Viewpoint of Engineers and Managers on Work Force Diversity and Ethnicity related Policies in Telecom Sector in India

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ABSTRACT: In today's dramatically changing business environment, countries such as India have changed drastically to accommodate the increasingly diverse work force in most, if not all, of its organizations. Workplace diversity is a multi-faceted concept that will continue to evolve as more industries, specifically the Telecom industry, move toward both working in and recruiting employees from a international market place. It is argued that this has led to a perception that work force diversity became most important for sustainable organizational innovation. This belief drives corporate managers and engineers to embrace and comprehend the concept of work place diversity, its barriers, and benefits. Furthermore, workforce diversity is increasingly recognized and utilized as one of the very important, if not the most important, organizational resources in regards to whether the goal of an organization is to be an employer of choice, to provide excellent customer service, to maintain a competitive edge or to exercise innovation. Any business that intends to be successful must have a borderless view and an underlying commitment to ensure that work force diversity is part of its day-to-day business operations / environment.

Work force diversity is created by including people from different backgrounds i.e. cultures, religions, age etc. in the organization. Managing diverse workforce requires removal of differences in the people working in the organisations. In diversity management, there is respect for each individual irrespective of their interest, background, education, origin etc.

Every business needs to recognize the importance of diversity as well as ethnicity and should be ready to spend resources on managing diversity in the organization. Managing diversity is also one of the challenges for human resource managers in India especially in Telecom industry. An attempt has been made in this research paper to critically analyse viewpoint of Telecom Engineers and Managers on policies related to Work Force Diversity and Ethnicity in Telecom Sector in India.

I. INTRODUCTION

Work place diversity generates conflicts between employees. Conflict occurs due to differences of thought, age, ideas, behaviors, interest, attitudes, religious differences, political differences and unjustified distribution of resources. Conflict is not always negative and does not always create problems. It very much depends on how the conflict is handled by the management. If handled properly, it can become a very rich source of development. When corporate world ignore the conflicts between employees, this will result in clashes amongst them. In turn, these clashes will be converted into personal and emotional conflict in the long run and therefore damages the organizational culture, worker morale, and more over overall organizational performance. It can also lead to a reduction in creativity, innovation, quality, and performance of employees and organizations ultimately leading to negative effects on the team performance.

Diversity management is a strategic process to manage a diverse workforce including the fight against stereotypes, prejudice and all kind of discrimination due to the individual perceptions and assumptions in the manner to maximize the benefit and minimize barriers of different opinions, behaviour and attitudes of human beings within an organization.

Today's diversity issues are considered important and are projected to become even more important in the future because of increasing differences in our population. Organizations need to focus on diversity and look for ways to become totally inclusive organizations because diversity has the potential to increase productivity and competitive advantages (SHRM, 1995). Stephen G. Butler, co-chair of the Business-Higher Education

Forum, United States of America believes that diversity is an invaluable competitive asset that any country cannot afford to ignore (Robinson, 2002). Managing and valuing diversity is an important part of effective people management, which can improve workplace productivity (Black Enterprise, 2001). Demographic changes (increasing importance of women in the workplace, organizational restructurings and legislations to provide equal opportunity to men/women) require organizations to revise their management practices and develop creative approaches to manage human resources.

Diversity signifies that there are important and valuable differences between people in the organization. It is generally accepted that there are some differences that are ascribed from birth and cannot change like gender, caste, ethnicity, race and physical abilities. Class is also from birth but in a growing economy, it can change over time. Some other differences like educational background, language, geographic location, religion or political beliefs can also be acquired. The dimensions of diversity vary across countries and cultures and in any given location can change over time. Managing diversity in the workplace is an essential part of change management. If Indian companies have to compete in today's changing global marketplace, it has to learn to manage diversity.

This is the right time for men and women to be in the telecom industry, especially with the convergence of technology, the Internet and applications ecosystem with large established operators," says Ashok Ramchandran, human resources (HR) director at Vodafone India.

TelecomSector in India

Indian telecommunication sector is growing at a great pace and expected to become a manufacturing hub for the rest of the world in telecom equipments. The Indian telecommunications network is the 3rd largest in the world and the 2nd largest among the emerging countries of Asia. Today, telecom sector is the fastest growing market in the entire world. The telecommunication sector still continues to register remarkable success during the year and has emerged as one of the key sectors responsible for India's economic growth. Due to increasing demand for a wide range of telecom equipment especially in the area of mobile telecommunications, has provided excellent opportunities to Indian and foreign investors in the manufacturing sector.

