

Voice of the Minority Workers in the Workplace - A Literature Review Based Study on Women and Ethnic Minority Workers.

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Abstract

Purpose: Employees' voice has emerged as an important issue in the work place as it can significantly impact their engagement and productivity as well as performance of the organization as a whole. Though, demographic heterogeneity and effective voice communication mechanisms for all employees irrespective of gender, ethnicity and other aspects are an integral part of high performance Human Resource Management systems and may contribute a lot to enhance performances in the organization in many ways, the failure to ensure synergy among these group may result in rather a negative effect on overall organizations. Whenever majority employees get the opportunity to gain their interests through their leaderships and related roles and the minority are deprived of getting their legitimate or even minimal facilities, they start to consider themselves only as a worker rather than an integral part of the overall organizational structure. This isolated feeling keeps them apart from thinking for the betterment of the organization. This is the most common scenario for women in most of the organizations which psychologically puts them into a corner of the organization with the course of time. The same happens for ethnic minority and especially black employees because of the absence of institutional focus on them to provide them necessary back-ups to express their voices. This main purpose of the research is to identify the salient issues of voice and silence of the employees who are minority in the organization based on their "gender" (i.e. woman employees) and ethnic group.

Methodology: The main research methodology incorporated in this paper includes study and review of existing academic papers published based on the empirical studies conducted elsewhere in the world. Analysing the papers from various research repositories, it has been tried to explore the basic issues and the salient reasons of their silence along with the measures proposed in various studies. This research also tries to come up with recommendations for uplifting the voice and silence of employees.

Findings: The major research findings recommend that, the best way to uplift the voice of the women and ethnic minority employees is to create awareness of their rights as well as providing them back-up support by trade unions and other inter and intra-organizational groups concerned with the minorities. At the same time most of the literatures put emphasis on the organizational concerns for bringing the minority employees into main stream to provide them the maximum opportunity to express their voice with complete participation. Most importantly, the research finding suggests incorporating Information and Communication Technology (ICT) as a tool for promoting the voice of women and ethnic minority people.

Keywords : Employees' Voice, Ethnic Minority Workers, Women's participation, Employees' Silence.

Introduction

Although classical economists like Adam Smith and David Ricardo described "labor" as a "living factor" of production, organizations practicing modern management philosophy are persistently in search of the ways to accommodate opinion of the workforce in organization's decision making.

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In this context, over past three decades employees' voice has emerged as an important issue in the work place as it can significantly impact their engagement and productivity as well as performance of the organization as a whole (Bull *et al.*, 2010).

Employees' voice, as a general concept, refers to the participation of employees in influencing organizational decision making. Employees voice is an extension of the concept of Employees Relations (that refers to communication between management and employees concerning mainly grievances, conflicts and problem resolutions) and advocates for employee participation in organizational decision making in order to incorporate their views and opinions constructively to improve work performance, social relations and reduce conflict within the workplace (McCabe & Lewin 1992; Van Dyne, et. al. 2003). Although valuing employees' opinions in organizational decision making has long been practiced in formal or informal manner in many work places, Freeman & Medoff (1984) first introduced the term "voice" to refer to a two way communication between employers and employees. Unions were, however, seen as the platform for the raising collective voice of the employees', but in their study Freeman & Medoff (1984) argue that systematic efforts to allow the employees to communicate their grievances and opinions at individual level lead to increase employees' satisfaction, reduced labor turnover (that is often referred to as "Exit") and eventually enhanced individual and organizational performance and productivity.

This study aims evaluating "voice" of the minority employees at the work place. As "employees' voice" is not a relatively new concept in Employees' Relation, practice of this concept is rarely found in the organizations in Bangladesh. Therefore, this study examines this issue through intensive review of the literature published based on the empirical studies taken place in the context of different other countries- mostly the developed countries. As mentioned earlier, there are different demographic and social aspects that are used as a base of formation of informal groups defining "majority" and "minority" groups of employees. This study, however, has been conducted voice of the employees who are minority in the organization based on their "gender" (i.e. woman employees) and ethnic group.

