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ANNOTATION

This Conference Paper looks at how organizations can deal with diversity in the workplace, using different approaches and strategies to ensure it's successful implementation. The Paper will delve into the different types and sources of diversity management, diversity cost, and the challenges organizations face due to diversity, the benefits of diversity as well as legal compliance required. Finally, the Paper will offer possible solutions to managing diversity in the workplace.

KEY WORDS

- Affirmative Action
- Cultural Diversity
- Diversity Management
- Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI)
- Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)



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- Equality
- Global Diversity Management
- Multicultural Workforce
- Racism
- Workplace Diversity



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INTRODUCTION

How diversity is managed in a multicultural workforce is becoming increasingly important for businesses in this era of globalization (Kamal, 2009). This is because this issue affects efficiency and productivity in organizations. This Paper aims to shed light on diversity management in international organizations. The findings of the study will be beneficial to international organizations, academia and Policy Makers as it provides guidelines on how to manage diversity. The question that the researchers are setting out to answer is, why is it important for an organization to embrace diversity management?

In the early Nineties, factors such as ageing workforce, globalization, concern towards discrimination, increased the necessity for companies to come up with a new plan to gain competitive advantage through human labor (Guest, 1997; Becker and Gerhart, 1996). The response to this necessity was the introduction of diversity management (Agocs and Burr, 1996). The main idea of diversity management was to enhance the effectiveness and productivity of organizations by valuing, promoting and utilizing diversities between individuals (Sharma & Nisar, 2016).

Diversity management can be defined as the planning and implementation of organizational systems and human resource practices to maximize the merits of diversity while minimizing its demerits (Cox, 1993). The demographics of the population and the workplace in the world are drastically changing because of a number of reasons, such as women, older people, an increasing number of ethnic and religious minorities, and single people with caring responsibilities in the workplace (Bisin et al., 2011).

Accordingly, organizations need to effectively manage and understand workforce diversity not only to increase business outcomes but also to ensure that they build an inclusive work environment in a socially responsible manner (J. O. Syed, M., 2015). Diversity plays a crucial role in organizations; this is as a result of globalization, the increase of complex jobs and greater diversity of the workforce. Different scholars have defined diversity in different ways.

Another definition given by Cox (2001), describes diversity as the variation of cultural and social identities among people who exist together in an employment setting. Thomas and Ely (1998), explain that diversity is varied approaches and perspectives to work brought by members of different identities. Organizations need to focus their attention on engaging with and managing a heterogeneous workforce in ways that not only yield sustainable competitive advantage, but also are contextually and socially responsible (J. Syed & Tariq, 2017).



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According to Kandola and Fullerton (1998, P.7), the managing diversity concept confirms that the workforce is made up of a diverse number of employees who have differences which are visible and sometimes, non-visible differences. They include factors such as age, sex, disability, race, background, personality and work ethics, and is built on the premise that bringing together these differences ensures an environment which is productive in which every employee feels valued and appreciated.

Ragins (1997) posits that cultural identities are often associated with certain power positions, asserting the fact that some cultural identity groups have more prestige, power, and status than others do. An example is in the Western culture where men hold a higher status than women, this can be seen in politics where there are more men voted into office than women, and in the business world where more men hold senior positions than women (Taylor, 2017).

Cox and Beale (1997) and Vertorex (2015) state that the management of diversity can only be done by the top management teams, as they play a vital role in ensuring that it is done effectively and efficiently. There is need for organizations to create structures and cultures that facilitate the inclusion of employees in workgroups as well as involving the fulfillment of the needs of both belonging and uniqueness (Brewer & Silver, 2000; Syed & Boje, 2011).

