Advances in Strategic Human Resource Management
Prof. Ashish Pandey
Shailesh J. Mehta School of Management
Indian Institute of Technology, Bombay

Diversity and Inclusion at workplace: An Strategic Perspective
Lecture - 05 C
Initiatives and Approaches of Diversity Management

(Refer Slide Time: 00:16)

So, I hope you must have understood and you must have recognized the importance of having diversity at workplace. Now, we will look at how to achieve more diversity and how to do the diversity management at workplace. What do we mean by diversity management? Diversity management is defined as specific activities, programs, policies and any other formal process or efforts that is designed to promote the organizational culture change related to diversity.

The example of diversity management initiatives are flexible working arrangements, promoting work life balance initiatives, education and training program to raise the cultural awareness, equal opportunity policies for different groups of the society.

(Refer Slide Time: 01:10)

There are three predominant approaches towards diversity management. First is strategic diversity management, second is work life balance related diversity management and third is social justice related diversity management.

Strategic diversity management is about valuing diversity for competitiveness and it is about cultural awareness for workforce integration and bonding. We looked at the example of IBM that is an example of strategic diversity management, work life balance related diversity management that is about giving flexi time, encouraging diverse thinking to foster innovation

and creativity. We looked at the example of Godrej, Zomato, these are the examples of work life balance related diversity management.

Social justice related example that is about going beyond the legal compliance and obligation to include people from the disadvantages or minority groups from the society in the workplace. Again Godrej, Tata organizations are proactive in ensuring the social justice and in that way they are promoting the diversity in management.

(Refer Slide Time: 02:37)

Let us look at what is the situation in India. Are Indian organizations homogeneous? What is the perception of people from different groups about each other? So, there is a simple, but very interesting study conducted and published in this Asia Pacific management review by a professor Kundu. The summary of the finding of his study is that male employee.

So, they conducted this cross sectional survey in large number of organizations, more than 1000 of the data they collected and what they found is that male employees, rated female employees consistently less qualified, less competent, less productive than females themselves rated.

General category employees perceived that minority and socially disadvantaged employees were less competent and less productive. Almost all employees believed that minority, socially disadvantaged and disabled employees were provided with comparatively less organizational support in terms of working facilities, promotions and salary increases.

Even females of the general category believed that they had less chance of receiving working facilities, promotions and salary increases than males from the general category. Further, each category of employees believed themselves to be more important than others. Females from all categories value diversity more highly than males.

Females from general category and both males and females from minority disabled and socially disadvantaged categories placed higher value on employers efforts to promote diversity compared with general category males. So, these findings suggest that general category male look at perceived their counterparts from the different categories as less competent and people from other categories including female from general categories perceived themselves as disadvantaged groups.

Though this study is based on mere perception, we cannot neglect this perception and these kind of incidences, these the data like this suggest that Indian organizations have to proactively approach the diversity management and proactively work towards making the workplace more inclusive.

So, the next question is how we can enhance the diversity management at workplace in Indian organizations? First and foremost thing is leadership support and involvement. If a committee is formed by the top management and if it is headed by the departmental heads or senior managers, people are likely to look at the impact of the committee's work in more favourable light. The cooperation of the organizations and other managers will be much higher to those committees which are headed by senior managers.

Diversity management is can also be and has also to be promoted by various good HR processes. HR processes in all HR functions like recruitment, performance management, training and development, salary and wage compensation etcetera. There is a need to create a suitable working environment.

There is a need to have the in general the values shared values and beliefs about respecting that people coming from different socio-economic and other backgrounds. Objectivity and effective communication is key to make performance management system fair and only a performance management system which is based on the judicious combination of objective and subjective parameter gives the sense and perception of fairness amongst people.

And fairness is the hallmark; the sense of fairness is the hallmark of good diversity management. Desirable behavior and undesirable behavior must be identified and explicitly communicate it to the people in the organization. We need to specify what is the desirable behavior which promotes diversity which nurtures diversity.

We also need to identify what are the undesirable behavior, what is the undesirable language, what is the undesirable gestures or the decision making process which do not favour which works against diversity management and both of these behaviors must be popularized in the organization. Feedback process must be robust in the organization.

There has to be a mechanism, there has to be openness in the organization to receive feedback. There has to be a psychological safety or psychological environment where people do not mind people are not fearful about raising their voice against certain practices which they do not consider fair or right in the organization.

Last, but not the least, only concept based diversity management cannot go very long. There has to be a data based data driven process of diversity management. Organizations need to identify the metrics and then they need to regularly measure themselves against those metrics which are the indicator of effective diversity management.