

A STUDY OF SIGNIFICANCE OF WORKPLACE DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT GODREJ

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ABSTRACT

Workplace diversity and inclusion are the emerging issues in today's scenario and will only grow in importance, when companies makes a start by investing in these concepts. As every single person has his individualism with their own specific traits and no single person is accountable as representative of a certain group. In a realistic competitive business environment stereotyping mindsets, racial discrimination and prejudices such factors are held responsible for damaging the businesses. Workplace diversity is all about realizing, accepting differences among people of different communities, genders, ages, disabilities sexual orientation and with differences in personalities, experiences, education and knowledge bases. Diversity has different connotations to different people and organization applies these definitions in their own terms respectively. Senior management reward and equitable policies in the support of diversity proves to be the benchmark for the success of these companies. At Godrej, diversity is core to their people philosophy, where the company aims in encouraging the inclusive environment for all for all Godrejites and enabling more employees to take up a diversified role. The paper aims to study the significance of inclusion of diversity in the corporate sector and to study the various practices implemented by the Godrej while incorporating this approach in the organization. The study was based on secondary approach, which includes journals, reports, online sources, souvenir for theoretical framework.

Keywords: Diversity, Inclusion, Workplace, Employees, Godrej Ltd.

Introduction

Inclusion of the diverse workforce in the workplace is the upcoming topics in the HR scenario and has become a major subjective issue for many companies. Diversity includes the individuals with intangible and noticeable differences with respect to age, gender, race, and unknown differences like nationality, religion, political beliefs and education which creates an environment to work where differences are valued and employees gets the opportunity in developing talents, consistent to a company values and their business objectives. It is an emerging concept that has been dealt everywhere. Workforce in an organization are found to be constant battling with this issues which made some believe that inclusion of diversity in the workplace is as simple as meeting the required quotas for employee race and gender, but the truth is far beyond that it promotes acceptance, respect and teamwork despite differences in race, age, gender, native language, political beliefs, religion, sexual orientation, or communication styles among employees.

However, due to the diversity in the workplace, the issues of acceptance and respect, gender equality, generation gap, language, equality arise accordingly. HR personnel and recruitment professionals need to successfully manage a diverse workplace by increasing awareness for differences in people of all walks of life. Godrej, the multinational Indian company has an opinion that they can maintain the competitive advantage over other companies through their diverse workplace by having their employees' innovations and differences help in their work. The company feels privileged in developing an inclusive environment for all Godrejites. This process of committing enables in serving above billion global citizens which comes from different age, background, marital status, physical ability and nationality.

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Literature Review

Diversity helps in identifying and valuing kinds of differences, which make organization as a better workplace. Currently, positive concerns have been shown by employers for initiatives on diversity and inclusion with proper investments to confirm success for their teams. It can be found out from different studies that teams with diversification give rise to better performance which in return adds more profit to the organization. The McKinsey report in 2015 on around 366 companies stated that the top four organizations which were the promoters of ethnic and racial diversity in management had the chances of getting 35% more financial returns as compared to the industry standards. Also, there was an additional return of 15% as compared to the industry standards for the top four organizations having gender diversity.

There is also a study from McKinsey which reports that diversification in executive board level had higher equity returns of 95% than the boards with homogeneous nature.

Further, the studies from Boston Consulting Group and Harvard Business Review confirm the fact that problem solving skills and performance are better with diverse teams as compared to the teams with non-diversification.

It also adds that employees coming from diverse environments express different feelings and vision, which implies to the birth of positive diverse solutions. Diversity cannot be expected overnight. It demands constant co-operation from the insiders as well as the outsiders who are knitted closely with the organization.

There is a huge role of managers in influencing to carry out these initiatives while interacting with employees to give them clarity on diversity goals of the company.

Forshay designs customized solutions by a group of networking experts for the company by a collective combination of relationship building, and data. Workplace diversity leads to innovation. A group of non-homogeneous employees adds value by giving unique perspectives. A study indicates that companies implementing a concept of diversity considered to be more innovative. The parallel attachment of diversity and inclusion indicates a fresh, conducive, safe and healthier environment where employees found to be more productive. Employees could never be able to give their best at their workplace if they feel neglected. The research of psychologist Daniel Kahneman indicates that being biased in nature human decisions are normally based on intuitive beliefs which hardly possess any logical importance. The article challenges facing HR teams in the prospects of diversity and inclusion reported the lack of diversity and inclusion left an adverse impact on an employee and left the employees in dark clouds. In the words of Nisaba Godrej, Executive Chairperson Godrej Consumers, states 'We recognize merit and preservation and encourage diversity in our company and respect diversity inside the organization and are also committed for employment with equal opportunity. A real diverse and inclusive business demands the requirement of a board by HR teams to understand different factors on developing A D & I strategy, negotiation of legal frameworks, taking over unconscious bias to measure progress effectively.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study is to understand the significance of diversity and inclusion in the corporate sector and to study the various practices implemented by the Godrej while incorporating diversity and inclusion in the organization.