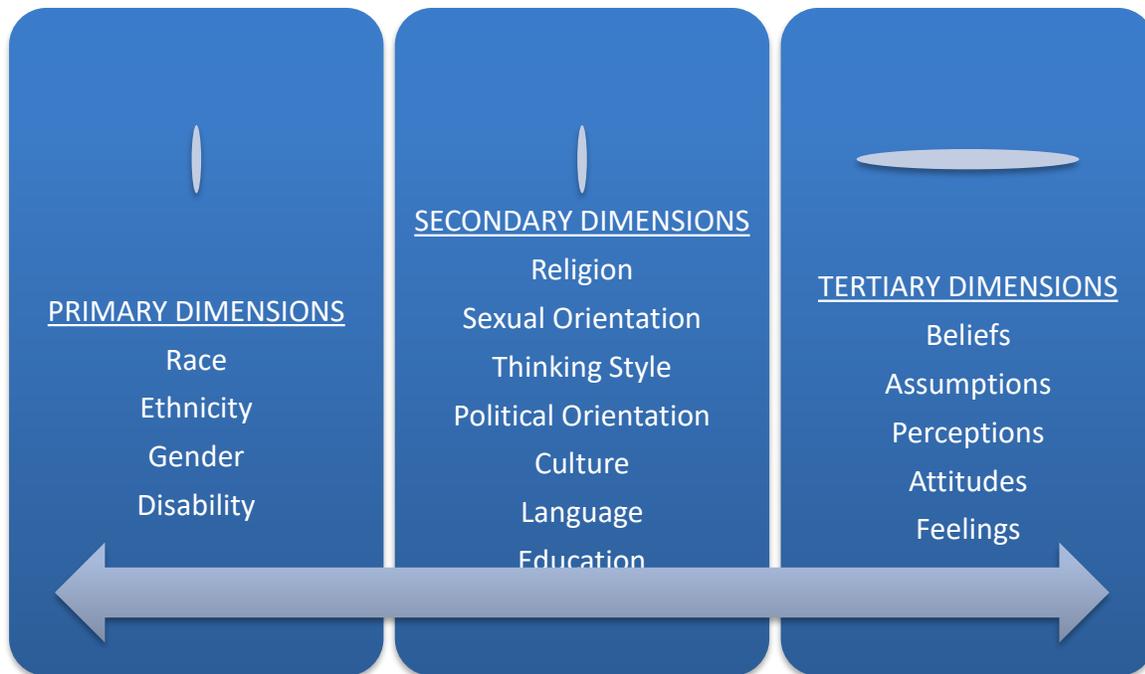
APPROACHES AND STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING DIVERSITY

In the past few decades, how the issue of equal opportunities has been approached has evolved gradually from affirmative action (AA), to the current diversity management approach (Vertorec, 2015). AA is intended to deal with systematic discrimination, which is deeply entrenched in outdated old employment policies and help to get rid of discrimination in the workplace (Derlien & Peters, 2008). The purpose of equal employment opportunity (EEO) is to ensure that the work environment is free from all forms of unlawful discrimination and harassment, and everyone is treated fairly (Paludi, 2013).

Diversity management is not legally mandated, unlike equal employment opportunities and affirmative action (Wrench, 2007). 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 they can all reach their potential and maximize their contributions to an organization's strategic objectives (Ugwa, 2015).

Cultural diversity is considered very important in diversity management (Kamal, 2009). According to Ely and Roberts (2008), the differences among members of a team in their gender, ethnicity, nationality, or any other dimensions of social identity that are associated by a past history of inter-group oppression, discrimination and prejudice can be termed as cultural diversity. There are three dimensions of diversity; they are primary, secondary and tertiary (Rijamampianina & Carmichael, 2005). This is illustrated in Fig. 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1. Dimensions of Diversity



Source: Yousuf Kamal

Diversity can be categorized into three variables, primary; which includes race, culture, gender, disability and age, secondary; which includes, cognition, personality, education, position, linguistic ability, psychological factors, and mediating variables such as nature of attitude, interaction strategies and organizational factors (Mamman, 1996).



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PARADIGMS OF DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

There are three paradigms that were identified by Thomas and Ely (1998). Most businesses use only two of them. They are the discrimination and fairness paradigm, which lays emphasis on, fair treatment, equal opportunity, recruitment and compliance with federal equal opportunity requirement.

The access and legitimacy paradigm emphasizes the need for acceptance and the celebration of peoples' differences.

Ely and Thomas (2001) introduced the 'moderator strategy' which states that the impact of cultural diversity on group functioning is influenced by 'diversity perspective', these are the normative beliefs and expectations of members of a group on cultural diversity and the role it plays in their workgroup.

Diversity perspective can be implicit, for example the unstated way that an individual manages her/his subordinates. It can also be explicit, which is in the form of written policies and statements by an organization (Taylor, 2017). Diversity perspectives can also be classified into three types; discrimination and fairness, access and legitimacy, and integration and learning (Stacy, 2016). Ragins (1995) stated that organizations had to undergo important changes in how homophobic, sexist and racist behavior was viewed, in order to recognize the value of diversity.

