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Inclusive Strategies: Fostering Workplace Diversity

A study on Inclusive Strategies in a Diverse workplace

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Abstract: In today's globalized business environment, fostering workplace diversity is essential for organizations seeking sustainable growth and innovation. This study explores the viewpoints of managers as well as employers, in the role of inclusive strategies in promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) within organizations. The research highlights the importance of leadership commitment, unbiased recruitment processes, employee resource groups, mentorship programs, and policy reforms in creating an inclusive work environment. Additionally, it addresses challenges such as unconscious bias, resistance to change, and cultural integration while proposing actionable solutions. By analyzing case studies and empirical data, this study demonstrates how inclusive strategies contribute to enhanced collaboration, higher job satisfaction, and overall organizational success. The findings underscore the need for organizations to move beyond compliance-driven approaches and actively embed inclusivity into their corporate ethos to drive meaningful change.

I. Introduction

This research is regarding employee inclusion & diversity as given in the title. It is focused on how the managers & employers in the workplace view inclusion & diversity. It can be viewed in a positive matter or negative or even neutral depending on the situation as well as, perception of them. They could overall perceive inclusion & diversity positively. But the same could also be said negatively. Some employees could feel that it's just a waste of time or a business strategy. While there could also be employees, who perceive it neutrally. They neither view it positively or negatively. The researcher is performing this study to find out how many of them perceive inclusion & diversity in a workplace.

The inclusion and diversity of an employee has changed over time considering the social, cultural and political movements as well as the changes in their workplace and business setting. In the last few decades, some new attention has been received regarding diversity & inclusion in the workplace, so that most organizations have developed policies and strategies toward in improving the inclusivity, equity and diversity.

Before the widespread focus on employee inclusion and diversity, workplaces were exclusionary environments where certain groups were marginalized or overlooked. Women, racial minorities, LGBTQ+ individuals, and others were either denied opportunities or relegated to lower-paying, less influential roles.

This lack of inclusion stifled both the individual growth of employees and the overall potential of organizations. The introduction of civil rights laws, gender equality policies, and other reforms during the mid-20th century began to break down these barriers, but many challenges persist. Over time, organizations have realized that D&I are not just ethical imperatives but also key drivers of advancement, efficiency, and organizational success.

II. Abbreviations and Acronyms

Acronym	Full Form	Acronym	Full Form
DEI			Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
HRM			Human Resource Management
CSR			Corporate Social Responsibility
EEO			Equal Employment Opportunity
D&I			Diversity and Inclusion
ERG			Employee Resource Group
L&D			Learning and Development

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Population and Sample

The 10% of managers & employers working in Corporates/Industries of Vadodara, Gujarat. This study uses a way of picking people called simple random sampling. It's a fair method because everyone has the same chance to be picked for the study. It's also one of the most common ways used in research. Random sampling is when you pick random people from a group to be part of a study. This helps make sure the study is fair and true for everyone in that group. For instance, if you're studying how employees think about diversity and inclusion at a company, random sampling means picking random workers to talk to. It doesn't matter what job they hold or how long they've been working. This way, the study's results represent the thoughts of the whole company, not just one part of it. This method makes the research results more reliable and able to be applied to the whole group. By using this method, researcher can ensure that their results are not skewed by factors like personal preferences or pre-existing groupings, and the findings are more likely to be applicable to the broader population.

3.2 Data and Sources of Data

Books are essential sources of secondary data, providing well-researched, theoretical, and historical perspectives on diversity and inclusion. These resources offer foundational knowledge, frameworks, and previous research that will help contextualize and deepen the understanding of the study topic. Academic journals are invaluable for gathering peer-reviewed research and scholarly articles related to diversity and inclusion. Websites and blogs can provide practical and up-to-date information on diversity and inclusion practices within real-world organizations. These online sources often contain industry reports, news articles, best practices, and case studies that can complement academic resources. Google Forms is an effective tool for collecting primary data in the form of surveys or questionnaires. It allows researchers to easily design and

distribute surveys to a wide audience. The data collected through Google Forms can then be automatically compiled and analyzed.

