

DIVERSITY AND EQUITY MANAGEMENT IN UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

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ABSTRACT

In higher educational institutions, the enrolment of individuals takes place on a wide-ranging scale belonging to different backgrounds and categories. The individuals migrate from all over the country and differ from each other regarding factors such as, caste, creed, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, occupation and socio-economic background. It is vital to formulate policies and procedures for the effective integration of diverse categories of individuals. They should be made available equal rights and opportunities. It is vital to initiate procedures that would render a significant contribution in the management of diversity and equity. The main purpose of this research paper is to understand diversity and equity management in universities and colleges. The main areas that have been taken into account include, why is diversity important, the equity perspective, factors to consider in diversity and equity management, ways to implement diversity and equity management in universities and colleges, equity, diversity and inclusion themes and recommendations.

Keywords: Diversity, Equity, Institutions, Education, Developments, Individuals

INTRODUCTION

Higher education in India has experienced significant developments in recent years, both in institutional development and diversity of social composition of students and faculty. Enrolment of students belonging to the disadvantaged communities such as, Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, Other Backward Classes, and educationally backward minorities in higher education has improved significantly in recent years. Similarly, students from rural communities have also been successful in getting admissions in the institutions of higher education in urban areas and metropolis, including those institutions, which are otherwise considered as leading, given their background and traditional social composition of students. Girl students are also characterized in higher educational institutions in considerable numbers. This has meaningfully influenced the nature and composition of students in higher education institutions. There could be numerous factors responsible for bringing about variations in the social composition of students. Social transformation and increasing middle class across the group and communities, besides a host of affirmative action policies, may be considered as important causes for this change (Orientation cum Workshop on Management of Diversity and Equity in Universities and Colleges, 2017).

These developments and progressions have brought in new challenges before the institutions of higher education. How to respond to the challenges of diversity appear to be a major problem for most of the institutions. Increase in aspects such as, incidence of group based discrimination and exclusion, increasing number of cases of crime and violence against women and sexual harassment are causing problems within the course of progress of the institutions. Strong and operative institutional support mechanisms in higher educational

institutions are indispensable for managing diversity and promoting equity. Establishment of Special Cells and Equal Opportunity Cells in different universities and colleges are important interventions in this regard. These cells have been created with two intertwined objectives, to stimulate diversity and inclusive practices on the campuses of the institutions, to ensure non-discrimination at the institutional level, and to ensure effective implementation of policies and programmes within the institutions. Role of these cells becomes especially important given the framework of educational institutions in India (Orientation cum Workshop on Management of Diversity and Equity in Universities and Colleges, 2017).

There are numerous socially and culturally embedded sites of group-based exclusion and discrimination at the institutional level. Educational institutions do not exist in isolation, they work in collaboration with each other for effective developments. The symbiotic relationship that exists between society and institutions, gets best reflected in the practices of the educational institutions. In this case, active intervention of the State through a selection of inclusive policies and affirmative action programmes becomes a requirement (Orientation cum Workshop on Management of Diversity and Equity in Universities and Colleges, 2017).

WHY IS DIVERSITY IMPORTANT?

Diversity enhances institutional excellence by improving learning, critical thinking, logical reasoning, creativity in research and workplace productivity. Characteristics that make people similar and different from one another, including but not limited to race, gender, ethnicity, creed, religion and socio-economic background. The three diversity components are, structural diversity, which is the numerical and proportional representation of different groups in a context; interactional diversity is interaction with diverse people and generation of information regarding different ideas and institutional diversity includes, curricular and co-curricular, diversity courses, inter-group dialogue program, cultural awareness centres, and departments that are part of the university campus (Forman, 2014).

Diversity mission is to promote an organizational culture and structure that honours diversity through integration of the principles of access, equity and inclusion into all the aspects of university processes and practices. When understanding the significance of diversity, it is important to understand three diversity principles, these are, first, opportunity to render a complete participation in campus life, second, promoting fair and just outcomes for all to achieve their complete intellectual and professional potential, and third, an individual or group sense of belonging as valued members of campus life. It is vital for the faculty, staff and students to promote understanding of the value of cultural diversity and connect diverse assets to find resourceful solutions for common challenges. The centres make available assistance to specific populations on campus as well as opportunities for intercultural engagement among students, faculty, and staff members. The centres are committed to bringing about social change within the principles of access, equity and inclusion (Forman, 2014).

