ISSUES IN EMPLOYEE DIVERSITY IN A MULTICULTURAL ORGANIZATION:
THE ANALYSIS OF RELATIVE DEPRIVATION THEORY

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Abstract

Different culture-regions have the way they go about conflict. And certainly some may have more plausible ways of dealing with conflict than the rest. It then follows that a multicultural organization experiencing industrial conflict either with its internal or external publics would easily quell such conflicts by use of diversity mix. The paper hinges on the ancient wall that cultures perceived differently, especially by reason of anthropological evidence. What then is left with the paper is that in a multicultural organization, having different culture mix come together to share in the dialogue of the house, psychologically quietens tension from diverse groups. As well, cultures do not conflict by reason of diversity difference, but by reason of relative deprivation of member needs or when one culture feels threatened by another. In other words, emphasis in employee diversity as a threat to organization productivity, is a thing of language misapplication. Diversity itself does not engender conflict, except when threatened by another and when conflict breaks out, it is not the fault of diversity but man. Scholars then should shift their emphasis from that of diversity as a threat, to that of relative deprivation among culture mix. The paper is a descriptive one and as such adopts content analysis and empirical approach for its methodology. The conclusion of the paper is that scholars should focus on internal issue of culture clash which is the one of relative deprivation. Approaching it from this focal point will help solve diversity problem with pluralist organizations.

Key Words: Industrial Conflict; Multicultural Organization, Employee Diversity.

A. Introduction

Employee diversity is not all together a threat to organization productivity. By reason of culture mix, conflicts with the modern industry can be best managed. For one, there is the anthropological and ancestral belief that ancient wisdom yet rules in the affairs of men, not minding the gainsaying of positivists on structural knowledge. Whether continental or oriental, there are salient ways by which traditional knowledge interrogates innate issues. One of such then is the issue of conflict. The belief is that by various cultures coming together, ideas can be shared on such ancient walls. Managers then, must look out for those ways and seek to explore them.

It then follows that in a multi-cultural organization, diversity mix, by reason of anthropological evidence can resolve conflicts where one culture fails.

Organizations then rather than being snared by racial practice, should begin to look out at growth orientedness. No doubt, global impact has the tendency to grow a pluralist organization for much more than its mono-culture system of labour.

The position of the paper then is that pluralist organizations can survive their diversity threat when seen on the basis of internationality. In other words, managers should see their diversity audience as a deliberate one in order to grow the organization for global interest.

In other words, regional organizations are personally involved in their labour system. A pluralist organization, must see its diverse audience as an international platform with the purpose of incorporating diverse cultures for a diverse market.

B. Statement of Problem

The position of traditional scholarship, as with employee diversity, is the one of threat with many of these scholars, culture mix, not minding its anthropological and social economical relevance can interfere with the organization’s productivity. The paper then argues that employee diversity is not altogether a threat. The perception of ideological and cultural issues are not actually problem prone. Problem stems when one culture feels threatened by another. Therefore, the argument on its own that diversity is a problem is a gainsaying. Diversity is only a problem within the context of relative deprivation and not region. Looking at it from the position of denial can help resolve emerging conflicts between culture mixes in an
Objectives of Study

The paper aligns its objectives on the following discourses.

1. To find out if employee diversity on its own is a threat to multicultural organizations.
2. To find out if culture strife stems from relative deprivation.
3. To find out if culture diversity is an added advantage to pluralist organizations.

Research Questions

1. To what extent is employee diversity a threat to multicultural organizations?
2. To what extent is culture strife subject to relative deprivation?
3. To what extent is culture diversity an added advantage to pluralist organizations?

Conceptual Issues of Employee Diversity

There is an avalanche of papers on modern day organizations. Concern has been about conflict management, especially with organizations in a third world setting. The reason is not far-fetched. Third world states are yet laddered with caste system which has the tendency of meddling with organization productivity. In western blocs, some scholars argue, continental philosophy to a large degree, models the practice of labour. It is believed that broad mind thinking governs most of the organizations, especially the pluralist ones where continental mix is needed.

In Ogbo (2014) then, an organization is a social system modeled with group members and individuals for the sole aim of the organization. According to the scholar an organization meets the needs of two publics—her internal and external publics. Such then requires that the organization must clearly spell out its goals to check probably membership behaviour, especially where such behaviour can pose a threat to the life of the organization.

It then follows that organizations remain productive on the model of certain key administrative functions. As cited in Mmecha (2018) such roles include: planning; directing; coordinating; job descriptions etc.

Organization-practice then is more of the application of ethical philosophy in a business environment. An organization is not ethically healthy when it militates against the moral; social and psycho well-being of its publics. In Mishra (2014) the ability to effectively check moral voice in an organization to a large degree, grows the organization.

Thus, then diversity issues is one of such voices that have continually threatened managerial ability.

In Abdel (2012) employee or organization diversity is conceptualized as a business unit in a multicultural mix, ranging from that of demography; ideology and subject needs. An organization then with such dispersions can possibly turn these into gin (Owoyemi, 2011).