3.3 Data Processing & Analysis

The data collected from the research, including both quantitative and qualitative responses, was processed and analyzed using Excel Sheets. Excel is a powerful and widely used tool for organizing, processing, and analyzing data due to its user-friendly interface and extensive analytical capabilities.

1. Data Entry and Organization:

After collecting data through methods such as Google Forms, responses were exported into Excel sheets. The first step in the data processing phase was organizing the raw data into structured columns for easy analysis.

2. Data Cleaning:

Before proceeding with any analysis, the data was cleaned to ensure accuracy and consistency. This involved checking for any missing, incomplete, or inconsistent responses. In some cases, outliers or irrelevant data were removed or corrected establishing the integrity of the analysis.

3. Quantitative Data Analysis:

For the quantitative questions (such as Likert scale ratings or numerical data), Excel's built-in functions were used to perform statistical calculations. Key operations included: - Descriptive Statistics: average, medium, mode and standard deviation were calculated to summarize the central tendency and variability of responses. - Frequency Distribution: Excel was used to calculate how often specific responses occurred, enabling a better understanding of patterns in the data. - Data Visualization: Charts, graphs, and histograms were created to visually represent the data, making it easier to spot trends and relationships. These visualizations helped illustrate how employees or employers perceive different aspects of inclusion and diversity.

4. Qualitative Data Analysis:

The descriptive answers from open-ended questions were processed by categorizing and coding the text data. The main themes or patterns in the responses were identified manually or through Excel's text functions.

5. Comparative Analysis:

Excel also allowed for comparative analysis between different groups or variables. For example, responses from different departments, experience levels, or demographic groups could be compared to assess whether perceptions of inclusion and diversity varied across these factors. This helped to uncover any significant differences or trends in how certain groups viewed workplace diversity.

6. Reporting and Presentation:

Finally, the processed and analyzed data was presented in the form of reports, summaries, and visualizations. Excel's functions made it easy to organize the data into tables and charts, which were then incorporated into the research findings and discussion sections. Overall, the use of Excel for data processing and analysis allowed an efficient and efficient access to processing a large volume of data. His robust analytical features facilitated both quantitative and qualitative analysis and ensured that the results of the study were accurate, complex and represented in a clear and comprehensible way.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This research study on “Inclusive Strategies: Fostering Workplace Diversity” has brought to light the perceptions of managers and employers on workplace diversity and inclusion. In general, most respondents expressed positive or non-negative opinions about their companies' efforts. Many accepted the fact that diversity leads to improved cooperative efforts, innovation, and employee satisfaction. Some respondents were however ambivalent and pointed out that policies on diversity are formulated but their implementation and real impact leaves much to be desired.

One of the remarkable insights from the employees was clear dedication from the managers and employers towards encouraging inclusiveness in the workplaces. From the responses, it was evident that most participants not only recognized the significance of diversity and inclusion but also thought through ways these concepts could be deepened in their organizations. A good number of the respondents were ready to actively participate and provide solutions which showed that inclusion was not only regarded as a compliance obligation but rather a value and responsibility to be shared within their places of work.

Participants embraced the chance to engage in conversations about inclusion, frequently perceiving the research as a platform to express their ideas and desires for creating fairer and more inclusive spaces. This engagement was characterized by insightful and practical recommendations, suggesting a genuine desire to delve into meaningful and impactful endeavours. Participants shared their own encounters with inclusion initiatives, expressed a longing for more comprehensive programs, and frequently connected diversity to broader organizational objectives like fostering innovation, enhancing employee satisfaction, and ensuring long-term success.