THE EQUITY PERSPECTIVE

Equity means fairness, impartiality and even-handedness amongst the individuals, irrespective of their backgrounds and categories, it is important that the faculty and the staff members, as well as the other students should treat each other with justness. The case for diversity and inclusion in higher education is traditionally based on moral and philosophical aspects. A righteous, virtuous and fair institution treats all the individuals equally and courteously with the goal of guaranteeing that every individual has the opportunity to live free from bias and with the ability to achieve his or her complete potential. Many have noted that programs promoting diversity and inclusion nurture the collaborative, cultivating, and non-discriminatory environment that is the primary factor, if individuals are to identify their complete potential. The reason being, universities are committed not only to educating future generations and leaders, but also to assuring that faculty and staff work in a positive, co-operative, and nurturing environment. Promoting dignity, respect, and personal growth is important to one's mission (A Report of the Steering Committee for Diversity and Inclusion, 2015).

While equity is connected to the right to be different and free of discrimination, some have a discussion that the concept must also incorporate a historical perspective. In higher educational institutions, there are individuals belonging to different castes, races, creed, religions, ethnicities, cultures and socio-economic backgrounds. These features recognize diversity amongst them. Within the classroom settings, in case of implementation of projects and research work, the individuals are required to collaborate and work with each other. The individuals with varied backgrounds should be welcomed within universities and colleges and measures need to be formulated effectively to accept those, who have been under-represented in positions of power and influence within the society at large due to past discriminatory practices (A Report of the Steering Committee for Diversity and Inclusion, 2015).

FACTORS TO CONSIDER IN DIVERSITY AND EQUITY MANAGEMENT

The main factors that are required to be taken into consideration for the purpose of diversity and equity management in universities and colleges have been stated as follows: (Inclusive Excellence, n.d.).

Mission Statement, Goals and Values – The universities and colleges are required to identify the mission statement, goals and values in an appropriate manner. One should be clear regarding what are the goals and what kinds of processes and procedures are required to get implemented to achieve them. In order to accomplish the goals and objectives, it is vital for the members of the institutions to identify certain qualities and traits and put them into practice in an appropriate manner. The institution's inclusive excellence statement should be prominently displayed on the websites, job applications, posters and other materials.

History – The reputed educational institutions that have a long history and are known for excellence and quality in education generate opportunities for individuals to enhance their

skills and qualifications. The main factors that are included in history are, do the institutions have a history of excluding or including members, belonging to diverse categories, backgrounds, and occupations or those who possess varied experiences. When individuals recognize the history of the institutions, they gain knowledge and experience regarding how it has been in the past and what kinds of measures are required to get implemented to make it adaptable in accordance to the changing needs and requirements of the present world.

Physical Environment – In educational institutions, physical environmental conditions and the location are also important aspects in the management of diversity and equity. The individuals, when applying to colleges and universities take into consideration the location and the physical environment. In some cases, individuals do not prefer to work or study in universities and colleges that are located at a great distance from their homes or when the environmental conditions are not amiable. In institutions, where individuals can obtain easy access to facilities, notices, information, offices and create sociable terms and conditions with the individuals, it is stated that they have a comfortable and satisfying working environmental conditions.

Policies and Procedures –The influence of institutional policies and procedures may have on diverse identities, backgrounds, categories and experiences. Policies and procedures primarily take into account the methods and strategies that are necessary to implement tasks and functions in an appropriate manner. These also render an imperative contribution in the maintenance of discipline, authority, regulation and obedience within the institutions. The departments and colleges need to formulate certain rules and policies regarding the timings, organization of classes, equal opportunities and putting into practice morality and ethics. It is vital for all the members to recognize the policies and procedures and communicate with each other in an effective manner.

