

Thomas and Ely's three paradigm in the state of diversity within the organization...

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The of diversity in the US Company, Citigroup primarily works under the paradigm of 'Connecting diversity to work perspective'. The paradigm is one of the three highly relevant factors within the diversity management in a company. Thomas and Ely (1996) have expounded on the ways issue of diversity is treated within an organization. This particular paradigm has emerged as one of the most successful managerial initiatives that significantly impact the performance outcome of organizations. Citigroup has been a leadership company that has successfully been managing diversity under the paradigm. The CEO, Prince (Paine et al., 2008) has been able to turnaround the prospects of the company by ensuring a culture of shared responsibility. He has been not only been able to exploit the tenets of diverse workforce but it has been aligned to work in tandem with work perspective vis-a-vis its long term and short term goals. The paradigm, connecting diversity to work perspectives broadly refers to the way cultural differences are incorporated within the business strategies to enhance productivity and business outcome. In the current environment of rapid globalization, managing diversity is one of the most critical elements of success. Citigroup has expanded its business across globe and to maintain a competitive advantage within the industry, managing diversity has become the need of the hour. It therefore, exploits socio-cultural paradigms of the region to improve its business outcome, both within US and also in its offshore business. It promotes better understanding of cross cultural understanding to resolve workplace conflicts. At the same time, it takes cognizance of cultural differences and exploits human competency for optimal performance. The other two paradigms: The discrimination and

fairness paradigm; and the access and legitimacy paradigm, are not relevant in the case of Citigroup. The first paradigm ensures that diversity is included in the workforce. But unfortunately, the paradigm is used only to comply with the federal mandate of affirmative action. Though fair treatment and equal opportunity is fundamental requirement, the people coming from different race, color and gender have little or no influence on the work culture of the organizations. Managerial leadership does not make any significant efforts to exploit their differences for improving performance outcome. Thomas and Ely's other paradigm, access and legitimacy paradigm can best be described as using diversity to exploit demographic compulsions for 'gaining' consumer power. Its policies are inclined to favor the cultural differences which often harm the long term vision and goals of the company. The core competency of firm is also often comprised in favor of regional demographic interests. In the case of Citigroup, both these paradigms are not applicable because the company has introduced a culture of shared responsibility based on cross cultural understanding that integrates them with the system. The long term goals of the company are achieved through incorporation of cultural differences within the broader umbrella of organizational strategy. Thus cultural competencies are exploited to gain the larger goals of the companies. Indeed, the workforce is empowered to exploit the vast scope of opportunities and use them as human capital to exploit the challenges of the times. (words: 510) Reference Thomas, D. A., & Ely, R.J. (1996). 'Making differences matter: A new paradigm for managing diversity'. Harvard Business Review, 74(5), 79-90. Paine, Lynn Sharp., Knocp, Carin

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