

A Study on Managing Cultural Diversity and Governance Process in the Education Sector

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Abstract

Background of the study: The domain of education employs people from diverse backgrounds and cultures. Each faculty member has their distinct characteristics and personality traits making it challenging for the Human resource department to keep them all content and satisfied with their work and fellow members under one roof. Aim/Purpose: This study aims to investigate the application of governance for managing cultural diversity among faculty members for achieving sustainable human resource management in Community Colleges. Methodology: A thorough investigation of the conceptual and empirical literature available in the domain has helped create a strong foundation for the research. With the help of an extensive review of the literature, the relationship between diversity management and the governance process among faculty members is reviewed. Findings: Finally, the study concludes with the significance of the relationship between diversity management and the governance process among faculty members to achieve sustainable human resource management in the education sector. Results: Reviewing the correlation between diversity management and the governance process among faculty members solves the problems of communication and interaction among employees having diverse backgrounds. Practical, Research & Social Implications: The paper highlights the need for suitable management of diversity in community colleges which can lead to broader and more impelling implications for the policy makers and the colleges to adopt more welcoming and inclusive principles to cater to all needs and make diversity richer and a strong suit. Originality/value: Sustainable human resource management leads to greater productivity among employees and sustainability for the organization. In the contemporary world where competition is vast, there is a need to maintain internal harmony and balance. Thus, our research provides an in-depth analysis of the myriad ways adopted by the education sector for diversity management and practices and governance process.

Keywords: Education Sector, Diversity Management, Governance Process, Sustainable Human resource management and Community College.

INTRODUCTION

Managing cultural diversity and the governance process in the education sector is crucial for creating inclusive and equitable learning environments. A strong principled and well-maintained staff can only nurture students with good morale and capacity to deal with any situation. The education sector employs a moderate percentage of human resource employees from different cultures and backgrounds. The Human resource manager in different colleges faces challenges in managing faculty members of diverse characteristics due to their varied socio-cultural and economic realities. In this research, the process of governance is reviewed for managing cultural diversity among faculty members to attain the goal of sustainable human resource management.

Management of diversity is a process intended to maintain and create a positive work atmosphere where the differences and difficulties of employees are valued so that all can reach their attainable goals and boost their offerings to an organization's strategic objectives. (Patrick, H. A., & Kumar, V. R., 2012). In India, community colleges are a relatively new concept that is gaining recognition and importance in the education system. Community colleges offer vocational and skill-based courses that are aligned with industry requirements and cater to the needs of local communities. The concept of community college is still evolving in India and hence the management is all the more challenging (Carter, 2019). India is a diverse, dynamic, and culturally rich country. The history of segregation and discrimination is also deep-rooted in India (Rani, 2020). Thus, the management of the task force is bound to pose certain limitations.

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The research attempts to determine how public sector administrators outline this concept and investigate the various policies applied to maintain harmony in the diversity of the people. Therefore, the research has broadly four objectives.

O₁: To evaluate the relationship between faculty performance and diversity management attributes like Age, Ethnicity, and Educational background.

O₂: To evaluate the relationship between the organisational effectiveness and governance process attributes like Transparency, Active Participation and equality.

O₃: To evaluate the relationship between the faculty performance and organizational effectiveness.

O₄: To evaluate the relationship between the diversity management attributes like (Age, Ethnicity and Educational background) and governance process attributes like (Transparency, Active Participation and equality).

These objectives are investigated and the answers are attained through an in-depth review of the literature. A thorough examination of the scholarly articles have helped in providing answers to the objectives. The findings indicate the limit to which workforce diversity has been implemented in public organisations, the nature of diversity programs, and the reported positive and negative effects of existing programs. (Carrell, M. R., & Mann, E. E., 1995). The process of Governance in higher education has undergone certain substantial changes in recent decades. Therefore, to analyse the process of governance in higher education a specific understanding of governance is needed. (Giliberto, June 2011)

Adapting human resource management for sustainability allows thinking about new findings to solve HR problems such as HR shortages, employees' health or HR development, to promote the visionary role of Human resource management in developing sustainable business organizations or to increase the effectiveness of human resource management performance. (Ehnert I., 2014)

METHODOLOGY

The current research aims to examine the application of diversity management and governance process on faculty members and to evaluate the relationship between these two concepts.

