

## MANAGING WORKPLACE DIVERSITY THROUGH GLOBAL PEOPLE FRAMEWORK MODEL

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### Abstract:

*With the organizations going global, management of workforce diversity is a primary concern for most of the businesses. In present times organisations need to recognise and manage workforce diversity effectively. With the increasing diversity in organizations, the need to maintain a uniform workplace culture becomes a need of primary importance. Diversity forms one of the seven core values of workplace culture. So naturally, the importance of workforce diversity cannot be ignored. Maintaining workforce diversity and workplace culture is indeed, a tough task. But the answer to this problem lies in the Global People Framework model, which manages the workforce diversity and culture at the same time. The present paper intends to explain the fruitfulness of this model in managing the workforce diversity.*

### KEYWORDS:

Diversity, Workforce Diversity, Global People Framework, DARE

### INTRODUCTION

With organizations reshaping and evolving themselves into multinational and transnational entities, the issue of workforce diversity has gained prominent importance in the field of workplace culture. Diversity refers to the co-existence of employees from various socio-cultural backgrounds within the company. Diversity includes cultural factors such as race, gender, age, colour, physical ability, ethnicity, etc. The broader definition of diversity may include age, national origin, religion, disability, sexual orientation, values, ethnic culture, education, language, lifestyle, beliefs, physical appearance and economic status. Diversity is being considered as one of the seven core values of workplace culture. This workforce diversity not only helps the organizations in the running of their businesses, but a pool of diversified and enriched knowledge is also available to the organizations. Indian workplaces have a great deal of diversity in terms of language, ethnicity, caste and religion. Under such a diversified scenario and climate, it becomes a critical task for any organization to evolve and develop a single course of workplace culture which will be admired, embraced and adopted by each and every employee of the organization. A solution to this problem seems apparent in a model of diversity management, better known as Global People Framework. At a time when it is commonplace for enterprises to stretch around the globe, this model helps in providing the glue to create a sense of trust and shared purpose and develop a high performance culture through better diversity management of the workforce.

### Reasons for diversity at workplace

While the primary reason for this increasing trend of diversity is attributed to the phenomenon better known as 'Globalization', there are several other reasons that are responsible for this trend. These include:

Change in the demographic status of the country. With more and more people from traditionally agricultural communities and women joining the ranks of working middle class, workforce from different strata of

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society join the working folk.

This traditional workforce has got traditional Indian knowledge (inherited from rich Indian culture and heritage) which serve as the main source of experience and practices to run the organizations in Indian context successfully. The Organizations in India are utilising these knowledge and experiences to gain competitive advantage against their rival companies. Therefore, companies are proactively encouraging diversity in India.

### **Advantages of Workplace Diversity in India**

Workforce diversity has several advantages of having heterogeneous workforce. Some of the benefits include better decision making, higher creativity, innovation, better marketing to foreign and domestic ethnic minority communities, and a better distribution of economic opportunity (Cox, 1991: Cox and Blake, 1991, cited by Henry & Evans, 2007). Watson (1993) also suggested in one of his studies that culturally diverse groups relative to homogenous groups are more effective both in the interaction process and job performance. Here are some of the advantages that workplace diversity offers to an organization.

**Spotting of new markets:** Business thrives on diversity, which entails, serving people differently. Different people have different needs as per their expectations and traditions. To serve these diversified needs of the customers will require searching of new markets. An organization with diversified workforce surely becomes indispensable source to look out for new markets to serve the diversified customers in the highly diversified market of India.

**Reduction of costs:** Businesses prosper on the theory of 'economies of scale'. More production means reduction in the prices of the goods and services. Employees with diversified backgrounds will help in the development of products suitable to customers of diversified background. If an organization is able to serve customers from diversified backgrounds, it will gain more and more market, thereby, increasing its profits.

**Improved hiring of quality people:** Variety is the spice of life, so goes the proverb. Life is beautiful because it is enriched by different colours, food, culture, weather, emotions, aspiration, etc. Similar is the case with organizations. People with varied culture and tradition always bring rich fountain of talent, skill and experience to the organization. It gives the organizations the options to hire quality people.