The foregoing however is from the liberal school. Much of the gain saying that has been created about employee-diversity is that of loss, especially as it concerns the subject of race. But the fact remains that racial issues are not altogether threat to the life span of the organization. If at all there are emerging problems such probably have to do with the management.

Industrial Conflict an A Multicultural Organization: The Issue of Relative Deprivation Roles

It is important management understand her internal publics; especially how each member-group and individuals perceive conflict. Although essentially, most human conflicts stem from relative deprivation (Smith, 2007).

In other words, the issue of employee diversity is not altogether a threat to organization productivity. The underlining factor is the relative deprivation witnessed by diverse groups. In Walker and Smith (2007) this is referred to as a discontent on the part of member-groups of the organization, thus when they suddenly realize that they have been on justly used or entreated. In such instances authorities liken the attitude of the opposing group to culture affiliate.

It then follows that relative deprivation reflects the attitude of a people, whether diverse or mixed towards a circumstance involving their well-being. Such circumstances, if not favourable,
have the tendency to engender conflict.

Deprivation then whether innate or social is the basis of all human conflicts; not the culture itself. Diversity itself is a treasure. Rather cultures react when they feel threatened, and not because they are cultures naturally associated with conflict. The basis of all conflict is the tendency to purge itself from the suppression of superior powers through this conflicts erupt. What then scholars label as diversity threat is a mere linguistic expression without ultimate reality. What is left, the paper posits, is that cultures do not necessarily conflict with one another. An opposing culture must have felt threatened through the means of common deprivation.

C. Theoretical Framework

The paper employed Relative Deprivation theory in the equation about employee diversity as a threat to organization productivity and performance. To what extent does diversity militate against industrial harmony? Human conflict, whether in the industry, family or administrative quarters stems from relative deprivation as perceived by the defenseless.

The theory then was propounded in 1938 by Robert K. Merton. The theory adds credence to frustration – aggression hypothesis which argues that human conflict erupt with time; usually as a thing of purgation from piled up aggression emanating from that of denial. In such instances, human aggression and its consequent purging is the last resort.

In other words, the social relevance of relative deprivation theory is the fact that humans do not just go into conflicts. There must have been a puncture somewhere, coming in form of dispossession of rights. Walker and Smith (2007) conceptualize this as an experience where one sees oneself of being denied of an entitlement that is duly his.

The paper then posits that employee diversity is not altogether a threat to organization productivity and performance; rather such culture mix contend with each other whereby one feels threatened by another. Thus then, organization diversity is not a threat, but appears to be so by use of linguistic dynamics.

Actual problem itself is the deprivation felt by the minor or alien culture. What then is left the paper submits, is the need for scholars to conceptualize diversity threat within the frame work of relative deprivation of members needs.

Methodology of Research

The paper is a quantitative one, concern about research was to find out why cultures react; if they are in any way subject to the inability of man to stay together or one culture being stripped by another. The paper then, with the use of likert method, interviewed seven staff from a multicultural organization in River State Nigeria. The use of likert’s method was use to find out their attitude towards culture diversity in the workplace.

Presentation of Data and Analysis

Research question one

To what extent is employee diversity a threat to multicultural organizations?

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The result here shows that cultures conflict when one culture is being threatened by another.

Research question two:

To what extent is cultural strife subject to relative deprivation?

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<td>Cultures react when threatened by another and not on the basis of border differences</td>
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The result here shows that cultures conflict when one culture is being threatened by another.
Research question three

To what extent is culture diversity an added advantage to pluralist organizations?

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<td>Crossborder culture is an added advantage to the whole image of the organization</td>
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With the result reading at the response of 3.7 it may well be said that cross border interactions are added advantage to the whole image of the organization.

D. Conclusion and Recommendation

The paper then submits that diversity itself is not altogether a threat to organization with pluralist practice. The supposition of scholars that culture mix is a threat in an organization with inter-relational audience is a label on human culture. Diversity, class, if at all there is, stems from relative deprivation; thus when one culture feels threatened by another. Scholars then should begin to tackle diversity threat from the point of relative deprivation of member-needs. The absence of these needs is what triggers the supposed conflict. The diagram bellows leaves us with a critical look.

The paper then concludes that the modern day organization can do well considering the anthropological relevance of cross border diversity. The issue of internal class within the industry should be tied to deprivation issues rather than that of cross border interaction.
The above tree reveals how conflict emanates. It does not emanate from two sources, but from a single source which may be only to the private knowledge of the opposing group. For instance, a member unit deprived of its humanity reacts to the disdain, and not because it is a culture. In the same vein, a member unit deprived of love will definitely react to the inhuman treatment. When such a conflict breaks out the analysts may not see the underlined, but liken it to culture mix among member groups. It then remains that diversity threat stems from a single source; which is the one of relative deprivation of member needs, and not because humans will always conflict by reason of diversity difference.

References


