

Research method on culture

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Introduction

In order to provide a clear insight into this study, this chapter starts with the background of the study, problem statement, purpose of the study, research objective, research question, research hypothesis, significance of the study, study of framework, and the outline for chapter 2 and chapter 3. This chapter outline about an overview of managing cultural diversity among employees toward the effectiveness working environment in hotel industry in Malaysia. Subsequent sections deal with contribution of the study to the literature and discuss the structure and the research design of the proposal.

1. Background of the study Cultural diversity has become a hot-button issue when applied to the workplace (Kimberly Amadeo, 2012). What is cultural diversity in the workplace? Culture refers to the values, norms, and traditions that affect the way a member of a group typically perceives, thinks, interacts, behaves, and makes judgments (Alpert, 1992). Diversity is generally defined as acknowledging, understanding, accepting, valuing, and celebrating differences among people with respect to ages, class, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, race, sexual orientation, spiritual practice, and public assistance status (Esty, 1995).

Hence, cultural diversity is when differences in race, ethnicity, language, nationality, religion, and sexual orientation are represented within a community. A community is said to be culturally diverse if its residents include members of different groups. The community can be a country, region or city (Kimberly Amadeo, 2012). Malaysia is one of the most culturally and economically diverse regions of the world (Fisher, 1996).

Malaysia is one of the most diverse countries in terms of ethnicity, religion, spirituality, language, and culture (Malaysia Info, 2009).

Ethnicity refers to shared cultural practices, perspectives, and distinctions that set apart one group of people from another (Cliffnote, n. d.). The population of Malaysia consists of three main ethnic groups—Malays, Chinese, and peoples of the South Asian subcontinent (Encyclopedia of the nations, 2012). Religion originates in an attempt to represent and order beliefs, feelings, imagining and actions that arise in response to direct experience of the sacred and the spiritual (Connelly, 1996). The official religion of Malaysia is Islam, and is practiced by the majority of Malays, and a portion of the Indian community.

Under the constitution, other races are free to practice any religion in an atmosphere of acceptance and tolerance. The other main religions include Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism and Christianity (Expatgomalaysia, 201). The essence of spirituality is the search to know our real self, to discover the true nature of consciousness (Russell, 2006). Language is a human system of communication that uses arbitrary signals, such as voice sounds, gestures, or written symbols (Nordquist, 2012). Hence, managing diversity in the workplace is a challenge for any manager, but it can be accomplished using some basic tools.

Managers need to go above and beyond their comfort level to develop knowledge about cultural difference and sensitivity to diversity issues. Take a leap and establish relationships at work with individuals who are different from them. The more natural thing is for people to surround themselves with individuals who are similar to them. By building relationships with individuals

with different backgrounds, they will learn about the talent and knowledge they can add to the organization (Noe, 2009). Cultural diversity is broad concept in hotel industry in Malaysia.

Employing a diverse workforce give benefit in higher productivity, lower employee turnover, better understanding of client, and enhanced corporate reputation (Employing a diverse workforce: making it work, 2008). Managed well, diversity provides benefits that increase effectiveness in working environment. However, when ignored or mismanaged, it brings challenges and obstacles that can hinder the organization's ability to effective (Gardenswartz & Rowe, n. d.).

Problem statement

Managing cultural diversity is becoming an issue in the hotel industry especially to Human Resource manager (Holaday, 2007).

The improper managing cultural diversity among employees will create less effective in working environment. When ignored or mismanaged, it brings challenges and obstacles that can hinder the organization's ability to effective and success (Gardenswartz & Rowe, n. d.). The previous researcher Al-Jenaib said that diversity can also lead to miscommunication, dysfunctional adaptation behaviors and the creation of barriers that reduce the benefits diversity can bring to the organization (Al-Jenaib, 2012). Plus, cultural diversity can create stereotype perception and exclusive work environment.

