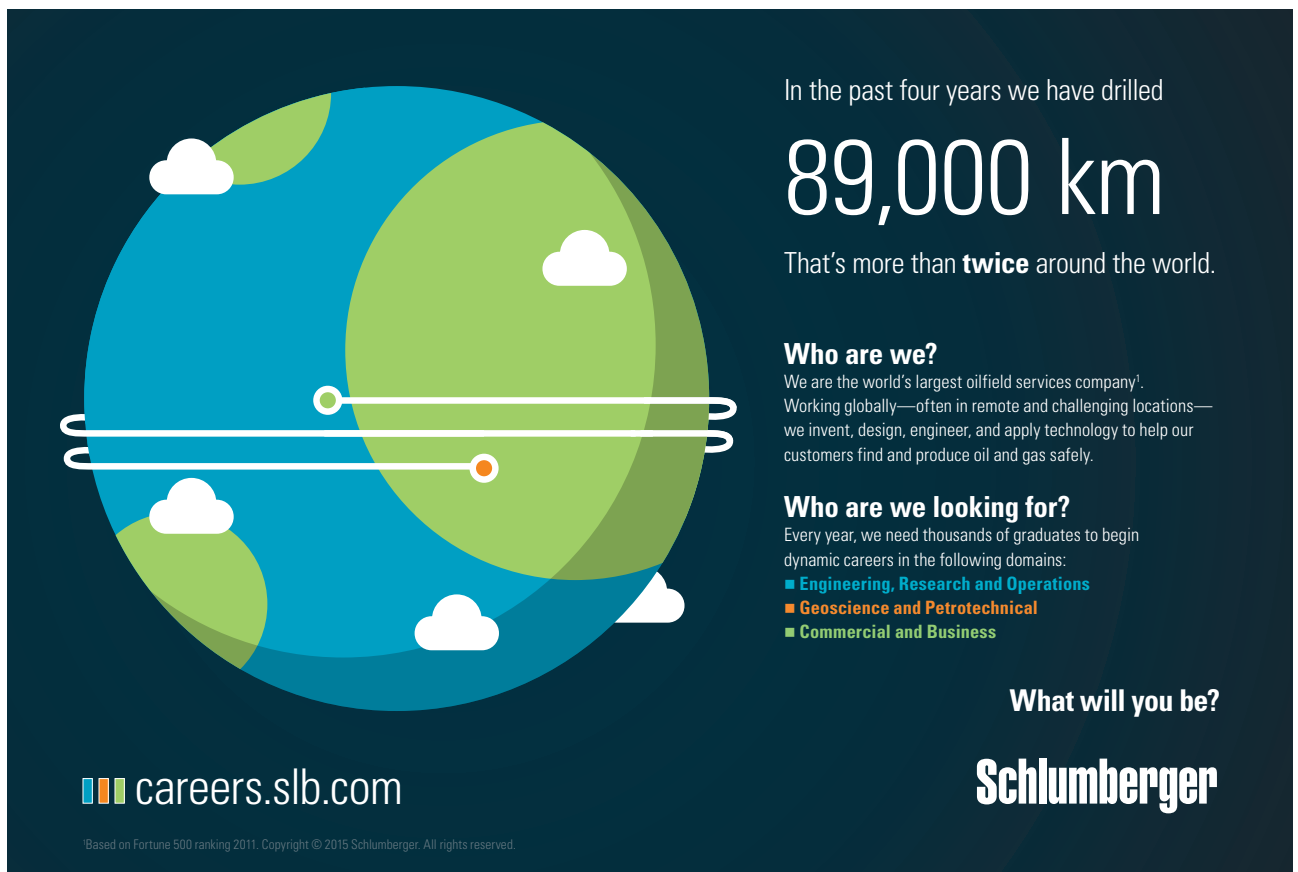
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10. Africa's ..... is now grabbing attention as a driver of growth and democracy.
  - A. low class.
  - B. upper class.
  - C. emerging middle class.
  - D. tribal community.
  
11. According to Trompenaars, the ..... dimension is the standard by which relationships are measured.
  - A. universalism v/s particularism.
  - B. individualism v/s communitarianism.
  - C. specific v/s diffuse.
  - D. achievement v/s ascription.
  
12. Hofstede's ..... dimension measures employees' comfort with unstructured environments.
  - A. masculinity.
  - B. uncertainty avoidance.
  - C. individualism.
  - D. power distance.
  