The enthusiasm to engage in conversations and enhance diversity initiatives demonstrates a notable change in the mindset of managers and employers. Rather than perceiving inclusion as a fixed set of rules or a checklist, many consider it as a dynamic and ongoing process that necessitates collective dedication and continuous enhancement. Their active involvement and willingness to openly discuss ideas demonstrate a genuine commitment to encouraging and fostering an inclusive diversity work environments in which all employees from various origins are acknowledged and empowered to present the best of themselves. This eagerness not only showcases individual commitment but also indicates a widespread readiness within organizations to embrace significant transformations.

Another key topic was the need to take a fresh look at and beef up company policies to make sure they lead to real change. People who responded pointed out that while many companies have diversity policies, these often don't go deep enough or hold anyone accountable to make a lasting difference. Ideas in this area included changing hiring practices to draw in diverse groups of talented people. This could be done by getting rid of biases in job ads how interviews are done, and what's used to pick candidates. Some also suggested working with groups that don't get as many chances. This could mean teaming up with schools, colleges, and professional groups to find more diverse candidates.

Apart from hiring, those involved emphasized how crucial it is to provide fair chances for moving up in the company. They pointed out that organizations need to make sure career growth isn't held back by prejudices or built-in obstacles. They suggested steps like clear-cut promotion standards, programs to pair up with mentors, and paths to develop leadership skills aimed at groups that don't have much representation. Also, those surveyed proposed using diversity measurements to monitor progress and make organizations responsible. This involved gathering and examining data on hiring, promotions, retention, and worker satisfaction to spot gaps and gauge how well diversity efforts work.

They also suggested sharing these numbers with workers and stakeholders often to build openness and trust. According to these answers, participants overwhelmingly agreed that a proactive and organized strategy is necessary for significant change. In order to create inclusive and diverse workplaces, training, policy improvement, equal opportunity, and data-driven accountability were continuously highlighted as essential elements. These observations offer insightful advice to businesses looking to go beyond token diversity initiatives and establish work environments where all staff members can succeed.

It is inadequate to merely establish policies; organizations must also actively track their progress and hold themselves accountable. Participants recommended various strategies, including the integration of diversity objectives into leadership performance appraisals, the regular review of diversity statistics, and the insistence that leaders personally commit to inclusion initiatives. Mitigating unconscious bias demands continuous education, introspection, and systemic modifications to eradicate disparities within organizational procedures.

In addition, it is vital for organizations to allocate resources toward initiatives designed to cultivate pathways for diverse talent to ascend into leadership positions. Such initiatives might encompass leadership development programs tailored regarding employees from specific groups, additionally mentorship and sponsorship efforts. Moreover, establishing clear and open criteria for promotions is essential to guarantee equitable opportunities for career progression.

In the future, it is imperative for companies to prioritize the adoption of actionable and lasting strategies, systematically assess their effects, and cultivate an inclusive culture where each employee is recognized and appreciated. Such a forward-thinking strategy will not only boost organizational achievements but also contribute to the development of a more just and equitable workplace for everyone.

Figures and Tables

Table 1:

What are some of the primary benefits of a workplace with high inclusion?

Sr. No.	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Increased employee turnover	11	110
2	Improved creativity and innovation	40	40
3	Enhanced employee morale	33	330
4	Difficulty attracting top talent	9	90
5	Reduced customer satisfaction	9	90
	Total	102	1020

In conclusion, the results from the table suggest that the majority of respondents (40%) believe that improved creativity and innovation is the most significant benefit of fostering inclusion and diversity in the workplace. This highlights the widespread view that diverse teams contribute to more creative problem-solving and innovative solutions. Enhanced employee morale was the second most selected option, with 33% of respondents indicating that inclusion and diversity positively impact employee satisfaction and motivation. On the other hand, only 11% of respondents were considered to conceive employees, suggesting that most employees do not perceive diversity and inclusions as a factor leading to a higher turnover. Both difficulties in attracting the highest talent and reduced customer satisfaction have received the smallest answers, each of them, which means that these factors are not considered to be significant disadvantages of the initiative of diversity and integration. Overall, the findings indicate that employees largely view inclusion and diversity as a source of creativity, innovation, and morale, with less concern about negative impacts such as turnover or talent attraction.

