

Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) -The Key Initiatives for Organizational Excellence

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ABSTRACT

Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) are crucial for organizational excellence, as they help to address the unique diversity, equity, and inclusion gaps in the workforce. Workplace equality refers to equal access to all opportunities and freedom from discrimination, while inclusion ensures that everyone enjoys the meal. DEI is essential for organizational success, and organizations must work to address the unique diversity, equity, and inclusion gaps in their workforce. Leaders must highlight pertinent opportunities, advance equity by addressing societal injustices, and activate diversity by accepting differences among staff members and clients to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace. This entails setting clear objectives and goals, appreciating and celebrating the diversity between clients, employees, and strategic partners, and cultivating a feeling of community among all parties. It takes intentional measures to encourage full engagement and a feeling of community among all employees, clients, and strategic partners to practice inclusive leadership. All levels and types of leaders must comprehend the fundamentals of leadership and implement new ideas into their organizations or positions. Additionally, they need to build the means, assets, and assistance necessary to identify and lessen prejudice, accept diversity, build sympathetic bonds, cultivate allies, resolve disputes, and bring about positive change. The author of this paper has studied a variety of DEI initiatives of business organizations and examined the role of DEI in organizational excellence. The discussion part gives the required insights for the decision-makers.

Keywords: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Organizational Performance

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1. Introduction

A diverse workforce includes people of all races, genders, ages, religions, physical abilities, and other demographics. When considering your diversity goals, you must recognize the specific gaps in inclusion, equity, and diversity that exist within your workforce. The four primary types of diversity are internal, external, organizational, and worldview, and you should endeavor to understand and represent each one. Read on to learn more about each of them and how diversity affects the workplace. Workplace equality gives people the freedom to be themselves in the workplace. All employees, regardless of gender, race, religion, ethnic heritage, sexual orientation, or disability, must be treated with respect and dignity.

Equality in the workplace is the absence of prejudice and equal access to all opportunities. It is unacceptable for people to treat their peers unfairly or with prejudice, especially when it comes to their age, gender, or ethnicity. Numerous nations have passed laws to advance employment equality. For instance, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) exists in the United States. It has rules in place to guard against discrimination against both employees and job applicants. Such laws forbid discrimination on the grounds of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, disability, and other categories. Ensuring everyone has a good dinner is the goal of inclusion. Creating a diversified business culture is not the same as creating an inclusive workplace culture. Having a varied workforce shouldn't mean that its members must be of different genders, races, or sexual orientations.

2. Literature Review

In her 2020 article, Archana Balasubramanian investigates government initiatives to increase worker diversity. The change to the Factory Act of 1948 that permits female employees to perform nightshifts is the subject of the author's main discussion. Only if safety is guaranteed will this amendment be relevant. Given the advancements and employment prospects since the Factory Act of 1948 was passed, the Madras High Court permitted women to work from 7 p.m. to 6 a.m. in December 2015. The Karnataka government published it on November 20th, 2019. However, a few requirements were made, such as the availability of transportation, CCTV cameras with a 45-day recording period, sanitary working conditions, an adequate supply of restrooms, a 12-hour break between shifts, two female security wardens, and CCTV coverage of the area around the plant. The author emphasizes that since a POSH Act complaint must be filed within three months, the footage period should be extended. Additionally, both men and women should receive the same 12-hour rest between shifts.

In 2016, Nagaraj M. Muggur looked at and highlighted the different ways that gender inequality still exists in India's social and economic spheres. The major goal of the study is to describe programs for women's empowerment and analyze historical patterns in gender inequality in Karnataka. In comparison to men, women have much lower rates of population growth, sex ratio, employment, literacy, wage rate, political engagement, and economic standing. Population growth indicates that gender disparity in Karnataka is far less than it is at the federal level. To effectively address these problems and close the gender gap through active involvement in the social, economic, and political arenas, effective inclusive policies are needed. Parents must be aware of and comprehend that female children are equal to male children to achieve gender equality in kid sex ratios. Together, we must work to highlight the value of women and girls and to advance gender equality. We must also work to advance women's access to education, training, and employment opportunities.