Climate and Culture –Climate and culture of the universities and colleges include various activities, events and functions that are appreciating to the members of all the organizations, identities, backgrounds and experiences. Climate includes all the factors that comprise the working environmental conditions. On the other hand, culture includes norms, values, programs and functions that generate awareness amongst the individuals, stimulate their mind-sets and make them dedicated towards learning. In case of climate and culture, it is vital to take into consideration, whether the individuals belonging to deprived, marginalized and socio-economically backward sections of the society are included. These individuals should be allowed to participate in cultural programs, provided if they possess the skills and abilities. The participation in various cultural programs involve interest and enthusiasm on the part of the individuals.

Leadership – In departments and colleges, the heads, chairpersons, deans, and other individuals in leadership positions are required to possess the qualities, skills and abilities to exercise the leadership functions in an efficient manner. They need to possess the abilities to recognize the managerial functions of planning, organising, directing, staffing, controlling and co-ordinating. Leadership skills include making effective decisions and generating ways to enhance productivity. It is imperative on the part of the leaders to recognise the ways to manage diversity and equity in an appropriate manner. Equal rights and opportunities should be made available for all the individuals and there should not be any kind of discrimination

on the basis of caste, creed, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, occupation or socio-economic background.

Supervision –Supervision involves management, regulation, co-ordination and control of tasks and activities. For the managers, administrators and supervisors, it is vital to possess the skills and abilities to adequately supervise, direct and organize the employees and their tasks and operations. The supervisors are required to demonstrate openness to diverse perspectives, opinions and values. They need to take into consideration differing viewpoints and perspectives of the individuals and listen to their ideas and suggestions. The supervisors need to make provision of the opportunities to pay attention, learn about and understand diverse identities, backgrounds, categories, capabilities and experiences of the individuals.

Professional Development –Every individual is required to focus upon his or her professional development. In order to gain success and meet the desired goals and objectives, individuals need to be professional in their performance and conduct. Professional development focuses upon the development of skills, abilities, proficiency and expertise. These traits are considered necessary to enhance one's performance and standing within the institutions. In higher education institutions, it is vital to generate funds for the professional development of the individuals. There are organization of workshops and seminars that focus upon professional development of the individuals. An individual's regularity, resourcefulness, conscientiousness, diligence and performance are the factors that recognize his or her professionalism.

Human Resources –Human resources are an imperative aspect of any educational institution. The tasks, activities and operations are performed in an appropriate manner with the aptitude and capabilities on the part of human resources. It is essential to make provision of adequate training to the individuals regarding the organization, goals and objectives, history, background, job duties, personnel and concepts. The development of human resources is regarded as an imperative aspect of any institution. The development functions need to take into consideration the diverse aspects of the individuals regarding caste, creed, race, ethnicity, religion, gender, culture, occupation and socio-economic background.

Budget – For the efficient development of human resources, to organize training and workshops, to carry out tasks and functions in an appropriate manner, to improve productivity and to work towards the achievement of goals and objectives, it is vital to take into consideration the budget. In the organization of workshops and seminars, initiation of innovative methods and techniques, the departments and colleges do take into consideration, how much budget is available. In case, there is limited budget, then workshops and seminars will not be able to include the required areas. On the other hand, if budget is sufficient, then the organization of workshops and seminars would be implemented in an operative manner.

Committees and Taskforces –In the membership of committees and taskforces, it is essential to take into account that all the individuals, belonging to diverse backgrounds and categories have the opportunity of being included. The individuals possess varied experiences, and all of them should be allowed to share their experiences and generate awareness amongst others. When the formation of committees and taskforces takes place, it is essential to ensure that only those individuals acquire membership, who possess the required skills and abilities. One important area that is required to be taken into consideration is,

whether attention to inclusive excellence is included in the charge of committees and taskforces.

Managing Conflict – The occurrence of conflicting situations do in some cases take place over trivial or major issues. It is important that conflicts should be resolved in a peaceful manner and there should be formulation of effective conflict resolution methods and strategies. There can be occurrence of conflicts, when two or more individuals are working on a project or an assignment. Then, if they have mutual understanding and try to understand the causes behind disagreements, then conflicts would be managed in a peaceful manner. On the other hand, if conflicts are not managed in an effective manner, then they would impose barriers within the course of achievement of goals and objectives.