Research Methodology

The study was based on secondary approach, which includes journals, reports, online sources, souvenir and case study for theoretical framework.

Significance related to diversity and inclusion to build a great corporate culture.

The diversity and inclusion concept is increasing day by day in every organization. The importance of diversity in workplace is progressive as it gets people of many religions, races and cultures together under one environment.

Many activities have been conducted by different organizations to manage employees of different race, ages, genders and sexual orientations. In order to gain results, initiatives have been taken by organizations in imbibing this approach. Effectively managing diversity improves not only organizational effectiveness, but it provides encouragement to the diversity efforts done by others. The success of diversity management initiatives is relied upon the top management commitment and the reward policies.

Cox and Blake (1991) found in order to remain competitive, organizations have been advised to attract, develop and retain males and females of all ages, skin, colors, cultural backgrounds and physical capacities. The effective incorporation of diverse inclusion approach not only provides sensibility to the business moreover makes employees sensitize towards the needs of the organization, which helps in increasing the retention of organizational members.

Incorporation of strategies at Godrej in managing a diverse workplace:



Case on Building an Inclusive Aqua feed team at Godrej Agrovet Ltd.

Aqua feed business, like many other in the industry, has been largely male dominated. Deterrents, whether sociocultural, infrastructure or role led, have resulted in women opting out. Above all the highly specific technical education required, makes this tougher. Company has shown deep commitment in becoming more inclusive and enabling more women to take on roles. There is also enough research to show how companies with diverse teams end up outperforming others. So their philosophy becoming more inclusive is not just the right things to do, but also makes very good business sense. They started by setting recruiting goals and identified roles that had higher chances of being opted for by women. These were typically office based or in the laboratories. Company had recruited women, not just in the laboratories, but also in sales. Though this was the start, but farmers were hesitant to even acknowledge women and said they were uncomfortable in discussing business with women. To make this successful Managers at every level took it upon themselves to mentor, unlearn, anticipate and counter biases and lead by example. New hires didn't give up, persisted and found ways to build a rapport with different stakeholders. Eventually, their resilience started paying off. Since then they have consistently performed ahead of plan and proved to their managers and peers and has made role models with bold ambitions and the resilience to perform.

Source: The Godrej Way

Methodical Practices involved at Godrej Limited

Involvement of Senior management through their visibility in the various workshops and training programmes.

Communicating the diversity concept to their employees by publishing the real life stories of their employees in 'The Godrej Way'.

Fostering inclusive environment for all Godrejite through Godrej Women leadership network', which is an initiative for the empowerment of women team members, in managing their professional and personal concerns.

Offering training, leadership and developmental opportunities, aiming to make the company a best place for exploring the women's talent..

Execution of flexi work policies, part time work and work from home while understanding the work life continuum.

Creating a formal procedure for enhancement of diverse strategy with identifiable aims for company's strategic initiatives

Initiation of Godrej Alliance for working parents concept where, team members often with their spouses and parents share experiences through meetings ,parenting sessions and workshops. A discussion ranges from child care,children education to maintaining a healthy work life balance.

Empowering the employees through 'Learning as a journey programme which involves group workshops with industry leaders to one- on- one session, which goes much beyond their core work.

Providing an equal opportunity to the employees by not discriminating them on the basis of gender and focusing on the policies related to sexual harassment. Sensitizing employees to LGBT issues, by Godrej India culture lab, which had hosted 40 LGBT theme events.

Conclusion

Diversity management is a dynamic concept which explores the strategic organizational culture, which brought together different range of customers irrespective of sex, caste, creed, communities under one umbrella. The concept of diverse inclusion at the work place in Godrej Ltd. is encouraged by the initiation of the programmes which helps in retaining the talent from different backgrounds. Initiatives set forth in the process of this amalgamation i.e. developmental and leadership programmes for employees, performance review processes, organisation-wide projects, corporate social responsibility initiatives are ideally set to foster collaboration among the different groups, which allows employees of all levels to work with groups they care about while connecting with each other.

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