**Reduction in unintended biases:** As the organization hires people with varied backgrounds and serves customers belonging to different backgrounds, the biases against people with different background gradually reduces. This helps in the culmination of respect and the feeling of brotherhood among the masses, as the employees, after leaving the organization premises, gets back to his/her social life, where he/she interacts with different people. This helps in dampening the feeling of biasness towards other people from different culture.

**Favourable publicity:** Nowadays, organizations are valued because of the people they employ. Hiring people with different culture, tradition, gender, physical ability helps them in publicizing their organizations. For example, organizations hiring 'differently-abled' employees owe a great respect these days. Job advertisements often promote women to apply against the vacancies. This naturally enhances their public image.

**Creative advantage:** Diversified workforce has different ways of thinking and doing the things. This all, when combined together, helps in infusing creativity within an organization. Employees belonging to different cultures and traditions will suggest measures of doing the things which they have been inculcating right from their childhood. This naturally provides creative advantage to the organizations.

**Social progress:** As India is a country with different cultures and traditions, promoting diversification will lead to the social progress of the country. When people from different walks of the society come together and join hands, the real progress of the society is achieved. Therefore, involving diversified workforce is a step towards achieving social progress of the country,

### **The Global People Framework Model**

To make adjustments with the diverse workforce in the organization there are certain models viz., DARE (Disinclination, Apathy, Recognition and Embrace). Adding to this list is another model, better known as the Global People Framework to ensure diversity management. This framework helps in the management workplace diversity involving the employees of the company. Iterating the slogan "Winning Culture, Winning together", the model concentrates on four aspects of organization to manage workplace diversity. These are:

1. **Right Workplace:** Sustaining a positive diversity and fairness climate across all the departments and functional operations leads to better management of culture as each and every employee is given proper

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opportunity to walk down their own lines, of course through mutual cooperation and coordinated efforts.

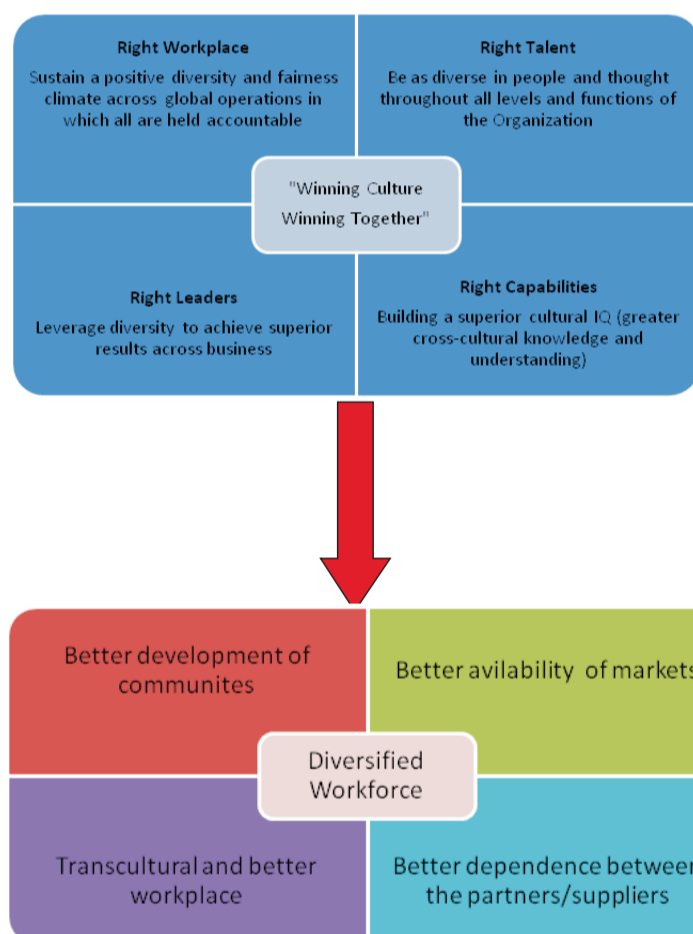
2.Right Talent: To maintain a successful and healthy workplace culture, it becomes essential that the people who are hired from diversified workforce should be talented. Rightly talented employees are found to be more committed and devoted towards their jobs. Thus, it results in the building up of a better workplace culture.