Events – In universities and colleges, there are various types of events and functions that are organized to bring about unity and integration amongst the individuals. The organization of events and functions are important to generate awareness amongst the individuals regarding various areas, concepts and perspectives. When organization of events take place, it is vital to ensure that provision is made of assistive devices, such as, wheelchairs etc. Spaces should be provided to keep the belongings and valuables, in case, they are not allowed inside the auditorium. Provision should be made of facilities, such as heating or cooling in accordance to the weather conditions, and other facilities needed to make the individuals feel comfortable.

Programs and Services –Universities and colleges need to get adapted to the changing requirements of the individuals and society. In the system of higher education, it is vital to integrate technology and innovative methods, so that the individuals are able to enhance their learning in an appropriate manner. The programs need to ensure that curriculum and instructional systems are well organized, so that collaboration is able to efficiently develop between the instructors and the students. Programs and services should focus upon enhancing professionalism amongst the individuals. It is vital to ensure that content of the programs and services should include the opportunities for individuals belonging to various backgrounds, categories and occupations.

Marketing and Communication – Marketing and communication have become common in the present existence in educational institutions. Advertisements are displayed in newspapers, and magazines regarding programs. In educational institutions, notices are displayed on bulletin boards regarding programs, services, events, workshops, and seminars. Communication regarding these aspects should be done in an appropriate and an understandable manner. The language and the words used should be simple, so that the individuals are able to acquire an understanding of them in an efficient manner. Marketing and communication helps in the generation of awareness and information regarding the developments that take place in universities and colleges.

Assessment – Performance appraisal methods are of utmost significance that help in identifying the flaws and inconsistencies and in making improvements. In universities and colleges, the organization of tests and exams, which can be in a verbal form or in written form, help in identifying the weaknesses in the performance of the individuals and how to make improvements. The assessment of the professors also in some cases get carried out. This is when the students are asked to evaluate them, regarding teaching methods,

instructional techniques, organization of class activities, responding to queries, clarifying doubts and problems, and how they communicate with the students. When the assessment is carried out in an efficient manner, then the individuals feel satisfied. On the other hand, if flaws and inconsistencies are identified, then individuals would implement measures to make improvements.

New Projects and Initiatives –The introduction of new projects and initiatives are regarding participation, content and influence. The procedures need to be identified that facilitate the introduction of new projects and initiatives. When growth and developments take place in educational institutions, then one imperative area is the members of the institutions should learn to get adapted to them. The individuals need to possess the traits of resourcefulness, diligence and conscientiousness to work towards new projects and initiatives. The introduction of new projects and initiatives help in the enhancement of skills and abilities amongst the individuals and lead to their growth and development.

New Student Orientation –In the orientation of new students, the diversity and inclusiveness statement should be provided to all students. The students belonging to Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, other backward classes and marginalized communities should be made available equal rights and opportunities. It should be ensured that students are provided with the skills and abilities to successfully manage and deal with diversity in and outside of the classroom. Security, protection and needs of students, belonging to diverse backgrounds need to be taken into account in the planning and organizing of student orientation. The students, who migrate from other regions or foreign countries need to adapt themselves to the internal and external environments of the institutions.

Student Advising – In universities and colleges, students usually live away from their families. They need to independently take care of all their requirements, including living accommodation, educational programs, jobs, and other expenses relating to technology, books, stationary, diet and nutrition etc. When a person has numerous responsibilities, he does feel pressurized and stressed. In most cases, individuals seek counselling and guidance from experts and professional counsellors. The advisors are required to undertake programs and methods to diverse students, for example, presentations at the student organization meetings, involvement in multicultural events and activities and so forth. In other cases, advisors help the students to get easily adapted to the environment and how to find solutions to their problems and concerns.