Table 2:

As per you what should effective Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) training programs mainly focus on?

Sr. No.	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Highlighting the company's past achievements in diversity	13	130

2	Raising awareness of unconscious bias and its impact	22	220
3	Teaching employees to avoid controversial topics in conversation	14	140
4	Providing one-time sensitivity training sessions	9	90
5	Encouraging open communication and feedback mechanisms	40	400
	Total	98	980

In conclusion, the findings from the table reveal that the majority of respondents (40%) view encouraging open communication and feedback mechanisms as the most effective strategy for fostering inclusion and diversity within the workplace. This emphasizes the importance employees place on creating an environment where ongoing dialogue and feedback are encouraged. Raising awareness of unconscious bias and its impact followed as the second most selected option with 22%, reflecting a strong recognition of the need to address and mitigate biases that can hinder inclusivity. Teaching employees to avoid controversial topics in conversation was chosen by 14% of respondents, suggesting that employees are mindful of creating a respectful and comfortable environment for all.

Highlighting the company's past achievements in diversity received 13%, indicating some value in showcasing progress but perhaps less of a priority compared to more immediate, actionable strategies. Lastly, providing one-time sensitivity training sessions received the least response (9%), pointing to a preference for ongoing efforts over single training events. Overall, the results indicate that employees favor continuous, proactive efforts such as open communication and unconscious bias awareness supporting equality and inclusiveness, rather than relying on one-time interventions or retrospective recognition.

Table 3:

What do you think organizational policies and practices that promote workplace inclusion should include?

Sr. No.	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Strict dress codes and rigid work schedules	8	80
2	Flexible work arrangements and parental leave options	33	330
3	Hiring based solely on seniority	9	90
4	Using gendered language in communication	8	80
5	Use of clear channels for reporting harassment	35	350
	Total	93	930

So, in conclusion, the data presented in the table reveals that the majority of respondents (35%) prioritize the use of clear channels for reporting harassment, highlighting the importance of establishing transparent and accessible mechanisms for employees to report issues related to harassment. Flexible work arrangements and

parental leave options closely followed, with 33% of respondents selecting this option, reflecting the significance employees place on work-life balance and support for family needs.

The option of hiring based solely on seniority received 9%, indicating that while some value seniority in hiring decisions, it is not the most favored practice for inclusion and diversity. Both strict dress codes and rigid work schedules and using gendered language in communication received the least responses, with only 8% each, suggesting that respondents do not see these practices as beneficial to promoting an inclusive work environment. Overall, the findings indicate a strong preference for policies and practices that support accessibility, flexibility, and a respectful workplace culture, while rigid and outdated practices are less favored in fostering inclusivity.

Table 4:

Do you think your company can work smoothly without employee inclusion?

Sr. No.	Options	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Strongly agree	7	70
2	Somewhat agree	12	120
3	Neutral	35	350
4	Somewhat disagree	1	10
5	Strongly disagree	0	00
6	Rather not say	10	100
	Total	65	650

So, in conclusion, the variables reveal that most of the participants (35%) are “neutral” regarding whether the company can function smoothly without employee inclusion, indicating uncertainty or a balanced view on the matter. The second highest response (12%) “somewhat agree”, suggesting that a portion of employees believes some level of inclusion is important, but not necessarily critical for smooth operations. A smaller percentage (10%) chose “rather not say”, indicating some reluctance to comment on the issue. Only 7% of respondents “strongly agree” that the company could operate without inclusion, while 1% “somewhat disagree”, reflecting a minority who believe inclusion is not essential for the company's smooth functioning. Overall, the results suggest there is an acknowledgement regarding the aspects of inclusion, however a significant portion of respondents may not fully comprehend its direct impact on the overall performance of the company.

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