Area of concern about this study is to managing cultural diversity among employees to improve the effectiveness in working environment in the hotel industry in Malaysia that focused on Kuala Lumpur area. Numerous studies <https://assignbuster.com/research-method-on-culture/>

have been conducted in other countries outside Malaysia in managing cultural diversity among employees but there is limited studies were found regarding managing cultural diversity among employees towards the effectiveness working environment in the hotel industry in Malaysia only that focused on Kuala Lumpur area.

This study is importance to provide benefits to the organization in Kuala Lumpur area that come from the diverse employees to give the effectiveness working environment. The previous studies highlighted that managing workplace diversity has become a priority concern among organizations in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) today. The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is under increased pressure to appropriately employ and manage people of diverse cultural and racial backgrounds (Walck, 1995).

Furthermore, there is as more and more minority groups enter the hospitality industry of the United States, such as the group generations of African American, Hipic Origin, and Asian, managing cultural diversity is becoming a challenging issue in this industry, especially to HR managers (Holaday, 2007). Yi Gong, (2008) has mentioned in his studies that related study needs to be conducted to facilitate the industry to understand the opportunities and advantages of successfully managing cultural diversity.

Meanwhile, the program of action to increase general awareness of cultural diversity should be created to support the company policy (Baum, 2007). They should also be given training to increase their knowledge and skills to dealing with people having different cultural backgrounds (Baum, 2007).

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to determine managing cultural diversity among employees towards the effectiveness working environment in the hotel industry in Malaysia that focused on Kuala Lumpur area.

Four major related variables being tested in this research consists of create an inclusive work environment, avoid stereotyping, applying training program and communicating with staffs for the effectiveness in working environment.

Research objective

As the issue of the study had been identified, the objectives of the study that had been derived are as follows: 1. To identify the major factor in managing cultural diversity among employees that give effect to the effectiveness working environment in the hotel industry in Malaysia that focused on Kuala Lumpur area 2.

To explore the benefit in managing cultural diversity among employees that give effect to the effectiveness working environment in the hotel industry in Malaysia that focused on Kuala Lumpur area

Research question

In conducting the research and based on the objectives above, there are several questions identified which are: 1. What are the major factor in managing cultural diversity among employees that give effect to the effectiveness working environment in the hotel industry in Malaysia that focused on Kuala Lumpur area 2.

What are the benefit in managing cultural diversity among employees that give effect to the effectiveness working environment in the hotel industry in Malaysia that focused on Kuala Lumpur area

Significance of the study

This study contributes to the theoretical advancement in the field of hotel industry by empirically testing a structured model to managing cultural diversity among employees toward the effectiveness working environment in the hotel industry in Malaysia that focused on Kuala Lumpur area.

This study can help the organization in managing cultural diversity that will enhance the company benefits in return such like higher productivity, lower employee turnover, better understanding of client, and enhanced corporate reputation (Employing a diverse workforce: making it work, 2008). By having strategic inclusion plan in work environment, this gives benefit to the employees. The diverse staffs know they are valued and feel they belong.

The staffs are more likely to feel that way when they are treated with respect the leader and their peers, given the chance to use their talents to the fullest and assured of equal opportunities to move ahead (Employing a diverse workforce: making it work, 2008). This study also can help university to expand the body of knowledge by providing some useful information regarding the cultural diversity management in working environment and the research from students can be as one of the sources and references for other students to conduct research or assignments.

Study of framework Create an inclusive work environment

Avoid stereotyping Effectiveness working environment Managing cultural diversity Apply training program Communicating with staffs 1. 8 Outline The

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next chapter will be the second and third chapter of the research proposal. Chapter 2 will start with the literature review of the four variables which is create an inclusive work environment, avoid stereotyping, apply training program and communicating with staffs. Chapter 3 will start with the process of conducting the research such as data collection method, research design, measurement of variable, sample frame, sample size, sampling techniques, and followed by data analysis techniques.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

In this chapter will clarify about related theories from past researcher regarding this study. This study is explain about the literature review. It is also based on findings that are collected through journal, article and also website.

