Chapter 2: Diversity Legislation in a Global Perspective

*Equality and Fairness in Employment*

Discussion Question

1. The International Bill of Human Rights consists of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; and the two optional protocols.

The different articles under the declaration were designed to fit harmoniously together, although there is potential tension between the articles that assure freedom of cultural and religious expression and those that assure equality, particularly as they apply to the workplace.

What is an example of possible tension between freedom of cultural and religious expression and those that assure quality?

1. In Turkey, hijabs, burkas, and other religious attire are prohibited. Similar bans are found in countries such a Belgium, Italy, Tunisia, and in Germany. Although opponents of these laws criticize them as limiting freedom of religion and religious expression, proponents claim that they promote a secular society and assure freedom from religion in schools and in the workplace and therefore guaranty equality in the public arena.

From an inclusive workplace perspective, what is your opinion concerning banning religious attire?

1. In the United States, civil rights legislation from the 1960s and later outlawed job discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, pregnancy, national origin, age, and disability. The United States and Canada provide similar antidiscrimination protections, although differences do exist. The United States does not provide these protections for its employees except for membership in a union.

How does this affect employees in the workplace? In an inclusive workplace, what could organizations do to improve employee protections?

1. In order to assure adherence to employment laws and regulations, to avoid penalties, and to reap rewards of compliance with local rules in these different national and cultural contexts, managers must understand the legislative and business-related social policy practices of countries in which they are doing business.

Why is understanding the legislative and business-related social policy practices of countries in which they are doing business important? Provide an example.

1. The scope of protections against sexual harassment varies greatly among countries. Noncompliance with antidiscrimination laws can have severe consequences, but employee discrimination still happens today. What are the limitations of antidiscrimination diversity legislation and do you believe that it can deter and prevent discriminatory employment practices?