The Indian telecom network with 621 million subscribers is the 3rd largest in the world. This sector is growing at a speed of 45 percent during the recent years. This expansion is possible because of many proactive and positive decisions taken by government of India and contribution of both i.e. public and private sectors. This rapid growth in the telecom sector have been facilitated by liberal policies of the government that provides easy market access for telecom equipment and a fair regulatory framework for offering telecom services to the consumers at a reasonable price. The Indian telecommunication policies were modified to introduce more and more private telecom players in the market. The mobile phone sector in India has registered 20.21 million numbers of new subscribers per month. The overall density in the telephone sector has increased to 70.89 percent.

Review of literature

There is no dearth of studies in the areas of work force diversity and also ethnicity. However, viewpoint of engineers and managers on policies related to these in Telecom sector has not been studied frequently world over. A few related studies are as under:

Tsui, Egan, and O'Reilly (1992) explained that the level of gender diversity impacts the performance of the group and organizational members in different ways depending on the ratio of one gender to the other.

Pelled's (1996) study was about Demographic Diversity, Conflict, and Work Group Outcomes. This study developed a theoretical model to explain the turnover and mixed performance consequences of demographic diversity in work groups. The model also suggested that each demographic diversity variable with respect to age, gender, race, group tenure, organization tenure, education and functional background can be classified according to its level of visibility and its level of job relatedness, visibility is the extent to which the variable is easily observed by group members and job-relatedness is the extent to which the variable directly shapes perspectives and skills related to cognitive tasks. It was found that the visibility and job relatedness of a diversity variable indirectly influence how much turnover and/or performance enhancement the variable yields.

Latimer(1998) argued that diversity in terms of ethnicity, age, gender, personality and educational background promotes creativity and problem-solving capability. He suggested that groups had been found to be less risk averse than an individual's 'risky shift'. Increased diversity

leads to lower levels of risk aversion and better decision-making and problem-solving capability. This arises because diversity promotes a more robust critical evaluation of the first solution to receive substantial support.

Jackson and Joshi (2004) performed multi-attribute, multilevel analysis of team diversity and sales performance. This work demonstrated that an improved understanding of the relationship between team diversity and team performance can be reached by considering the combined effects of team diversity and demographic social context. The three aspects of the social context would moderate the effects of demographic diversity on performance: the combination of diversity dimensions within a team, the demographic characteristics of the team manager and the demography of the work unit. It was found that a team performance was lowest for teams with a combination of relatively high tenure diversity and high gender diversity and high ethnic diversity. It was found that there is a significant relationship between team performance and three dimensions of diversity-gender, ethnicity and tenure.

The study of **Choi and Rainey (2010)** explored the effects of diversity and diversity management on employee perceptions of organizational performance in U.S. Federal Agencies. The three variables under investigation were diversity, diversity management, and perceived organizational performance. The study showed how managerial efforts and other contextual variables such as organizational culture, demographic characteristics of group members and supervisors moderate the relationship between diversity and organizational outcomes. Levels of diversity of 67 federal agencies have been measure and analyzed as to how diversity management affects the relationship between levels of diversity and perceptions of organizational performance.

Khaled Helaly (2011) explained that diversity is not only about preventing unfair discrimination and improving equality but also valuing differences and inclusion, spanning such areas as ethnicity, age, race, culture, gender, physical disability and religious belief.
Beth K., Judy and Elizabeth (Bess) (2020) concluded that over the past decade, more people have begun to openly acknowledge that their identities don't fit in with existing conceptions of gender, race, and ethnicity.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

The present research study has been conducted with an objective to analyse the viewpoint of Telecom Engineers and Managers on policies related to work force diversity and ethnicity in Telecom Sector in India. The sample included in the study has been drawn from different Telecom companies situated in different places in India. The sample size of the research consisted of 218 managers, executives and engineers working in different areas in Telecom companies at top level and middle level in the organization. Out of these 65% were males and 35% were females. 97% were Indians and 3% were Non-Indians. Primary data have been collected using well structured questionnaire.

The questionnaire was individually made available to respondents through e-mails, by Indian post, by courier, by hand according to availability of respondents. The respondents were approached at their respective work place or residence and their willingness to participate in the study was sought and objectives of the study were made clear to them. It was explained to the respondents that these items of information were needed for research purpose only and will kept confidential. So respondents were requested to provide genuine and correct view. The sample was selected from Telecom companies situated throughout India i.e. Gurgaon, Delhi, Noida, Hyderabad, Bangalore, Chandigarh etc. Both Indian and non-Indian Telecom professionals from top level and middle level were included for the study. Convenient Sampling technique was used to choose sample unit from Telecom companies.

