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PUNE**

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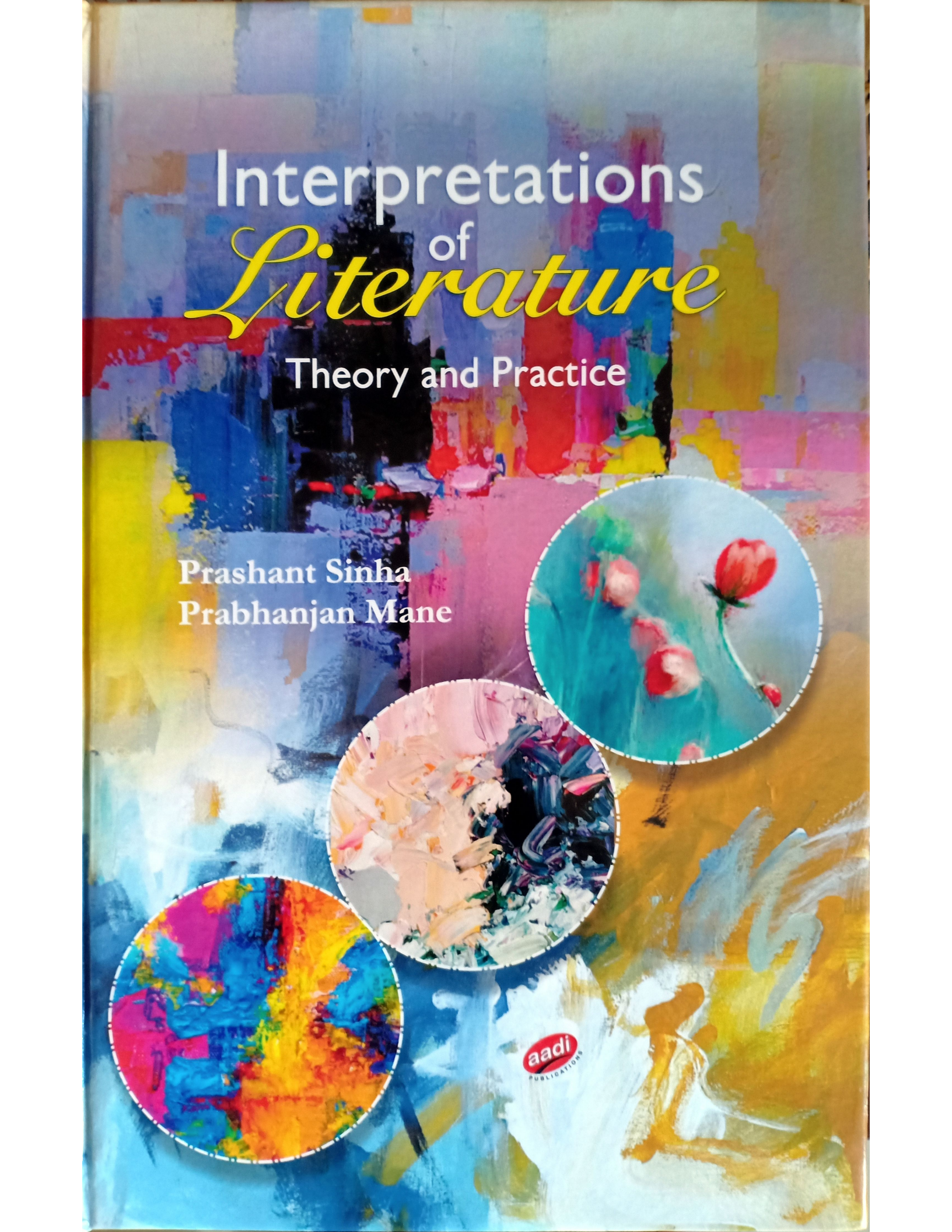


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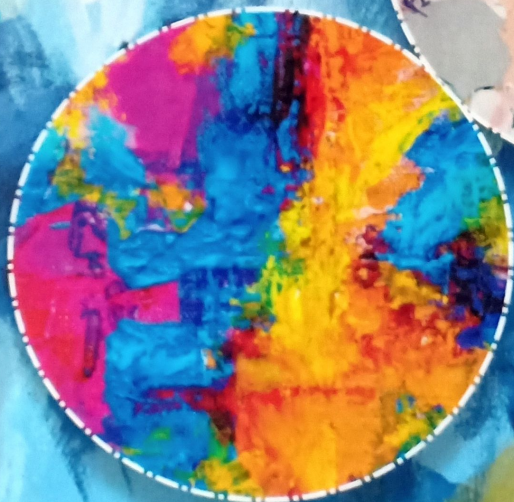




# Interpretations of *Literature*

Theory and Practice

Prashant Sinha  
Prabhanjan Mane



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# The Power of Narrative: An Analysis of Stories and Re-positioning Identity

Snober Satarawala

## Abstract

The paper begins by briefly elaborating on what constitutes culture by understanding the signs that construct the narrative sequence or the syntagmatic chain. This is done by means of a brief explanation of Saussure's concept of the sign and the direction in which Derrida takes it. The attempt is to understand how a signified linked to a signifier can be altered. One way this can be achieved is by modifying the narrative as will be illustrated by various examples. The aim is to establish the potentiality to change the perception of the paradigm.

The argument is illustrated by referring to the street art of Shilo Shiv Suleman, Hollywood movie *Grease*, Sharmila Rege's book *Writing Caste/ Writing Gender: Narrating Dalit Women's Testimonios*, and the book *I am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai.

The thesis statement is that a change in the paradigm is possible through the change in the narrative or syntagmatic chain and this is enabled through stories of heroism and not victimhood.

