LGBT DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT WORKPLACE – AN ANALYSIS OF CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS

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ABSTRACT

Diversity and Inclusion are the critical elements of the workplace regardless the size of the organization. Today in the world around 27 million LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender) is present, and around 8 million are in the US and 3.5 million are in Australia. These enormous numbers show that the workplace has to be LGBT supporter, and these talents cannot be ignored. At the higher management level, LGBT employees have strong interpersonal skills, empathy, creativity, and high emotional intelligence. It leads the team to expand its customer base and ability to retain the customer or clients as they will have a trust in the enterprise. Such initiatives will improve the brand image of the business.

Key words: LGBT, Creativity, Interpersonal skills, Demographics.


1. INTRODUCTION
1.1. Diversity Management

LGBT Diversity and Inclusion at the Workplace

Diversity and Inclusion are the critical elements of the workplace regardless the size of the organization. The success of any business depends on its uniformity of employees regarding age, gender, race, religious belief, sexual orientation (Badgett, Durso, Mallory, & Kastanis, 2013). These diversities bring new ideas and facilitate the organization to accomplish success. In this highly competitive business environment, it’s beneficial for the establishment to modify the policies which suit each section of the society (Benschop et al., 2015).

Today in the world around 27 million LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender) is present, and around 8 million are in the US and 3.5 million are in Australia. These enormous numbers show that the workplace has to be LGBT supporter, and these talents cannot be ignored (George B. Cunningham, 2011). Till 2012, only 190 organizations were recognized to be the best place for LGBT equality. Straight off a day’s company’s approach to talent acquisition towards enhancing the diversity of the workplace include LGBT. Establishment

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makes sure that the workplace should be favourable to them and the policies & procedures were in place (Cunningham, 2015).

Transgender individuals undergo severe discrimination at the workplace, across the world. International labour organisation (ILO) in 2013 mentioned about the discrimination of transgender under LGBT (Federman & Rishel Elias, 2016). There presented a significant gap in the HRM and diversity research area for transgender and had a limited amount of literature. Typically, diversity management directed towards LGBT is lesser compared to women or ethnic minorities. Eventually, things are changing and diversity management, bringing benefits for LGB employees and also reducing the discrimination.

For LGBT individuals, working in an organization is not an easy task. Other employees at fewer occasion hold a varied perspective towards LGBT employees. In 2014, President Obama passed the legislation, promoting diversity and inclusion in the federal workplace. However, the LGBT employees tend to prefer the federal workplace least and mostly pursue careers in fashion or entertainment industry rather than government or military (Federman & Rishel Elias, 2016).

In the Fortune 500 companies, there is evidence which shows that LGBT employees, mainly travel extensively as their straight counterparts, which lean to take tonnes of perspectives to the table to work out complex problems at the workplace. At the higher management level, LGBT employees have strong interpersonal skills, empathy, creativity, and high emotional intelligence (Góis, Duarte, Pinheiro, & Teixeira, 2016). These skills make the employees useful for the organization in attaining their goals.

Workplaces, whose policies are favourable for the LGBT employees, it’s more likely that the employees share their sexual orientation openly and as a consequence able to share their perspectives freely in solving complex problems, ultimately leading to performance gains (George B Cunningham, 2011).

For instance, at the athletic department, sexual orientation diversity and favourable policies tend to help LGBT employees to express their talent openly, and they outperformed their peers. Ensuring the ‘safe haven’ for the employees to express their sexual orientation and to develop a pleasant atmosphere to enhance the sexual orientation diversity at workplace take the organization to the next level regarding productivity (Fullerton, 2013). Diversity training is essential, and establishment has to make sure that they render the transparent and productive message to their employees by asserting on the importance of diversity and how all sorts of diversity create miracles in the workplace (Köllen, 2015).

Those organizations which have friendly policies towards LGBT employees tend to have lesser discrimination cases, which lead to increase the market share, become the happiest workplace to work for, high in achieving the goals, and benefit the society (Köllen, 2013) (Sposato, Feeke, Anderson-Walsh, & Spencer, 2015). In this mode, establishment able to retain the best talent as the talented people only want to remain in an establishment where the skills and expertise are valued to a greater extent (Lloren & Parini, 2016).

Diversity regarding sexual orientation in the system receives an immediate effect on employees. LGBT-supportive policies or supportive workplace climate enhances the openness about being LGBT, also improve the health and well-being outcomes, less discrimination, improves the job satisfaction, improved the relationships with co-workers and supervisors, higher commitment and other positive behaviours & attitude leads to increase in productivity (Colgan, McKearney, & Colgan, 2011) (Lloren & Parini, 2016). These factors reduce the attrition rate in the organization and also alter the view of the other external organization who
are interested in doing business with socially responsible companies. It leads the team to expand its customer base and ability to retain the customer or clients as they will have a trust in the enterprise. Such initiates will improve the brand image of the business (Martins et al., 2016).

Active recruitment strategy for LGBT also has an impact on non-LGBT employees as more often research shows that employees prefer those employers which value diversity, creativity and treat equally to all staff (Madera, 2013). Today, more companies are developing LGBT-friendly policies and making sure that the discrimination should not happen, organization organizes events such as employee networking, mentoring plan, diversity awareness & importance. Companies like Marriott International, JP Morgan Chase, MGM Mirage provide equal health benefits to same-sex partners (Riley, 2008).

The chief challenge is for those companies which have global offices, as in many states such as Algeria, UAE, Jamaica being gay is illegal and countries like Saudi Arabia and Uganda gays are punishable with death. These substantial differences create problems for the companies to keep the sound and safe environment towards the sexual minority (Ozturk & Tatli, 2016).

Moreover, when the non-LGBT employees come as an expatriate to those countries where it’s legal, and LGBT are accepted, there tends to be an issue, especially for the LGBT employees. They are marginalised and discriminated based on the expatriates’ ideology (Schmidt, Githens, Rocco, & Kormanik, 2012). Such matters become involved for the organization to deal and sometimes push the negative thoughts for the LGBT group.

As more countries are legalising LGBT, there is the significant market formation happening in the respective states. Hence, it’s essential for the organisation to tap the talent from the LGBT community. Furthermore, financial sectors are hiring more LGBT employees so that they can address other LGBT customers. It facilitates the organization to have an extended customer base (Sears & Mallory, 2015) (Sposato et al., 2015).

The inclusion of LGBT employees is the most difficult kind of diversity; organization have to take. Few research is present related to LGBT diversity, and many research scholars are itself belong to LGBT community. Different perspectives are required to have a holistic view of the LGBT community. Moreover, gaps in analysing the career growth of LGBT employees and mobility in various cases of occupation also needed to be done.

REFERENCES


LGBT Diversity and Inclusion at Workplace – An Analysis of Changing Demographics


