

The Importance of Affinity Groups for Organizations and Employees

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Abstract : This study aims to discover the extent to which affinity groups effectively act to combat inequalities, promote diversity, and contribute to the inclusion of non-hegemonic groups in the work environment. To this end, we have built empirical research, in which we interviewed 36 leaders and members of the collectives of non-hegemonic groups, namely women, blacks, and LGBTQ. With the proper authorization of the participants, their interviews were transcribed and submitted for critical analysis of the discourse. The field revealed that collectives are the result of the articulation of non-hegemonic groups, which create and participate in legitimate and institutional spaces to promote diversity. We also identified that diversity actions have happened as a market trend and reproduced mimetically. As the largest companies implement these actions, they become benchmarking and thus create a flow that is reproduced by other companies. However, there is no effective change in the structures that could promote inclusion and belonging. We state that a diverse group of employees are not enough to claim that the organization is diverse and inclusive. There remains much more to discuss and delve into deeply, including gender, diversity, and intersectionality.

Keywords : diversity, inclusion, collectives, affinity groups, employee resource groups

Conference Title : ICAMB 2023 : International Conference on Accounting, Management and Business

Conference Location : Algiers, Algeria

Conference Dates : March 27-28, 2023