

Diversity in the Concept of Management: Different Style and Difference Ethics

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Management is a universal phenomenon. It is a very popular and widely used term. All organizations - business, political, cultural or social are involved in management. Diversity in management concept fosters better organizational performance. Its roots go back to equal employment opportunity and affirmative action, followed by notions of 'Valuing Differences'. It is conventional that different managers display different styles of management in the course of their work. Managers have to perform many roles in an organization and how they handle various situations will depend on their style of management. Ethics is such a vital component of management practice. It makes good business sense for managers to be ethical. While each company has a different ethical standard, management ethics are largely the same in every industry. In many ways, this type of ethical understanding exists as an unwritten code, though literal ethical documents also exist. This paper discusses the concept of diversity and concept of management with a view to portraying the necessity of diversity in management of any organization. It also aimed at elucidating the significance of different management styles and ethics in any particular organization or institution and getting organizations reassess their structures for a successful management through alternative approaches of thinking and actions. It discusses different types of styles and ethics involved in management and details the importance of diversity in management. The paper generally recommends that diversity should be utilized in the management of organizations to ensure that everyone is carried along irrespective of cultural background, ethnic group, tribe, race, or color.

Key Words: Diversity, management, styles, ethics

Introduction

Diversity in the concept of management is a strategy that is intended to foster and maintain a positive workplace environment. Usually initiated by Human Resources professionals and managed by department heads and supervisors, an effective diversity management program will promote recognition and respect for the individual differences found among a group of employees (Osmond, 2008). The idea of this management approach is to encourage employees to be comfortable with diversity in the workplace and develop an appreciation for differences in race, gender, background, sexual orientation or any other factors that may not be shared by everyone working in the same area of the company.

The underlying principle of diversity in management has to do with acceptance. While individuals retain their own sense of values and ethics, diversity in management encourages people to recognize that not everyone is alike. Rather than being intimidated or prejudiced by those differences, employees are encouraged to accept the fact that there are diverse interests, diverse values, and diverse physical and emotional characteristics present within

the office environment (Sonia, 2006). Further, the diversity present in the office does not have to hamper productivity or create conflict. Instead, the diversity may function as helpful attributes that promote the attainment of the goals and objectives of the department.

Diversity in management can be adapted to many different types of working environments and be integrated into many different types of management styles (Garus, 2003). Promoting recognition and acceptance of diversity among the employees can convert a hostile workplace environment into a welcoming environment where people freely communicate and support one another with any tasks associated with the job (Benaus, 2004). In doing so, the implementation of a diversity management approach often makes it possible for productivity levels to increase dramatically.

One of the main advantages of a strong diversity management program is that it tends to encourage the development of latent skills and talents among employees. Individuals who may have felt unable to move forward in the company due to factors such as race, gender or sexual orientation find that these attributes are no longer issues. When this happens,

employees begin to feel valued and are more willing to step outside their comfort zones and enhance their skill for the benefit of the departmental team, the company as a whole and for the individual (Sidney, 2001). Implementing a diversity management program successfully is not an easy task as it takes time and dedication. However with patience, time, and structured efforts to educate employees, a diversity management policy and program will eventually make a huge difference in the communication among employees and the general productivity of the department (Harrison, 2009).

Concept of diversity

Diversity refers to the experience of human differences and commonalities, an experience which is increasingly becoming relevant to people's daily lives in the 21st century. In order to be successful, all kinds of organizations (business, public administration, NGOs etc.) are obligated to confront the issues involving diversity internally, among management and staff, and externally in their environments (customers, suppliers, contractors etc.). The concept of diversity encompasses acceptance and respect. It means understanding that each individual is unique, and recognizing our individual differences. These can be along the dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs, or other ideologies (Jack, 2005). It is the exploration of these differences in a safe, positive, and nurturing environment. It is about understanding each other and moving beyond simple tolerance to embracing and celebrating the rich dimensions of diversity contained within each individual (Satus, 2003). Diversity is a reality created by individuals and groups from a broad spectrum of demographic and philosophical differences (Micah, 2004). It is extremely important to support and protect diversity by valuing individuals and groups free from prejudice, and by fostering a climate where equity and mutual respect are intrinsic. Diversity therefore, means more than just acknowledging and/or tolerating difference. Clef (2009) opined that diversity is a set of conscious practices that involve:

- Understanding and appreciating interdependence of humanity, cultures, and the natural environment.
- Practicing mutual respect for qualities and experiences that are different from our own.
- Understanding that diversity includes not only ways of being but also ways of knowing;
- Recognizing that personal, cultural and institutionalized discrimination creates and

sustains privileges for some while creating and sustaining disadvantages for others;

- Building alliances across differences so that we can work together to eradicate all forms of discrimination.

Diversity according to Clef (2009), includes knowing how to relate to those qualities and conditions that are different from our own and outside the groups to which we belong, yet are present in other individuals and groups. These include but are not limited to age, ethnicity, class, gender, physical abilities/qualities, race, sexual orientation, as well as religious status, gender expression, educational background, geographical location, income, marital status, parental status, and work experiences. Clef is of the view that categories of difference are not always rigid but also can be fluid, respects individual rights to self-identification, and also recognizes that no one culture is intrinsically superior to another.

Concept of Management

Management is an art of getting things done through and with the people in formally organized groups. It is an art of creating an environment in which people can perform and individuals and can co-operate towards attainment of group goals". According to Taylor (2003), "Management is an art of knowing what to do, when to do and see that it is done in the best and cheapest way".

Management is a purposive activity. It is something that directs group efforts towards the attainment of certain pre - determined goals. It is the process of working with and through others to effectively achieve the goals of the organization, by efficiently using limited resources in the changing world. Of course, these goals may vary from one enterprise to another. For example, in one enterprise may be launching new products by conducting market surveys and while in the other, it may be profit maximization by minimizing cost.

Management involves creating an internal environment: - It is the management which puts into use the various factors of production. Therefore, it is the responsibility of management to create such conditions which are conducive to maximum efforts so that people are able to perform their task efficiently and effectively according to Khanus (2007), who opines that good management includes both being effective and efficient. Management for Khanus also includes ensuring availability of raw materials, determination of wages and salaries, formulation of rules & regulations etcetera. Being effective therefore, means doing the appropriate task i.e. fitting the square pegs in square holes and round

pegs in round holes. It can also mean, doing the task correctly, at least possible cost with minimum wastage of resources.

Different Types of Management Style

The different types of management styles are the key to business's success or failure. When a business commences, it may start out with just a hand full of trusted business partners who can somewhat agree on the mission statement. At some point they would have to hire employees. The management style that one chooses can establish whether it runs evenly across the board or spirals out of control. How these people are managed can make or mar the business at critical growth moments. As a business the main goal as a whole should be to gain a profit.

There are different types of management styles when it comes to managing in the workplace and choosing the right type of style to lead with could have a big impact in terms of how your staff produces for you (Amis, 2004). There are four major types of management styles including democratic, autocratic, paternalistic, and Laissez- faire. But knowing the four different leadership styles in management does not mean that you can simply pick one and then that is going to work. In most cases, the traits of the staff that you are managing will help to define the management styles you will use, something blending a combination of the different categories (Amis, 2004).

One should not expect to adopt a certain type of management style if it is not in his personality (Bynum, 2002). In a perfect world, businesses could be run by four different people that represented each management style. Each management style has its pros and cons. If one is able, let him incorporate each management style based on each situation. There are four basic types of management styles and here are some of the situations when each of them may need to be used.