13. An important aspect of foreign workers in United Kingdom's history of immigration is the mass movement of people from
  - A. Poland to England in the 1980s.
  - B. Arab nations to England in the 1950s.
  - C. Commonwealth nations to England in the 1960s.
  - D. Eritrea to England in 2015.
  
14. Rich countries are increasingly competing to recruit ..... to meet their labour shortages in key industries.
  - A. low-skilled immigrants.
  - B. college educated immigrants.
  - C. casual workers.
  - D. highly skilled immigrants.
  
15. .... is a social policy of racial segregation involving political and economic and legal discrimination against people who are not Whites.
  - A. Apartheid.
  - B. Direct discrimination.
  - C. Colour bar.
  - D. Exclusion.

16. .... is an important policy instrument aimed at broadening the economic base of post-apartheid South Africa.
- A. Youth empowerment.
  - B. Black economic empowerment.
  - C. Racial equality.
  - D. African unity.
17. The ..... views disability as a consequence of environmental, social and attitudinal barriers that prevent people with impairments from maximum participation in society.
- A. rights model.
  - B. justice model.
  - C. social model.
  - D. equality model.
18. An indirect benefit of employing disabled people in the USA is
- A. retaining qualified employees.
  - B. saving on compensation.
  - C. increased employee attendance.
  - D. increased company morale.
19. In ....., a job is part-time if working hours do not exceed two-thirds of those worked in an equivalent full-time job.
- A. The United Arab Emirates.
  - B. England.
  - C. Spain.
  - D. Malawi.
20. .... employees are hired to work on a part-time basis by companies that need extra help during a particular season.
- A. Temporary.
  - B. Freelancers.
  - C. Seasonal.
  - D. Relief.
21. The ..... function of managers in diversity through cross-functional teams include members from different areas of the business.
- A. planning.
  - B. controlling.
  - C. organisational.
  - D. leading.

22. .... in management, particularly those comprised of people from diverse backgrounds, offer more perspectives and ideas than any one person.
- A. Groups.
  - B. Teams.
  - C. Sub-cultures.
  - D. Quality circles.
23. The purpose of ..... is to give awareness to workers and facilitate the integration of diversity in organisations.
- A. diversity training.
  - B. diversity appraisal.
  - C. diversity selection.
  - D. diversity recruitment.
24. .... include employee satisfaction and diversity that address different dimensions of employee satisfaction
- A. Econometrics.
  - B. Employee wellbeing.
  - C. Performance appraisal.
  - D. Performance metrics.



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25. South Africa was the first country on the African Continent to ban .....  
discrimination in its constitution.
- A. homophobic.
  - B. heterosexual.
  - C. transsexual.
  - D. homosexual.
26. LGBT inclusion can be explored by asking what needs to be in place to promote
- A. acceptance.
  - B. tolerance and treatment.
  - C. equality and generosity.
  - D. safety, acceptance and equality.
27. .... present major challenges to the successful implementation of workplace HIV/  
AIDS programmes.
- A. Stigma and fear.
  - B. Prejudice and denial.
  - C. Stigma and discrimination
  - D. Discrimination and racism.
28. An employer is required to make ..... to allow an HIV/AIDS worker to have  
time-off for treatment.
- A. a favourable treatment.
  - B. an affirmative pledge.
  - C. reasonable accommodation.
  - D. sound value judgment.
29. .... who work together might be subjected to pressure in their attempts to  
balance their work and family responsibilities.
- A. Single couples.
  - B. Dual-career couples
  - C. Same sex couples.
  - D. Sole survivors.
30. Researchers predict that the increase of ..... workers will be significantly greater than  
the increase in employees working from home.
- A. telecommuter.
  - B. seasonal.
  - C. part-time.
  - D. mobile.

31. One benefit of diversity management at the workplace is that
- A. employees can be more tempted to voice their racial identity.
  - B. employees bring their religious values with them in the firm.
  - C. employees bring better competitiveness to the firm.
  - D. employees can be more resistant to change.
32. Management of diversity is important to a company's workers because
- A. employees mainly learn about the differences among themselves.
  - B. employees learn about the drawbacks of diversity.
  - C. employees learn about the wealth that it brings to their company.
  - D. employees mainly learn about the class differences among themselves.
33. Issues like hippie culture, May 68, pop music better relate to
- A. Generation X.
  - B. Baby boomer generation.
  - C. Generation Y.
  - D. Millennials.
34. Young managers contribute to diversity by
- A. seeking top positions which their elders are aiming.
  - B. bringing new ideas and learning to the firm.
  - C. having expert IT knowledge that they all learn.
  - D. increasing competition with existing older workers.
35. One way of accepting a physically disabled employee is to
- A. declare a company as an Equal Opportunities employer.
  - B. offer any position to the disabled employed.
  - C. have at least one disabled employee in any position.
  - D. recruit him in order not to face criticism from outsiders.
36. The main difficulty for foreign employees in diversity environments is their
- A. language barrier.
  - B. attitude to competition.
  - C. cultural tradition.
  - D. attitude to work.