The results of a 2018 government study on women entrepreneurs in the state of Karnataka point to the importance of women entrepreneurs in today's developed economies. In the US, 40% of firms are owned by women, and the percentages are similar in other nations. Women entrepreneurs play a key role in the industrial economy of the nation because of low investment requirements, strong potential for creating gainful employment, and a larger distribution of industries in rural and urban areas. Several organizations in India are committed to promoting female entrepreneurship and provide a range of initiatives to assist female entrepreneurs in starting and growing their firms. Among the important organizations are the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), the National Institute for Entrepreneurship and Small Business Development (NIESBUD), the World Assembly of Small and Medium Entrepreneurs (WASME), and the Small Industries Development of Bank of India (SIDBI).

In their working paper from 2021, Malini L. Tantri and Sanjukta Nair investigate how post-independence India focused on achieving strong economic and social development. Additionally, domestic enterprises are protected through industrial licensing, input regulation, foreign investment, etc. Karnataka is renowned for its knowledge-intensive industries and use of technology. In 1983, Karnataka became the first state to implement a state-specific industrial policy. Despite this significant governmental support, the industrial sector's share of the overall GDP has decreased while the service sector's share has been rising. The Karnataka government recently (on August 13, 2020) issued the Industrial Policy 2020–25, a plan to support industry 4.0. The policy has placed a lot of emphasis on the growth of MSMEs in Karnataka, one form of which has been the implementation of an MSME Sarthak plan to address difficulties faced by MSMEs. Bangalore is renowned for creating skilled labor and is home to the sole MSME2 training facility in the nation. The number of employees has increased 72 times since 1980. Karnataka, one of the top five industrialized states, raised its contribution to India's industrial GVA from 4.8 to 6.3 percent over 28 years; yet, even with Maharashtra's lower participation, Karnataka's industrial sector GDP contribution is still less than half of Maharashtra's. In the most recent years, the manufacturing industry has seen a fall in the increase of GVA and GCF per capita. In Karnataka's industrial sector, the mining and energy sectors are growing faster. Karnataka has fallen in the national rankings for trade facilitation as well. In the pandemic condition where the bulk of migrating labor is being marginalized, the government should have a well-thought-out plan for the demand and supply of labor required for industrial activity.

According to Gill's (2021) proposal, workplace demographics are undergoing changes due to various factors such as racial or ethnic identity, religion or spirituality, immigrant status, gender, and sexual orientation. Additionally, changes in income, educational attainment, socioeconomic status, and literacy are also contributing factors. For transformation to be successful, strategies should prioritize "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" (DEI) over "Diversity" alone. In order to boost worker happiness and engagement, they should also concentrate on creating inclusive team environments. There is growing evidence linking the effectiveness of the organization, patient outcomes, and provider work conditions.

Organizational leaders must promote, lead, and support DEI activities in light of the social and cultural repercussions, according to Amin, 2021. Furthermore, a growing number of people are assimilating into multilingual, multicultural, and multiracial cultures. There is a major impact of these demographic shifts on social, legal, political, educational, and cultural institutions. The inevitability of cultural diversity—where employees engage in both positive and negative interactions with people from backgrounds other than their own—was also cited as a necessity for organizations and sectors to survive. However, organizational activities that support a great workplace culture are guided by leaders in diversity and inclusion. Incorporating equity-based awareness into hiring, onboarding, training, task development, workplace culture, promotion, succession planning, and retirement are long-term strategies developed by organizations that value DEI.

According to Ali.A. Karakha, managers and human resources specialists/professionals within an organization can conduct a thorough analysis of workforce needs, identify weaknesses, and support proactive actions needed to improve DEI levels within the organization. All of these outcomes lead to a more resilient and productive work environment. By using appropriate indicators for evaluating DEI at the workforce level, managers and HR professionals can support improved workforce outcomes. Creating a productive and resilient workplace enhances the lives of construction workers and raises

the caliber of their job, which is desired by all stakeholders in the sector. It also benefits everyone who works there (intrinsically and externally).

According to Kari Rozenkraz (2021), in order to accomplish the aims of shared excellence, the surgical community ought to spearhead efforts to enhance the diversity of academic medical institutions, hospitals, and medical schools. Enhancing diversity in the medical field is essential to lowering healthcare inequities, giving underrepresented groups in medicine more opportunities, and enhancing patient outcomes.