Curriculum –The curriculum and the instructional systems in programs and courses should be formulated in an adequate manner. These are the imperative aspects that facilitate the acquisition of knowledge and information amongst the individuals. When the curriculum and the instructional methods are adequately framed within educational institutions, then the instructors and the students will be able to create a better co-ordination between them and work effectively towards the achievement of academic goals. Besides the generation of awareness, knowledge and information, it is vital for the instructors to prepare the students to get engaged in cultural competence and collaborate with others to recognize the significance of unity in diversity.

WAYS TO IMPLEMENT DIVERSITY AND EQUITY MANAGEMENT IN UNIVERSITIES AND COLLEGES

The important ways that implement diversity and equity management in universities and colleges have been stated as follows: (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2015 – 2019, 2015).

Ethical Practice –Maintenance of highest ethical standards, ensuring respect for diversity, due process, natural justice, merit relative to the opportunity, transparency, consultation and duty of care towards all the members of the universities and colleges communities are held in highest esteem. Ethical practice takes into consideration that individuals within universities and colleges, whether they are teaching or non-teaching staff members should follow the traits of morality and decency in carrying out of tasks and functions and in communicating with others. It takes into consideration the ethics, which includes the integrities, morals, beliefs, values and norms that are required for the achievement of goals and objectives.

Respect, Consultation and Collaboration –These aspects include, having reverence, admiration and acknowledgement of the individuals, their needs, requirements and diverse approaches, characteristics and knowledge. Within the classroom settings, the individuals have different perspectives and ideas. In case of any job or task, their suggestions are different, but for the successful achievement of goals, it is vital to develop adequate listening skills. Everybody has the right to give their viewpoints and suggestions, and the ideas that are worthy and useful are made use of in the decision making processes. Reliable and trustworthy inclusion will be accomplished through ensuring that the say of the disadvantaged stakeholders are both heard and inform practice. The plan will promote collaboration and the sharing of perspectives, knowledge and ideas in the interests of transformational learning for all.

Capacity Building –In India, 65 percent of the population is youth. In most cases, individuals have recognized the significance of education and aspire to study and hone their skills and abilities. In higher educational institutions, it is vital to bring about innovative techniques and methods, optimum utilization of resources, make effective use of technology, take into consideration proficient and accurate advice, information, recommendations and encouragement should be given to the faculty, staff and students to allow them to flourish in education and within employment settings. Focus upon capacity building of the individuals, would render a significant contribution in diversity and equity management.

Engagement - Engagement is regarded as one of the aspects, which is of utmost significance, in any work in universities and colleges, one cannot carry out the tasks in isolation, therefore it is essential to get engaged and collaborate with supervisors, staff members and fellow students. Engagement primarily means working of individuals as a team regarding various areas, which include, research, project work, organization of seminars, workshops, or any other task, which requires integration and collaboration amongst the individuals. This aspect will be nurtured internally with the diverse community and externally with the associated social justice organizations. Social responsibility amongst all stakeholders

will contribute in the improvement of the university's standing as a socially inclusive and engaged university.

Continuance Review and Improvement – When plans, policies, rules and regulations are formulated, it is vital to review them from time to time and bring about improvements. The changes that take place within the internal and the external organizations are the main areas that lead to continuance review and in making improvements. The changes within the internal organization are with respect to curriculum and instructional procedures, usage of technology, innovative techniques and methods and so forth. External organizations experience changes with regards to procedures, strategies, actions, events, measures and techniques. One characteristic or a feature will not remain the same, they may continue to exist for long term or short term period, but within the course of time, changes do come about and improvements need to be made.

Equity and Fairness – In educational institutions in urban areas, there are individuals, who seek enrolment and come from all over the country. There are individuals, who migrate from rural and tribal communities to acquire higher education. In universities and colleges, there are individuals, who belong to Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes. It is vital to consider these students equally and one should not discriminate against them on the basis of caste, creed, race, ethnicity, religion, occupation, gender or socio-economic background. Equal rights and opportunities should be made available to these individuals, so that they possess the viewpoint that they have come to another region to acquire education to generate welfare of themselves, society and the country.

