

Are Diversity and Inclusion in The Workplace Your Problem?

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Abstract

This paper will address the need for diversity and inclusion in the workplace. It has been a rolling topic in the media, and Fortune 500 company CEOs have taken initiatives to make their organizations more diverse and inclusive. However, why should we care? The number of those who had jobs or were seeking employment, in October 2018 amounted to 162.72 million (Monthly civilian labor force in the United States from October 2017 to October 2018 (in millions, not seasonally adjusted), 2018). The US Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that over the decade of 2016 -2026, the U.S. labor force is expected to expand, due to nearly 39 million workers who will enter the labor force. The will bring about a change in the dynamics of the labor force. There will be many individuals who will vary in age, races ethnic, cultural, and gender backgrounds. With this influx of new people working together also comes a responsibility of the companies, they will be employed by to offer equal opportunity for them. It will require that companies address implicit bias, gender discrimination, and structural racism policies and practices held within the organization.

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Introduction

What are diversity and inclusion? What are the effects of the lack of diversity and inclusion in the workplace? Currently, there are only eleven Hispanics, three Black, and twenty-four women who can be among CEO for Fortune 500 companies. White males account overwhelmingly as the majority within leadership roles in the labor force. The average earnings compared among gender, and racial lines show a vast disparity as well. A full-time female worker made only 80.5 cents for every dollar earned by men (Hegewisch, 2018). Despite efforts made by government and policies to eliminate racial disparity both Blacks and Hispanics still experience lower wages. Hispanics and Blacks earned 65% as much as whites in 2016 (Kochhar & Cilluffo, 2018). These statistics reveal a stress call for diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

Thesis Statement

The thesis explored in this paper is “We should be concerned about diversity and Inclusion in the workplace.”

Methods

The approach used to gather information for this project was both qualitative and quantitative. I employed search methods learned from the librarian in order to use the online Purchase library database search tool effectively. Using the library database search tool, I was

able to obtain peer-reviewed journals, helpful Alert Collector that include a list of books, reference books, scholarly journals, magazines, and organization on my research topic. The quantitative method aided in gathering the statistics need to support my argument for my thesis “We should be concerned about diversity and Inclusion in the workplace.”.

Review of Literature

Introduction

This following review of the literature reinforces the need for a more diverse and inclusive workplace. There are many obstacles and suggested methods that have been both successful and caused some disbelief due to them

Defining the Problem

The need for Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) within the workplace is becoming more apparent every day. Grissom (2018) tells the narrative through statics concerning the history, and future demographics of the workforce. He lists some of the issues we currently face today with diversity in the workplace. Grissom’s article has data regarding the marginalized and minority groups in the workplace. What is not mentioned, are the complications that impede the workplace from becoming more diverse

Walter (2017) Angela Wangari Walter examines the many obstacles that hinder organizational and institutional change within the leadership. Walter address institutionalized racism and how it is maintained within organizations through culturally bias practices. She tackles color blind, and blind spots. Society is uncomfortable talking about race, and many

prefer to avoid the conversation altogether. The issue with that is, it is necessary to talk about race in order to eradicate hidden bias. The hidden bias (blind spots) are an unconscious bias that is ingrained in our thought patterns that causes even the most well-intention individual, who is against discrimination to make a bias decision. Leadership roles within the organization are essential to addressing the problems of implicit bias. Walter includes recommendations on how leadership can address these barriers.

The workplace is not only impacted by the lack of diversity and inclusion on an individual level, but it affects the organization monetarily as well. Herring (2014) explain how diversity and inclusion impact business financially. He gives the bottom-line standpoint on the tangible benefits of diversity in organizations. Other benefits that included are productive and better talent management. He provides evidence, accountability, and measurement tools for diversity programs.

Searching for a Solution

Diversity and Inclusion methods need to be incorporated when training and developing young professional. There are many different practices; this article brings attention to that assist to improve Diversity and Inclusion in the workplace. Multiple learning methodologies include interactive case studies, forced choice and voting exercises that help to uncover preferences and biases, and e-learning that provides

The author (2017) lists a few recommendations for tools that can be used to create a more inclusive environment in the workplace. This article will help provide additional information and options that can be used to support the development of inclusivity in the workplace.

Accommodations for physical disabilities, mental health, work-life balance, as well as flexible

work schedules for those caring for children and parents. Mentoring, and workplace inclusion and equity committees that are created to help cultivate and form a panel of individuals who are committed to building a more diverse workplace within an organization.

Applied & Measuring Solutions

Business owners and CEOs have joined the cause to make their organization more inclusive. Tim Ryan (2017) of Pricewaterhouse new initiative, where he enlists 150 Executives to commit to fostering a open discussion about race and gender in the workplace. This article is excellent in that it opens the door to safe dialogue about race and gender in the workplace. This discussion is a very delicate topic in the work environment. If discussion about gender and race is navigated in respect, it will make certain employees feel appreciated. Due to the race being a more sensitive topic for whites in the workplace more so than People of color. Jayne Feld (2014) in this New York Times article highlights three different Fortune 500 companies that are taking the initiative to be more diverse and inclusive, MassMutual, Morgan Stanley, and Prudential are successful companies who understand that the demographics of the current society is changing they have a responsibility to accommodate that change. Communication across cultures can make it challenging to accommodate inclusion.

Intersectionality of race and gender is culture. It should be taken into consideration when addressing diversity and inclusion as cultures communicate in their way. Brislin (2008) uses the applied psychological process to deal with issues that hinder diversity being useful in the workplace. Brisling's use of applied psychology in the process of communication among

different cultures and genders, as well as “Interpreting Silence, Quiet, and Indirectness chapters are informative when focusing on the intersecting categories of diversity inclusiveness.