According to Adediran, the issue of diversity, equity, and inclusion has elevated to the top of organizations' business priorities because of the world crisis, the speed at which globalization is happening, social movements that have recently been connected to racial injustice, and the growing demands of consumers, employees, and society at large for ethical business practices. DEI initiatives are moving beyond "nice to have" policies and announcements due to mounting pressure on companies to follow their own advice and the possibility that they could result in financial outperformance.

3. Different DEI Models

Two models of practice underpin equality, diversity, and inclusion.

The Equal Opportunities Model

The Equal Opportunities Model demands that everyone be treated fairly. According to this approach, prejudice or inequality should not be justified by "irrelevant factors" as race, ethnicity, or hair color. Positive intervention refers to the model's need that any possible barriers to equality be identified and removed as soon as practical.

The Differences and Diversity Model.

The Difference and Diversity Model states that people should feel appreciated for who they are and that their differences and uniqueness should be celebrated. People begin to feel more powerful when they begin to value each other's and their own diversity and originality. The diverse cultural experiences and beliefs of a team's members may prove advantageous.

The Six Elements of a DEI Plan in an Organization

DEI Strategic Plan

Leadership Commitment

Recruitment and Hiring of Diverse Talent

Inclusive Performance Management

Equitable and Inclusive Culture

Marketplace and Community Impact

Source: <https://brighterstrategies.com/blog/diversity-equity-inclusion-framework/>

How do you promote Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the workplace?

Reveal relevant opportunities.

In addition to comprehending the environment in which diversity, equity, and inclusion are manifested for particular individuals, groups, and the organization as a whole, it necessitates knowing the numerous types of diversity that exist both within and between groups. Before giving direction, promoting alignment, and inspiring commitment to DEI efforts in the workplace or other types of organizations, top leaders should think about how experiences of privilege and power may affect their approach and effectiveness — and that of others.

They should also consider how DEI dynamics may affect their marketplace and business strategy.

Before deciding on one to three strategic actions to achieve the intended results, senior leaders can collaborate with others in the organization to examine each person's particular context and identify the most relevant chances for change.

Elevate Equity.

The definition of equity is giving everyone the same opportunities and resources in a given setting so they can realize their full potential.

Senior leaders must first confess that their organization doesn't operate on an equitable playing field and acknowledge societal injustices in order to advance DEI.

Because people enter the labor force and go through their professions with discrepancies in advantage, opportunity, privilege, and power, what defines "fair opportunity" varies from person to person. When organizational leaders define

their reason for resolving equity gaps, admit any obstacles, set specific targets toward more equity, and then take action, they show a commitment that forms the cornerstone of the company's diversity and inclusion initiatives.

Activate diversity

Diversity refers to a wide range of individual and organizational traits, attitudes, beliefs, experiences, backgrounds, and behaviors that both complement and contrast with one another.

To activate such diversity, workers and customers must acknowledge and value each other's uniqueness. It gives managers and teams the tools they need to investigate how diversity impacts assumptions, methods, and points of view in addition to figuring out how to maximize each person's contribution. It also means setting clear objectives and expectations.

Lead inclusively

Proactive, intentional, and continuous efforts are required to foster full involvement and a sense of belonging among all employees, clients, and strategic partners in order to achieve inclusion. It entails following policies and guidelines in addition to having the ability to develop and apply original leadership theories.

All levels and types of leaders must comprehend the current requirements and know how to implement inclusive leadership in the many roles and groups they support. They also require skills, resources, and support as they strive to improve their ability to identify and lessen bias, appreciate diversity, build empathetic connections, cultivate allyship, handle conflict, and bring out the best in others.

Source: <https://m.pefata.com/leadership-challenges/equity-diversity-inclusion/>

4. DEI initiatives by business organizations

A sample of DEI initiatives by different business organizations has been described below,

Accenture

Diversity consulting to advance inclusion

The business assists organizations in advancing inclusion and diversity by fusing industry knowledge with cutting-edge analytics. Take a stand against inequality, racism, and intolerance.