Elimination of Conflicts and Violence – There have been cases, when in reputed educational institutions, there has been prevalence of conflicts and crime and violence against individuals, particularly women. The women belonging to deprived, marginalized and socio-economically weaker sections of the society are in some cases harassed as well as discriminated against. Therefore, one of the imperative areas is to generate empowerment opportunities for women and treat them with dignity and respect. The occurrence of conflicts and violence are barriers within the course of management of diversity and equity in universities and colleges, therefore, it is vital to formulate measures to bring about peaceful resolution of conflicts, and elimination of violent and criminal acts.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION THEMES

The equity, diversity and inclusion themes have been stated as follows: (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2015 – 2019, 2015).

Leadership and Governance – Quality leadership and governance are stated as the main factors that are key aspects to the accomplishment of any university's inclusion strategies, and permit inclusive practices to pour through the organisation in line with strategic objectives. Inclusive leader's model values, which are genuine, render an imperative contribution towards implementing the functions of leadership and governance. Inclusive governance permits widespread voice and a range of perspectives in the decision making processes. Diverse, inclusive leadership and governance is better prepared to lead a

diversified community. Governance structures and processes should be fair, equitable and inclusive.

Staff and Student Diversity and Inclusion – Reputed higher educational institutions usually have diverse student, staff and faculty populations. More work needs to get carried out to become comprehensively representative. Procedures need to get implemented to assist the individuals belonging to diverse communities and backgrounds. Diversity is stated as more than representation, it is representation across all levels and disciplines. One is mainly concerned to restore educational disadvantage in access and accomplishment for the students. Aligned with this is connecting the complete value of rich diversity, such that inclusive practice in both education and employment become usual practices. Pedagogical practices are inclusive and leveraging the rich diversity of the students. Students from equity groups are confident, prepared and skilled for employment.

Building an Inclusive Organization - The culture of any organization includes common beliefs, approaches, values, norms, standards, principles and actions. These aspects comprise the comprehensive whole, and the lived experience of all those functioning within it. Cultivation and building the capacity of staff and students around justness, equity, diversity and inclusive practices will help in the formation of an educational and employment environment. In this environment, everyone will have the opportunities for continuous learning and the ability to make a productive, resourceful and meaningful contribution. The university environment should be world standard, accessible, convivial, assisting and supportive for all.

Community Engagement, Participation and Service –In higher educational institutions, individuals need to participate and provide service to the community members. Educated individuals should work towards the upliftment of the deprived and less fortunate individuals. For instance, when the individuals are pursuing their Masters or Doctoral degrees, they get engaged in guest teaching, they do fieldwork and visit various places, such as other educational institutions, or even slum areas, and so forth. Field visits are primarily based upon the research areas of the individuals. There are organization of seminars and workshops, where students present research papers relating to different areas, to generate knowledge and information amongst others. Programs should get promoted to encourage community engagement, participation and service to the community.

Inclusive Policies, Systems and Processes - Policies, systems and processes reinforce an organization by setting agreed standards and making provision of vigorous content management and data in an efficient and modernized manner, while dynamically addressing inequalities. Fair policies and processes also recognize the need for flexibility to suit the diverse needs of staff members and students. Education and employment standards, policies, guidelines, procedures, schedules and processes are based on equity, diversity and inclusion principles. Technology should be widely made use of, and the expansion of information technology systems are inclusive and accessible. Strong equity, diversity and inclusion framework should make provision of support and assistance to disability action plan, gender equity strategy, and multicultural plan with progress scrutinized on a regular basis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations for the diversity and equity management have been stated as follows: (Report of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Advisory Group, 2016).

Making provision of greater clarity on the overall cost and the fees by improving the depth and the range of frequently asked questions, providing help sheets and advising regarding grievances and concerns. Especially the students, belonging to marginalized communities usually experience problems regarding various areas, hence, they should be made available proper counselling and guidance facilities to alleviate their problems and concerns. Expansion of hardship funds through endowment for first generation, especially for the students belonging to low socio-economic status and making improvements in the prominence and intentionality of support for the transfer students is considered important.