This study is divided into two parts:

1. Analysing the faculty performance in the Community College.

Faculty performance has been analysed by applying diversity management process with attributes as Age, Ethnicity and, Educational Background.

2. Analysing the organizational effectiveness in the Community College.

Organizational Effectiveness has been analysed by applying governance process with attributes as Transparency, Active participation and Equality.

Finally, the relationship has been analysed between diversity management and governance process in education sector. The research adopts qualitative analysis of the existing knowledge on the subject since. Review of the literature allows a robust foundation to the domain along with a systematic structural investigation into the existing research (Krithi & Pai, 2021; Tiwari, Kainthola, & Chowdhary, 2020). An exhaustive review of the literature has been conducted by the author that provides comprehensive information on the subject and helps in achieving the required goals.

Findings

To attain the answers to the four objectives established by the author, a rigorous review of the literature is provided in the following section.

Community College

Based on the American system, community colleges were first introduced in India in 1990s (Carter, 2019; Jerry, 2016). Since India is one of the most populated and young country, the need to train the youth in vocational courses was realised by the government to hone their skill sets (Carter, 2019). Community colleges give admission to those students who might not have attended the college and they also attract students who might otherwise have attended a four-year college. (Rouse, C. E., 1995). Community colleges are providing access to higher education by increasing the bachelor's degree attainment (Alfonso, M., 2006).

Managing a community college is not easy in the best of circumstances. Managing a community college whose faculty is represented by a union is considerably even more challenging. Unionisation always results in some degree of power being shifted to the faculty (Wollett, 1976), and governance Garfield, T. K. (2008). The community college management has typically been cast as bureaucratic, allowing functional responsibilities of various offices to respond directly to specific needs and to specified supervisors. One of the most popular and well-received depictions of this casting (Miller, M. T., & Miles, J. M., 2008).

Community college leaders are on the front lines navigating the volatile terrain ahead for postsecondary education. (Mey, M. J., Jessup-Anger, E., & Jessup-Anger, J., (2008). Within an educational institution, the response given by leaders and their behaviour towards demands created by external forces affects community college and organizational effectiveness as well as it also affects staff morale and functionality (Wharton, L. E., 1997).

Furthermore, Community colleges have become an important entryway for students intending to complete bachelor's degrees. (Long, B. T., & Kurlaender, M., 2009). Literature on the community college and contemporary understandings of the institution suggest different viewpoints. It is often thought to be a "democracy's college", "the contradictory college", or even referred to as a "neo-liberal college" (Levin, J. S., 2012). Community college was established on the premise to give advantage to humble and disadvantaged students to empower them to financially become stable (S, J, & S K, 2013). Thus, the faculty of such colleges need to be just too.

Diversity Management

Diversity management in the Indian education system is of paramount importance to create inclusive and equitable learning environments for students from various cultural, linguistic, socio-economic, and religious backgrounds (Yadav & Lenka, 2020). It is also echoed by scholars that an effective faculty leadership can enhance the performance of all the stakeholders of the institution (Ajabnoor & Dawoud, 2023). Diversity management in faculty is a crucial aspect of promoting inclusivity and equity in higher education institutions. It involves implementing strategies to recruit, retain, support, and advance a diverse faculty body that reflects the broader societal diversity (Vermeulen, 2011). Promotion of diversity management requires awareness, leadership, dialogue and long-range planning. (Nicholas Sr, F. W., & Oliver, A. R., 1994). Community colleges have recently and attracted great appreciation because of their essential role in providing employee training to many commercial institutions (Dougherty, K. J. (2003).

Community colleges establish themselves as a counter to monetary requirements and employer demands, and as they rely more heavily upon workplace efficiencies such as part-time labour, they turn themselves into businesses or corporations and threaten their social and educational mission (Levin, J., Kater, S., & Wagoner, R. L. (2006).