Partnering with clients to accelerate equality

Accenture's Talent & Organization/Human Potential practice offers years of experience working with organizations in the area of inclusion and diversity. They partner with clients to create their inclusion and diversity strategy by employing a results-driven methodology. Clients go closer to equality with the help of tailored learning opportunities and workshops on leadership alignment. Their innovative ideas and state-of-the-art research enhance the clients' inclusive initiatives. The organization provides training, guidance on inclusion and diversity, and a wide range of staff members with expertise in leadership alignment. Accenture's successful inclusion and diversity programs and interactions with clients across a range of industries attest to their techniques, which are among the best in the business.

They provide insights that inspire action by utilizing analytics and human-centered design. Gender, race/ethnicity, LGBT+, those with disabilities, and cross-cultural diversity are a few of the focus areas.

Inclusion & diversity consulting

Every leader needs the means to bring about change inside their companies and a strategy to advance inclusion and diversity. Accenture can help the company by providing insights through powerful analytics.

Supplier inclusion and sustainability

Together with its multibillion-dollar supplier chain, the corporation cultivates and expands a global culture of responsible purchasing, which reflects its commitment to achieving equality of opportunity. Operating an ethical business where everyone benefits from long-term value purchases is just one of the many ways they are enacting change on a global scale. To encourage this, they execute multiple projects and programs, continuously expand the functions, and offer this service to clients.

Coca Cola

Creating a culture of diversity, equity, and inclusion in Coca-Cola

The company feels that diversity, equity, and inclusion—which are core to the company's values and growth strategy—have a substantial impact on the company's success. They capitalize on the remarkable diversity of people that can be found all over the world in order to fulfill their mission

of reviving the world and making a difference. They aspire to lead the charge in advancing a better shared future in addition to reflecting the diversity of the communities they serve.

Coca-Cola's DEI strategy includes three main long-term goals of the company:

- Mirror our markets
- Equity for all
- Inclusivity

Diversity Leadership Council

In order to meet the Global Women's Leadership Council's target of 50% female leadership positions worldwide by 2030, they aim to accelerate the growth and promotion of female talent into increasingly influential and responsible roles.

Networks for Employee Inclusion

Growth is contingent upon providing tools to facilitate change and ensuring that employees are heard. Their networks of inclusion are committed to creating a friendly work environment.

EY

As a multinational company, EY has the opportunity to address the effects of injustice and unfairness and foster progress both inside and beyond the company. They commit to fighting racism, bigotry, discrimination, and inequality while advancing social justice and inclusive growth.

How EY supports leadership, talent, and culture:

New technology, changes in how, why, and where people work, as well as demographic shifts, are all contributing to changes in the demands and expectations of the workforce. If organizations want to acquire the skills they want, they must adopt a new approach to recruiting, developing, and inspiring their staff.

Plan for Talent Development

Having the appropriate people in the right places with the right talents is crucial for keeping up with the ever-changing nature of the workplace. To get the required abilities, do you purchase them or enroll in classes?

The business may help the organization fulfill its talent aspirations and develop a workforce that possesses the abilities, values, and priorities needed to accomplish all business goals, from expansion to transformation.

Leadership

For a company to grow and adapt, it needs outstanding leadership. Performance within an organization can be greatly impacted by prudent leadership investments. To achieve this performance potential, adaptive leadership must be unlocked. This involves leading with emotional intelligence, based on shared values, and embracing continuing development for both leaders and employees.

With a deep grasp of the client's business, market, sector, and rivals, the organization can assist the client's executive team in preparing for and navigating through complexity, unpredictability, and the future of work.

To encourage long-term, sustainable growth and increase worker productivity, the right leaders must be trained with the necessary competencies.

Analytics for Workforce

In today's turbulent business environment, your personnel needs to be the right size, shape, mix, and competencies. People analytics provides data-driven insight for workforce strategy and planning, enabling personnel management and development to yield unique business benefits.

Enhancing the reliability of project timelines and facilitating accurate reporting and efficient management can be achieved by having daily insight into employee actions and attitudes, regardless of whether the program is part of a change or ongoing operations.

The company can help you put up flexible and dependable forecasting methods and systems that may provide data insights nearly instantly, directing regular reporting, action planning, and program management.

Talent Spotting

When people are taken into account as a component of an integrated company strategy, the right talent, with the right abilities, at the right price, may be found.