**Keywords:** Saussure, Derrida, subaltern, heroic, women.

What's the use of stories that aren't even true?

(Rushdie, 1990: 20)

What is a story? E.M. Forster (1879-1970) in his book *Aspects of the Novel* (1927) makes a distinction between plot and story where story is a sequential linear narrative punctuated by a series of 'thens' whilst plot is something constructed, linking events using a series of 'therefores'.



This understanding of plot hearkens back to Aristotle (384-322 B.C.) who in *The Poetics* (335 B.C.) establishes causation as one of the key elements in plot. In short, this paper tentatively initiates a rather ambitious hypothesis that through causation in narratives the very signified associated with a sign has the potential to be erased and replaced by another. Thus, through a determined and conscious effort, narratives can be used to re-position identity and its perception from marginal to heroic.

Aristotle also asserts in response to Plato that there is a special pleasure that comes from drama and this paper will modify that to be applied more inclusively to all stories, as stories are present, although in an invisible form, everywhere; even in drama. Also the term story will be used in a more or less loose manner considering plot to be a substructure or parole of the langue of a story. The special pleasure obtained from stories according to Aristotle is *Catharsis*. Different critics have argued over the translation of this term, however, in this paper it is going to be understood as the washing out of unwanted emotions, some of which are as Aristotle states 'pity and fear'.

Centuries later Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) will recognize the importance of stories. He will question why people tell the stories they do? How do they disguise themselves in their stories? In the essay, "Why Freud Still Haunts Us" published in *History and the Psyche*, Michael Roth justifies the relevance of Freud. Roth focuses on psychoanalysis as the art of listening to stories and asking questions. One central question posed is "What are you getting out of telling this story?" or he asks "What desire is expressed by your injury, or in telling the story of injury?" (Roth, 2014: 118).

For Freud, Love and Hate or what he refers to as *Eros* and *Thanatos* are central to most human experiences. According to him, as explained by Roth in the above essay, one of the reasons why people find it difficult to tell the real story is repression, "...the wilful refusal at self understanding, it is a psychical mechanism preventing us from claiming our own desires" (119). Ironically that is the source of pleasure for it is, "...out of not knowing, there will always be inhibition against knowing ourselves" (119) and "...the delights and ravages of guilt are central themes in psychoanalysis" (121).

So where does this guilt and the consequent suffering come from? According to Freud there are three main sources: "The superior power of nature, the feebleness of our bodies, the inadequacy of the regulations which adjust the mutual relationships of human beings in the family, the state and society" (Freud, 1961: 33). From the point of view of this paper the last which could be translated as culture is the most relevant.

Roth's interpretation is that Freud later thinks less that people are suffering because of childhood memories gone awry but feels that they are actually remembering stories. Thus hysterical patients suffer from reminiscences. Their symptoms are the remnants, and the memory symptoms of certain (traumatic) experiences. Thus in a sense it is the past or history that makes people pathological.

In short stories are more than a fictional narrative sequence. The stories persons tell are linked to their pasts or histories. However, they can choose what to draw upon from that past as they have human agency or intention. Thus stories are defined and given shape by their purpose or the idea, intention or theme. In short, what they choose to tell and how they decide to tell it does have a conscious intention. It is artificial writing that is deliberately constructed and in turn constructs reality as many critics be it Victor Shklovsky<sup>1</sup> or Jonathan Culler<sup>2</sup> assert. Thus if the purpose behind telling a story is changed then it is possible for the signified or concept image embedded in that story to be changed.

Stories are as old as time and are not just ways we interpret this world (*Mimetic*), they are creative—they create a world<sup>3</sup>. At a deeper level they are ways we interpret ourselves and the roles we play. A great deal of that is bound to the emotions of love and hate rooted predominantly in our perceptions of our self. Thus stories have power and this power has a hold not just on the way we see ourselves but also the way the outer world perceives us. They are what make us available to the world who will read us into existence through them via the tinted glasses of their own stories. We are discovered and exist through the culture of stories.

Multiple ways of understanding culture are available. However, in particular, this paper is going to look at it in terms of semiotics with a special focus on the narratives that make up culture, particularly as agents of change.

In a nutshell, the discussion will begin by briefly elaborating on what constitutes culture by understanding the signs that constitute the narrative sequence or the syntagmatic chain. This is done by means of a brief explanation of Saussure's concept of the sign and the direction in which Derrida takes it. The attempt is to understand how a signified linked to a signifier may be modified. One way perhaps this can be achieved is by modifying the narrative as will be illustrated by various examples. This may have the potential to change the perception of the paradigm.

What is culture? In layman's terms it could simply be clothes, food, manners, festivals, rituals, movies, video games, etc. However, at a more sophisticated level one form of culture is the stories or narratives which may be as obvious as fiction or discreet as histories, myths, advertisements,

news telecasts or personal narratives. It must be stressed that this is a completely different understanding of the term culture as compared to the traditional usage by critics like Matthew Arnold who saw it as high culture as he discusses in *Culture and Anarchy* where he describes it as "a pursuit of our total perfection by means of getting to know, on all matters which most concern us, the best which has been thought and said in the world".

Culture is not innocent but is a translation of power. The dominant culture is the one that has control. So if the culture is masculine, the stories that are hidden behind each of its elements are marked by gender as can be seen in the often mentioned advertisements where women ride pink scooters whilst men wear darks glasses, leather jackets and race about on black motorbikes. However despite the various forms of control and assertion of power which Michel Foucault (1926-1984) discusses in his seminal book *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975) be it education and the lines we stand in or the prison house to incarcerate our criminals but perhaps one of the greatest prison houses is language.