The success rate of D&I is not as high as some would think. Dobbin and Kalev (2016) scrutiny of why diversity programs fail, comprehensively examine diversity training tactics. Many hiring testing, performance ratings, grievance procedures while in theory could produce results, they have been found to be inadequate to produce ongoing results for the creation of a more diverse and inclusive workplace. Dobbin and Kalev give suggestions and statistics for a program that get results. They include voluntary training, self-managed teams, cross-training, college recruitment for men and minorities, mentoring to name a few.

Dr. Kelly and Dr. Smith (2014) also examine the ineffectiveness of some D&I programs. Dr. Kelly and Dr. Smith offer an opposing perspective on Diversity and Inclusion initiatives. Their assessment of the programs rounds out the argument about the necessities of Diversity and Inclusive in the workplace. Dr. Smith and Dr. Kelly look at the multiple identities of individuals in the workplace.

Conclusion

Diversity and Inclusion in today's workplace are imperative. There are the many different CEOs who are taking the first steps in acknowledging the need and incorporating the proper practices and to make their organizations more diverse and inclusive. Many complications hinder D&I strategies from being successful. To be able to measure the methods will help companies choose and administer ones that work effectively for them.

Analysis

Challenges

Implicit Bias and Racial Discrimination

Implicit bias exists in everyone. It has been shown, the most well-intentioned individuals who are passionately opposed to discrimination and racism hold some bias. Implicit bias is also known as blind spots or unconscious bias. It can be subtle and can be insidious. Stereotypes aid in the formation of these bias. We dwell in a society where we flooded with images that depict people of different cultural, race, ethnic, and age groups in ways that can be either negative or positive. These stereotypes whether we choose to accept them as truth or not gets embedded in our psyche and affects our decision making. It is almost impossible for someone not has any form of implicit bias. They have been shown to influence hiring and promoting practices.

An experiment performed Allen R. McConnell, and Jill M. Leibold using The Implicit Association Test (IAT) measured specific measure of prejudices. In that White study undergraduates interacted one by one with White and Black participants, their behavior during these social interactions was evaluated by skilled judges and by the experimenters themselves. The participants completed explicit measures of racial bias and a race (IAT). It was discovered that the individuals who displayed stronger negative attitudes toward Blacks (vs. Whites) on the IAT had more negative social interactions with a Black (vs. a White) experimenter reported relatively more negative Black prejudices on explicit measures (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006).

Several biases affect hiring practices. In a 2003 Bertrand and Mullainathan performed a study to measure racial discrimination. In the experiment, they send out fictitious resumes to jobs found in the classified ads in Boston and Chicago newspapers. To influence the perception of a race the names were changed to either white or African American sounding names. The responses to the resume found that applicants with African American names received fewer callbacks (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2003). It was also revealed that white names got fifty percent more replies than blacks regardless of industry. This correlates with African Americans are 16% less likely to get invited to job Interviews. Not choosing an applicant due to racial discrimination has its own set of bias obstacles in the workplace.

Gender Discrimination

The gender gaps are still present even though woman have made significant advances in the workplace. Women make up 47% of the U.S. labor force, and among adults ages 25-64, women are likely to have a four-year college degree than men(United States Department of Labor, n.d.). According to the U.S. Department of Labor, there are 74.6 million women in the civilian labor force (United States Department of Labor, n.d.). However, when we compare the figures, we are baffled by the fact they still have not achieved parity with men, in the company's chair roles and pay equality. Among the CEOs who lead Fortune 500 companies as of 2018, just 24 of them are women. The Wall Street Journal has reported that women CEOs get paid a smaller percentage of what their male counterparts are getting. Pew Research Center analysis of median hourly earnings of both full- and part-time workers in the United States show that in 2017, women earned only 82% of what men earned (Graf, Brown, & Patten, 2018). It should be equal pay for doing the same job. Women have reported discriminated against because of their gender, and

have a difficult time climbing the corporate ladder. Being overlooked for promotions. Women feel there is a double-standard in the workplace as it pertains to them (Women and Leadership, Public Says Women are Equally Qualified, but Barriers Persist, 2015). Companies are making it a point to hire more women to be more diverse but leaving out including them.

Structural Racism

Structural Racism has an enduring impact on the workplace. It is one of the most impeding obstacles when trying to create a diverse and inclusive organization. Structural racism is the standardized and legalized range of policies, practices, and attitudes that routinely advantage whites while producing cumulative chronic adverse outcomes for people of color. It relies on established traditional ways of operating in which historically White values and norms define leadership; this reinforces an organizational status quo which in turn perpetuates inequalities in access and leadership (Anderson and Collins, 2013).

Solution and Benefits

The benefits of a diverse environment are positive work environment with employees of a different background, skillsets, and experiences. When working together and learn from one another they come up with innovative ideas for products and services. What can we do to incorporate diversity and inclusion in the workplace? Expanding the talent pool, by recruiting talent from different educational, economic, cultural background, gender and, age range. What are problems hindering the cultivation of diversity in the workplace? Unconscious bias, Communication, resistance to change, implementation of diversity in workplace policies. Components of exclusion; Ageism, Racism, Sexism, Heterosexism, Classism, Ableism, Culturalism. How do we manage diversity in the workplace?

Personal Reflection

This project has forced me to work hard and dig deeper. I have been able to call upon my experience from previous classes I have taken here at Purchase College. The knowledge I have gained in Racial Inequalities, Organizational Leadership, Advanced Psychology of Communication are a few classes that prove to be useful in working on this assignment.

Conclusion

The study on Diversity and Inclusion in the workplace has shown the importance of creating an environment that is suitable for people of different backgrounds and how organizations can benefit from them.

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