The data was tabulated and analysed, using appropriate statistical tools and techniques that included ANOVA and Semantic Differential Scales etc., using SPSS 16.0 version software package.
Reliability analysis
The reliability analysis has been conducted for the study. It is important and widely used in measuring the accuracy of a study. Below are the descriptions of how coefficient alpha is labelled.

Table 1 Internal Consistency (Coefficient Alpha)

Coefficient alpha	Level of reliability
0.8-0.95	Very good reliability
0.7-0.8	Good reliability

0.6-0.7	Fair reliability
< 0.6	Poor reliability

Source: Adapted from Hair, Money, Samouel and Babin (2003). Essential of Business Research Methods. Wiley InternationalEdition: Leyn Publishing LLC,(page 172).

Table 2: Reliability Test

Sr. No.	Constructs	Coefficient Alpha
1	Questionnaire: Impact of diversity with regards to ethnicity	.892

Source: Data generated by SPSS version 16.0

From the table 2, the Cronbach's alpha was used to test the internal consistencies and stability of the multi-item scale. The closer the Cronbach's alpha to value of 1 the higher the internal consistency of the particular item.

The constructs which is "Impact of diversity with regards to ethnicity" show coefficient alpha at 0.892. Questionnaire gives a very good reliability. In conclusion, the reliability coefficient (coefficient alpha) of all examined constructs in the questionnaire is acceptable. The constructs shows a Cronbach's alpha more than 0.6 which signifies the consistency and reliability of the questionnaire.

III. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Every organization is pool of many talents, personalities, thoughts, demographical environment and success of any organization depends on combination/mixture of these. Management of work force diversity is crucial for the success of the organization and cannot be ignored. Analysis of the research work has been presented below:

Table 3: Existing Framework of Work Force Diversity in Telecom Sector

Sr. No.	Statements	SA	A	UD	D	SD	Mean	SD
1	My organization has policies on harassment and discrimination.	8.30	10.10	28.00	31.10	22.50	2.51	1.18
2	My organization displays its policy on harassment/human rights/ discrimination to staff, or communicates its policy in other ways.	23.40	41.30	22.90	11.50	0.90	3.75	0.97
3	The organization has developed an open communication system.	11.50	31.60	37.60	17.00	2.30	3.33	0.96
4	My staff is aware of systems for raising complaints against inequality.	17.40	40.80	26.60	11.50	3.70	3.57	1.02
5	There is less formal procedure for raising issues without being identified like complaint box, telephone, e-mails etc.	18.30	31.20	25.70	22.00	2.80	3.40	1.10
6	There is a process for reviewing practices and policy that consider input from employees without discrimination.	22.50	36.70	25.70	10.10	5.00	3.61	1.09

7	There is staff in my organization that could assist someone to pursue a complaint of harassment based on gender status or otherwise.	25.70	35.30	22.90	12.40	3.70	3.67	1.10
8	There is staff in my organization that could assist someone to pursue a complaint of discrimination based on gender status or otherwise.	30.70	34.40	20.60	13.40	0.90	3.81	1.05
9	I feel lonely at office because I don't know the local language.	19.70	28.40	21.10	21.10	9.70	3.27	1.26
10	There is feel at home environment among employees in the organization.	21.60	33.90	24.80	17.00	2.70	3.55	1.09
11	My problem and complaints are not entertained in the organization because I belong to certain class or minority.	25.20	27.10	18.80	21.60	7.30	3.41	1.27
12	My colleagues do not behave properly with me because I belong to a certain class or minority.	28.40	25.20	21.10	17.00	8.30	3.49	1.29
13	In my view workforce diversity is good for employees.	20.20	33.50	22.00	16.10	8.20	3.41	1.21
14	In my view workforce diversity is good for organization.	22.00	41.70	20.60	10.60	5.10	3.65	1.09

Source: Primary Data   (Generated by SPSS version 16.0)

(i) **Policies on Harassment and Discrimination**

The above table reveals that 10.10 percent respondents agreed that their organization has policies on harassment and discrimination and 8.30 percent respondents strongly agreed with this statement. Overall 18.40 percent respondents agreed that their organization has policies on harassment and discrimination. While 28.00 percent respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement and 53.70 percent respondents disagreed that their organization has policies on harassment and discrimination. Study, therefore, reveals that half of the organization has policies on harassment and discrimination in telecom sector in India.

