**Shavita Deshwal**
Assistant Professor Dept. of
Business Administration, MSI

# Workforce diversity- A perspective of employees and students

**Shavita Deshwal**

### Abstract
Diversity can generally be defined as recognizing, understanding and accepting individual differences irrespective of their race, gender, age, class, ethnicity, physical ability, race, sexual orientation spiritual practice and so on. Diversity is growing in today's organizations. Diversity can benefit the organizations in enormous ways. Different values and perspectives shared by employees can make the organization to compete in this turbulent environment. Globalization in this recent time has triggered more interaction amongst people from different cultures and backgrounds than before. People are now more open-minded in the marketplace worldwide with competition coming from almost everywhere in the continent. This study is an attempt to find out and compare the perception of people for workforce diversity. In the present study the sample of 200 respondents was taken. Convenient sampling technique was used. The sample was drawn from Delhi. Interpretation of result was done on the basis of mean, standard deviation and 't' test.

**Keywords:** Diversity, Differences, Turbulent environment, Culture.

## 1. Introduction
Diversity is growing in today's organizations. Diversity can benefit the organizations in enormous ways. Different values and perspectives shared by employees can make the organization to compete in this turbulent environment. Therefore, any organizations need to keep up with the global market trend by 24/7 working on and improving on its products and services in the aspects of innovation and creativity to meet new customer needs in order to stay competitive. It need efforts and hard work from employees because they are the valuable assets to determine a company's success and help organization to gain competitive advantage by contributing their creativity and innovative ideas at work that can never be duplicated. Diversity deals with both observable and invisible characteristics. Observable characteristics of diversity include age, gender and race whereas its invisible characteristics include religious beliefs, educational background and work experience. Diversity can generally be defined as recognizing, understanding and accepting individual differences irrespective of their race, gender, age, class, ethnicity, physical ability, race, sexual orientation spiritual practice and so on. "Numerous organizations have recognized and attempted to respond effectively to the demographic shifts in the workforce by launching diversity initiatives, hiring diversity consultants and offering an array of diversity training programs." (Kalev, Dobbin, & Kelly, 2006).

## Background
Inclusive workplaces characterized by supportive leadership and empowered employees is required to translate the gains. Diversity management strategies or approaches have also been criticized for not addressing the exclusion of people from different identity groups and their limited access and participation in the organization. (A. Prasad, 2001) [1] In one study of Fortune 500 companies, it was found that the top 25% of the firms in terms of women in senior management, actually yielded returns to their stockholders that were more than 30% higher than those of their peers. (Catalyst, 2004) [2] A survey in the United States found racial diversity to be associated with increased sales revenue, more number of customers, greater market share, and greater relative profits. (C. Herring, 2009) [3]. A Forbes report found that diversity was a key driver of innovation and critical for success of organizations on a global scale.

**Correspondence:**
**Shavita Deshwal**
Assistant Professor Dept. of
Business Administration, MSI

The results indicate that diversity is crucial for encouraging different perspectives and ideas that foster innovation. (Forbes, 2011) In a report by Deloitte it is argued that diversity and inclusion lead to improved business outcomes and diversity means more than "just having a sprinkle of women and a dab of color." (Deloitte, 2011) [4]. A Deloitte report observes that if just 10% more employees feel included, the company will increase work attendance by almost one day per year per employee. The report also found that when employees think their organization is committed to and supportive of diversity and they feel included, they report better business performance in terms of their ability to innovate, responsiveness to changing customer needs and team collaboration. (Deloitte, 2012) [5]. A catalyst report found that in India, employee perceptions of inclusion accounted for 43% of team citizenship behavior (J. Prime and E. R. Salib, 2014) [6] The findings that more women as board members translates to higher financial returns, was based on a study commissioned by the Times of India group to examine the relationship between companies with women on their boards and profitability. (S. Mukherjee and N. Singh, 2014) [7]. Diversity management alone is insufficient to improve performance. (M. Sabharwal, 2014) [8]

**Objectives of the Study**
The objective of the study was to find and compare the perception of people for workforce diversity.