Autocratic Management Style

An autocratic manager makes decisions without the consultation of others, instead serving as a dictator type in communicating orders because they like to be in control of situations (Bynum, 2002). This style of management leads to work getting done on time because there are less people involved in the decision making process. The problem with this type of management style is that the staff are going to eventually lose motivation working in an environment where they have no say and employee turnover is likely to run high as they move on to other

opportunities where they can have an impact. For situations or events where an on the spot decision needs to be made, this type of leadership can serve a purpose, but trying to have an autocratic style of management in place for long periods of time is just going to lead to headaches for all involved. This style of leadership is more suited for a prison setting or in the military and not so much for business management.

Democratic Management Style

A democratic manager is willing to share work with his staff by delegating it to get the job done. You are banking on the competency of your team to get the job done on time and to have it done correctly (Sidney, 2001). Employees love this type of management style in business because they feel involved and part of the process. Their job performance is likely to be better than in an autocratic setting, though giving them the authority to do the work may lead some to rely on other to bear the brunt of the work on the project (Khanus, 2007). Also, depending on what type of work it is, employees may feel like the work is being pushed off on them because you as a manager don't feel like doing it. Getting too many people involved in the project or process could slow the work down. It could also mean less time for you to concentrate on your work as your team asks questions and waits on your answers before proceeding to the next steps (Khanus, 2007).

Participative Management Style

Also sometime known as consultative management style, this decision making style in management revolves around getting lots of feedback from your staff before coming to a conclusion and making a decision (Sidney, 2001). This means that the process can take a bit longer as there are more voices to be heard, but getting a consensus on major decisions can lead to buy in from those who might otherwise have been opposed to the implementation of such changes. The downside to this style of management and leadership is that employees may feel that you don't value their opinion or are too stubborn if after all of the feedback is received you go off and make the decision in your own without incorporating any of their feedback (Amis, 2004). If you are going to make company or departmental policy changes, this type of style can make the team feel involved and more apt to go with the flow of whatever changes are coming down (Amis, 2004). This style also works well for brainstorming sessions as a manager work on new product ideas or marketing promotions.

Laissez Faire Management Style

In this leadership management style, the team is given the freedom to complete the job or tasks in any way they deem it should be done. It is hands off approach at the management level in terms of direction, but the manager is there to answer questions and provide guidance as needed (Bynum, 2002). This is a good way to help develop individual contributors into leaders which is only going to serve to make your team stronger in the long run (Bynum, 2002). On the flip side, it can lead to conflict on the team because some employees may try to assume the role as a leader in the interim or to dictate to others how their work should be done.

Different Ethics in Management

Doing business globally opens the arena for conflicts in norms. Many multinational companies have codes of ethics, mission statements, and integrity policies guiding their practices. However, when operating outside of their boundaries they confront different sets of norms which sometimes conflict with their home based ones. In this conflict of norms, occasionally the ethical issue is not seen to be the same by the parties concerned. Ethics in management can change and develop as human progress continues (Urnam, 2008). In the case of new industries, such as internet, the rules are being made as it progresses. Based on the common practices and experiences of those using this mode of communication, norms are being formulated (Urnam, 2008).

The role of ethics in management is also dependent on the level of responsibility the company is willing to take. The pro-active mode would characterize a company that believes strongly in its mission as moral (or at least for the benefit of society). It would respond as a trend setter to some of the ethical dilemmas (Clief, 2009). The re-active mode would be the companies though aware of social responsibility, respond to immediate situations rather than anticipating them. The passive mode leads the company to deviant behaviour by refusing responsibility (Satus, 2003). There are two main extremes found in the corporate world: profit on one side and human safety, which constitute an ethical spectrum.

The main goal of management ethics is to treat all employees and customers justly and fairly. It is believed that by following a moral and ethical code, business will improve (Nathan, 2001). When a management team adheres to management ethics, employees become motivated and a workplace environment becomes motivational. When applied to

everyday business, acting ethically means adhering to law, competing with others in an honest manner, and performing daily tasks without any element of deceit. Many companies around the globe update written codes of conduct as a result of past corporate scandals. It is not uncommon for a company to update this document on a yearly basis. After a code of conduct document has been updated, each staff member must read and understand the document (Nathan, 2001). Further, all employees must adhere to the updated codes of conduct, and those that do not follow these regulations are often dismissed. Although managers must follow the same codes of conduct as employees, these individuals have additional obligations.