37. Which one of the following is not an element of Hofstede's cultural dimension theory?
- A. Masculinity.
  - B. Power distance.
  - C. Individualism.
  - D. Social class.
38. The legislation covering gay employees at work better relates to the
- A. transsexual workplace issue.
  - B. bisexual couple workplace issue.
  - C. transgender workplace issue.
  - D. homosexual workplace issue.
39. If a firm does not accommodate a disabled employee in the European Union, the firm should
- A. employ a normal worker in his place.
  - B. pay indemnity to the Courts.
  - C. contribute to the solidarity fund.
  - D. recruit from other countries.



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40. A part-timer in the Information technology area can be better suited at
- A. completing the job of a full-time worker as and when needed.
  - B. working at any time.
  - C. undertaking back up office work.
  - D. doing the full-time job in the afternoon.
41. The concept of “sameness” earlier applied to diversity meant that
- A. all people belong to the same community.
  - B. all employees look exactly the same.
  - C. all people are born in the same world.
  - D. all Americans are the same.
42. “Cultural exception” in France affects diversity at work when
- A. the French say that they are different from migrant workers.
  - B. the French have a particular cuisine of their own.
  - C. the French have a feeling of superiority over others.
  - D. the French adopt a certain work style like siesta or paid vacations.
43. The fact that Chinese employees show greater respect to central government compared to Americans refers to the cultural dimension of
- A. masculinity.
  - B. individualism.
  - C. avoidance.
  - D. power distance.
44. In 1975, the United Nations, in an attempt to promote gender diversity worldwide promoted the
- A. Year of the Woman.
  - B. Year of Emancipation.
  - C. Year of Gender Equality.
  - D. Year of the Dragon.
45. The Marxist ideal of removing social barriers contributed to a utopian view of diversity based on
- A. the proletariat.
  - B. the people’s society.
  - C. the classless society.
  - D. the end of generations.

**Answers**

- |      |       |       |       |      |      |      |      |      |      |
|------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1.B  | 2.C   | 3.A   | 4.D   | 5.A  | 6.A  | 7.B  | 8.D  | 9.C  | 10.C |
| 11.A | 12.B  | 13.C  | 14.D  | 15.A | 16.B | 17.C | 18.D | 19.C | 20.C |
| 21.C | 22.B  | 23.A  | 24.D  | 25.A | 26.D | 27.C | 28.C | 29.B | 30.D |
| 31.C | 32.C  | 33.B  | 34.B  | 35.A | 36.A | 37.D | 38.D | 39.B | 40.C |
| 41.A | 42.D. | 43.D. | 44.A. | 45.C |      |      |      |      |      |

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# 18 Essay-Type Questions

1. Why was diversity management an issue that focused on ethnocentric values in the past? How has feminism and Afro-American movement influenced diversity in the 1960s? How is diversity a more open concept under globalisation?
2. How has the workplace diversity evolved from “sameness” to a multicultural environment? What are the advantages of diversity at work? How might a nation benefit from its multicultural population in the effective management of diversity?
3. What were the main factors that caused role stereotypes in society in the past? How has women emancipation changed the perspective? How are women better engaging themselves at work and what does this mean to their inclusion?
4. What are the key characteristics influencing Generation Y at work? How do the values and attitudes differ from the baby boomer generation (1946–1964)? How would you predict the values and expectations of Millennials (2000 onwards) at work?
5. What does an inclusion strategy imply at work in the French society? How may yardsticks like inclusive integration ensure adequate representation of the different components of society? What are the benefits and drawbacks of secularism at work?
6. How is the world population of 7 billion people shaping diversity at work? What advantages exist when the Chinese and Indian managers undertake business development in some African nations? What diversity issues should be seriously considered in this strategy?
7. How may “dual career couples” contribute to workplace diversity? Outline the cultural shift that diversity this represents to workplace diversity? What are the advantages and drawbacks of this form of family pattern at work?
8. Relate individualism and collectivism to diversity management in a capitalist and a command economy? How may power distance contrast in diversity between a rich and a developing nation? Illustrate areas where companies might adopt avoidance in managing workplace diversity.
9. How can a broadcasting station integrate part-time or free-lance workers with full timers? What are the benefits earned from such integration? What are potential threats of this form of recruitment to such an organisation?

