

## A Study on Diversity and Inclusion: HR Perspective

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### ABSTRACT

Diversity and inclusion (D&I) are pivotal in today's global landscape, acknowledging the value of differences to enrich organizational culture and foster innovation. Diversity covers various aspects like race, gender, age, ethnicity, culture etc., while inclusion actively fosters an environment where these differences are respected and valued. D&I plays a crucial role in talent attraction, retention, and employee engagement, contributing to a positive corporate culture that promotes equal opportunities for everyone. The research methodology is descriptive and exploratory, incorporating both primary and secondary data sources to offer a comprehensive perspective on this vital subject. The primary data collection involves the administration of questionnaire to HR professionals from various industries within Vapi and Silvassa region, ensuring diverse perspectives and experiences. This approach allowed for the accumulation of firsthand insights and perspectives directly from those actively engaged in diversity and inclusion practices within their organizations. Complementing the primary data, the secondary data sources included literature review on D&I, delving into evolving definitions, frameworks, and best practices. This multifaceted research design enabled a thorough exploration of the intricate nuances of diversity and inclusion in contemporary workplaces. The research objectives include studying the concept of Diversity and Inclusion, gain insights from HR professionals across various industries, and identifying the challenges organizations face when implementing successful D&I programs. The collection is geographically focused on Silvassa and Vapi, with questionnaires exclusively administered to HR professionals in these locations. It's important to note that the study's findings are confined to organizations within the Vapi and Silvassa regions.

**Keywords--** Diversity, Inclusion, Equity

involves creating a supportive and respectful environment that actively welcomes and values differences."

In today's dynamic and interconnected world, the concepts of diversity and inclusion have risen to the forefront of discussions surrounding workplaces, organizations, and society at large. Diversity, at its essence, signifies the recognition and appreciation of the myriad of human differences that enrich our collective experience. These distinctions encompass a broad spectrum, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, abilities, and even diverse perspectives and cognitive styles. Diversity is the unique tapestry of individuals that weaves together the vibrant fabric of modern society.

Complementing diversity, inclusion stands as the active commitment to creating an environment where these differences are not only acknowledged but embraced and leveraged for the betterment of individuals and organizations alike. It transcends mere tolerance, seeking to foster a culture of respect, equity, and empowerment. Inclusion champions the idea that every individual, irrespective of their background, should have an equal seat at the table and an equal voice in the conversation. It is the cornerstone upon which equitable opportunities, collaborative innovation, and a harmonious coexistence are built.

Together, diversity and inclusion constitute a powerful force, one that is instrumental in shaping the success and sustainability of modern organizations. They serve as catalysts for attracting and retaining top talent, enhancing employee engagement, and nurturing a positive corporate culture. As we delve into the depths of this research, we embark on a journey to understand not only the significance of diversity and inclusion but also the challenges faced by organizations in implementing effective strategies that uphold these principles. In doing so, we aim to shed light on the path forward towards more inclusive and equitable workplaces that reflect the diverse world we inhabit.

## I. INTRODUCTION

### Definition

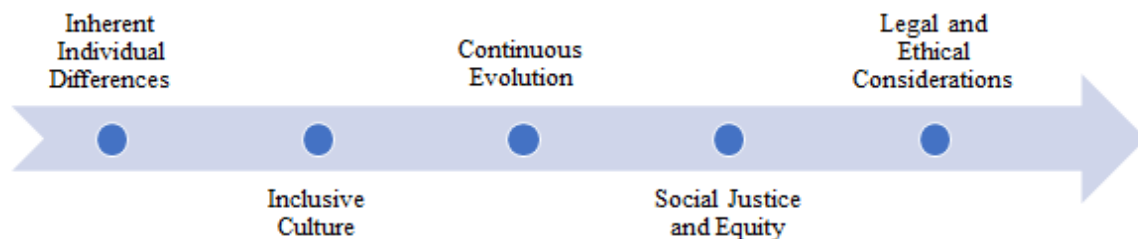
The Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM) defines Diversity and Inclusion as "Diversity encompasses all the different characteristics that make one individual or group different from another. Inclusion