Language and its signs are steadily programmed into our cerebral hard drive from the day we are born and the only way one can be set free is through its distortions often seen in figurative language and stories. Thus for Foucault power is not permanently localised in the hands of one person or entity rather it is something dynamic, flowing through the system ripe and available for anyone to seize.

An interesting discussion with an eminent translation scholar Siri Niergaard<sup>4</sup> from the University of Florence, Italy, led to the understanding that in the post-translation era anything could be translated including architecture. However, Niergaard could only view the destruction of cultural heritage sites in Iraq by the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) as the negation of translation. It is her culture or the structure of western democracy that causes her to hear that voice or parole. For ISIS, it is their translation or parole that invokes them to set up a new order which is ironically the old order and hence another equally valid voice must be allowed to come<sup>5</sup>. The absence of the building speaks of its [the translation's] presence and the dismantling allows other narratives to be translated.

However, because of her culture of Christian democracy she is only able to see it as a culture of radical destruction and not a creation of a new order. The signified she associates with that narrative is negative as she views it through the eyes of her culture. This paper is not asserting that either is right, it is just allowing different narratives or stories to be heard. Thus stories write characters into existence but the way they are read is determined by the culture of the reader. To a certain extent stories

can be read as a translation of the way the self wishes to be perceived, however, ultimately part of the interpretation lies with the reader. What cannot be neglected is that there is the intentional part that is embedded in the text which guides the reader in the direction of a certain desired signification<sup>6</sup>.

A solution Antony Appiah stresses is 'hybridity'. For Appiah, to be a cosmopolitan means to be collectively responsible. He recognizes that there is a power grid on which culture rests so when people claim they want to be your 'brother' or 'sister' it is inevitably on their own terms and they end up being the big controlling brother. For Appiah, in "Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers", 'Cosmopolitans think human variety matters because people are entitled to the options they need to shape their lives in partnership with others'. He stresses that they do not pull down people of cultures to find the pure; rather what is liberating and freeing is to expand multiplicity and diversity. To him, what is the need of the hour is to manufacture new traditions or cultures by reaching out to others without abandoning their own, as that would lead to a tragic erasure. One way this paper is suggesting is listening to and telling different stories.

Appiah promotes heterogeneity which is the condition of the contemporary language game that allows people to pursue new endless possibilities of inquiry, hybridity and expansions of horizons. However, although this may seem a very utopian vision, it can be aspired towards not just by expanding the mind of the reader but by embedding these codes<sup>7</sup> within the stories we tell.

An interesting translation of this hybridity is in the work of Shilo Shiv Suleman who describes herself as a visual artist digital storyteller. She uses magical realism and technology for social change. Her project, *The Fearless Collective*, is what she describes as 'collaborative painting' which is a feminist movement where people together 'reclaim their right to public space' by creating 'public art as dialogue' in a form of collective writing, for their paintings tell powerful stories that they have written together using signs. Together with the local population she paints walls: From reclaiming feminine mythology in Varanasi, to private and public space in Dharavi. Stories of transgender goddesses in Ahmedabad, to collaborations with cinema hoarding painters in Chennai. (Suleman)

Saussure, in his seminal text *Course in General Linguistics*, states signs exist in inseparable duality. The concept image or signified is bound to its sound or signifier. The union is arbitrary and established by the community. The sign only has meaning within a particular structure a



priori if the structure is changed, the meaning of the sign can potentially change as well. The structure can be part of a vertical or paradigmatic chain or it can be along a horizontal, sequential axis. All signs are negative terms as there is nothing tangible or concrete in a sign and it is purely relational.

Culture is one structure that gives the sign meaning. This paper is not concerned with the paradigms but the horizontal sequence or syntagmatic chain. It is also interested in how the link between the signified<sup>8</sup> and the signifier<sup>9</sup> can be altered in the process of signification. As an extension of Saussure: words which are part of a cultural structure have power—the power to create reality. Thus the corollary is if the signified is altered, the power the word wields also alters.

Derrida modified the idea of the signifier so that it is not what is heard but what is seen in its most elemental form which is a black mark on a white page. By bending the rules violently, there is potential for the wholly other or a truly new invention and consequently even a new world order to come, however, this will never be entirely realized as humans are all bound by the illusion of rules and norms. Although this is abstract, what is important is the awareness that rules are an illusion. Thus one way of bending the rules is through narratives for they are non-transcendental<sup>10</sup> and hence generate infinite narratives. It is through narratives that it is possible to change the signified associated with a signifier.

An interesting illustration is the paradigm of the term 'grease' which brings to mind a dirty sticky substance. Merriam-Webster dictionary defines it as animal fat, oily matter or a thick lubricant. This gave rise to the syntagmatic chain which was 'to grease someone up' meaning to flatter him; 'to grease someone's palms' is to bribe a person; to be greasy implies being 'creepy'. To have a greasy face or hair would have been considered positively repulsive yet in the blockbuster Hollywood movie released in 1978 titled *Grease* the signifier literally means the gel the young studs put in their hair who were like 'grease lightning' driving fast cars. The lyrics to the chorus of the chartbuster title song<sup>11</sup> are,

Grease is the word, is the word that you heard

It's got groove, it's got meaning

Grease is the time, is the place, is the motion

Grease is the way we are feeling

This is far removed from the paradigm of the sign 'grease' and the possibility in the shift or rupture is because of the narrative in which the sign is located which is—the cool guys with the fast cars get the good girls even though they go through some ups and downs.

Diachronically<sup>12</sup> as well as synchronically<sup>13</sup> signs have experienced ruptures<sup>14</sup> or shifts, for example, the word 'gay' in the poem "Daffodils" is an emotion of happiness the poet experiences, where a poet could not help but be gay in such jocund company. Now the term 'gay' has a completely different meaning, however, in different parts of the world this nuance of homosexuality may not be understood. Similarly, the sign 'special' rather than mean precious now means challenged in some way or the other.