Literature

Review Literature review is process that involves the identification of published and unpublished work from secondary data sources on the topic interest, the evaluation of this work in relation to the problem and the documentation of this work.

It also provides the foundation for developing a comprehensive theoretical framework.

Stereotyping in Cultural Diversity

Stereotypes lead to assumptions and conclusions based on a person's race, gender or sexual preferences. Making these assumptions and conclusions then leads to discrimination. Stereotypes can be about race, religion, gender, age, disabilities, income, geographical locations. (A. Sahar, 2011) .

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Stereotype threat refers to being at risk of confirming, as a self-characteristic, a negative stereotype about one's social group (Steele & Aronson, 1995).

In general, the conditions that produce stereotype threat are ones in which a highlighted stereotype implicates the self though association with a relevant social category (Marx & Stapel, 2006; Marx, Stapel, & Muller, 2005). Stereotype also defined as a cognitive link between two social or personal concepts (e. g. , the Self, social groups, identities, attributes, traits, behaviors) that are not defining features for one another (Allport, 1954; Devine, 1989). For example, if dark skin is the defining feature for being Black, then the link between dark skin and the Black racial group is not a stereotype.

But, a link between Black and poor is a stereotype, even if there is a correlational, causal, or cultural connection. Stereotyping is the application of a stereotype (Bodenhausen & Wyer, 1985; Devine, 1989; Hamilton & Sherman, 1994), inferring one characteristic (e. g. , worthless) from the other (e. g. , me). A stereotype can be almost any thought that oversimplifies a person or group, although will be focus primarily on negative, well-rehearsed, automatically activated stereotypes.

There are several relevant characteristics of stereotypes to note: Stereotypes can be socially shared (i. e. , consensual, collective) or exist in the mind of only one person (i. e. , nonconsensual, individual; see Ashmore & Del Boca, 1979; Stangor & Schaller, 1996). Stereotypes can be based on a prominent group membership (e. g. , a woman stereotyping herself as nurturant because of her gender), based on a mundane characteristic (e. g. ,

someone stereotyping a man as Irish because he has red hair), or be unrelated to social group (e. . , a wife stereotyping her husband as lazy). Stereotypes can link people to characteristics that are negative (e. g. , criminal), neutral (e. g. , enjoys basketball), or positive (e. g. , good at math). Even positive stereotypes can have undesirable negative sequelae, because they set up unfair expectations (see shifting standards; Biernat & Vescio, 2002; McCabe & Brannon, 2004). 2. 3Create an inclusive work environment. INCLUSION: A PHILOSOPHY WE BELIEVE IN " Our diversity mission is to be one company, one team, all-inclusive...

It's about bringing out the best in each of us, so that we can achieve great things together. " It's about listening to the voices of our employees and partners to help shape our future. It is through this process that we set goals and develop a strategy that will hold us accountable for making Lockheed Martin a place of " institutionalized inclusion. " (Robert, 2012). The term inclusion is also used to describe the active, intentional, and ongoing engagement with diversity—in people, in the curriculum, in the co-curriculum, and in communities (intellectual, social, cultural, geographical).

Inclusion describes the ways in which individuals might connect that increase one's awareness, content knowledge, cognitive sophistication, and empathic understanding of the complex ways individuals interact within systems and institutions. (www.aacu.org/inclusive_excellence/index.cfm). Diversity and inclusion is about creating a work force that represents the global communities in which we live and work and ensuring an environment in which every individual's contributions are valued.

A diverse and inclusive environment challenges our way of thinking by bringing together a variety of talents, backgrounds and experiences, and serves as a catalyst for new ideas and innovation. (Conocco). 2. 4Applying training program. To meet the cultural diversity challenges, companies in the hospitality industry must have sensitivity to differences (Clarke, 2007). Diversity training and education are necessary and essential to help companies in the industry to become competitive and successful (Christensen, 1993).