## II. HISTORY

The history of diversity and inclusion has evolved significantly over time. While the concept of diversity has always existed in human societies, it gained prominence in the mid-20th century as civil rights movements in the United States and around the world advocated for equal rights and opportunities regardless of race, gender, or other characteristics. In the corporate world, diversity and inclusion became a recognized concept in the latter half of

the 20th century, driven by legal changes and societal shifts. It gained popularity as businesses recognized the benefits of diverse perspectives and the need for inclusive workplaces to foster innovation and productivity. Today, diversity and inclusion are central to many organizations' values and strategies, as they strive to create equitable environments where people of all backgrounds can thrive and contribute to their fullest potential.

### *Nature of Diversity and Inclusion*



*Source: (classace.io, n.d.)*



## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

(Jayakrishnan S. S., 2020) The paper commences by illuminating the concept of diversity, emphasizing the profound importance of embracing individual differences, at both surface and deep levels. Inclusivity is portrayed as the achievement of a fair and respectful work environment that offers equal opportunities to all. The article underscores the strong relationship between diversity and inclusion, highlighting their role in organizational success and societal progress. Notably, the article discusses gender diversity and the

evolving landscape of the LGBT movement in India, acknowledging legal advancements while addressing persistent societal stigmas. It also discusses real-life examples of companies committed to diversity and inclusion. Furthermore, the article addresses barriers to these initiatives and provides suggestions for fostering inclusivity in organizations.

(O'Donovan, 2017), research paper, titled "Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace," provides a comprehensive exploration of the multifaceted concepts of diversity and inclusion within organizational contexts. The author underscores the increasing relevance of diversity

due to global demographic shifts and the presence of multinational companies. The paper adeptly defines diversity as encompassing both visible and invisible differences among individuals while introducing inclusion as the process of fully engaging people across these differences. It emphasizes the need for effective diversity management and integration into organizational culture, highlighting benefits such as cost savings, enhanced innovation, and improved customer service. Additionally, the paper acknowledges challenges such as resistance to change and tokenism. This paper serves as a valuable resource for understanding the advantages and complexities of diversity and inclusion in contemporary workplaces, emphasizing the importance of active management to create inclusive and productive environments.

**(Krithi, 2021)** Within this paper, the authors delve into the multifaceted dimensions of workforce diversity, categorizing it into primary, secondary, and tertiary dimensions, encompassing various aspects of diversity, both visible and less apparent, such as race, gender, ethnicity, age, cognitive style, and educational background and provides a comprehensive overview of workforce diversity and inclusion and aims to consolidate the existing literature on this topic and identify avenues for future research. In this paper, the researcher introduces the concept that organizations are comprised of individuals with diverse backgrounds, attributes, and characteristics. They emphasize that effective management of workforce diversity and inclusion is essential for organizational competitiveness in today's globalized world. Furthermore, the paper discusses the benefits of workforce diversity, highlighting its potential to drive innovation, improve decision-making, and a competitive advantage to organizations. However, it also acknowledges the challenges associated with managing diversity, such as miscommunication and conflicts, when not handled appropriately. The study underscores the crucial role of inclusion in mitigating the challenges posed by diversity. Inclusive practices are presented as key strategies for fostering diversity management and enhancing organizational commitment. This research paper provides a comprehensive exploration of workforce diversity and inclusion, discussing their dimensions, benefits, challenges, and the pivotal role of inclusion in achieving organizational competitiveness. The authors encourage further research in the field, particularly in understanding the effects of inclusion on diverse workforces.

**(Nisha Nair, 2015),** The author presents a comprehensive exploration of the ever-evolving concepts of diversity and inclusion within the context of organizations, while also examining their intersection with leadership. The paper encompasses a wide array of topics, including definitions and interpretations of diversity and

inclusion, their impact on organizational practices, the challenges in managing them, and the crucial roles played by leadership and organizational climate. Additionally, it delves into the complexities of diversity, addressing both visible demographic distinctions and concealed differences in values and thinking styles. The authors emphasize the significance of fostering inclusive cultures that transcend surface-level disparities to embrace hidden identities and commonalities. Furthermore, the paper highlights the ethical imperative of promoting diversity and inclusion alongside the tangible benefits, such as improved financial performance, increased innovation, and enhanced corporate image.