A more problematic manifestation of this is how America under the legitimizing terms of 'democracy' and 'liberation' has written itself into existence as the great benefactor of the world erasing the reality that they have caused more deaths than even the horrific beheadings by ISIS or 26/11/2008 tragedy in Mumbai. Thus by declaring 'a war against terror' they have successfully disguised their acts of terror and through this narrative changed the signified associated with the term 'war' making it desirable and necessary as opposed to 'terror' which is cowardly. Thus they have written themselves into existence as the hero of the narrative.

What is the relevance of this argument up to this point? A sign creates reality rather than is *Mimetic*<sup>15</sup>. However, the paper argues that this is possible through narratives. If the sign is constantly situated in a structure of suffering it will construct that reality. Thus if the desire is to change the signified linked to a sign and consequently the power it wields, it is necessary to change the narrative.

Thus if one wants to change 'woman' as a sign, the narratives in which the sign is situated has to be changed to narratives of power. These narratives can be anything that makes culture, be it news reports, advertisements, clothes, offices for women, ladies rooms, facebook posts, twitter, instagram and of course collaborative painting and so on. A simple example is: Sharmila Rege, who in the Epilogue of her book *Writing Caste/ Writing Gender: Narrating Dalit Women's Testimonios*, states that she is interested in the women's rendering of Dr. Ambedkar's message 'Educate, Organize, Agitate'.

These stories or testimonies are those of less than ordinary women. They are of women who stopped being subalterns and women who conquered fear to become s/heroes. They conquered fear, pettiness and selfishness and seized power thus enabling them to stop being women and become leaders. They did not achieve this through masculine violence rather through great courage, love and a sense of sisterhood.

The testimonies are compelling narratives with powerful plots and memorable characters. Sharmila Rege argues that, "Dalit life narratives are in fact testimonies, which forge a right to speak for and beyond the individual and contest explicitly or implicitly the 'official forgetting' of histories of caste oppression, struggles and resistance" (Rege, 2006:14).



Some may claim they are truths, however, all writing is artificial once the sign is imprinted on paper; the awareness that it is indelible and unalterable, available for anyone to read, results in the sentences being crafted into fiction with a specific end, purpose or *telos*. The end to these writings cannot be to awaken the subaltern for they probably cannot read English translations. These are powerful narratives that succeed in changing the signified associated with the signifier 'Dalit woman' which is made available for English speaking and there for upper class educated readers, be it Indian or Western.

These are not stories of suffering. In fact, often stories of victimhood may at times cause the reader to avert their gaze rather than engage it, as is the case in reality when people avoid looking at a corpse or a bleeding wound.

Another powerful narrative is *I am Malala: The Girl Who Stood up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban*. As the title suggests, it is a story of the miraculous survival of a young girl, who despite the awareness that she is a target and can lose her life, continues to pursue what she believes in. It is the story that we are concerned with for that is what has the potential to create the reality that everyone believes. It is constructed using the laws of causation with a transcendental theme or purpose which in this case is a story of survival and consequently triumph. Within the narrative, this triumph should not be handed out by someone from outside. Thus Malala's story is not depicted as the triumph of the British doctors who saved her life, that story would not make Malala heroic rather she would be a victim and there for silenced. What the Taliban could not succeed in doing, the story would have done—silence Malala.

Also, that discourse would not be different from the colonial narratives of the British who came on a civilizing mission<sup>16</sup> that rendered a large part of the world invisible or the more disturbing contemporary rhetoric that America uses today characterizing them as the saviour.

What makes Malala memorable is—in her story, she liberates herself not through violence but by being heard. Whether it be at the united nations or in her novel, she tells delightful stories of a young girl who fights with her brothers, as most sisters do, and then becomes extraordinary by fighting with the Taliban using words and stories that will render them impotent; for they may attempt to kill her but they will never be able to destroy her story.

Thus, what is of prime importance is the introspection as to what are the stories that we tell of ourselves? How do we feature as characters

in those texts? What are the stories we want to tell our children of ourselves?

If we change the narrative, we change the way we create ourselves, we seize power and this must be our agenda. We must bring about the catharsis of pity and fear to establish a new order. It must arise out of the actions of women following the laws of cause and effect—this must be our poetics. We must change the news reported, the myths manufactured, the advertisements made, the songs sung, the paintings painted, the dances choreographed, the posts on social media. In a sense we must change our culture and one way could be through the stories we tell.

### Notes

1. In the essay "Art as Technique".
2. Culler talks of naturalizing a text.
3. Heidegger in *Being in Time* refers this to as worlding of the world. Creating a world on uninscribed earth.
4. Colloquium held at Savitribai Phule Pune University on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March 2015.
5. For Derrida meaning is not made but allowed to come, welcomed, quite by accident as a gesture of hospitality.
6. This has been discussed elaborately by Wolfgang Iser in "Interaction between Text and Reader".
7. Roland Barthes defines five codes which according to him are elements of a narrative.
8. Concept image.
9. Sound image.
10. Dependent on words.
11. The song was sung by the Bee Gees.
12. historically.
13. simultaneously.
14. A term Foucault uses to counteract the control of conventional history. It is a term linked to the 'history of ideas'.
15. Aristotle used the term at its most basic level to mean representation.
16. John Stuart Mill (1806-73) in the last chapter of *Considerations on Representative Government* (1861).