The increased globalization of hospitality industry has made it necessary for international companies in the industry to work effectively in foreign environments. Diversity management training program such as cross-cultural training can help international managers to learn knowledge about different cultures and help them to develop skills of managing cultural diversity issues, which can therefore significantly reduce the potential costly failure caused by cultural difference problems (Caudron, 1991).

For international hospitality companies, preparing current managers and future expatriate managers with cross-cultural sensibilities is important. To diminish cultural barriers that managers of international hospitality companies may encounter in foreign countries, they will have to aware their own ethnocentric viewpoints and have the willingness to go beyond them and learn about a different cultural environment (Canen, 1999). The cross-cultural training section should be added into the training program to direct and help the trainees to understand the cultural expectations and their additional nonverbal behavioral manifestations.

Diversity management training and multicultural education teach employees about various cultures. These training programs help to diminish stereotypes and allow trainees to see the cultural differences and the truth about other cultures. By the training, employees will show more respect to other people with different cultural backgrounds, and achieve more understanding of others' beliefs and their traditions (Fernandez, Kleiner & Sturz, 2005).

The training program emphasizes communication and educational training, which has positive impact to both minority and non-minority employees (Weaver & Wilborn, 2002). Since multicultural workforce includes every job position from the top management down to low-level employees (Elmuti, 2001), diversity management training should be conducted in all levels in the hospitality industry but not only in the entry-level or low-skilled level (Weaver & Wilborn, 2002). Say, specific training programs aiming at managing cultural diversity should be carefully designed, continually enforced, and gradually improved.

Moreover, it cannot be ignored that for any training program that has the chance of long-term success, upper level management must be involved to ensure the implementation of diversity practices (Ahmed, 2006). 2. 5Communicating with staff. Different languages and various cultural backgrounds increase the difficulty of communication between employees in the workplaces. Language is always viewed as a crucial one among all the cultural features that make up cultural identity (Ganem, 1999).

As Geert Hofstede, the famous writer of *Culture's Consequence*, an influential book published since 1980, said in an interview, " I would say that understanding of other languages is almost a necessary, albeit insufficient,

condition for the understanding of the phenomenon of culture (Powell, 2006, p. 13)". Language differences often result in miscommunication. Rather than coming naturally, communication competence is a learned process like some other skills, which therefore increases the difficulty employees with different backgrounds to understand each other quickly and correctly.

In addition, an intercultural communication may encounter more specific problems than a communication with one culture does. With different knowledge or experience, people in an intercultural communication have more difficulty to interpret others' behavior, which increases their uncertainty of how other persons will respond to the communication (Baum et al, 2007). Employees of a company with diversity environment are therefore often poorly prepared to manage the high uncertainty experienced in intercultural communication.

For example, an immigrant worker from Asia might be lack of knowledge or experience in dealing with a local American employee who was born and brought up in the United States. Different cultural backgrounds often engender misunderstanding when communication becomes unsuccessful or inefficient (Baum et al, 2007). Not only the workers, to effectively manage team members with diverse cultural backgrounds, line managers also need to be sensitive to the cultural differences that may affect the working relationship of employees.

The ability to work effectively with people who have diverse backgrounds is one of the essential skills that hospitality managers require but may often lack (Baum, et al), which increases the possibility of miscommunication in the workplaces. Particularly, when individuals fail to conduct an effective

cultural communication, they may feel themselves excluded. At the same time, some feelings may be provoked such as suspicion, lack of confidence, and even hostility. In many overseas properties of the international hospitality companies, problems caused by communication difficulty seem more prominent.

Take the expatriate managers for instance, communication difficulties can negatively influence their everyday life, which makes them unhappy with their current situation and prevents them from successfully adjusting to the host country and its culture. Obviously, proper cross-cultural training can help employees to cope with intercultural communication obstacles. For expatriate managers, effective communication helps them to become more efficient in the workplace, reduce their emotional stress, and ultimately aid them to complete the cultural adjustment successfully (Seymen, 2006).

