

Example of discrimination in the workplace impacts and strategies term paper

[Business](#), [Management](#)



Management has been termed by scholars to be a field whose paradigms are in constant transition. The environment in which businesses and management operate is faced by new challenges as the world adopts new methods of doing business. Economic and technological advances have significantly altered the business patterns and practice around the globe today. Globalization has since introduced new technology and procedures such as outsourcing and social marketing to meet new business requirements. Nations are constantly creating regional blocks that allow cross border employees where different nations have multinational and multiethnic workforces. Additionally, the insistence of developing the girl child has been successful to a point where corporate workforces are now composed of large numbers of working women. However, such a multifaceted workforce presents its share of challenges for the workplace. Discrimination has since crept into the workplace and the nature of the discrimination is equally as varied. Diversity in the workplace has a huge social impact on the workforce. Employees may find personal relation in the workplace quite difficult leading to discrimination against others based on either on the race, age or gender. It goes without say that instance of discrimination significantly curtails the productivity, efficiency and effectiveness of the employees in the workplace. This paper provides a succinct review of discrimination in the workplace by providing hypothesis that proves the same. This paper will also provide an analysis of the causes of discrimination and possible measures that can be put in place to curb this social issue.

Introduction

The facets under which discrimination can occur are varied in many aspects. The most common forms of discrimination that has persistent over time are the race and gender-based discrimination . In general, it has been viewed that men are perceived to look down on women. This form of gender-based discrimination has been in existence for as long as knowledge has existed. The second form of discrimination, racial discrimination has emerged due to the global nature of current world businesses. Businesses and educational constructs have led to expatriates working in different locations in the world. This has subjected business environments to multiracial businesses which inherently create social tensions in the business workplace (Aycan, Mendonca, Yu, Deller, Stahl, & Kurshid, 2000). The third kind of discrimination that has also emerged is discrimination based on age. Different age groups are perceived to have competing interests creating a new form of discrimination. This has since subjected businesses to unproductive and ineffective businesses processes. There are other smaller versions of discrimination based on other tenets such as regional, political affiliation, sexual orientation and personal philosophies. In the United States, any form of discrimination in the workplace is, by law, prohibited . Here the term discrimination has been defined to be unfavorable treatment of another person due to the following tenets; ethnic background, color, race or nationality; marital status, gender or pregnancy; sexual orientation; physical disability or political affiliation. Additionally, other anti discrimination laws have been legislated in the United States laws and provide other definition if unlawful treatments.

There are various ways by which discrimination can be exhibited in the workplace. They include favoritism in hiring and recruitment of employees. Here a firm is said to hire its employees based on the different facets as described in the anti-discrimination laws. This form of discrimination can be defined as direct discrimination where there is consistent favoritism where for instance only whites are considered over African Americans in recruitment to job posting . This can be asserted by the basic fact that employers are not in a favorable position to prove job requirement met by one group over the other. Other employers such as the Roman Catholic Church are known to consistently prefer male employees over females. Discrimination can also be exhibited in differentiated working conditions and benefits offered to employees (Aycan, et al, 2000). Here, the working condition of a specific working group is made favorable over others. This form of discrimination has been defined as indirect discrimination. This instance of discrimination has been found to persist in different organization such as the disciplined forces where favoritism abounds on the deployment of troops within a force. Other requirements such as shaving clean are discriminatory to other religions. This kind of discrimination can also persist in the manner in which transfers, promotions, layoffs and retrenchments are executed. All these issues may be done deliberately or otherwise, however, they go as far as proving the assertion that relations within an organization may be curtailed due to inherent nature of race, gender or religion.

Another form of discrimination is harassment. Here employees harass others in a form that may be either physically or emotionally such as making fun of such employees in the workplace. Offensive harassment is said to persist in

the workplace in a mode that is meant either intimidate or embarrass others (Ayman, et al, 2000). Humiliating fellow employees in the workplace has a huge social impact at the workplace. Sexist or abusive language used in the work place demeans the targets of such harassment and in most cases good working relation is almost completely severed.

Discrimination; Hypothesis and Analysis

There are three hypothesis that may be used to prove the nature and impacts that discrimination may have in the workplace. Hypothesis that have been developed are as follows:

- a. Discrimination abounds in the workplace and the most common kind is gender discrimination and in particular, discrimination against women.
- b. Workplace discrimination reduces workplace productivity
- c. Due to poor relations in the workplace, organization profits are heavily curtailed due to poor relations in the workplace.

The use of such constructs allows the analysis and evaluation of different assertions on the impacts and nature of discrimination. Employees and the organization can be socially viewed with a careful analysis and evaluation of such hypothesis.

Variables for Hypothesis A: Discrimination against women is the most rampant form.