(ii)**Display of Policy**

41.30 percent respondents agreed that their organization displays its policy on harassment/human rights/ discrimination to staff, or communicates its policy in other ways and 23.40 percent respondents strongly agreed with this statement. Overall 64.70 percent respondents agreed that their organization displays its policy on harassment/human rights/ discrimination to staff, or communicates its policy in other ways. While 22.90 percent respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement and 12.40 percent respondents disagreed with this statement that their organization displays its policy on harassment/human rights/ discrimination to staff, or communicates its policy in other ways. On the basis of data we can draw conclusion that most of

the organization displays its policy on harassment/human rights/ discrimination to staff or communicates its policy in other ways.

(iii)Open Communication System

Table no. 3 reveals that 31.70 percent respondents agreed that the organization has developed an open communication system and 11.50 percent respondents strongly agreed with this statement. Overall 43.20 percent respondents are agreed that the organization has developed an open communication system. While 37.60 percent respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement and 19.30 percent respondents disagreed with this statement that the organization has developed an open communication system. Hence, we can conclude from the study that almost half of the telecom companies in India developed an open communication system.

(iv)Systems for Raising Complaints

40.80 percent respondents agreed that their staff is aware of systems for raising complaints against inequality and 17.40 percent respondents strongly agreed with this statement. Overall 58.20 percent respondents agreed that their staff is aware of systems for raising complaints against inequality. While 26.60 percent respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement and 15.20 percent respondents disagreed with this statement that their staff is aware of systems for raising complaints against inequality. Therefore, we can conclude that almost half of the staff in telecom companies in India is aware of systems for raising complaints against inequality.

(v)Procedure for Raising Issues

It is concluded that 31.20 percent respondents agreed that there is less formal procedure for raising issues without being identified like complaint box, telephone, e-mails etc. and 18.30 percent respondents strongly agreed with this statement. Overall 49.50 percent respondents agreed that there is less formal procedure for raising issues without being identified like complaint box, telephone, e-mails etc. While 25.70 percent respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement and 24.80 percent respondents disagreed with this statement that there is less formal procedure for raising issues without being identified like complaint box, telephone, e-mails etc. Study, therefore, reveals that half of the organization has less formal procedure for raising issues without being identified like complaint box, telephone, e-mails etc.

(vi)Process for Reviewing Practices and Policy

As per response 36.70 percent respondents agreed that there is a process for reviewing practices and policy that consider input from employees without discrimination and 22.50 percent respondents strongly agreed with this statement. Overall 59.20 percent respondents agreed that there is a process for reviewing practices and policy that consider input from employees without discrimination. While 25.70 percent respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement and 15.10 percent respondents disagreed with this statement that there is a process for reviewing practices and policy that consider input from employees without discrimination. Hence, we can conclude from the study that almost half of the telecom companies in India have process for reviewing practices and policy that consider input from employees without discrimination.

(vii)Assistance to Pursue a Complaint of Harassment

35.30 percent respondents agreed that there is staff in their organization that could assist someone to pursue a complaint of harassment based on gender status or otherwise and 25.70 percent respondents strongly agreed with this statement. Overall 61.00 percent respondents agreed that there is staff in their organization that could assist someone to pursue a complaint of harassment based on gender status or otherwise. While 22.90 percent respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement and 16.10 percent respondents disagreed with this statement that there is staff in their organization that could assist someone to pursue a complaint of harassment based on gender status or otherwise. From available data we can draw that in India almost half of the telecom companies have staff that could assist someone to pursue a complaint of harassment based on gender status or otherwise.

(viii)Staff to Assist to Pursue Complaint of Discrimination

Table no. 3 shows 34.40 percent respondents agreed that there is staff in their organization that could assist someone to pursue a complaint of discrimination based on gender status or otherwise and 30.70 percent respondents strongly agreed with this statement. Overall 65.10 percent respondents agreed that there is staff in their organization that could assist someone to pursue a complaint of discrimination based on gender status or otherwise. While 20.60 percent respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this

statement and 22.30 percent respondents disagreed with this statement that there is staff in their organization that could assist someone to pursue a complaint of discrimination based on gender status or otherwise. From data it is concluded that in India almost half of the telecom companies have staff that could assist someone to pursue a complaint of discrimination based on gender status or otherwise.