**(Ms. Aaiman Siddiqui, 2020),** In the backdrop of globalization, the paper underscores the imperative role of cultural diversity in today's workplaces, emphasizing its profound impact on organizational success. The authors define cultural diversity as the acceptance and respect for differences across various dimensions, highlighting its dynamic and pervasive nature across all organizational levels. The paper goes on to stress that effectively managing this diversity is not only ethically essential but also strategically advantageous, fostering a positive organizational image, loyalty among clients, and commitment from employees. The theoretical contributions, including Hofstede's 5D model, Hall's high and low context in communication, and the systematic-organic dimension, are skilfully presented, adding depth to the discussion. Moreover, the paper delves into approaches and strategies for managing cultural diversity also highlighting the compelling reasons why organizations should consider cultural differences in their operations, encompassing customized product development, effective communication, business restructuring, international customer interactions, trade fairs, and promotional strategies.

**(Saxena, 2014),** This research provides a comprehensive exploration of the significance of diversity in contemporary organizations. Author defines workforce diversity, including factors like age, cultural background, and gender, and emphasizes its importance in the era of globalization. The paper highlights that while a diverse workforce is essential for competitiveness, it also poses management challenges due to differences in perception, attitude, and more. The paper summarises findings from multiple studies conducted by different authors, collectively emphasizing the complex nature of workforce diversity and its impact on organizational productivity. Key findings include the need for effective diversity management, the role of leadership in cultural adaptation, and the potential for diversity to foster innovation. The problem statement recognizes that diversity-related challenges cannot be solved by employee termination

alone and emphasizes the importance of addressing these issues strategically.

(Lynn M. Shore, 2011), This paper introduces Brewer's Optimal Distinctiveness Theory as a foundational framework for understanding the balance between an individual's need for belongingness and uniqueness within a group. It defines inclusion in work groups as the satisfaction of both these needs, emphasizing acceptance and connection to prevent isolation and promote security. Authors underscore the significance of creating organizational environments where diversity is pervasive and differences are seen as opportunities for learning. Furthermore, the paper discusses how their inclusion framework aligns with and distinguishes itself from existing models and theories within the diversity literature, particularly highlighting the focus on individual experiences within work groups. The literature review within the paper discusses various themes, including the role of leader-member exchange in reducing turnover in diverse work groups, the importance of leaders in creating an inclusive culture, and insider status practices that reflect inclusion. It also highlights the positive consequences of inclusion, such as job satisfaction, reduced turnover intentions, well-being, creativity, and enhanced career opportunities. The authors stress the need for further research to explore the mediating mechanisms between inclusion and these outcomes.

## IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Problem Statement

In today's diverse work environment, organizations face the challenge of fostering inclusivity. This research aims to address the identified gaps in understanding and implementing diversity and inclusion practices. By examining the need for such initiatives, this study seeks to provide valuable insights to organizations striving to create inclusive workplaces and harness the benefits of diversity.

### 4.2 Objectives of the study

- To study the concept of Diversity and Inclusion
- To gain insights of HR professionals across diverse industries regarding diversity and inclusion practices.
- To identify the challenges faced by organizations across various industries and regions when implementing successful diversity and inclusion programs.

### 4.3 Research Design

**Type of Research-** Exploratory and Descriptive

**Type of Data-** Primary and Secondary

**Sampling technique-** Snow Ball sampling

**Size-** 16 Companies

**Research Instrument-** Questionnaire

**Scope-**

- Data collection is specifically focused on the geographical areas of Silvassa and Vapi.
- He questionnaire was administered exclusively to HR professionals in these locations.