Objectives of the study

Though, demographic heterogeneity and effective voice communication mechanisms for all employees irrespective of gender, ethnicity and other aspects are an integral part of high performance. Human Resource Management systems and may contribute a lot to enhance performances in the organization in many ways but failure to ensure synergy among these group may result in rather a negative effect on overall organizations.

Besides the common aspects like educational qualification, salary, experiences, age, religion, social and cultural background, there exists acute discrimination in the organizations on the basis of gender and ethnic groups and even colour which directly makes a border between majority and minority. Whenever majority employees get the opportunity to gain their interests through their leaderships and related roles while the minority are deprived of getting their legitimate or even minimal facilities, they start to consider them only as a worker rather than an integral part of the overall organizational structure. This isolated feeling keeps them apart of thinking for the betterment of the organization. This is the most common scenario for women in most of the organizations which psychologically puts them into a corner of the organization with the course of time. The same happens for ethnic minority and especially black employees because of the absence of institutional focus on them to provide them necessary back-ups to express their voices. There exists numerous researches focusing on the impact of the voice and silence of the employees in organizations. Researches have demonstrated that, absence of voice of the employees not only keeps them away from thinking of the betterment of the organization but also creates job dissatisfaction and makes them personally frustrated which leads unstable social consequences. That is why, besides of routine work activities and important decision making matters, in order to maximize the quality of human capital in the organization, it is utmost important to make the employees "happier" which ultimately leads better employee management relations,

greater motivation, and higher level of loyalty of the employees along with increased employee engagement and productivity. There may be a number of mechanisms to get the voice of women, ethnic and black minority employees heard which requires a clean and clear feasibility analysis for demographic consequences. This research aims to explore their various concerns including analysis of the realities and backgrounds of minority employees' voices along with a number of recommendations for the same.

The main objectives of this research include -

- i. Analysis of the basic issues of employee voice and silence, especially women and ethnic minority group employees compared to the main stream employees by analyzing the renowned literatures.
- ii. Investigate the reasons for such voice pattern.
- iii. Recommend some remedies to improve the situation of "voice discriminations" at the workplace in detail.

Literature Review

Employees' voice at the workplace has turned out to be a widely discussed topic in the HR literature since last three decades. However voice of "minority employees" has relatively recently emerged as a discourse in these literature and there exists mentionable diversity in explanation of the term 'voice' along with the specification of 'minority employees'. Although employees can be categorized as "majority" and "minority" based on number of aspects like age, gender, ethnic group, religion, social and cultural background, gender and ethnic groups are two prominent aspects based on which sense "commonality" is noticed among the employees in the most workplace. Also, literature focusing various issue related minority employees (such as their right their voice etc) mostly emphasize the issues concerned with gender and ethnic group.

Concepts of "Employees' Voice" and Its Benefits at the Workplace: Employees' integration into organizational decision making has turned out to be a major agenda in practice as well as in the researches related Human Resources Management over last few decades. Although different other terms (e.g., Employees participation, Employees engagement, Employees involvement, Employees empowerment) are found in the literature, "Employees' voice" is the term that is most extensively used in explaining this concept.

Hirschman (1970) defined voice as "any attempt at all to change, rather than to escape from, an objectionable state of affairs, whether through individual or collective petition to the management directly in charge, through appeal to a higher authority with the intention of forcing a change in management, or through various types of actions and protests, including those that are meant to mobilize public opinion".

According to Wilkinson and Fay (2011), the term "voice" refers to how employees are able to have a say in routine work activities and important decision making matters at work. Recent literature suggests that there are several benefits for the organizations in taking employees' voice into organizational decision making. Becker et al (2001) suggest that effective voice communication mechanisms are an integral part of high performance HRM systems. Also, as they suggest, apart from increasing organizational productivity by enhancing employees efficiency, this mechanism enhances effectiveness of devising more effective training and development programs that help "maximize the quality of human capital in the organization". Voice mechanisms may allow employees to provide valuable feedback and thus contribute to business success. They may also help employee in safeguarding their rights.