DIVERSITY IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT

It has become necessary for businesses especially multinational corporations (MNCs), to understand and manage the diversity of their workforce, as a result of globalization and its impact on the demographics of countries (Shen, Chanda, D' Netto, & Monga, 2009).

Against this backdrop, in order to maintain consistency throughout an organization, diversity management has become a framework to leverage the diversity of a global workforce (Rosenzweig, 1998). An organization's flexibility is enhanced by diversity as it encourages the firm to question old methods and become more adaptable to new ways of doing things (Nelson & Quick, 2013).

Teams consisting of members from diverse backgrounds are the preferred choice of many businesses, this is because they are better performers than homogenous teams (Sippola and Smale, 2007). Especially for difficult tasks, heterogeneous teams have proved to be better performers than homogeneous ones (Benet-Martinez and Hong, 2014). Transnational diversity pays attention to the interaction and complexities in different racial or ethnic groups, while diversity stresses the content of ethnic culture (Williams et al., 1998).



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Both individuals and organizations need diversity in the global context, because of the important role it plays in the transfer of knowledge and innovation, motivation and productivity, the overall performance of the organization (J. Syed & Tariq, 2017). Quotas have been introduced in countries across Europe to ensure that there is an increase in the representation of women on corporate boards, this has seen other countries try to emulate the same (G, 2006).

Racism in the workplace has been associated with detrimental outcomes such as poor physical and mental health, drinking problems (alcoholism), as well as staff absenteeism (Buttner, et al., 2010; Buttner & Lowe, 2010). Scott and Byrd (2012) propose that associations that create social skill and encourage smooth cooperation and change crosswise over representatives, and specialization sections are probably going to be more effective than those that don't focus on these issues.

For organizations to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage, they must continuously monitor their diversity programs and change them as required to fit in with the current trends (Kamal, 2009). Organizational issues are being influenced by diversity, these include; enhanced global knowledge, high performance, innovation, and employee commitment (Lauring, 2013).

DIVERSITY COST

When investing in workforce diversity strategies, companies face four kinds of extra costs (Commission, 2003). These are:

Legal Compliance Costs: Expected costs include record-keeping policies, employee preparing, and implementing a new communication approach. In any circumstance, the scale and quality of current internal strategies and current administrative obligations will impact the size of these costs for a company.

Cash Diversity Costs: The primary capital expenses are education and training, facilities and support, working conditions and benefits, information, jobs and tracking, and recording. Some of these are "one-off" and long-term but most of them are repeated long-term costs.

Opportunity Diversity Costs: Opportunity costs are the loss of benefits because it is not possible to use a limited resource in other productive operations. These include: Top Management, Functional Time Diversion Management, and lack of productivity.

Diversity Business Risks: Many programs assigned to change organization culture takes longer to execute or fail than scheduled. This "execution risk" is usually recognized by organizations. Sustainable strategies on diversity are the result of a successful corporate culture transformation.



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BENEFITS OF DIVERSITY AT THE WORKPLACE

As diversity management is positively combined to greater gains on investment, therefore, any company that wants to reach the worldwide competitive profit must identify diversity as an organizational formula and promote methods to become an inclusive organization because (Odor, 2008).