Company Name	Location	Job Title
Grauer and Weil	Vapi	Senior manager-HR
TCPL Packaging Ltd.	Silvassa	Assistant manager-HR
Phase 3 Autofab Ltd	Dadra Silvassa	Assistant manager-HR & Admin
Ador welding Ltd	Silvassa	Assistant Manager
Huber Group	Vapi	HR Executive
Industrial Boilers Ltd	Vapi	Hr assistant manager
Meril and HR	Vapi	HR
Sumitomo Chemical	Vapi	HR
Meril Life Sciences Pvt Ltd.	Vapi	HR Executive
Grauer and Weil	Vapi	Junior HR
IPCA & HR	Athal	Sr. Manager HR
IPCA laboratories ltd. Athal	Athal	HR recruiter
PPFL, Athal	Silvassa	Management Trainee
Cello Plasto, Daman	Daman	HR
Oceania Container Lines	Vapi	Assistant Manager
Gulf Oil Lubricants India Ltd.	Silvassa	Manager HR and Administration

### 4.4 Limitations of the Study

The study's findings are restricted to organizations within the Vapi and Silvassa regions, limiting the applicability to a broader context.

Data collection solely from HR professionals may not encompass the perspectives of others within the organizations.



## V. DATA ANALYSIS

**Table 1:** Age

Options	Frequency
Under 18	0
18-24	5
25-34	8
35-54	2
55-64	1
65 or older	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table 2:** Gender

Options	Frequency
Male	9
Female	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table 3:** Education

Options	Frequency
High school	0
Associate degree	0
Bachelor's degree	2
Master's degree	14
Doctorate/Ph.D	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table No 4:** Years of experience

Options	Frequency
Less than 1 year	7
1-5 years	6
6-10 years	1
11-20 years	2
More than 20 years	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table 5:** Diversity and inclusion positively impacts organizational performance

Options	Frequency
Strongly agree	7
Agree	8
Neutral	1
Disagree	0
Strongly disagree	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table 6:** Organization effectively promotes D&I

Options	Frequency
Very effectively	6
Somewhat effectively	7
Neutral	2
Not very effectively	1
Not at all effectively	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table 7:** Organization have policies to promote D&I

Options	Frequency
Yes	10
No	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table 8:** D&I training programs

Options	frequency
Yes, regularly	6
Yes, occasionally	4
No	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table 9:** Effectives of D&I training

Options	frequency
Very effective	7
Somewhat effective	3
Neutral	3
Somewhat ineffective	1
Very ineffective	0
No training provided	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table 10:** Sense of belonging

Options	Frequency
Strongly feel a sense of belonging	
Feel a moderate sense of belonging	9
Feel somewhat neutral about belonging	1
Do not feel a strong sense of belonging	0
Do not feel any sense of belonging	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table 11:** Is your voice heard and valued

Options	Frequency
Always	11
Often	2
Sometimes	3
Rarely	0
Never	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table 12:** Equal opportunities are provided to all for career advancement

Options	Frequency
Yes	12
No	1
Not sure	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table 13:** Feel comfortable discussing Diversity issues with superiors

Options	Frequency
Yes, very comfortable	11
Yes, somewhat comfortable	4
No, not comfortable	1
I haven't tried	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table 14:** Organization has diverse leadership team

Options	Frequency
Yes, very diverse	9
Yes, somewhat diverse	6
No, not diverse at all	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table 15:** Workplace actively recruits from diverse backgrounds

Options	frequency
Yes, actively	8
Yes, somewhat	8
No, not at all	0
I don't know	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table 16:** Felt isolated at work

Options	Frequency
Yes	4
No	11
Maybe	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table 17:** Types of discrimination experienced (multiple selected)

Options	Frequency
Race/ethnicity	4
Gender	5
Age	3
Sexual orientation	3
Religion	5
Disability	3
Others	5
Not experienced	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table 18:** Noticed transformation in workplace culture due to implementation of D&I initiatives.