(ix)Feel Lonely at Office

Above table reveals 28.40 percent respondents agreed that they feel lonely at office because they don't know the local language and 19.70 percent respondents strongly agreed with this statement. Overall 48.10 percent of the respondents agreed that they feel lonely at office because they don't know the local language. While 21.10 percent respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement and 30.70 percent respondents disagreed with this statement that they feel lonely at office because they don't know the local language. We conclude that half of the staff working in the telecom companies feels lonely at office because they don't know the local language.

(x)Feel at Home Environment

33.90 percent respondents agreed there is feel at home environment among employees in the organization and 21.60 percent respondents strongly agreed with this statement. Overall 55.50 percent respondents agreed that there is feel at home environment among employees in the organization. While 24.80 percent respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement and 19.80 percent respondents disagree with this statement that there is feel at home environment among employees in the organization. It is concluded that almost half of the staff working in the telecom companies don't feel at home environment among employees in the organization.

(xi)Entertainment of Problems and Complaints

It is concluded that 27.10 percent respondents agreed that their problem and complaints are not entertained in the organization because they belong to certain class or minority and 25.20 percent respondents strongly agreed with this statement. Overall 52.30 percent respondents agreed that their problem and complaints are not entertained in the organization because they belong to certain class or minority. While 18.80 percent respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement and 28.90 percent respondents disagreed with this statement that their problem and complaints are not entertained in the organization because they belong to certain class or minority.

From data it is concluded that in India almost half of the staff working in telecom companies feels that their problem and complaints are not entertained in the organization because they belong to certain class or minority.

(xii)Behaviour of Colleagues

We can concluded from above table that 25.20 percent respondents agreed that their colleagues do not behave properly with them because they belong to a certain class or minority and 28.40 percent respondents strongly agreed with this statement. Overall 53.60 percent respondents agreed that their colleagues do not behave properly with them because they belong to a certain class or minority. While 21.10 percent respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement and 15.30 percent respondents disagreed with this statement that their colleagues do not behave properly with them because they belongs to a certain class or minority. Then it is concluded that almost half of the respondents agreed that their colleagues do not behave properly with them because they belong to a certain class or minority.

(xiii) Diversity is Good for Employees

33.50 percent respondents agreed that workforce diversity is good for employees and 20.20 percent respondents strongly agreed with this statement. Overall 53.70 percent respondents agreed that workforce diversity is good for employees. While 22.00 percent respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement and 24.40 percent respondents disagreed with this statement that workforce diversity is good for employees. Study, therefore, reveals that almost half of the staff working in telecom companies support workforce diversity and they believe that workforce diversity is good for employees.

(xiv) Diversity is Good for Organization

41.70 percent respondents agreed that workforce diversity is good for organization and 22.00 percent respondents strongly agreed with this statement. Overall 63.70 percent respondents agreed that workforce diversity is good for organization. While 20.60 percent respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement and 15.60 percent respondents disagreed with this statement that workforce diversity is good for organization. Study, therefore, reveals that almost half of the staff working in telecom companies support workforce diversity and they believe that workforce diversity is good for organization.

"There is staff in my organization that could assist someone to pursue a complaint of

discrimination based on gender status or otherwise." is the item with highest mean (mean 3.81), followed by "My organization displays its policy on harassment/human rights/ discrimination to staff, or communicates its policy in other ways." with mean 3.75. The item with third highest mean was "There is staff in my organization that could assist someone to pursue a complaint of harassment based on gender status or otherwise."

"My organization has policies on harassment and discrimination" has the lowest mean among the others (mean 2.51).

The item "My colleagues do not behave properly with me because I belong to a certain class or minority." has the highest standard deviation, which is 1.29. The item with second highest standard deviation is "My problem and complaints are not entertained in the organization because I belongs to certain class or minority." "The organization has developed an open communication system." Has the lowest standard deviation which is 0.96.

The following Null Hypothesis was also developed and tested:

"There is no significant difference between opinion of Indian and non-Indian respondents on diverse workplace policies in Telecom sector."