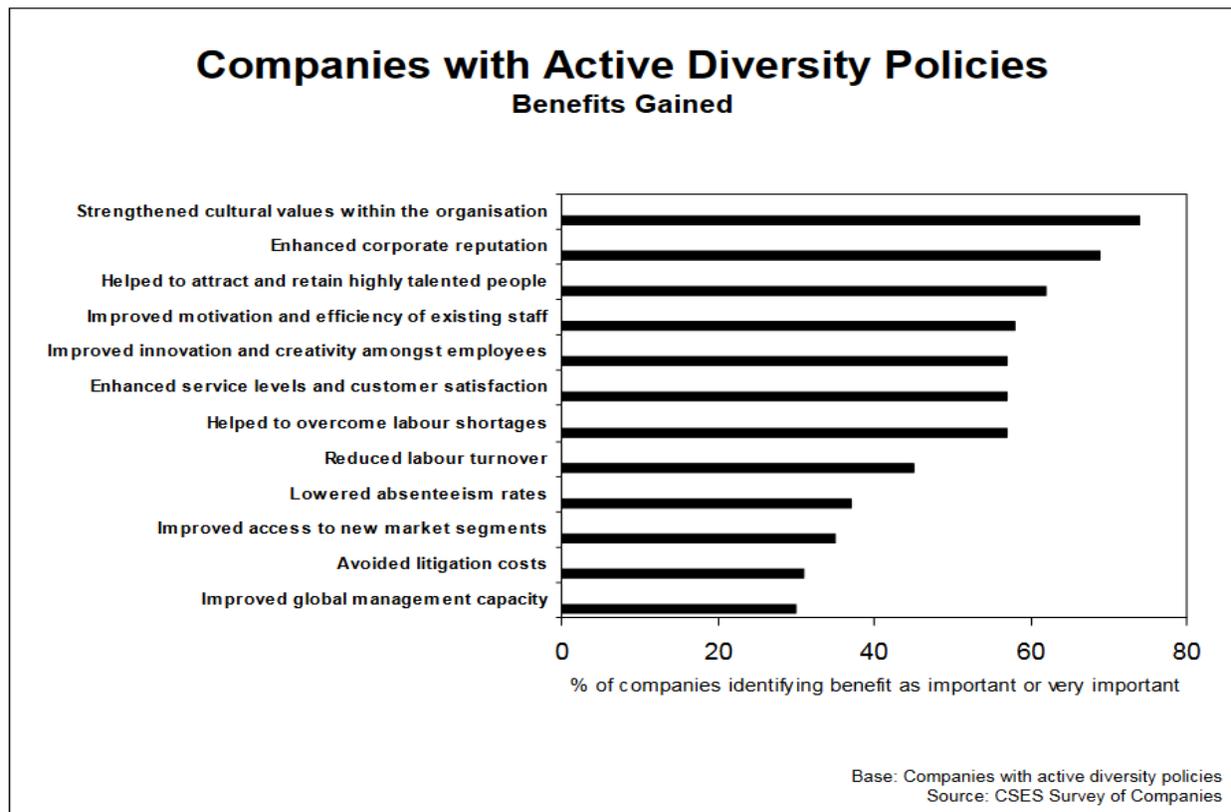
According to European Commission (2003) good use of diversity principles helps to improve the capacity of human capital by gaining knowledge that is shared by varying people with different cultural orientations (Odor, 2008). The following are the key importance of diversity management:

- Improve the Employer to Employee relationship in a cost-effective way.
- Develop better customer relations and broader service range.
- Facilitates flexibility, innovation and creativity within the Organization.
- Stabilize sustainable organizational development.

Some scientists have been able to document an organization's ability to transform potential difficulties from managing a culturally varied organization into a lasting competitive advantage. (Georgiadou, 2014).

Organizations which consider workforce diversity plans identify significant benefits that sustain long-term competitiveness, and in certain situations, also produce short and medium-term developments in performance (Table A) (Commission, 2003).

Table A





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A variety of skills enable the company to deliver a wider and more adaptable product and service variety. Organizations benefit from employing experts with a wide range of abilities that are often not available when recruiting locally by drawing from a culturally varied talent pool. Through leveraging the abilities and experiencing their global staff, globally focused businesses can contribute to their spectrum of services (Katie Reynolds, 2019).

DIVERSITY POLICIES

"Diversity of the workforce" within businesses is linked to strategies aimed at recruiting, retaining and developing staff from various social groups. This leads to a shift in the mix of individuals employed in some instances and changes in the type of individuals employed in particular or technical management roles (Commission, 2003).

Such strategies in all instances go beyond accordance with anti-discrimination laws. But it is hard to identify a "different workplace" in practice. Nowadays there are accepted ways to distinguish between workplaces that are 'diverse' and 'not-diverse'. A "different workplace" is the result of major changes in a company's inner culture and the measurement of values shifts that accompany modifications in inner cultures is hard.

In addition, not all Organizations set out in their diversity strategies to accomplish the same objectives. Organizations implement workforce strategies for different reasons: ethical, regulatory (demonstrating compliance with anti-discrimination laws) and financial (generating financial advantages that exceed the cost of execution).

CAPABILITIES APPROACH IN DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

The strategy to capacities in the management of diversity and equality enables the issue of gender equality in terms of paid jobs and care to be addressed while also offering a universal model of equality rooted in the acceptance of human diversity (Lewis, 2005). Sen (1980) has helped to understand a universal, cross-cultural delicate approach to comprehension and the reasons behind inequality.

Basic capabilities have been described as inherent capacities that are available to individuals and form the foundation for creating more sophisticated capacities (Nussbaum, 1999).