Almost every decision that is made on a daily basis involves an ethical decision. Managers must keep this in mind at all times. By setting a good ethical example for other employees, managers can easily encourage all employees to follow the same ethics. Some companies offer managers specialized management ethics courses that must be completed prior to job acceptance. Frequently, managers who switch companies are asked to follow a different code of conduct. This does not mean that all other management ethics should be forgotten, but it does mean that additional ethics should be learned. Ethics are not necessarily interchangeable from country to country. Sometimes, different cultures respect different ethical rules (Urnam, 2008). Thus, any person who decides to move to another country may have to adapt to cultural, and workplace, ethical differences.

Diversity Management

The purpose of Diversity Management is to tap into the positive potential of diversity and transform this potential into a reality. Organizations are reassessing their structures and processes in the light of equal opportunity (Paulson, 2011). Awareness of diversity and competence in its management are necessary prerequisites for success. Many business and other organizations have already developed diversity management programs with some success. Having originated in the US in the early 1980s, DM is to some extent already established in many organizations (George, 2009). Also, in Europe organizations are learning to use diversity as an advantage. Valuing differences makes the difference for success!

Diversity Management is a young management discipline, which originated out of a maze of many different historical currents and social issues. In the USA, Diversity Management is still associated

(rightly or wrongly) with "affirmative action" and "equal opportunity" in multi-cultural (ethnicity, race, gender, sexual preference, etc.) contexts (Philip, 2010). In Europe the emphasis has been more on the management of language and national differences as well as equal opportunity for women (gender mainstreaming).

In Nigeria, there seems to be movement away from Equal Opportunity, which often, albeit sometimes unintentionally, leads to quotas and presupposes assimilation as the main adaptation principle, toward a more systematic, positive, organizational approach of diversity management, toward appreciation of diversity and the conscious striving toward a scientific as well as ethical and results-oriented approach (Ugoji, 2003). This approach, however, is not easy to put into practice. Conflicts and social issues obviously cannot be overlooked as they are embedded in their complexity and contexts.

This complexity entails the fine tuning and nimble use of different tools for dealing with it, and for describing and assessing each unique diversity constellation of any particular organization, community, region or country. For example, in Nigeria diversity takes on a different form than in South Africa. The different historical and social roots of the Nigerian and South African diversities have to be deeply respected and taken seriously (Friday, 2007). There are no simple recipes. As a consequence, in spite of difficulties in overcoming complexity, diversity management has to assume that people are able and willing to change themselves and their thinking, and thereby define and redefine diversity in a positive light.

How can such changes be initiated? What are the political implications? Again, we have not got easy answers but there is one important point we would like to keep in mind. Complex systems often react counterintuitively to the attempts at managing or controlling them. To some extent this was the case of "affirmative action" which has consciously been considered very political (Adewale, 2006).

Importance of Diversity in Management

As the marketplace for goods and services becomes increasingly global, businesses must understand and embrace diversity in their brands as well as in their work forces. Simply having a diverse employee population is no longer enough, according to Forbes (2009); for a company to succeed in today's challenging economy, it must not only meet the needs of a multifaceted marketplace, it must respect different cultures, ideas and philosophies.

Innovation

One of the biggest reasons to employ a diverse work force is the broad base of cultural experience that will drive innovation. Whether an employee is management, mid-level or entry level, when everyone in the work force has a similar background, the creative process that drives innovation and problem solving is similar. A new perspective that doesn't match this "group think" is more likely to improve the business in a unique way (Forbes, 2009).

Attracting Talent and Customers

Premier industry business talent prefers to work for or with a company that has a diverse work force. Customers also prefer to buy goods and services from diverse companies, too. These are two reasons that Forbes (2009) says to be truly successful in the global marketplace, a business must be authentically diverse. That means a company must develop a new model that embraces diversity as a central growth enabler.

