



Lecture 2: Diversity in the Workplace

Learning Objectives

1. Describe the two major forms of workplace diversity.
2. Describe how individual characteristics are relevant to OB.
3. Demonstrate how workplace discrimination undermines organizational effectiveness.
4. Describe how organizations manage diversity effectively.

Workplace Discrimination and Organizational Effectiveness

- **Workplace diversity:** Any characteristic that makes one person different from another
- **Surface-level diversity:** Differences in easily perceived characteristics, such as gender, race, age, or disability
- **Deep-level diversity:** Differences in internal qualities, such as values, personality, skills, and knowledge

Workplace Discrimination and Organizational Effectiveness

- **Stereotype:** A belief or association between a person's social group and a specific characteristic
 - **Stereotype threat:** The extent to which a person internalizes a negative stereotype about their group
- **Prejudice:** A negative feeling about a person because of their association with a specific group

Workplace Discrimination and Organizational Effectiveness

- **Discrimination:** Treating a person or group differently based on one's stereotypes or prejudices about that person or group
- Negative effects of discrimination:
 - Decrease productivity
 - Decrease OCBs
 - Increase interpersonal conflict
 - Increase turnover
 - Harm employees' psychological and physical health

Workplace Discrimination and Organizational Effectiveness

Exhibit 2-1 Forms of Discrimination

Type of Discrimination	Definition	Examples from Organizations
Discriminatory policies or practices	Actions that deny equal opportunity to perform or unequal rewards for performance	Older workers may be targeted for layoffs because they are highly paid and have lucrative benefits.
Sexual harassment	Unwanted sexual advances and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that create a hostile or offensive work environment	Salespeople at one company went on company-paid visits to strip clubs, brought strippers into the office to celebrate promotions, and fostered sexual rumors.
Intimidation	Overt threats or bullying directed at members of specific groups of employees	African-American employees at some companies have found nooses hanging over their workstations.
Mockery and insults	Jokes or negative stereotypes	Arab-Americans have been asked at work whether they were carrying bombs or were members of terrorist organizations.
Exclusion	Exclusion of certain people from job opportunities, social events, discussions, or informal mentoring	Many women in finance claim they are assigned to marginal job roles or are given light workloads that don't lead to promotion.
Incivility	Disrespectful treatment, including behaving in an aggressive manner, interrupting the person, or ignoring his or her opinions	Female lawyers note that male attorneys frequently cut them off or do not adequately address their comments.

Individual Characteristics and OB

- Examples of biographical characteristics – Age, sex, race and ethnicity, disability, tenure, religion, sexual orientation, and gender identity
- **Age**
 - Age does not appear to be associated with performance or productivity.
 - Turnover and absenteeism rates are lower among older workers.

Individual Characteristics and OB

- **Sex**

- No consistent male-female differences in problem-solving ability, analytical skills, competitive drive, motivation, sociability, or learning drive
- Yet, women earn less than men for the same positions and have fewer professional opportunities.

Individual Characteristics and OB

- **Race and Ethnicity**

- No consistent racial differences in absence rates, social skills, or accident rates
- Many countries prohibit race and ethnic discrimination.
- Yet, employers and employees tend to favor colleagues of their own race in performance evaluations, promotion decisions, and pay raises.

Individual Characteristics and OB

- **Disability**

- Any physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities
- Also includes sensory disabilities, chronic illness or pain, cognitive or learning impairments, sleep disorders, and psychological challenges
- Workers with disabilities receive higher performance evaluations but may be less likely to be hired.

Individual Characteristics and OB

- **Tenure**

- Tenure is a good predictor of employee productivity.
- Tenure and job performance are positively related.

- **Religion**

- Religious beliefs are not correlated with performance or productivity.
- U.S. law prohibits discrimination based on religion, but it is still an issue, especially for Muslims.

Individual Characteristics and OB

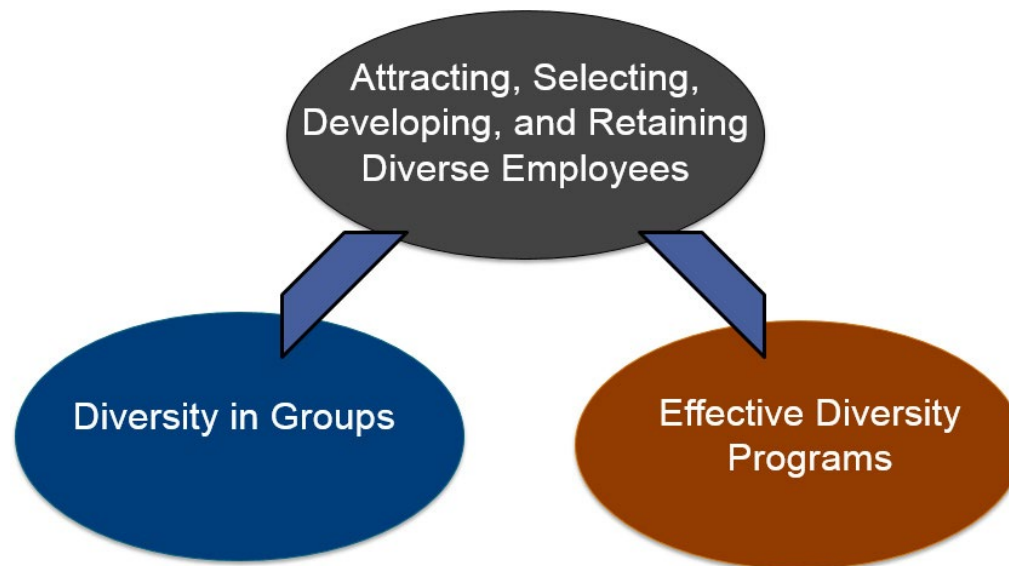
- **Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity**
 - Federal law does not protect employees against discrimination based on sexual orientation, though many states and municipalities do.
 - Many Fortune 500 companies have policies covering sexual orientation and about half now have policies on gender identity.

Individual Characteristics and OB

- **Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964**
 - Prohibits discrimination of employees in 5 protected classes: race, color, national origin, religion, and sex
- **Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990**
 - Requires employers to make “reasonable accommodation” for disabilities
- **Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967**
 - Prohibits discrimination of employees 40+ years old

How Organizations Manage Diversity Effectively

- **Diversity management** is the process and programs by which managers make everyone more aware of and sensitive to the needs and differences of others.
 - More successful when it is everyone's business



How Organizations Manage Diversity Effectively

- **Attracting, Selecting, Developing, and Retaining Diverse Employees**
 - Replace discriminatory selection procedures and validate new job-related tests.
 - Target recruiting messages to specific groups.
 - Some companies actively recruit less-hired groups.
 - Select expatriates who have previous culture-specific experience, high self-efficacy, role clarity and autonomy, and organizational and familial support.

How Organizations Manage Diversity Effectively

- **Diversity in Groups**

- Most people in groups need a common way of looking at and accomplishing major tasks, and they need to communicate well with each other.
- Emphasize higher-level similarities among people.

How Organizations Manage Diversity Effectively

- **Effective Diversity Programs**

- Teach managers about the legal framework for equal employment opportunity.
- Teach managers how a diverse workforce will be more effective at serving a diverse customer base.
- Foster personal development practices that bring out the skills and abilities of everyone.

Implications for Managers

- Share your organization's anti-discrimination policies with your employees.
- Assess and challenge your own stereotypes and prejudices.
- Look beyond biographical characteristics and consider an individual's KSAOs before making decisions.
- Customize jobs to fit each person's abilities, especially those who request accommodations.