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# Managing Human Resource in Cross-Cultural Organisations

*Dr. Jeet Singh  
Dr. Preeti Yadav*

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# A STUDY OF WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AND IT'S IMPACT ON EMPLOYEES

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## ABSTRACT

Globalization necessitates a business to spread from its original base to operate business in other countries. After 1991, India also got the heat of globalization, due to cheap labour and abundant resources and it consequently became a primary destination for other countries to do business. With an easy access to technology and an easier availability of most of the resources, the only thing that can distinguish one organisation from another is its manpower. Organizations with Human capital advantage can always succeed in achieving their objectives as they consider employees as their ultimate strength and believe that investment on employees is definitely going to give high returns and help them achieve their objective. Organizations constantly strive to find out various ways and means of increasing employee productivity and performance and one such technique which is being practiced now a days is recruiting and managing a diverse workforce. Workforce diversity refers to employees with different Age, Gender, Education, Work Experience, Organizational Tenure, Region, Ethnicity, Caste, Colour, Race, Religion, Culture, disability, personality traits, Work Experience, and similar related things. Acknowledging, understanding, accepting, valuing, and celebrating these differences refer to managing workforce diversity. After investing on and managing workforce diversity there has always been a debate whether there has been a significant impact of workforce diversity on employee performance. When employees with diverse background work together does it really impact their performance or that there is no significant impact of the same.

**Key words:** Human Resource Management, Diversity, Workforce Diversity, Employee Performance

## INTRODUCTION

Today's manager increasingly has to work in international and diverse environments. With companies becoming more employee centric, Human Resource Management has become one of the most important functions in an organization. Employees are considered to be the ultimate asset in any organization and there are proven facts that companies practicing efficient human resource management have produced positive results both in the form of employee productivity as well as organizational profits. Organizations are now investing more and more on its human resources and their development as Human capital advantage is the only thing that can distinguish one organization from another.



**OBJECTIVE**

- To have a clear understanding of what is WORKFORCE DIVERISTY in Organisations.
- To understand major dimensions of cultural diversity.
- To identify the impact of cultural diversity on employee effectiveness through cross cultural study.
- To open up new outlook and set up a base for further implications of this study.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research paper is completely conceptual and the base comes from various secondary sources like research articles in Journals, magazines, speeches, newspapers and websites. It gives an insight to the importance of Workforce diversity and its effectiveness from Employees and Organisation's perception in today's corporate world and Secondary data helped in supporting these facts. It also discusses about inclusion that is the state of being included in a community or a group even if employees are from different backgrounds, orientation, religion, ethnicity or economic status.

**HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

Human resource management (HRM) is the method of recruiting, hiring, staffing and managing an organization's employees. HRM is often referred to as human resources (HR). A company or organization's HR department is usually responsible for creating, putting into effect policies governing workers and maintaining the relationship of the organization with its employees.

Human resource is the term first used in the early 1900s and then more widely in the 1960s for the people who work for the organization, in aggregate. HRM is employee management with an emphasis on those employees as assets of the business. In this context, employees are sometimes referred to as assets. As with other business assets, the goal is to make effective use of employees, reducing risk and maximizing return on investment.

The modern HR technology term, human capital management (HCM), has come into more frequent use than the term, HRM, with the widespread adoption by large and midsize companies and other organizations of software to manage many HR functions.

**DIVERSITY**

Diversity initiatives are now common place in corporate. It is very rightly propounded by Sachs (2000), which is hard to define what diversity is because everyone has an opinion. In the year 1987, William Bock, Secretary of labour commissioned a study of demographic and economic study. His study became a landmark book Workforce 2000 – Work and Worker in the Twenty First Century. After some years of his book, most companies believed that incorporating new talent into the organization is an easy task as they are required to obey the rules of existing culture. But for the variety of reasons like rapidly changing political contexts; globalizing markets and shift in social, economic, and cultural pattern within and across nations have highlighted the need for a fresh analysis of corporate culture. Over last 40-50 years companies itself must adapt that kind of corporate culture where they can retain or attract the competitive workforce.

## **WORK FORCE DIVERSITY**

According to Hofstede "symbols are words, gestures, pictures, objects that carry complex meaning. This is called as diversity which can be depicted in a language, attire, and body language (Hofstede, 2000). According to International journal of Psychological Studies (2001). Cross-cultural research is a scientific method of comparative research which focuses on systematic comparisons that compares culture.

Workforce diversity is the buzzword today and organizations nowadays are keen to recruit and have a diverse workforce on board. Dora and Kieth (1998) mentions that Organizations have discovered that Diversity is not an absolute phenomenon but it is a continuous process. Saxena, A. (2014) discusses that Workforce diversity is considered as one of the basic necessities in today's changing environment but managing the same is a challenge. Having invested on workforce diversity, organizations often try and find out the impact of workforce diversity on employee performance. But having a diverse workforce has its benefits as well as challenges and thus Researchers says that if a diverse workforce is being recruited and managed in a very effective and efficient manner and issues arising out of the same are handled smoothly, then the same is definitely going to give a positive impact on employee performance.

## **THE INDIAN WORK FORCE DIVERSITY**

Diversity in the Indian workforce has a spectrum wider than just age or gender; a country where Seventy-two percent of the population is 72% Indo-Aryan (Northern), 25 percent Dravidian (Southern), and 3 percent Mongoloid (others). India's workforce is predominantly young. A Manager needs to consider the diversity in his team on a case to case basis. The pace of globalization is increasing continuously therefore the composition of workforce is changing day by day in India. The companies from different countries are now understanding and respecting the Indian culture. Large number of professional workforce is entering at this time of rapid economic expansion of India and this provides increased opportunity for the well qualified and well connected people. The MNCs are recruiting well qualified employees for IT industry as Indian are considered as best talents amongst the world. India with its diverse culture and considerable huge population reports economic disparity in different geographical locations. As a strength India is the having the largest English-speaking population and the world largest base of middle-class group. India's growth is expected to recover from 4.4 per cent in 2013 to 5.4 per cent in 2014, supported by slightly stronger global growth, improving export competitiveness and implementation of recently approved investment projects," said the latest edition of the World Economic Outlook released by the IMF. But on the other hand, it is a country having the most diverse culture in the world. It has having different regions with their own religion more than two thousand ethnic groups, four major language containing a total of 1,652 sub languages and a strong social hierarchical structure.