The following section will discuss more on methodology. At methodology, the researcher will highlight about the method that will be used to collect data.

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter is exploring about the methodology of this research. It involves the process of conducting the research which is research design that consists of purpose of the study, types of investigation, study setting, unit of analysis, sampling design, data collection method, measurement and data analysis technique. 3. 1 Purpose of study In this research, it falls under descriptive research.

Descriptive research is undertaken in order to ascertain and be able to describe the characteristics of the variables of interest in a situation

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(Sekaran, 2010). Here, this study will try to determine and describe the major factor that influence effectiveness working environment among employees. It undertaken to understand whether managing cultural diversity among employees can create effectiveness working environment by apply training program, inclusive work environment, avoid stereotype and increase communicating skill among employees.

Type of investigation

Correlation study involved in this study which is researcher interested in explaining the important variables associated with the problem. In this study researcher wants to investigate whether the independent variable have relationship with dependent variables.

Study Setting

This study falls into non-contrived setting category. Non-contrived known as a research can be done in natural environment where work proceeds normally.

Researchers do the research to know the effectiveness in managing cultural diversity among employees on the working performance by avoid stereotypes, give effective training program, inclusive working environment and lastly, communicating skills with staff. 3. 4Unit of analysis The unit of analysis refers to the level of aggregation of the data collected during the subsequent data analysis stage (Sekaran, 2010). Here the unit of analysis is an individual. The problem statement focuses in managing cultural diversity among employees, either it is effective or not.

For this purpose, data will have to be collected from each individual staff member works in hotel industries in Malaysia through questionnaire

answered by them. 3. 5Sampling Design Sampling is the process of selecting a sufficient number of the right elements from the population, so that a study of the sample and an understanding of its properties or characteristics make it possible for us to generalize such properties or characteristics to the population elements (Sekaran, 2010).

Population

According to Sekaran, (2010) population refers to the entire group of people, events or things of interest that the researcher wishes to investigate. In this study, the population is employees who worked in the hotel industry in Malaysia that focused on Kuala Lumpur area. The researchers want to select only from difference 3 types of hotels in Kuala Lumpur area that consists of 3, 4 and 5 Stars of hotel.

Sample Size

Sample is a subset of the population that compromise some members selected from it. It is not all but only some elements of the population from the sample (Sekaran, 2010).

In this study, the sample size determined based on Uma Sekaran. Sample for this study are 60 employees in 3 hotels that we have been selected which mean 20 samples of employees from each of the hotel in Kuala Lumpur area.

This research will use one of the statistical analysis packages that are Statistical Package for the SocialScience(SPSS) to analyze the data will be collected from respondents. By using this software, it will help the researcher in determining the best statistical techniques.

CONCLUSION

Cultural diversity has become a hot-button issue when applied to the workplace (Kimberly Amadeo, 2012). What is cultural diversity in the workplace? Culture refers to the values, norms, and traditions that affect the way a member of a group typically perceives, thinks, interacts, behaves, and makes judgments (Richard T. Alpert, 1992). Diversity is generally defined as acknowledging, understanding, accepting, valuing, and celebrating differences among people with respect to ages, class, ethnicity, gender, physical and mental ability, race, sexual orientation, spiritual practice, and public assistance status (Esty, et al. 1995). Hence, cultural diversity is when differences in race, ethnicity, language, nationality, religion, and sexual orientation are represented within a community. A community is said to be culturally diverse if its residents include members of different groups. The community can be a country, region or city (Kimberly Amadeo, 2012). Literature reviews starting with create an inclusive work environment, avoid stereotyping, and apply training program and communicating with staffs for the effectiveness in working environment.

In methodology section, it involves the process of conducting the research such as data collection method, research design, measurement of variable, sample frame, sample size, sampling techniques, and followed by data analysis techniques.

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