

# Immigrant discrimination in the work place term paper

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



## **Introduction**

In the wake of globalization, diversity has become an indispensable factor for attainment of success in the corporate world. Diversity has been found to provide not only new ways of thinking, but also fresh perspectives.

Unfortunately, although diversity has grown bigger than ever, discrimination against immigrants is still perpetrated. The growth of the United States of America and the subject of immigration cannot be separated. Immigrants have had a critical role in the development of the economic prowess of the US. However, immigrants still face discrimination in the workplace in the current civilized era. This paper discusses how immigrant discrimination is practiced in the place of work.

## **Background Information**

Dion contends that discrimination refers to unfair differential treatment basing on group characteristics, which in turn negatively affects the group in question. The most common group characteristics upon which discrimination in the work place is based include religion, accent, language, skin color, race and ethnicity. According to statistics from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), 2009 had the second highest complaints related to work discrimination. In that year alone, 93, 277 cases of discrimination were reported to the commission. In the same year, complaints of discrimination that targeted immigrants on the basis of their nationality rose by 5 percent whereas discrimination on the basis of religious affiliation rose by 3 percent. In 2011, the most popular form of discrimination in the workplace was racial discrimination according to statistics released by

the EEOC. In 2011, the commission received a total of 35, 890 complaints; this figure was slightly higher than that recorded in 2010.

## **Incidences of Immigrant Discrimination in the Work Place**

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has documented various examples of discrimination cases that affect immigrant workers. Mei Li, an immigrant from Asia sought to be employed in a garment shop as a presser. The employer turned down her request on the basis of gender. Me Li was told that the garment shop recruits only male pressers. On the other hand, Wah, a male immigrant from Asia was denied his preferred job, sewing machine operator, which according to the shop owner belongs to only women, and he was given a job as a presser. EEOC warns that such an act is illegal; classifying jobs in terms of sexual orientation is illegal. The shop owner took advantage of the immigrants because he knew that they were unfamiliar with EEOC laws.

In another incident documented by EEOC, Mark, who is White and John, who is Black got into a fight at work. The employer called for an investigation in the matter but the investigation failed to explain whether it was Mark or John who started the fight. Amazingly, the employer decided to fire John and only suspended Mark for a month without pay. It was unfair to fire John if there was no tangible evidence that he was the trouble maker. According to EEOC, the employer ought to have given equal measure of punishment to the two workmates: the employer ought to have either fired or suspended both of them.

Other cases based on religion, language and accents have also been

documented by the EEOC. In one such incident, Cole's co-workers had the habit of calling Cole in a manner that ridiculed his ethnic origin and accent. Cole was offended by this unethical and unwelcoming behavior from his colleagues. He complained to his boss about this situation. The boss took no action and this made Cole very uncomfortable, and he had to quit. In addition, Hussein requested for a day off to celebrate a very critical religious holiday. Even though, Hussein's absence would have easily been covered, his employer denied him the permission. EEOC warns that such forms of religious discrimination are unacceptable. Furthermore, Omar had just come back from a vacation in his country of birth. Upon his return, his employer demanded that Omar must go for a medical checkup. Omar's boss held the opinion that since Omar had been to his native country where cases of contagious diseases are rampant, he had to go for a medical checkup to elucidate whether he was infected. This was unfair because the request was based on belief and not facts. In fact, Omar was not found to have an infection after going for a checkup. In another disturbing episode, Radika, a young lady of Indian origin sought employment as a front office representative. Amazingly, the employer tuned her request down because she lacked an American appearance (EEOC).

## **Across the Borders**

Across the borders, Reitz contends that Canadian immigrants encounter discrimination starting at the job application level. Reitz's study found out that employers in Canada underestimate the professional qualifications of most immigrants. Reitz's study also found out that employers are likely to

respond to job application requests by simply evaluating the applicant's last names. Employers are likely to request an applicant to come for an interview if his or her surname sounds 'European or English'. Immigrants from Asia are the most affected owing to the nature of their names: by looking at their name, one can easily tell that they are Asian. Other Canadian studies have shown that there is a notable difference in the earnings of natives and immigrants doing the same job. Palameta contends that despite having same educational level, sex or residing in the same province, immigrants in Canada are three times more likely to encounter low income. Palameta regrets that in Canada, immigrants with university level education are likely to encounter low income outcomes just like natives without a high school diploma. In another study conducted by Dion and Kawakami, Blacks, Chinese and South Asian immigrants in Canada are the most affected by racial discrimination in the workplace. Furthermore, a study conducted by Picot and Sweetman in 2005, showed that the gap in earnings between native Canadians and immigrants has widened significantly in the past two decades.

## **The Role of EEOC**

In the United States, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has been given the mandate to enforce laws that protect workers from discrimination in the work place because of their age, sex, race and country of origin among other reasons. This commission has enacted laws that cover employees in all aspects of their work. Laws have been enacted, which champion fair play in the recruitment of workers, provision of incentives and

promotions, termination or demotion, work assignments, as well as employee benefits and compensation. EEOC warns that physical or verbal conduct and ethnic slurs that are perpetrated on the basis of nationality of immigrants are illegal if they are offensive in nature or create a hostile environment. EEOC laws state that all workers have the right to be treated fairly in their places of work irrespective of their nationality, sex, race or ethnic orientation. Immigrants are advised to familiarize themselves with these laws as well report instances of discrimination directed to them. Employers must ensure that their work places offer a suitable, working environment for both local and immigrant workers.

In summary, this paper has noted in the wake of globalization, diversity has become an indispensable factor in the attainment of success in the corporate world. Diversity has been found to provide not only new ways of thinking, but also fresh perspectives. Unfortunately, although diversity has grown bigger than ever, discrimination against immigrants is still perpetrated. The growth of the United States of America and the subject of immigration cannot be separated. Immigrants have had a critical role in the development of the economic prowess of the US. The most common group characteristics upon which discrimination in the work place is based include religion, accent, language, skin color, race and ethnicity. In the United States, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has been given the mandate to enforce laws that protect workers from discrimination in the work place because of their on age, sex, race and country of origin among other reasons. EEOC has enacted laws that cover workers in all aspects of their work. Laws have been enacted, which champion fair play in the recruitment

of workers, provision of incentives and promotions, termination or demotion, work assignments, as well as employee benefits and compensation.

Employers have a huge role in the establishment of working environments that accommodates both local and immigrant workers.

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