Notwithstanding enough positive evaluation of diversity implementation, there are also problems that can be created by diversity for organization. As heterogeneous personnel show a different range of backgrounds and experiences, use of different languages, have a different priority, etc., all this interfere collaboration. Moreover, there is a high risk of tensions, disagreements and conflicts, due to different ideologies. Sometimes it is just simple miscommunication and misunderstanding. That is why company cannot ignore such actions

within working groups, because it will result in turnover and more interpersonal conflicts (Robbins, 2001).

## **EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE**

Human Resource is the most important resource of any organization and its performance is the key area that is always at the centre stage in any organization. Organizations always try and create an environment that supports the employees to perform at their best and add to the productivity and profitability of the organization.

The ultimate goal of recruiting any employee in the organization is extracting the best performance out of him there by leading to organizational development along with his personal and professional development. Employee performance is based on a number of factors like intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, organization's culture, financial and non-financial incentives, role clarity, personal development, continuous learning, competitive compensation practices and the employee's efficiency and effectiveness. HR departments always try and study the factors that are hindering employee performance and work on eliminating the same to promote smooth, positive and effective employee performance.

## **IMPACT OF WORKFORCE DIVERSITY ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE**

Industries now a days are looking for unique ways to increase organizational performance and finding out best solutions to the business problems. Inclusion of a diverse work force is one of the mechanisms practiced by industries to enhance employee as well as organizational performance. (Joseph & Selvaraj, 2015)

Over last 40-50 years companies itself must adapt that kind of corporate culture where they can retain or attract the competitive workforce. For instance, South Korea has the largest number of international headquartered companies, although the global wealth is still centralized with United States, Europe, and Japan. The mixture of the religious traditions of South Korea—Christianity, Buddhism, Shamanism, Confucianism, and Chondogyo influence the structure and strategies of these companies when they undergo their globalization process.

An increasingly global business environment inevitably leads to an exchange of traditions that are religion based and hence became the problem of South Korea. Thus, to attain organizational effectiveness cultural diversity at workplace plays a key role and therefore it is sometimes called as 'Workplace Diversity'. Workplace diversity is not only about learning from others who are not same, but also about the dignity and respect for all so that the organizational environment can encourage learning. Workplace diversity is people issue; it is focused on both the differences and the similarities that people bring with them in the organization. A know-how company will achieve success if it can lead up the diverse workforce in a systematic manner. It is well established by study of Wheeler (1997) that over a period of time, heterogeneous groups outperformed homogeneous groups. They have a better approach towards problem solving, decision making and generating new ideas.

According to an article published in Economic Times (2010) the scope of diversity in the company not only focus on just gender and age but also extends to persons who are disable and people from underprivileged grounds. Ms. Sunita Cherian is a member of Wipro's corporate diversity council opined that the companies have to go beyond the routine. People from diverse



nationalities, from underprivileged backgrounds, different cultures, and different generations should also be considered. The report from Oxford economics (2013) on "Diversity across Industries" disclosed that there are five major industries which have progress farthest at encouraging diversity: retail, insurance, professional, business and services. It has been reported that Women will make up a larger component of most of the industries and workers at the age extremes are reported are from 25 to 65.

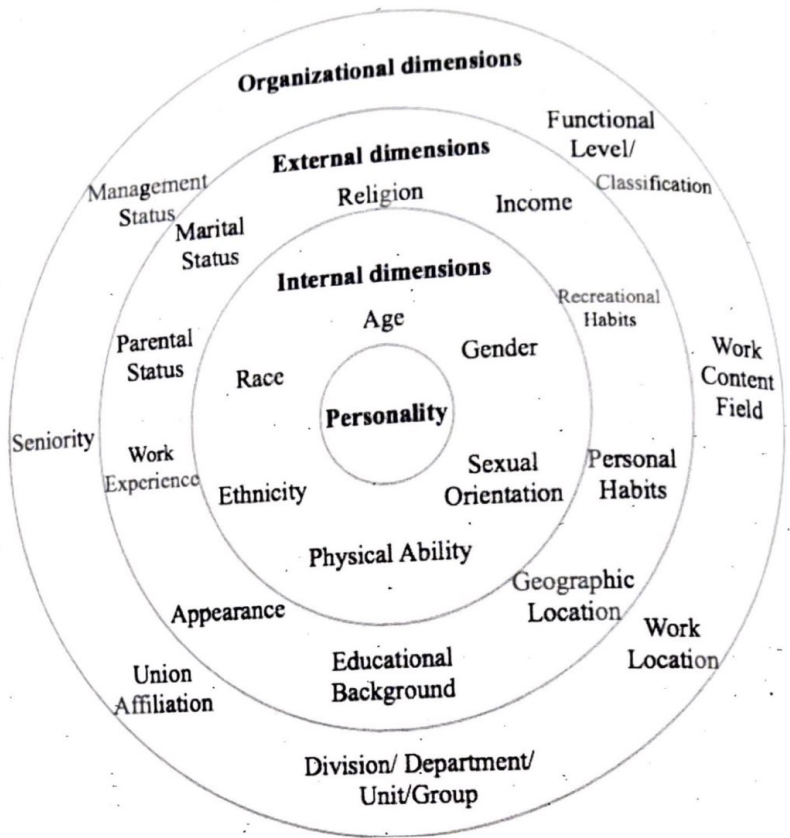
The researchers from the Oxford Economics concluded in their research that for achieving the level of cognitive diversity the company must have to go through a multistage process, called as 3Cs of diversity.