But according to the Global Capital Confidence Barometer, only 55% of companies say it's simple to identify and hire candidates who possess the necessary skills.

Bringing together the right people with the proper talents and career prospects is crucial to achieving organizational goals.

Technology is becoming more and more available to help the organization achieve just that by automating repetitive operations, enabling the workforce to make more insight-driven decisions, and freeing up the workforce's time to concentrate on the more human aspects of their professions.

HR modernization

HR's boundaries are ever-evolving, ranging from exceptional employee experiences to worker health and safety. Teams in HR must make the shift from the conventional human services that have historically defined the position to the new ones that will do so going forward.

Sync up the service vision and the operating model.

It will be feasible to develop a new people operating model, a business case for the function's transformation, an enabling roadmap for the trip, and deep insights into current operations with the help of EY's rapid HR/payroll assessment technique.

Take care of the difficult issues before they affect the budget and timeline.

With the help of the EY HR/payroll Innovation Lab, it will develop Minimum Viable Products (MVPs) for innovative people services, goods, procedures, and technologies. Customer feedback, quality and experience feedback loops, and iterative innovation will be used to develop and scale the MVPs for worldwide deployment. Together with the personnel, design the services and link them to the intended business results.

By completing the missing pieces

Discussions

These trailblazing companies are setting the stage for next diversity and inclusion projects. These leading multinational companies have taught us valuable lessons about how to implement diversity and inclusion programs that will benefit the entire globe. Some of these lessons include how to foster innovation and how to accurately evaluate and measure their efforts.

Acknowledge the Change in the Global Perspective on D&I: Diversity now includes more than simply gender and race. The significance of creating environments where a range of perspectives are valued and acknowledged is growing. The speakers' voices might or might not be the same gender, race, or ethnicity. Race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, generation, disability, and personality type are a few instances of diversity in the workplace today.

variety and inclusion now encompass more than simply gender and ethnicity; they also involve using that variety to create better goods and services. We must work together to emphasize how important it is to have a varied pool of thought.

Ex: concentrated on the disabled in India, where a large number of people are afflicted with polio or other diseases since there is a dearth of medication to treat them. Consequently, Deutsche Bank hires and trains people with disabilities in partnership with a non-governmental organization.

Managing a global firm that is consistent throughout the world involves two things: making a profit and investing in D&I. There are other problems that come with collaborating across cultures and geographies.

Challenges

Budgetary restrictions and inexperienced employees; • Understanding what to measure and suitable benchmarks for comparison

- Constantly being cognizant of how staff members see the culture
- sharing DEI initiatives and resources with the entire company;
- being aware of internal marketing strategies for the DEI business case

Conclusion

DE&I (diversity, equality, and inclusion) is still vital, so businesses should respond quickly. We've outlined the biggest organizational initiatives and challenges worldwide in this research, along with the breakthroughs these companies must make to go beyond the methodical approach to DE&I. To increase inclusion, they must also place a high priority on promoting equality, transparency, and a sense of belonging. Businesses will usually need to step up their bravery and audacity in order to advance in these sectors. They also need to be prepared to confront sensitive cultural norms and hold individuals responsible for their actions, especially leadership and management. Over time, they must also keep up these efforts.

The DE&I business is flourishing more than before. As the costs of a lack of variety have increased over time, the likelihood of diverse organizations exceeding their industry rivals in terms of profitability has also increased. Though representation is progressing at a sluggish pace, certain businesses are making significant strides. A careful look at these diversity award winners shows that progress requires a deliberate, business-led strategy in addition to bold, coordinated action on inclusion. In their assessment on the McKinsey series, they assert that "Diversity Wins" examines the business case.

The study concludes that diversity in terms of gender and ethnicity is worth the effort because it is associated with a significantly higher possibility of outperformance. Furthermore, cultivating a diverse and inclusive culture is critical to success since it promotes both individual achievement and group cohesion. Diversity in the workplace presents challenges, just like any big endeavor does when it first starts and continues. However, most of these challenges are surmountable, and the benefits of placing a strong emphasis on diversity and inclusion are not appreciably outweighed by them. Since this endeavor will benefit our teams as well as our communities, we ought to give it our highest attention.

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