3.Right Leaders: Leadership is considered the key element for defining and driving workplace culture Leveraging diversity to achieve superior results across our business forms the every responsibility of a true leader. Also, as the leader is at the top hierarchy of any enterprise, he takes the lead role in establishing a workplace culture.

4.Right Capabilities: Building a superior cultural IQ (greater cross-cultural knowledge and understanding) definitely gives a golden opportunity to the organizations to gain competitive advantage against their respective competitors.

With the help of the following demonstration, the Global People Framework can be understood.

**A Model of Global People Framework**



All the four components of Global People Framework work in complete collaboration and facilitates the evolution of a culture for the effective and efficient running of a business organization through better people management or better diversity management. The adoption of Global People Framework helps in the creation of a culture that internalizes and supports the following ideals:

Leveraging diversity to achieve superior business results across the globe

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Managing the recruitment, development, advancement and retention of diverse talent throughout all levels of organization.

Create, foster and sustain a positive diversified, inclusive and fair climate across the globe. In totality, all these ideals help in the building of a corporate culture (and not workplace culture), resulting in the advancement of organizations at four levels:

<u>Workplace</u>	<u>Markets</u>	<u>Community</u>	<u>Partner</u>
Being as diversified in people and thoughts	Winning in the marketplace, by appealing to diverse consumers and customers	Enhancing the lives of the diversified communities	Maximizing supplier diversity opportunities and engaging with customers and business partners by providing them value added facilities.

The opportunities that this Global People Framework model unfolds can be mentioned in the following words:

The model helps in cultivating creative leaders who can sprightly lead in complex, global environments

Facilitates the mobilization of resources with greater speed and flexibility; that is, the model helps in generating greater capability to adjust to underlying costs and faster ways to allocate talent.

Helps in the capitalization of collective intelligence and talent through effective collaboration across increasingly local and global teams.

The Global People Framework model actually puts emphasis on the six predominant factors that motivates organizations in the management of workforce diversity. These six factors become the underlying principles or the core values which drive the need to adopt this model. These seven principles can be mentioned in the following way:

- Principle of Social Responsibility
- Principle of Resource Imperative
- Principle of Legal Requirement
- Principle of Marketing Strategy
- Principle of Capacity Building Strategy
- Principle of Economic Payback

These six principles work in collaboration with each other and encourage an organization to tread on the path of better diversity management. The interrelationship can well be presented through the following illustration:

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### Six Principles of Workplace Diversity



### CONCLUSION:

Managing diversified workforce and culture at the same time is indeed, a daunting task for organizations in recent times. While diversified workforce provided plethora of knowledge to the organization, the differences in the organization makes it difficult to maintain a uniform culture throughout the organization. Several organizations, like Coca Cola, HSBC, IBM, etc. have adopted this model to yield the benefits of better workforce management. Accepting and respecting workforce diversity has now become an organizational decorum for the organizations. Diversity is seen as the art of thinking independently together in a unified direction. We must suspend our pre conceived attitude in judging the people with different and diversified backgrounds. The Global People Framework model helps the employees working in the organizations trust into the abilities and capabilities of their co workers, and helps them evolve into a team rather than categorizing their fellow worker individualistically. When a group begins accepting and respecting each other the dividends generated by diversity diminish and the results yielded are spectacular. Thus, the Human Resource departments should meticulously nurture and promote workforce diversity in the organizations. The Global People Framework is certainly a way out in the creation of sustained workforce diversity management, as not only helps in the management of diversified workforce, but also facilitates in the building of a uniform workplace culture along the lines of organizational needs and aspirations.

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