As suggested by the above discussions, there are indeed many potential benefits to the organizations of allowing employees' voice. However, to realize these benefits, organizations must not only provide employees with an adequate outlet to speak, but must also take their voice into account and follow up with visible, meaningful action (Evans, 2010).

Communication of Employees Voice - Formal and Informal Mechanisms: Voice mechanisms in organizations have now expanded beyond formal meetings of trade union representatives with employers. Direct modes of employee-employer communication are more common place, and it is likely that the use of social media will further extend the means by which individuals are able to disseminate information and provide feedback. There is an increasing use of consultative committees, in the private sector especially, whether non-union or union or a combination of both, alongside direct methods of employee voice (Purcell & Hall, 2012). In several industrial advanced countries e.g., the UK, Norway, Sweden etc, all employees, including in non-union firms, have the right to be consulted in specific circumstances, e.g., major redundancies and business restructure (Purcell & Hall, 2012). Recent research in Australia by Holland et al (2011) shows that direct voice is the central voice arrangement underpinning employees' job satisfaction. Bell et al (2011) suggest that identity based networks may play a key role in a company's diversity strategy to facilitate voice from minority groups.

The 2004 Workplace Employment Relations Survey study in the UK found that 91 percent of workplaces, with ten or more employees, used one or more types of face-to-face communication methods. At least 38 percent of workplace held a meeting of all employees addressed by a senior manager 'at least on a monthly basis' with at least some time made available for employee feedback and questions (Kersley et al 2006, cited in Purcell & Hall, 2012).

Given that formal meeting between unions and employers or consultative committees and employers are less frequent than workforce meetings and brief sessions (Kersley et al., 2006), employees are more likely to receive timely information direct from their managers, instead of via intermediary channels. However, workforce meetings and briefing sessions are usually designed to disseminate and enforce management agendas and goals, and with only limited and superficial attention to employee feedback and suggestions, there may be little opportunity for meaningful dialogue (Purcell and Hutchinson 2007, Purcell & Hall, 2012).

Consultation may be seen as a practice (right or expectation) to be informed of business decisions in advance and to have an opportunity to comment prior to their implementation (Budd and Zagelmeyer, 2010). A consultative committee is sometime established by organizations where representatives of employees, from trade unions or directly chosen by employees, or both, meet with senior managers to discuss planned business. Trade unions are at times lukewarm towards consultative committees because they may undermine the need or purpose of collective bargaining and are used by at least some employers as substitutes for unions. Employers, for their part, object to legal enforcement of consultative committees especially where these appear to limit their prerogatives. It is, however, a fact that managers have always an upper hand in consultation since it is they who establish the key parameters to the agenda (Purcell & Hall, 2012).

Regular group and/ or one-on-one meetings are another mechanism used by the management to hear from employees e.g., to identify what areas are working well and what areas need improvement. When managers meet with employees one-on-one, it may be helpful to make sure the conversation goes both ways. While managers probably have an agenda they want to focus on, employees too may be provided with an opportunity to ask questions and offer comments (Hedayati, 2012).

Other participation systems may be deployed to seek employee input and capitalize on the benefits associated with employee voice and participation. Open book management may empower employees to review actual organizational situation and provide relevant and helpful input (Case, 1995). Open-door policies are an assurance by the management that employees are welcome to raise issues or provide input at any time. Team mechanisms such as quality circles and total quality management teams enable workers to participate in seeking and implementing better solution to organizational problems (Evans, 2010).

Increasingly employers use attitude surveys on a regular basis to assess the level of employee engagement, identify barriers and the factors leading to its formation (Purcell & Hall, 2012). Employee surveys can be an economical way to seek input from employees about specific policies or initiatives. However, organizations that survey their workforce without acting on the feedback may negatively affect employee trust and engagement. Anonymity in surveys may encourage employees to offer suggestions without fear of reprisal. Suggestion boxes are equally useful to receive feedback and suggestions from anonymous employees.