**Research Methodology**
The study was an attempt to understand the perception of people for workforce diversity.100 male respondents and 100 female respondents were taken in sample. Out of total sample of 200 respondents 100 were the students of Post Graduate Courses (50 were male and 50 were female).Rest 100 were employees working at senior level in Government Organizations (50 were male and rest 50 were female).The study was completed in Delhi only. The questionnaire was self-structured and non-disguised. It had 30 items divided into two parts; Part A comprised of demographic details and Part B had questions related to the perception of respondents regarding workforce diversity. The questionnaire was subjected to review by experts for validity. Reliability of the questionnaire was checked by split half reliability test. Also journals have been used for collecting the secondary data. In the light of the above information, the following hypotheses have been formulated.

**Hypotheses**
**H1:** There is no significant difference in perception of female and male for workforce diversity.

**H2:** There is no significant difference in perception of male students and male employees for workforce diversity.

**H3:** There is no significant difference in perception of female students and female employees for workforce diversity.

**H4:** There is no significant difference in perception of male students and female students for workforce diversity.

**H5:** There is no significant difference in perception of male employees and female employees for workforce diversity.

**Analysis and Interpretation**
**H1:** There is no significant difference in perception of female and male for workforce diversity.

**Table 1:** Comparison between female and male on workforce diversity

| Gender | N | Mean | S.D | CR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Female | 100 | 63.26 | 6.23 | 4.81 |
| Male | 100 | 57.95 | 9.1 | |

Table 1 shows that the C.R value is 4.81 which is more than the table value at 0.05 level of significance (1.98).Hence our null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted that there is significant difference between female and male respondents on workforce diversity.

**H2:** There is no significant difference in perception of male students and male employees for workforce diversity.

**Table 2:** Comparison between male students and male employees on workforce diversity

| Students/Employees | N | Mean | S.D | CR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male -Students | 50 | 63.05 | 6.15 | 4.60 |
| Male-Employees | 50 | 55.55 | 9.5 | |

Table 2 shows that the C.R value is 4.60 which is more than the table value at 0.05 level of significance (1.98).There is significant difference between male students and male employees. Hence our null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted that there is significant difference between male students and male employees for workforce diversity.

**H3:** There is no significant difference in perception of female students and female employees for workforce diversity.

**Table 3:** Comparison between Female students and Female employees on workforce diversity

| Students/Employees | N | Mean | S.D | CR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Female-Students | 50 | 63.50 | 6.27 | .07 |
| Female-Employees | 50 | 63.35 | 10.3 | |

Table 3 shows the mean value of female students is 63.50 and of female employees is 63.55.CR value is 0.07 which is not significant. Hence our null hypothesis (H3) is accepted that there is no significant difference in perception of female students and female employees for workforce diversity.

**H4:** There is no significant difference in perception of male students and female students for workforce diversity.

**Table 4:** Comparison between Male students and Female Students on workforce diversity

| Students | N | Mean | S.D | CR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male –Students | 50 | 63.04 | 6.15 | .34 |
| Female-Students | 50 | 63.52 | 6.28 | |

Table 4 shows the CR value is 0.34 which is not significant at 0.05 level of significance. Hence our null hypothesis (H4) that there is no significant difference in perception of male students and female students for workforce diversity

**H5:** There is no significant difference in perception of male employees and female employees for workforce diversity.

**Table 5:** Comparison between Male Employees and Female Employees on workforce diversity

| Employees | N | Mean | S.D | CR |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Male –Employees | 50 | 55.58 | 9.5 | 2.35 |
| Female –Employees | 50 | 60.36 | 10.3 | |

Table 5 shows that the C.R value is 2.35 which is more than the table value at 0.05 level of significance (1.98).Hence our null hypothesis is rejected and alternate hypothesis is accepted that there significant difference in perception of male employees and female employees for workforce diversity.

**Conclusion**
Diversity can deliver many possible advantages to organizations. On one level it helps organizations to reach out to diverse customer groups and markets, and on another level by allowing for a variety of perspectives, it promotes innovation, creativity, financial performance, organizational adaptability, better problem solving, information processing, employee retention, enhanced profit, corporate image, superior work outcomes and performance. Globalization in this recent time has triggered more interaction amongst people from different cultures and backgrounds than before. People are now more open-minded in the marketplace worldwide with competition coming from almost everywhere in the continent. Diversity can be a problem to an organization but could also be a solution, It also comes with its disadvantages but also benefits and dangerous but also constructive. The challenge then is to extract the very essence of diversity and tactically manage it for the improvement of the people and the organization.

**Limitations**
- Due to paucity of time researcher has taken small sample of respondents.
- Due to cost constraints geographic coverage of the study is limited.

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