The concept of fundamental skills depends on one nation to another, and organizations seeking to control equality and diversity needs to be conscious of that. Organizations need to understand the fundamental skills of their workers that refer to their inherent skills or predispositions that people have and should promote them in a setting where they offer their workers the opportunity to develop their skills (Morrison, 2006).

In a research of hotel employees in multiple Hong Kong hotels, Wong and Ko (2009) discovered that by understanding employee views through surveys, hotels could derive methods of improving employee productivity. Basic needs can be identified through various ways as described above and the ability to identify these innate qualities and needs is how a firm acquires basic capability. Although fundamental needs are the most significant needs that an organization wants to suffice to guarantee the involvement of minorities and females, there are other skills that staff is looking for (Wong, 2009).

REQUIRED TOOLS FOR DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

Effective executives are conscious that the creation of a productive, varied workforce requires certain abilities. First, executives need to recognize and comprehend the implications of discrimination. Second, executives need to acknowledge their own cultural prejudices and biases (Koonce, 2001).

Unfortunately, there is no single recipe for dealing with the diversity issue; it mostly relies on the capacity of the managers to comprehend what is best, based on teamwork and workplace dynamics for the company. Social gatherings and business meetings, where every member must listen and have the chance to speak, are good ways to create dialogues. (Kelli Green, 2002).

Managers should enforce strategies to provide partners with access to data and possibilities, such as mentoring programs, associates should also never be denied positive, critical feedback they need in order to learn from their mistakes and achievements (Flagg, 2002). Another essential requirement in coping with diversity is to promote a safe place to interact with partners (Koonce, 2001).

Management of diversity benefits partners by establishing a fair and secure atmosphere in which everyone has access to possibilities and difficulties (Flagg, 2002).

An efficient manager should concentrate on personal consciousness when generating a successful varied workforce. Both managers and partners need to be aware of their personal biases. Organizations, therefore, need to create, enforce continuous training, this is because, a one-day training session will not alter people's habits (Koonce, 2001).



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DIVERSITY TRAINING

Diversity training helps create inclusive thinking and behaviour, leading to a more favourable, productive working setting for all. To guarantee that staff recognize the significance of diversity, inclusion and equal opportunities for jobs, companies should create compulsory training for every employee to complete.

Implementing diversity training programs is also a significant step towards reducing the likelihood of discrimination in the workplace and allegations of harassment. Moreover, to inform staff about the significance of diversity in hiring and promotion and how to prevent stereotypes in settling discrimination instances is also important (Traliant, 2018).

Good diversity training starts with the knowledge or awareness of diversity. It is not always feasible to state that an employee is different by having a conversation with him/her. Training enables staff to see how, even unintentionally, their words and behavior can be harmful to a diverse workforce population. It helps to humanize each other's co-workers and bring everyone on a level playing field (Estrada, 2012).

(Estrada, 2012) presents why diversity training is important in the following points:

Workplace diversity training can complement your staff policies on sexual and other types of staff harassment that you have in place.

- As diversity training can assist in avoiding such issues in your workplace, it is also can save money by encouraging awareness of diversity and avoiding allegations of harassment in future.
- Prevention of harassment and avoidance of negative advertising are just a few elements of what is essential to this practice.
- Diversity training is an investment that should not be considered optional with regard to a company's future and that of its workforce.

RESTRICTIONS OF IMPLMENTING DIVERSITY POLICIES



With different sorts of interests in various Human Resource (HR) approaches, there are two groups of barriers to the implementation of workforce diversity policies: Internal and external obstacles (Commission, 2003):

- **Internal Obstacles:**

According to a survey conducted by the European Commission; Companies that had not put resources into diversity management discovered three principle kinds of motivation regarding why a variety of alternatives had not been considered. First, the perception is that diversity policies are not required to satisfy present employee expectations, prospective future staff, clients or the general public. Second, was the lack of awareness of the term diversity. Thirdly, the challenge of changing the current culture of the organization, lack of internal expertise or knowledge, need of understanding of the business advantages of a diverse workforce, and difficulty in quantifying the gains to provide investment.

- **External Obstacles:**

A similar overview discovered three significant sorts of the external obstacles:

To start with, legitimate restrictions on holding delicate information about workers, which make it difficult to gather information on the ethnic cause, religious conviction, or sexual inclination in many nations. Second, notable holes in hostile to segregation enactment structure a significant piece of the national socio-legitimate system inside which organizations work. In conclusion, contrasts in national social frames of mind and social qualities, especially small and medium sized enterprises.