As an effort to help employees communicate their voice, along with formal means, different informal ways has been being used in the recent time. Direct communication with the employees by the top management is one of those initiatives. Instead of depending on the hierarchical communication top management, in order to know employees voice, often directly communicate with the employees in different formal and informal ways. Also, alongside direct methods, there are increasing use of consultative committees to aid the employees to communicate their voice (Purcell & Hall, 2012). In several industrial advanced countries e. g., in the UK, Norway, Sweden etc, all employees, including in non-union firms, have the right to be consulted in specific circumstances, e. g., major redundancies and business restructure (Purcell & Hall, 2012). Recent research in Australia by Holland et al (2011) shows that direct voice is the central voice arrangement underpinning employees' Job satisfaction. The advent of social media has contributed to the managers informal communication with staff and also the way employee express their views to senior management and other colleagues. As Smith and Harwood (2011) recognise, social media has great potential to improve employee voice practices. Its various forms and tools (e.g., Face book, Twitter, their various features) allow rapid sharing of information and views across and outside organizational hierarchies.

Minority Employees and Their Voice at Work Place: Diversity among the workers has become a growing feature at the work places over last few decades in all parts of the world. This trend has resulted in a larger presence of women and ethnic minority workers in the contemporary time than before. This demographic heterogeneity although may contribute to enhance performances in the organization in many ways, but failure to ensure synergy among these group may result in rather a negative effect on this aspect.

Therefore, in order to create a congenial working condition with an environment of mutual trusts and cooperation, it is indispensable that voices of the employees belonging to minority groups are equally heard as those of the "majority" employees have the note that diversity may contribute to improve performance when members understand each other, combine and build on each others' insights and approaches.

Methodology

This is a literature review based study. Information were collected by extensive review of literature published in the refereed and rank academic journals based on empirical data on employees' voice in the work places, in different countries.

Literature review based studies are frequently conducted in order to evaluate existing theories and propositions, in order to relate or make comparisons among or between or theories, and also in order to provide a foundation for conducting empirical studies in a certain context on some issues (on which empirical studies in that context have hardly been conducted in the past). (Backus, et al., 1993; McDougall et al., Speckbacher, et al., 2003) Following the similar methodology to the above mentioned papers information for this study were collected through extensive review of literature published on the related topic of the study. Since the study will use qualitative information and ordinal quantitative data, various non-statistical methods like Content analysis, Constant Comparison (related to Grounded Theory), Hermeneutical Analysis, Analytic Induction etc. were used to analyze and interpret information collected from literature review.

Findings and Discussions

This section wraps up the study where the findings of the study in relation to its objectives are summarized and the rationale of the study and the limitations of the study are pointed out.

Voices of the Women and Ethnic Minority groups: Despite the fact that women today constitute a majority of graduates across many disciplines and constitute approximately one half of all employees in advanced industrial countries, they still constitute significantly small proportion compared to men in most of the workplaces. Recent research carried out in the UK (Wearden, 2012) found that only 14.9% of directors at the 100 largest public companies are women. While the percentage is slightly up from 12.5% in 2010, male dominance remains a fact of organizational life. For example, at least ten FTSE-100 companies still operate with men-only boards, mainly mining groups. Other companies continue to lag behind. Just 9.2% of directors on FTSE 250 firms are women, up from 7.8% in 2010 (Wearden, 2012).

Harlos's (2010) empirical study identified gender, work self-esteem, and relative power as key determinants of voice in organizations. The study reveals that women may be more likely than men to voice to an internal mediator to try to resolve mistreatment. However, women's voice reactions also depend on power relations. The fact that women may be less motivated to voice when the offender is a supervisor instead of co-worker is consistent with gender role norms that point toward differential reactions for men and women.

Recently there is a movement in certain Western countries to increase number of women in the Board Rooms. Organizations are being encouraged and/or asked to increase the ratio of women in top management. For example in Scandinavian countries, there is currently a legal requirement to raise the number of women in board rooms. A similar legal push, in the shape of positive action, is found in the UK where positive action in favour of women and other-protected groups is enshrined in the Equality Act 2010.

