SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

CORPORATE CULTURE AND MINORITIES IN INDIAN COMPANIES:
A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO SELECT COMPANIES IN DELHI

THESIS SUBMITTED TO JAMIA MILLIA ISLAMIA

FOR THE AWARD OF DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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NEW DELHI

2011

The primary objective of the study is to ascertain whether significant differences exist between the perceptions of minority executives and majority executives with respect to the corporate culture in the company that they work for. The study also aims at identifying the specific attributes of corporate culture that significantly account for the differences in the perceptions of majority and minority executives. An attempt is also made to identify the specific minority types that have such perceptions significantly from those of majority.

Significant differences were observed between the mean perceptions of minority executives and majority executives. Thus, H1 is supported. The differences between mean perceptions of minority groups and majority groups were found to be significant in each of the six internal dimensions of corporate culture. Thus, the H2 is also supported. The differences between mean perceptions of minority groups and majority groups were found to be significant only 30 out of 71 attributes of corporate culture tested in the study. Thus, H3 is not supported. Interestingly, in all such cases, perceptions of minority group were inferior to the ones of majority group indicating perceived discrimination and deprivation. That is to say, the mean perceptions of minority executives were found to be less than mean perceptions of majority executives for all those attributes of corporate culture that are generally considered positive or desirable for better performance. In the case of attributes of corporate culture that are generally considered negative or undesirable, the mean perceptions of the minority executives were found to be greater than those of the majority executives. The specific attributes that showed significantly differences in perceptions of minority executives and majority executives are briefly described in the following paragraphs.

Significant difference between the perceptions of minority and majority executives were observed in respect of only select attributes

It may, further, be noted that most of the attributes where differences were found to be significant, related to three dimensions, namely, decision-making process, communication and information flows and superior subordinate relations. In fact, 23 out of total 30 attributes where the differences were significant related to these three dimensions of corporate culture. This suggests that these three dimensions need to be the in the center of diversity management strategy, in any company.

In all, six such types of minorities were found in the sample. Use of Games Howell's test for testing the differences in the mean perceptions of each type of minority group with majority group indicated that significant differences existed only in few of the minority types. Thus, H4 was not supported. In fact, the most common occurrence of significant difference was found in the case of minority type coded 1222, i.e. Male-religious minority - linguistic minority-regional minority (23 attributes out of total 30 attributes tested for significance of difference). The other two types of minority were Female-religious minority - linguistic minority - regional minority (code: 2222) and Male-religious majority-linguistic minority-regional minority (code: 1122). The differences were found to be significant in respect of 14 attributes in each of these types of minority groups. The remaining three types of minority were found to have significant differences in mean perceptions in respect of only 2 or 3 attributes and thus were not considered significant for this purpose. It may be observed that the types of minority groups that have shown significant differences in mean perceptions as compared to majority group had one thing in common. The codes used for these types of minority groups contained more than one '2's indicating that the members of these minority groups were in minority on account of more than one basis. In other words, the minority groups where members are in minority only on the basis of gender or only on the basis of religion or regional affiliation are not having significantly different perception about corporate culture. Thus, the differences in mean perceptions cannot be explained by gender alone or religion alone or language alone. This may be due to the possible ease in assimilation with majority-dominated environment.

The findings of the study have significant implications for practicing managers. The study offers evidence in support of the contention that the problems of discrimination and isolation do exist in Indian corporate sector. Thus, the need for effective diversity management is highlighted by the study. The findings of the study suggest that discrimination and isolation is felt by minorities, in respect of only some of the attributes and thus the companies need to focus on these attributes of corporate culture. It is suggested that business managers should consider the needs of collective team members by providing advanced technologies and procedures to offset the negative effects of majority influence and domination. Establishment of and adherence to non-discriminating procedures can help in minimizing such differences. In addition to the interventions based on technologies and procedures, team-building exercises could be highly useful in these situations. Business managers need to take special care while dealing with multi-cultural groups that have employees belonging

to minorities because employees in majority groups are more likely to exert influence, which may lead to sub-optimal outcomes and even strained relationships. The findings also suggest that specific minority groups that should be focused are the ones where the membership is due to more than one bases of minority.

Perhaps, this is first empirical study that comprehensively focuses on change in corporate culture as an instrument of diversity management strategy in the Indian context. The study identifies the specific attributes and the specific types of minority that should be focused on while designing diversity management strategies. Multiple comparisons of mean perceptions and analysis based on different types of minorities also make this study quite unique. The study identifies and uses 71 attributes covering 6 dimensions for assessing corporate culture. Thus, it offers a comprehensive list of such attributes for assessment of corporate culture. Such a list could be useful for future studies on assessment of corporate culture with different focus.