10. Briefly comment on the following internal dimensions of diversity namely race, ethnicity and gender and how these are considered as visible. Why are personality, lifestyle and work habits considered as invisible aspects of diversity? Why is it important for managers to reconcile both aspects?
11. What are the main considerations of the liberal approach to diversity according to Jewson? What could be criticisms of this approach? How do Kandola and Fullerton better approach diversity on stating that overcoming differences can lead to better productive workforce?
12. What is the importance of women emancipation in society? How does this concept positively apply at work? Why are patriarchal organisations more likely to favour men than women? How is this approach changing today?
13. Briefly comment on the contribution of Simone de Beauvoir in better defining the second sex or the other. How could the “Year of the Woman” in 1975 promote greater gender equality for women at work? How does female militancy contribute to gender diversity at work and what are its limitations?
14. Why is it that young employees earn higher salaries than older ones in selected sectors of activity? What is the reason behind employing a young manager at work? Why is the non-selection of young managers at the corporate level due to an absence of seniority discrimination in workplace diversity?
15. Why are middle-aged workers more likely to face discrimination on not being recruited on coming back to work after retrenchment? What are the qualities of middle-aged workers in the manual sector and how might these benefit younger ones? Why is it correct to make a balance between young and old workers in a company?
16. Why should managers be capable of addressing an issue like generational diversity? Why should communication style differ on dealing with generational diversity? Why is it important for management to consider developing leaders with a multi-generational and inclusion perspective?
17. Why might research reveal that baby boomers are hardworking and cost effective? Why is Generation X better at being a team player and problem solver at work? Why is Generation Y entrepreneurial but difficult to work with? What could be the key cultural considerations here?

18. How does the social class issue address workplace diversity today? What differences can be seen between the middle and the upper class? What are the aspirations of an emerging middle class in workplace diversity? How might the elimination of social class barriers better integrate workplace diversity?
19. What are the characteristics of the new affluent class in Great Britain? How might this contrast with the emerging service class in the same country? How might the differentiation of workers in seven classes compared to the initial five ones both benefit and challenge workplace diversity in Great Britain?
20. Use Trompenaar's model of cultural diversity and explain the dimensions of universalism and particularism. What is the difference between the neutral and emotional dimensions? How do they affect diversity? How does the 'outer direction' known as the organic dimension better influence workplace diversity today?
21. Why is power distance a useful dimension in cultural diversity at work? Why are rich countries more in favour of individualism to collectivism in relation to Hofstede's model of diversity? What are the key considerations regarding masculinity/femininity in workplace diversity?



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22. Explain how the movement of semi-skilled workforce from the Commonwealth nations to the United Kingdom in the 1960s address workplace and diversity at that time? What are the key skills that might rich countries look from migrant labour in diversity? What factors might create hindrance regarding accepting migrant workers in diversity?
23. How might emerging markets like China and India be prospective areas to welcome western managers? How do western managers contribute to the enrichment of diversity at work in such countries? What is the importance for western managers to adapt themselves to such diversity and how might this be helpful to both the home and the host workplace?
24. Why might a country like Qatar need a high level of migrant workers? How might this trend vary in Singapore which is more economically and technically advanced than Qatar? How might a move to seek qualified and skilled migrants better address the economic and workplace diversity of some Arab nations?
25. Why is France keener to accept selective immigration than the traditional need to recruit migrants? How might a high influx of foreigners affect workplace diversity in rich countries? To what extent might the movement of foreign workers to rich countries be of benefit to them?
26. Why is a concept like apartheid wrongful at the workplace? How has the Black Economic Empowerment programmed effectively addressed the diversity issue in modern South Africa? How could this initiative change the traditional white manager stereotype in South Africa? What are its limitations?
27. Why are “Millennials” more open to racial issues at work? What might account for this attitude? How can modern companies address racial discrimination issues at work? How might a concept like inclusion of races better impact workplace diversity?
28. Why must firms duly consider the issue of disability at work? What is the rationale behind governments empowering businesses to recruit disabled workers? Why could this assumption not be seriously abided by organisations and how could this affect diversity at work?
29. What precautions and actions should a firm take while employing a disabled worker? What could be a direct and indirect benefit of employing a disabled worker? How could an affirmation action towards recruiting disable workers add to the enrichment of workplace diversity?
30. Differentiate between the social and the rights model of disability. Why is it important for society to cast a positive eye on the disabled worker and how could this be aligned with the rights of the disabled worker? What are the common clichés for firms not to recruit a disable worker?