Trade unions are an important component in a democratic society, but for decades they have not been able to fully utilize valuable insights and perspectives offered by women that may serve not only women but entire employment sector (Roberts, 2012). The average British trade unionist is a young, degree-educated, white woman working in the professions. This is despite the fact that at least in some unions, women outnumber men, and that women have become vital to the survival of unions. For example, in 2012 Frances O'Grady became first female general secretary of Trade Union Congress in 144 years (Roberts, 2012). Increasing women's voices in the decision-making process may not only create a gender-inclusive work environment, it may also help in creating positive business outcomes.

In a research into (black and minority ethnic) BME community organizations' views on trade unions, it was reported that 86 per cent of organizations surveyed said that they had never worked with trade unions to promote BME interests and 96 per cent said that unions had never contacted them for advice or consultation (Perrett and Martinez 2006). Yet these same community organizations reported that racism, discrimination and marginalization were the greatest difficulties facing BME groups in respect of employment. Further, when asked where they thought BME individuals went for advice on employment related problems only 13 per cent said trade unions, compared to 27 per cent who said individuals went to Citizens Advice Bureaux. The authors of the research conclude that 'there remains a deficiency in the level of employment support for BME workers' and that the BME voluntary sector represents an access point for trade unions to BME communities and workers and so contact with these groups could be of potential benefit to unions (Perrett and Martinez 2006: 21-23) (cited in Holgate et al, 2008).

The UK trade union movement's response to the involvement of BME workers within its ranks has not always been positive and, in some cases, despite official policy statements in opposition to discrimination, it has been objectively racist in practice (Phizacklea and Miles 1987; Radin 1966). Leading some BME union members to believe that trade

unions do not adequately represent their interests (Bradley et al. 2002; GLC 1984; WEA 1974; WEA 1980). Only since the late 1970s, as a consequence of challenges from BME activists and anti-racists, were trade unions forced to re-evaluate their so-called 'colour-blind' stance, whereby they regularly asserted that there was 'no difference' between the experiences of BME and white workers (CIR 1974; GRE 1985; Radin 1966). Ignoring the racialised nature of the labour market and the structural racism within their own organizations, trade unions made little effort during this period to specifically target BME workers for recruitment and organization (Holgate et al, 2008).

During the 1980s, a number of researchers (Lee 1984; 1987; Phizacklea and Miles 1987; WEA 1980) investigated BME worker's relationship with unions. This body of research reinforced earlier findings, and concluded that black members are denied many of the benefits of their union membership because the movement inhibits full participation; unions fail to take up the grievances of their black members, there is evidence of direct and passive collusion of shop stewards and officials with employers in discriminatory practices; more often than not 'race' issues do not appear on trade union agendas.

The 1980s also saw the development of self-organization as a strategy to increase BME involvement in trade unions. The Black Trade Unionist Solidarity Movement (BTUSM), which described itself as a 'pressure group', held its first conference in June 1983, and aimed to bring about a change in the trade union movement to encourage BME workers to join an appropriate trade union (Holgate et al, 2008).

The UK union movement is known to have few BME union organizers or officials, which, if unions are serious about increasing the organizing of BME workers, could prove a hindrance in future organizing campaigns. The experience from the US suggests that if union renewal is to be successful the unions must become an integral part of the community and the communities need to become part of the union movement.

There have been few union initiatives specifically directed at organizing among the Asian communities of West London; yet there remains a substantial number of trade unionists in the area, and on a number of occasions there has been outbreaks of industrial militancy. The general union, the GMB, has been particularly active within the Asian communities of north-west London, initiating a number of organizing campaigns through the use of community and social networks. By employing Asian union organizers from the locality, the union has been able to build a relationship of trust with many workers who had felt that the unions were not interested in them or the issues they faced at work (Holgate et al. 2008).

In the absence of adequate voice mechanisms, ethnic minority workers may turn to informal intra-work networks, anti-racist organizations, external community-based organizations, faith-based groups etc as alternative sources of support and guidance (EMRAW, 2013).