From Recruitment to Strategy

Companies that embrace this authentic diversity will find that having only the requisite number of "minorities" in the workplace isn't enough. Instead, according to Forbes (2009), companies are developing "chief diversity officer" roles that touch more than just recruitment and human resources. These CDOs will instead have greater control over areas such as strategy, marketing and sales. Companies that have diversity among the management staff will more easily fulfill the needs of a broad customer base.

Cultural Intelligence

Perhaps the most compelling reason to employ a diverse work force is cultural intelligence. When fellow employees and customers are diverse, the opportunities not just to learn but to appreciate what values other cultures hold sacred are limitless. Adopting these values as part of the business' core message and product fosters understanding between the cultures (Forbes, 2009). When a business operates with diversity in mind, the opportunity for shared value--both in profit and society -- is greatly expanded.

Methodology

This paper is predominantly based on information derived from secondary sources. Hence much of the

data were accessed through the review of relevant texts, journals, newspapers, official publications, magazine and the internet which served as a tangible source of insight into diversity in the concept of management; different style and difference ethics.

Implication of the Study

An organization's success and competitiveness depends upon its ability to embrace diversity and realize the benefits. When organizations actively assess their handling of workplace diversity issues, develop and implement diversity plans, multiple benefits are attained. Organizations employing a diverse workforce can supply a greater variety of solutions to problems in service, sourcing, and allocation of resources. Employees from diverse backgrounds bring individual talents and experiences in suggesting ideas that are flexible in adapting to fluctuating markets and customer demands. A diverse collection of skills and experiences (e.g. languages, cultural understanding) allows a company to provide service to customers on a global basis. A diverse workforce that feels comfortable communicating varying points of view provides a larger pool of ideas and experiences. Companies that encourage diversity in the workplace inspire all of their employees to perform to their highest ability.

Conclusion

Diversity Management is a strategy to promote the perception, acknowledgement and implementation of diversity in organizations and institutions. Diversity management is based on the idea that diversity opens up alternative ways of perceiving, thinking and acting and thus enriches the life of an organization or any establishment. Human beings differ in age, social and national background, gender, sexual orientation, physical and mental ability as well as religious belief and worldview. Diversity is a source of creativity and innovation that can provide the potential for future development and competitive advantage. Ensuring that diversity is made visible and fruitful remains a central concern of diversity management. In doing so, individual and structural representation of perception and appreciation may be reflected upon.

Managers have to perform many roles in an organization and how they handle various situations will depend on their style of management. A management style is an overall method of leadership used by a manager. However, there is no particularly accepted style of management, but styles that lead to increased staff motivation, job satisfaction and productivity should be encouraged. While those that

have the opposite effect should be discouraged. Managers in most organizations commonly strive to encourage ethical practices not only to ensure moral conduct but also to gain whatever business advantage there may be in having potential consumers and employees regard the company as ethical. Creating, distributing, and continually improving a company's code of ethics is one usual step managers can take to establish an ethical workplace and in doing so the mindset of administrators change to accept innovations.

Recommendations

Diversity should be adequately utilized in the management of organizations, establishments or institutions to make sure that everybody is carried along irrespective of cultural background, ethnic group, race, or color. Before a manager adopts any type of management style, he should figure out who he is, find out his personality, what kind of leader is he is? Is he a 'What I say goes' or a 'Let it be' or maybe a 'what do you think?' The type of management style one chooses should be based largely on him as a person. A manager can find a friend, spouse, or co-worker and ask them what kind of leader they think he is, or find a personality test.

Anyone who desires a certain management style should find books on that particular style and read up. Take a class on leadership which can help him learn more about himself. Codes of ethics in management should be properly documented and referenced from time to time. All employees should adhere to the updated codes of conduct, and those that do not follow these regulations should be dismissed. Although managers must follow the same codes of conduct as employees, these individuals should have additional obligations.

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