31. How could a business in the Information Technology sector define a part-timer? Why is there a greater demand for part-timers at the workplace today? Identify two types of industries in this context? Devise a short code of ethics where the part-time worker could be better integrated in workplace diversity?
32. Differentiate between temporary and seasonal employees in workplace diversity? Why might a broadcasting station or a news company recruit freelance employees? What is the practicality of recruiting a part-time employee and what might be a constraint?
33. How can management of change benefit diversity at work? The manager as a change agent can empower diversity through co-operation and co-option. How do these practices affect diversity at work? How might cross-functional teams contribute to workplace diversity?
34. Why should firms promote managers as leaders of diversity at work? What characteristics might be expected from such leaders in a multinational environment? How do issues like acceptance, respect under transformational leadership impact positively diversity?
35. What is the relevance of employee motivation in better addressing diversity? How can motivated employees from a diverse background better impact on the acceptance of diversity at work? Relate teamwork and motivation to a diverse workforce in a multinational enterprise.
36. What are the key questions regarding recruitment in diversity? How could human resource managers better address the selection issue regarding diversity? How is managing growth in workforce diversity and increasing the representation of women and minorities a critical human resource management strategy of recruitment and selection for organisations?
37. What is the importance of training human resource managers in diversity? What are the key areas where such training should be provided? How can diversity training help reduce conflicts among workers and promote healthier work relationships in a firm?
38. What is the relevance for human resource managers to use performance metrics in diversity? Prepare a chart to explain the key performance metrics like quality, reward and team work and link them with diversity. What is the relevance for human resource managers to be advocates of workplace diversity regarding minorities?
39. How did advances against homophobia and the gay right movement of the 1960s favour better sensitisation of the public on accepting gay workers. What are the reasons that hinder African nations from accepting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) workers? Why should this attitude be overcome in workplace diversity?

40. Consider the retention or hiring of LGBT workers, state how this might be contrasting between an advanced nation and a conservative society. What is stigmatisation of LGBT and how does it negatively impact such employees at work? What action can be taken to bring LGBT inclusion at work?
41. What is the stereotype of HIV/AIDS and its prevalence in sub-Saharan countries? Why is it correct to say that the cliché of HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa be partly erroneous? How do employers better accept such workers? Why is there a compelling need to have HIV/AIDS workers in workplace diversity in sub-Saharan Africa?
42. What reasonable accommodation can a manager take to better integrate a HIV/AIDS employee at work? How should this measure impact positively both the HIV/AIDS employee and the other workers? What might firms undertake against employees bypassing the acceptance of HIV/AIDS workers in diversity?
43. Why are dual-career couples more prevalent today than before? In which areas of activity are such couples present? What are the benefits of employing a dual career couple? What are the risks to consider on employing a dual career couple in workplace diversity?
44. Explain the rise of the telecommuter worker in today's diverse work environment. What are the advantages of developing such a type of workforce? What precautions could a manager take to ensure the integration of the telecommuter in workplace diversity?
45. Differentiate between the constantly and the occasionally-mobile worker. How do mobile workers contribute to workplace diversity in the contemporary work context? How might rewards and motivation from management favour better inclusion of the mobile worker in diversity?



# About the Author

Dr Nirmal Kumar Betchoo is a full-time academic at the Université des Mascareignes, Mauritius with long teaching experience spanning nearly three decades. His areas of expertise include human resource management, public sector management, business strategy, international business and the management of diversity. He has published 6 academic books and contributed more than twenty articles in peer-reviewed journals and in important web directories like [allafrica.com](http://allafrica.com), [highbeam research](http://highbeam.research) and [afropages](http://afropages.com). He has extensively published in the local press over the past ten years. He has also presented papers in international conferences. Dr Betchoo has also served as external examiner to the University of Technology, Mauritius, the Mauritius Institute of Training and Development and the Mauritius Public Service. This book is his seventh publication.