An analysis was conducted of the practices involved in adapting to a community college teaching career, which tends to consist of essentially the same duties and responsibilities throughout the period of employment without external boundaries highlighting different careers (Harnish, D., & Creamer, D. G., 1985).

Professional teaching is an outcome of faculty inspiration and participation in institutions which systematically recognise and reward quality instruction (Alfred, R. L. ,1986).

Persistent participation of faculty members along with their usual job work as teachers plays a crucial role in maintaining the quality of education provided by a college. (Caldwell, C., 1986). Evaluation of existing information about community college faculty members bespeaks of the like academic attention provided to the topic. It encapsulates the limitations in the present literature and the need for further research. (Twombly, S., & Townsend, B. K., 2008).

Due to limited awareness about faculty at community colleges, not much courtesy has been given to their job gratification and ideas. (Isaac, E. P., & Boyer, P. G., 2007). Research reveals that the women faculty members accomplished a range of conventional feminine gender roles based on socially external to the college, within the college and individuals gender identity... (Lester, J., 2008)

Governance Process

Numerous studies have been conducted examining leadership within community colleges, participatory governance and its role, and on the conditions that support organisational change. Seher Awan (2014).

At majority of schools, the problem of faculty governance is rooted in the institutional, quasi-judicial limits of the powers of faculty senates. Aronowitz, S. (2006). Numerous researches have been done to conclude how authorisation has affected academic governance. (Hartley, M., 2010).

The culture of the community college is more challenging and sophisticated than that comprehended in the scholarly literature, which often portrays the institution as homogeneous and the employee as uniform. (Levin, J. S., Haberler, Z., Walker, L., & Jackson-Boothby, A., 2014). The importance of the faculty voice, trust and transparency, apathy and disengagement emerged as key variables of social and cultural aspects of soft governance, how faculty conceptualise shared governance. Kater, S. T. (2017).

CONCEPTUAL VIEW OF THE STUDY

The Relationship between Diversity Management and Governance Process



Figure 1.

Source: Authors

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The review of the literature revealed that the faculty members of the community colleges are believed to be having positive perception of the implementation of diversity management policies, irrespective of their diverse backgrounds. The examination of the collated material also revealed that the management of the community college have a strong belief on the application of governance process in the colleges. They support the policies and intend to follow them. The literature highlighted factors that can help in effectively managing cultural

diversity and the governance process such as promoting equality in status, including everyone, making fair policies, working as a team, listening to all the members of the staff, and awareness on cultural sensitivity.

The author concludes the current research that there exists a relationship between diversity management and governance process in the Community Colleges. The attributes of diversity impacts the performance of faculty members in the colleges and in order to ensure the professional growth of faculty members for the accomplishment of educational goals today almost all colleges should realize the importance of diversity management. (Chaudhry, S., 2016). College's at all administrative levels should take care of the implementation of governance process in their activities, especially with regard to transparency, equality and active participation by following laws and regulations. (Zatar, T. S., 2019)

Educational Organizations has a great role in increasing the professional growth of faculty members by applying diversity management and governance, which increases the quality of education, which can be reflected in the improvement of students.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The research highlights the positive effects of managing diversity at community college. It provides a background to future researches. Theories like social identity theory, cultural competence theory, or critical race theory are all in support that managing cultural diversity in the educational sector requires recognising and addressing systemic inequalities and power imbalances and yet dealing with them will all sincerity and fairness. Thus, implying that diversity in workplace is natural and the management and governance should be effective too.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS

Diversity management especially in Indian scenario where the country is overwhelmingly rich in cultures and traditions is a paramount issue and should be dealt with sensitivity. The author suggests certain ways in which the administration can ensure efficient governance to maintain diverse cultures in community colleges. The primary criteria while formulating a policy should be to make it inclusive and sensitive towards everyone's needs. The teacher training programs can be introduced initially before their joining to make them aware of the right behaviour. Further, in the grassroot level, the students should be educated on the rich diversity of the world and the appropriate way to humbly be with everyone. Further, there should be regular monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of diversity management initiatives.

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