Voluntary networks of working women may be useful not only to safeguard and promote women's interests but also to provide useful advice and feedback to employers and businesses. When people are able to talk openly about issues that concern them, participate in problem solving and management and then see how their efforts have a positive impact on their organization, it follows that their job satisfaction increases and their loyalty deepens (Frohlinger, n.d.).

The following is an example of how paying attention to women's voice has its dividends. In order to understand how women's network may help the bottom line, consider the story of the Women's Initiative (WIN) at Deloitte LLP Begun in 1992, when the company took on the challenge of identifying the reasons talented women were leaving the firm, it has not only produced the desired results critical to talent management but led to many other business "home-runs" as well. WIN (2011) annual report states that in 1993, the firm had fewer than 100 women

partners, principals, and directors. By 2011, the firm had more than 1,000. The firm's gender turnover gap had virtually disappeared. The firm now retains women at the same rate as men, continues to promote women into leadership roles; prepares its partners to sell more effectively to women clients as more women move into decision-making roles (WIN, 2011). Deloitte is an example of the benefits than may be realized from a women's network that is supported by the top management, given the resources required to succeed and seen as an investment rather than an expense (Frohlinger, n.d.).

Summary of Research Findings about Women's Voice in the Workplace: Though the number of women in society is around half of the total population still now the presence of women and in more precise words, the number of employees with influential role is negligible. Analyzing various research works states that, there exists variation of women's presence in variation with demographic and cultural issues. In developed countries while the presence of the women in decision making positions is increasing rapidly, in developing countries it is still limited into worker level. More importantly, the voice of overall female workers is still limited to within whispering among themselves and actually doesn't reach to the appropriate decision-making authority and they continuously stands backward in terms of their own satisfaction as well as providing noteworthy contributions to the organization.

This study provides a generic insight that, gender, self-esteem and relative power works as key determinants of organizations, while at the same time for uplifting the voice of the women there is no alternative of putting women into leadership role and promoting them into decision making which serves as an investment to the organization and thus mobilize the productivity of the organization by bringing job satisfaction among the employees.

Ethnic Minorities' Voices: Race is the outward appearance of a person because most people view race as colour and/or outward physical appearance of a person whereas ethnicity is the shared cultures, values, beliefs, foci of control language and the spirituality of a particular group of individuals'. However, racism is considered an umbrella term that covers both race and ethnicity and is defined as 'a belief that some races or ethnic groups are superior to others, used to devise and justify actions that create inequality between racial groups' (Mistry and Latoo, 2009).

In the UK, the Equality Act 2010 provides a legal framework to ensure equal access and employment to all workers regardless of their race, ethnicity and other dimensions of diversity. However, it is an organization's responsibility to adopt and implement a diversity policy that enables employee to promote the interests of ethnic minorities in the workplace.

It is fact that in many organizations, top management teams, involved in organizational decision making, do not represent the diversity of wider society and as such ethnic minorities are not given the opportunity to voice their interests in the decision making process.

Some organizations such as Goldman Sachs effectively set up employee networks as a remedy to such issues. The STEP Leadership Development programme at Goldman Sachs supports Black African and Black Caribbean employees to 'Succeed, Transform, Excel and Perform' in their roles and aims to develop future black leaders in Europe, the Middle East and Africa (Race for Opportunity, 2012). They have multiple strategies that have been constructed to deal with issues of this nature. There are a number of implications. At the group level, initiatives such as employee networks may be supported by the management and encouraged to resolved issues faced by ethnic minorities in the workplace. At the legal level, policies should remain in conformance with legal requirements and

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duties. At the organizational level, companies may provide adequate structural and cultural support to creation of ethnic minority networks and regular engagement with ethnic minority employees to have their feedback on organizational policies and strategies.