- The first one is Compliance, in which the company's aim is to comply with the law of diversity, no formal set of rules and strategy for diversity.
- The second one is "Commitment", which lead top management to set various diversity goals, and the company commitment to develop diversity strategy like; mentoring programs, diversity councils, and employee groups.
- The last level integrated into the company's product development, innovation and marketing, which is named as "Core". In this last level company has to often go through employees teams that draw cultural and cognitive differences and generate new ideas by listening into their innovate views.

### **CULTURAL DIVERSITY : DIMENSIONS**

The success of effective diversity lies in defining it in a broad and inclusive way. Organizations that define it broadly, involving all dimensions of similarity and difference around which there are inclusions and exclusions that affect the business. The Diversity, arises from the interaction of diverse people's thought comes out of their demographic characteristics, experiences, conceptions and ideas of working. The global economy takes the diversity criteria to the top of the agenda. Today the organizations are dramatically changing their workforce according to the required composition of the organization. As propounded by Thomas (1990), diversity breaks the action framework and goes beyond race and gender. The new diversity dimensions are not only focuses on age, race or gender but also go beyond the demographical criteria. Today a more relational approach is followed to highlight the dimensions of diversity, it now talks about the personal, interpersonal and inter group dynamics that influence how people interpret and act on their differences.

The famous model (Figure 1) proposed by Gardenswartz & Rowe (2003) used by many organizations across the world. The model gives multiple dimensions of diversity around which there is inclusion and exclusion. The famous model (Figure 1) proposed by Gardenswartz & Rowe (2003) used by many organizations across the world. The model gives multiple dimensions of diversity around which there is inclusion and exclusion is depicted in four concentric circles.



**Figure I : Internal Dimension and External Dimension of Cultural Diversity**

**Source:** Gardenswartz & Rowe (2003); Internal Dimensions and External Dimensions, adapted from Loden & Rosener (1991).

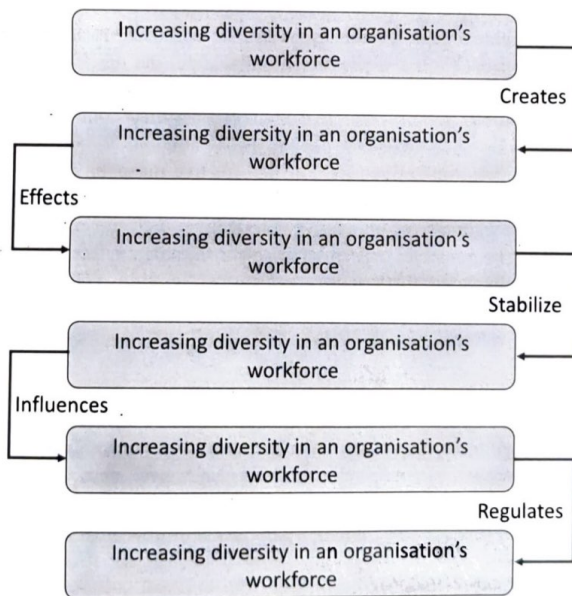
The core of the model is personality, relating to individual style and characteristics. The personality traits like introvert or extrovert, reflective or expressive, quick paced and or methodical, a thinker or a doer it all influence how the individual will be treated in an organization. The second layer, the internal dimensions, comprises of six aspects of an individual's life. Age, sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, and physical ability determine the treatment of an individual in an organization. These all determines the performance and expectation of both own and others. The third layer, External Dimensions, comprises those that are result of life experiences and choices. Aspects such as religion, education, marital status, work experiences and recreational habits are areas, around which employees can connect or disconnect, be valued or disrespected, it all depends upon how these dimensions are seen and

used. The last layer, organizational dimensions, contain those aspects tells about the aspect of similarity and differences that are part work in the organization.

The aforesaid dimensions give impact on both the aspect: treatment of employee and productivity of the organization. They represent areas in which there may be similarity as well as differences. If the all aspects are well managed these differences have the potential to bring new perspective, ideas and viewpoints needed by the organization. But, if mismanaged, they can create and conflict and misunderstanding amongst teams and hinder productivity. To maximize the complex set of differences in among teams, organization requires suitable framework and strategy.

## WORKPLACE DIVERSITY AND EFFECTIVENESS

Many existing literatures explains the impact of diversity in workplace, as well as the need and importance for managing diversity issues. An adoption of Hopkins Process Model of Ethics Diversity Relationship' (Hopkins, 1997) is taken in the beginning. This model explains the way in which diversity impacts on the functioning of the organization (Figure 2).



The corporate culture is established by the values, attitudes, behaviour and belief; these all are responsible for social information processing. In today's diverse workforce like India, English is not a first language for all employees. This affects the verbal and nonverbal communication in between the cultural networks and hence affects the ethics paradigm of the workplace. The organization's ethics paradigm defines formal and informal moral standards that



dictate acceptable behaviour of people in striving towards organizational goals that are in line with the organizational values (Hopkins, 1997). Hopkins Process Model of Ethics Diversity Relationship is based on cognitive theory which focuses on "higher" mental processes like knowledge, education, information processing, problem solving skills, language, decision making and creativity. Weiten (1983) recognizes the need of cognitive theory for addressing people and thought, attitudes, beliefs, attributions and expectation. The fundamental principle of this theory is that the way people view and react to the happenings of the environment. In support of this statement Spielgler (1983) suggested that employee's beliefs and expectations will determine their attitude which would shape their behaviour.