There is general perception among most societies that men view women as the weaker sex. Several communities, especially non-western communities such as Asians, Arabs and Africans, have the general perception that women should not have dominion over men. This can be illustrated by the nature in

which these communities provide very limited freedom for women and opportunities in leadership position. In Arabian countries such as Saudi Arabia, women are not allowed to participate in several assertive roles such as driving . The West is also not immune to this perception against the women folk however; the gravity of the problem may not be as dire. This perception has crept into the workplace. Gender discrimination is said to persist in several tenets of an organization. Women in leadership position within a working environment are a rather low statistic. This insinuates that hiring, promotion and transfers have been done in favor of men over women. Additionally, other vital advancement such as training and proper working conditions has subjected women to poor working conditions as compared to their male counterparts. Similarly, organizational managements have not been in a position to explain such discriminatory hiring patterns. This is due to the fact that most governments have provided equitable opportunities for vocational or higher learning to both males and females. Thus a scenario in which males, in aspect of an organization, appear to be more superior to the women only proves that significant and rampant nature of gender discrimination .

Variables for hypothesis B: Workplace discrimination limits workplace Productivity

The productivity of a workplace is pegged on several factors. Key among these factors is a coherent coexistence between the employees and the management. In addition to this is the vital harmonious relation between the employees themselves. Employee-to-employee relation is as vital as ensuring the performance of a department or a unit of the organization.

Discrimination in the workplace introduces harsh relation in the organization. This can be viewed from two approaches. In the first approach is where a fellow employee is favored unfairly for promotion to a managerial role. This can be done after other qualified personnel are overlooked for the promotion. Such a situation would imply that the newly promoted employee will not have a cordial relation with the rest of the employees. This severed relation has a huge impact on the efficiency in the human resource of the organization. A portion of the employees may take it up themselves to sabotage the performance of the new manager due to the perceived unfair discriminatory promotion. The overall productivity of the workplace is limited due to such detached working relations.

The second approach through which the issue of discrimination can be viewed is the harassment that fellow employee exert on others. Harassment at the workplace such as abusive or sexist sentiments imposes emotional discomfort on target employees. This nature of emotional discomfort creates a less corporative environment in the workplace which translates to poor results in the productivity. The general nature of discriminator is derogatory to the victims.

Variables for Hypothesis C: Profits Curtailed by Discriminatory Workplace relation

The culmination of all activities and impacts of discrimination at the workplace can be illustrated by the nature in which profits are significantly affected. Cases of poor employee relation are indicated by inefficient, ineffective and unproductive operations. Company profits are therefore set to drastically reduce within the organization.

The above construct and affirmation of theses through validation of the independent variable as stated above simply proves the existence and impacts of discrimination. The development of different construct may also be applied in indicating the repugnant nature on discrimination in other professional fields such as sport. However, it is equally vital to provide strategies that can be applied to solve the discriminatory thinking within an organization.

Strategies to Solve Discrimination

According to Sonja & Phillips, (2004) quality management and efficiency within an organization should not only focus on the products but also the process under which a product is developed. Shaughnessy, (2012) asserts that quality management is pegged on having a good working environment for the employees. Toyota faced similar hurdles while setting up operation within the United States. In the US the Toyota Corporation has a big manufacturing plant at Georgetown, Kentucky. Setting up the plant was faced by several hurdles due to both gender and racial discrimination. However, Toyota understood the demeaning nature of discrimination and has taken measures to curb the problem. The idea that Toyota adopted was totally new process. This is a process developed by Gallup used for measuring and managing the impact of human relation on the performance of the company. In so doing, the company realized that if the employees were left to have a free environment guided by simple principles that the company would see its products undergo transformative innovation. This free environment was referred to as 'lean thinking'.

The idea of lean thinking is fundamentally different from other management strategies. Lean thinking identifies that there is no 'one best way' or expertly sophisticated models that would solve all the efficiency and effective processes of the company. On the other hand, the idea of lean thinking allows worker to express their ideas at the workplace and each worker to develop own goals and endeavors as they work. This calls for constructive relation among the employees and provision of equal opportunities within an organization.

The philosophy of lean thinking is quite clear. The idea focuses on serving and adding value, ideas and concepts developed by fellow employees. Here, employees are encouraged to view ideas as an equal partner with whom one shares equal interest. Lean thinking redefines how employees should shift management thinking from mere workplace relation to more elaborate collaboration in day to day operation of the firm. Efficiency in ensuring harmonious coexistence and an open and free relation with the management is key for the business.

The new idea of lean thinking creates flow by focusing attention on people and process. Toyota believes that employees should be engaged and be ready to work with colleagues of different ethnic backgrounds, race, gender or age. The process focuses on personal learning and group experiences to improve on the products development together with improving company relation. Other organizations have since identified lean thinking as a means of managing human potential. Top managers are should be keen to identify human differences and engage the employees in driving individual values along with their values.

Conclusion

While Lean may have been a very successful endeavor for the giant car maker, the principles described by lean thinking can be applied in different organizations. In this sense, an organization should identify the differences that run within its human workforce and review methods of collaborative relation. Lean thinking identifies the fact that each person has individual values and respecting these values is the first step to improve relations. This model also asserts that once there is mutual respect the next step is developing a more productive relation. This will later proceed to improve efficient and effective business operations. In the end discrimination based on gender, race, religion, nationality and sexual orientation will reduce to non significant levels. Evaluating the nature of the employees and the role that the management must play cannot be underestimated. Providing an open relationship in the organization that ensures equal opportunities for all is very essential.

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