Table 4: Impact of Diversity with Regard to Ethnicity in Telecom Sector in India

Total Response (218)					
Sr. No.	Statements	Indian (209)		Others (9)	
		Rank Score	Average Response	Rank Score	Average Response
1	The organization does a good job of attracting and hiring minorities.	743	3.56	36	4.00
2	Opportunities for growth and advancement exist for minorities in our organization.	747	3.57	32	3.56
3	Different languages that are used to communicate do not create problem among employees.	771	3.69	33	3.67
4	At work, I developed low self-esteem due to my ethnicity.	718	3.44	38	4.22
5	The team leader includes all members at different ethnicity in problem solving and decision making process.	751	3.59	32	3.56
6	I am positive about ethnicity diversity in this work place.	743	3.56	33	3.67

Source: Field Survey

Figure 1: Analysis of Impact of Diversity with Regard to Ethnicity in Telecom Sector in India Using Semantic Differential Data
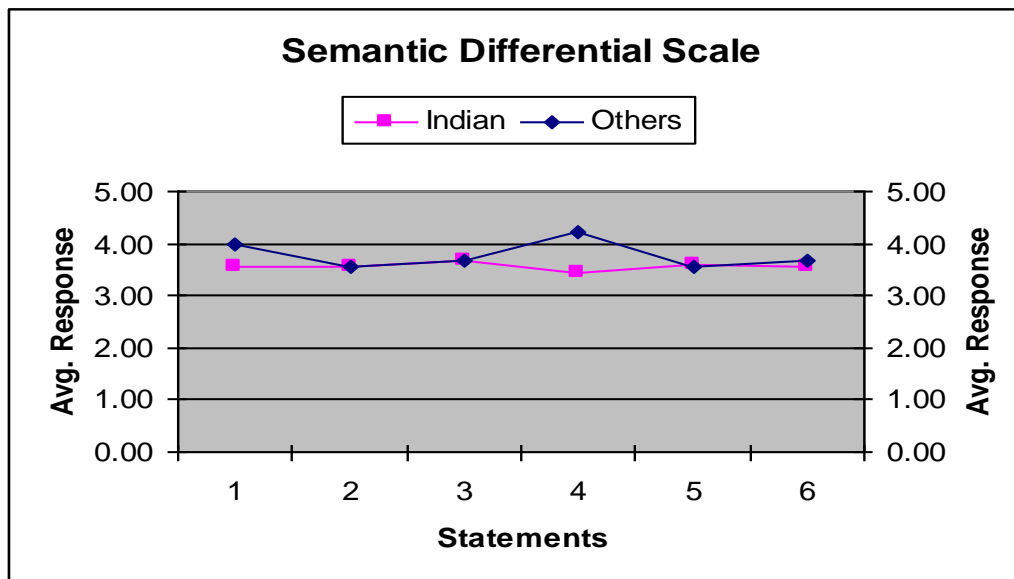
Source: Field Survey

Repeated measures ANOVAs are used to examine mean differences in related variables. In SPSS, we will use the General Linear Model (Test of Between–Subjects Effects) to calculate repeated measures ANOVAs.

To test the impact of diversity with regard to ethnicity in telecom sector we formulated and tested hypothesis.

Table 5: Comparison of Diversity with the Viewpoints of Indian and Non-Indian Respondents of Telecom Sector

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects	
Measure:MEASURE_1	
Source	**Sig.**
Ethnicity	0.357

Source: Primary Data   (Generated by SPSS version 16.0)

The test of between subject effects has been carried out at 5 percent significance level. Hence it can be concluded from Table no. 5 that null hypothesis i.e. there is no significant difference between opinion of Indian and non-Indian respondents on diverse workplace policies in telecom sector was accepted. From differential scale Figure 1 and acceptance of null hypothesis, it is concluded that there is no significant difference between opinion of Indian and non-Indian respondents on diverse workplace policies in telecom sector.

IV. CONCLUSION
The study revealed that most of the respondents support work force diversity because they agreed that work force diversity is good for organization and also for employees. Most of the organizations display policy on harassment/human rights/discrimination to staff or communicates its policy in other ways. Study also concluded that almost 30 percent of the respondents are not comfortable at office because they don't know local language. This challenge should be addressed by all organizations.

The study revealed that there is no significant difference between opinion of Indian and Non-Indian employees in the workplace with respect to workplace policies in Telecom sector. Opinion of respondents regarding workplace policies is same irrespective of ethnicity. This is a very interesting conclusion from Telecom industry. Other industries may also study the same. If the opinions of Indian managers and non-managers; Indian workers and other than Indian workers are same then policies are considered to be excellent and stable and if there is difference in the opinions of Indian and non Indian employees then biasness may be there in diversity and ethnicity related

policies and companies may face severe consequences.

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