The students, who belong to deprived, marginalized and economically weaker sections of the society, aspire that along with their education, they should obtain some kind of part time job, to sustain their living conditions. In present existence, the placement cells in universities and colleges, in some cases do not make provision of adequate information to the students regarding employment opportunities. Even after completion of Masters and Doctoral programs, the students themselves have to work hard to look for employment opportunities relating to their field. Therefore, placement cells and even professors and supervisors should provide adequate information to the individuals regarding employment opportunities.

Facilitation of more formal and sustained associations and co-operations between the faculty and staff around the objective of ensuring the efficacious recruitment, retention, progression, and graduation of ethnically underrepresented and first-generation students. In the departments, the faculty and the staff members have to work in integration with each other to frame the policies and procedures to ensure that students benefit in all areas, acquisition of education, employment opportunities and their overall growth and development.

Supplement the needs based model of recruitment for students of different races and ethnic origins. In some cases, these students have problems in communicating with others, the reason being, they are not aware of the native language, in such cases, the use of common language helps in the establishment of communication terms amongst the individuals. When individuals make use of a common language, then they are able to acquire understanding of each other's needs and requirements in an appropriate manner.

It is vital to increase the support for and make improvements in the performances of the International Student Services office, and designate an international student member to the Tuition Advisory Committee. Improvements need to be made in the efforts to make provision of gender-neutral or all gender restroom options that are available campus-wide. Increase in the support for the centre for Sexuality and Gender Diversity is vital. Opportunities need to be distributed in a more equitable manner for the students. There have been cases, when international students are not made aware of certain opportunities and they do not render an effective participation in activities, events and functions, therefore, more and more opportunities need to be created for them.

There should be provision of scholarships, fellowships and financial assistance to the individuals, belonging to deprived, marginalized and economically weaker sections of the society. In most cases, financial problems prove to be barriers within the course of acquisition of education, therefore, it is vital to provide financial support, so that individuals are able to acquire education in universities and colleges. Strengthening the commitment to targeted fellowships, tuition waivers, and similar support packages to recruit and successfully retain underrepresented groups in graduate programs is important.

The faculty and the staff members need to possess the traits of equivalence and fairness and provide equal treatment to all the individuals belonging to different backgrounds and categories. In the organization of class tests and assignments, the grading and evaluation of the students are entirely based upon their performance. The performance and participation of the individuals enable them to obtain the desired grade. There should be equal rights and opportunities for everybody, one should be treated with respect and there should not be any kind of discrimination on the basis of caste, creed, race, religion, ethnicity, gender and socio-economic background.

Development of a more vigorous and dignified mentoring program for all the faculty members, including mid-career scholars is important. As a substitute to outsourcing diversity, equity, and inclusion work to paid consultants, making complete use of campus expertise and professionalism among faculty and staff, by identifying ingenious ways to recognize and compensate additional service work should be recommended. In departments, besides classroom instructional methods and strategies, it is essential to familiarize the students with field visits, so that they are able to gain practical experience. Making use of the internet, books, articles and papers are essential to enhance one's learning and understanding of the academic concepts. Apart from these, it is vital to encourage the participation of students in services, programs and events to develop their skills and abilities.

CONCLUSION

The management of diversity and equity in universities and colleges require formulation of policies and procedures that need to put emphasis upon providing equal opportunities for individuals belonging to diverse groups, backgrounds and categories. Within and outside the classroom setting, it is vital for the faculty members to establish effective communication terms with individuals, belonging to diverse groups and origins. The individuals should be able to redress their grievances and seek solutions to their problems. Provision of counselling and guidance should treat all the individuals equally. The main areas of concern to economically weaker sections of the society is finances, therefore, availability of financial assistance should smooth the acquisition of education.

Making provision of information regarding employment opportunities to the individuals is also considered as the means of management of diversity and equity. In employment settings and in educational institutions, individuals from diverse categories learn to work in collaboration with each other. In the pursuance of doctorate, individuals are required to work with each other in research and writing and in the implementation of projects. The management of diversity and equity is primarily based upon the viewpoints and

perspectives of the individuals. When they possess the viewpoints that individuals belonging to all cultures and backgrounds are equal, then they would acknowledge and revere all cultures, castes, races, ethnicities, religions, values, and principles.

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