There is also an issue of inter-sectionality of age and ethnicity. For example, in Europe, older migrants and ethnic and religious minorities are reported to face specific challenges; for instance, in accessing care, the labour market etc. Recently, think tanks and activists have called on the EU to adopt targeted measures and encouraging initiatives in this area (Age, 2012). The EU is home to a significant population of older migrants and ethnic minorities, many of whom in their fifties or above, having settled in European countries during their early-working or childhood years. However, governments across Europe do not seem to pay much attention to this population group, who face higher risks of discrimination, poverty, and health problems. For example, pensioner poverty affects older migrants and ethnic and religious minorities in particular, especially in the current economic crisis, as pensions are being reduced and migrants blamed for economic downturn.

Statistics in the UK have shown that 677,000 people in the UK define themselves as mixed race. In addition, 14.6% of the minority ethnic population are mixed race, a larger group than people of Bangladeshi, African-Caribbean, African or Chinese origin (Bagilhole, 2009). This confirms the fact that organizations need to take into account the diversity within diversity.

Bristol City Council in the UK offers a worthy example of encouraging and making use of ethnic minorities' voice. The Council has taken the following action to advance race equality (BCC 2013); (i) Their BME workforce is currently 9% (738) and for comparison the percentage of the BME population of Bristol is 16%. Positive action is intended to improve the proportionate representation in the workforce. (ii) Continue to invest in the BME staff network using positive action developed a detailed plan to address specific issues affecting BME staff. (iii) Dissemination of training to all Senior Managers with the Council evolved into a three year training strategy for all staff. (iv) Work with other public bodies to increase the visibility and influence of BME staff within the public sector. (v) Assist in the promotion of and support to specific community events such as Black History Month. (vi) Continued support to the BME Voice and Influence Steering group as it transitions to form a new agency to take race equality forward for Bristol.

Kamenou and Fearfull's (2006) study of ethnic minority women in the UK shows that ethnic minority women are often required to fit into the existing organizational culture as an unstated prerequisite to career development and advancement. Their study suggests that employers must acknowledge and better understand religious and cultural differences instead of requiring their employees to fit into a narrow mono-culture.

Summary of Research Findings about Ethnic Minority Employees' Voice in the Workplace: Though race and ethnicity are two different terms, in most cases, racism is the umbrella term that covers both race and ethnic minority issues. More interestingly, it is observed that, since the variation of race and ethnicity arises because of the migratory people from under-developed to developed countries, issues involving ethnic minority employees are persistent into developed counties in comparison with the developing countries.

In most trade unions do not keep records of their ethnic minority membership and are therefore not in a position to respond adequately to black members' needs. This paper studies that, there is a common point of backwardness of ethnic minority employees because of the failure or unwillingness of the trade union to promote the voice of the black and ethnic minority employees. While, for gender discrimination and resulted absence of voice of women is mainly cause of personal phenomenon of backwardness and lack of self-esteem, in case of silence of ethnic minority employees is because of the organizational and concerned trade unions' lack of interest on minority employees. Most of the researches also propose to engage trade unions more effectively to serve positively for promoting the voice of the ethnic minority employees for overall betterment of the organization.

Conclusion

In order to improve work performance, social relations and reduce conflict within the workplace, it is essential to have optimal voice of the employees including women, black and ethnic minority employees. This study examines this issue through intensive review of the literature published based on the empirical studies taken place in the context of different other countries-mostly the developed countries. Since, there are different demographic and social aspects that are used as a base of formation of informal groups defining "Majority" and "Minority" groups of employees, this study, however, has been conducted based on the voice of the employees who are minority in the organization based on their "gender" (i.e. woman employees) and ethnic group. Analysis of the existing researches demonstrates that there are a number of reasons for such silence and voice. Success and failures of trade unions and its consequences in dealing with women and ethnic minority people are also important in this regard.

It has been observed that, the best way to uplift the voice of the women and ethnic minority employees is to create awareness of their rights as well as providing them back-up support by trade unions and other inter and intra-organizational groups concerned with the minorities. At the same time most of the literatures put emphasis on the organizational concerns for bringing the minority employees into main stream to provide them the maximum opportunity to express their voice with complete participation.

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