### EMPLOYEE EFFECTIVENESS

Effectiveness is very difficult to measure in an organization (Daft, 2003). A range of variables have to be taken into consideration at both the organizational and departmental levels to measure effectiveness. It can be evaluated to the extent to which the multiple goals of the organization are attained. Manager's effectiveness is very difficult to evaluate as it is dependent upon the performance on goals. Effectiveness is conceptualized in four approaches by Hersey et. al. (2005) as goal achievement approach, systematic approach, strategic factor's approach and competitive value approach. Goal achievement talks about the fulfilment level of organizational objectives and final achievements of the organization.

The organizations require effective managers as they contribute in the success of an organization. Every organization need people whose attempts to correlate various function of management for achieving effectiveness. For an effective manager definition, there are various studies which have described the qualities a manager. According to Japanese viewpoint a manager should have aggressive, innovative, productive, well informed, determined, energetic, creative, intelligent, responsible, enterprising, clear-thinking, cheerful, formal, courteous and modest. The above characteristics suggest that various qualities contribute to the effectiveness directly. The concept of effectiveness is a wide area of inputs it is crucial to man's self-development; organizational development; and fulfilment and viability of modern society (Drucker, 1967).

### ORGANISING CULTURAL DIVERSITY AT WORKPLACE

Developing cultural competence results in an ability to understand, communicate with, and effectively interact with people across cultures, and work with varying cultural beliefs and schedules. While there are myriad cultural variations, here are some essential to the workplace:

**Communication :** Providing information accurately and promptly is critical to effective work and team performance. This is particularly important when a project is troubled and needs immediate corrective actions. However, people from different cultures vary in how, for example, they relate to bad news. People from some Asian cultures are reluctant to give supervisors bad news – while those from other cultures may exaggerate it.

**Team-Building :** Some cultures – like the United States – are individualistic, and people want to go it alone. Other cultures value cooperation within or among other teams. Team-building issues can become more problematic as teams are comprised of people from a mix of these cultural

types. Effective cross-cultural team-building is essential to benefiting from the potential advantages of cultural diversity in the workplace

**Time :** Cultures differ in how they view time. For example, they differ within the balance between work and family life, and therefore the workplace mix between work and social behavior. Other differences include the perception of overtime, or maybe the precise meaning of a deadline. Different perceptions of your time can cause an excellent misunderstanding and mishap within the workplace, especially with scheduling and deadlines. Perceptions of your time underscore the importance of cultural diversity within the workplace, and the way it can impact everyday work.

**Schedules:** Work can be impact by cultural and religious events affecting the workplace. The business world generally runs on the western secular year, beginning with January 1 and ending with New Year's Eve. But some cultures use wildly different calendars to work out New Year's or specific holy days.

For example, Eastern Orthodox Christians celebrate Christmas on a special day from western Christians. For Muslims, Friday is a day for prayer. Jews observe holidays ranging from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur. These variations affect the workplace as people require day off to watch their holidays.

So how does one develop cultural competence? The exclusive article explores 4 more components of cultural diversity in the workplace, and strategies, skills and techniques for helping people develop cultural competence. Other differences include the perception of overtime, or even the exact meaning of a deadline. Different perceptions of time can cause a great misunderstanding and mishap in the workplace, especially with scheduling and deadlines. Perceptions of time underscore the importance of cultural diversity in the workplace, and how it can impact everyday work.

## RESEARCH GAP

A research gap is a research question or problem which has not been answered appropriately or at all in a given field of study.

There has been a number of valuable studies on impact of workforce diversity factors like Age, Gender, Ethnicity, Caste, Colour, Race, Religion, Culture, Disability, Personality traits on Organizational Performance Weling (2011); Otiye et al (n.d.), Isabell et al (2010); Deshwal and Chaudhary (2012); Rice (n.d.) ; Garnero & Rycx (2013); Barrington & Troske (2001 ); Cox, T. (n. d.) ; Hubbard , E. E. (2005) ; Schehar B, m. F. (2013) But there has been a minimal research on impact of the above factors on Employee Performance.

There has been a number of valuable studies on various diversity factors like Age, Education, Gender, Ethnicity, Caste, Colour, Race, Religion, Culture, Disability, Personality traits; Weling. (2011) ;Garnero & Rycx ( 2013 ) ; Isabell et al (2010 ) ; Ali et al (n. d ) ; Moreno, K. (2012) ; Ehimare ,J. (2011 ) ; Otiye et al (n.d.) but a minimal research has been done on diversity factors like Organizational Tenure, Work experience, Regional diversity and its impact on employee performance.

## CONCLUSION

The cross-cultural diversity has become reality today and its impact varies with the sort of organizational climate and overall strategy of any organisation. As more and more firms are

moving globally and entering the international business arena from their domestic periphery impact of cross-cultural diversity has increased manifold times. It's vital to manage the cultural differences efficiently for generating gains and getting an overall competitive edge.

After conducting extensive literature review, Diversity factors were identified under workforce diversity and a set of variables were identified to measure each factor. The following factors were identified: Age Diversity, Gender Diversity, Organizational Tenure Diversity, Educational Background Diversity, Work Experience Diversity, Religion Diversity & Regional diversity. The impact of these diversity factors had to be measured on employee performance and so one more factor identified was Employee Performance.

Workforce diversity is welcomed today across the organizations and a lot of investment have been done by the organizations to have a diverse workforce on board. But this does not always turn out to be a good decision. The organizations sometimes ignore or oversees the issues that arise out of workforce diversity and so the diverse workforce does not give the desired results and in fact reduces the efficiency of the employee as well as the organization. If the issues arising out of diversity are handled well, resolved cautiously and if the diverse workforce is managed properly, then diversity on board will definitely prove to be one of the biggest strengths of the organization.

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