REASONS FOR DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT IN ORGANIZATIONS

(Dike, 2013) presents three different reasons for the workplace diversity for the organizations:

- **Talent shortage:**

Talent shortage is one the reasons to diversify at workforce. In a time of crucial expertise lack, associations observe that to be competitive, they need to attract, motivate, maintain and make effective use of their precious staff. Management of diversity can decrease unwelcome turnover and decrease absenteeism.



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- **Wide range of Consumer Needs:**

Over the past few years, organizations have recognized that they can best serve varied groups of clients in through a diverse workforce, regardless of whether its location is in an ideal market or not.

- **Globalization:**

Globalization can be described as a process in which companies begin to function on a global scale. They are more open to global activities, and choosing an effective place to operate from. Input prices differ throughout the globe, this encourages businesses to shift their factories to developing countries where the cost of production is cheaper.

STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE DIVERSITY AT WORKPLACE

(Tatli & Ozbilgin, 2009) present the possibility of distinguishing three approaches to corporate diversity at the workplace, these are: Radical Change, Liberal change and Transformational Change.

- **Liberal change**

In practice, the liberal notion acknowledges equal opportunities when all people can compete for social benefits freely and equally. The Liberal Change Model's goal is to have a fair labor market from which the best individual is selected for a performance-only job. The liberal-change approach centers on compliance, law, and legal penalties for non-compliance (Dike, 2013).

One weakness in the liberal view is that formal rules can not cover every aspect of working life, as there is almost always an informal element to work like affinity groups, hidden transcripts, and alternative casual channels of communication (Cynthia Cockburn, 1989).

- **Radical changes:**

Unlike the liberal strategy, radical change seeks to intervene directly in the procedures of the workforce in order to obtain balanced workforce as well as a fair distribution of benefits among staff (Flagg, 2002).

Reasons for and against quota practices in originations or government authorities include contradicting thoughts like quotas:



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Compensation of real obstacles preventing marginalized participants from achieving a fair share of management roles.

It is against equal opportunities for all and means that a marginalized member has only given a position in order to fill a quota. Sweden's quota system for parliamentary positions is a favourable case for radical change through setting of quotas (Press, 2009).

- **Transformational change:**

Transformation change includes an agenda for equal opportunities for both short and long-term goals of a company (C. Cockburn, 1989).

To minimize bias in processes such as recruitment, promotion, and communication, it implements fresh policies for short-term purposes (Ilmarinen, 2000).

One example of a transformational shift is the ageing leadership, younger workers are seen as more productive and flexible, while older workers require higher wages and healthcare needs (Brooke, 2000).

An organization can formulate policies that eliminate age-based discrimination. Negative stereo-types of older staff, however, should be eliminated for long-term gains, because elderly worker can add value to the workplace through their expertise and experience (Ilmarinen, 2000).

CONCLUSION

The objective of this paper was to investigate the issue of diversity management in the workplace and to examine the different ways of dealing with workplace diversity as well as to provide guidelines for those in charge to effect successful diversity management strategies in their respective organizations.

Based on the information gathered, there is clarity on what management needs to do in order to build an effective diverse workforce, and how they can have a positive effect on diversity management. In addition, organizations need to continually look for different approaches in dealing with their diverse employees.

For organizations to achieve competitive advantage that is sustainable, they must continuously monitor their diversity programs and change them as required to fit in with the current trends.



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Human Resources managers also need to deal with the issue of diversity with the diligence that it deserves, by ensuring that no discrimination is practiced when hiring employees and putting in place the right training programs to enhance diversity management in their respective organizations.

Managers should be ready to modify some of their organization's methods when diversity management methods do not work efficiently, before doing so, the change vision needs to be efficiently communicated.

The use of counselors by the HR department accelerates the pre-screening process and draws attention to the under-represented communities. This is therefore a good alternative that organizations can use for diversity management in the workplace.

In addition, executives should embrace some principles of change management to guide them in making the change choice.

And lastly the business should offer concrete reasons why any change being introduced should be accepted by executives and staff.



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Doctoral Supervisor's feedback (approximately 100 words):

This article is approved with the following feedback:

Your content and objectives are feasible.

Good job using current resources.

Put the objective at the beginning of the paper.

Please go back and check grammar and spelling throughout your document. Please have a native speaker review this.



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