Options	Frequency
Yes, significant positive changes	6
Yes, some positive changes	6
No noticeable changes	1
Yes, but with mixed or uncertain outcomes	0
I don't have enough information	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table 19:** Organization recognize and celebrate diversity

Options	Frequency
Frequently	4
Occasionally	9
Rarely	2
Never	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table No 20:** Unconscious bias exist in workplace.

Options	Frequency
Yes	6
No	6
Not sure	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table 21:** You are aware of your own unconscious biases?

Options	Frequency
Very aware	8
Somewhat aware	3
Not aware	1
Not sure	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table 22:** There is formal anti-discrimination policy in workplace

Options	Frequency
Yes	10
No	1
Not sure	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table 23:** Challenges that hinder D&I

Options	Frequency
Lack of diversity in leadership	8
Unconscious bias in hiring	6
Resistance to change from some employees	10
Insufficient diversity training	9
Stereotyping and microa ggressions	9
Unequal access to growth opportunities	6
Inconsistent communication about diversity.	6
Difficulty in measuring diversity progress	6
Cultural insensitivity	6
Insufficient support for employee resource groups	7
Bias in performance evaluations	6
Discriminatory company policies	4
Gender pay gap	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>86</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

**Table 24:** Initiatives that could enhance D&I (multiple selected)

Options	frequency
Implement mandatory diversity training	11
Foster open dialogues on diversity.	9
Create mentorship programs for underrepresented groups.	7
Promote diverse recruitment practice	13
Recognize and celebrate cultural holidays.	6
Sponsor diversity-related events.	3
Promote diversity in decision-making	6
Improve accessibility for all employees.	8
Address unconscious bias in hiring	7
Enhance diversity in leadership roles	8
Promote flexible work arrangements.	9
Implement fair promotion policies.	7
Develop a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination.	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>102</b>

*Source: Complied from questionnaire*

## VI. FINDINGS

### Age

Study reveals that maximum respondents are from the age group of 24-34 that is 8 and minimum were from the age group of 55-64 that is 1 respondent. (Ref Table no. 1)

### Gender

The maximum respondents were male with 9 responses and the rest were female that is 7 respondents. (Ref Table no. 2)

### Education

The maximum respondents had Master's Degree as their educational qualification that is 14 respondents and minimum respondents had bachelor's degree i.e 2. (Ref Table no. 3)

### Years

The maximum respondents had less than one year of experience that is 7 respondents while minimum respondents had experience between 6-10 years i.e 1 response. (Ref Table no. 4)

### Diversity and Inclusion Positively Impacts Organizational Performance

The maximum respondents agreed to the statement that is 8 respondents, while minimum respondents were neutral that is 1 response. (Ref Table no. 5).

### **Organization Effectively Promotes D&I**

The majority of the respondents selected that Organization somewhat effectively promotes D&I that is 7 respondents while minimum agreed to the fact that it was not very effectively promoted that is only 1. (Ref Table no. 6).

### **Policies to Promote D&I**

The maximum respondents agreed that is 10 responses, while rest denied that is 6 respondents. (Ref Table no. 7)

### **D&I Training Programs**

The maximum respondents agreed that training was provided regularly while few also denied that is 6 responses respectively, while minimum said it was provided occasionally that is 4 responses. (Ref Table no. 7)

### **Effectiveness of D&I Training**

The maximum respondents agreed that Diversity and Inclusion training was very effective that is 7 respondents, while minimum respondents had an opinion that is was somewhat ineffective that is 1 response. (Ref Table no. 8)

### **Voice is Heard and Valued**

The maximum respondents agreed that there voice is heard and valued always, that is 11 responses,

while minimum respondents agreed that there voice was heard sometimes that is 1 response. (Ref Table no. 10)

### **Equal Opportunities are Provided to All for Career Advancement**

Maximum respondents agreed to it that is 12 responses, while minimum respondents denied this statement that is 1 response. (Ref Table no. 11)

### **Feel Comfortable Discussing Diversity Issues with Superiors**

The majority of the respondents were very comfortable discussing diversity issues with superiors that is 11 respondents, while minimum mentioned that they were not comfortable that is 1 response. (Ref Table no. 12)

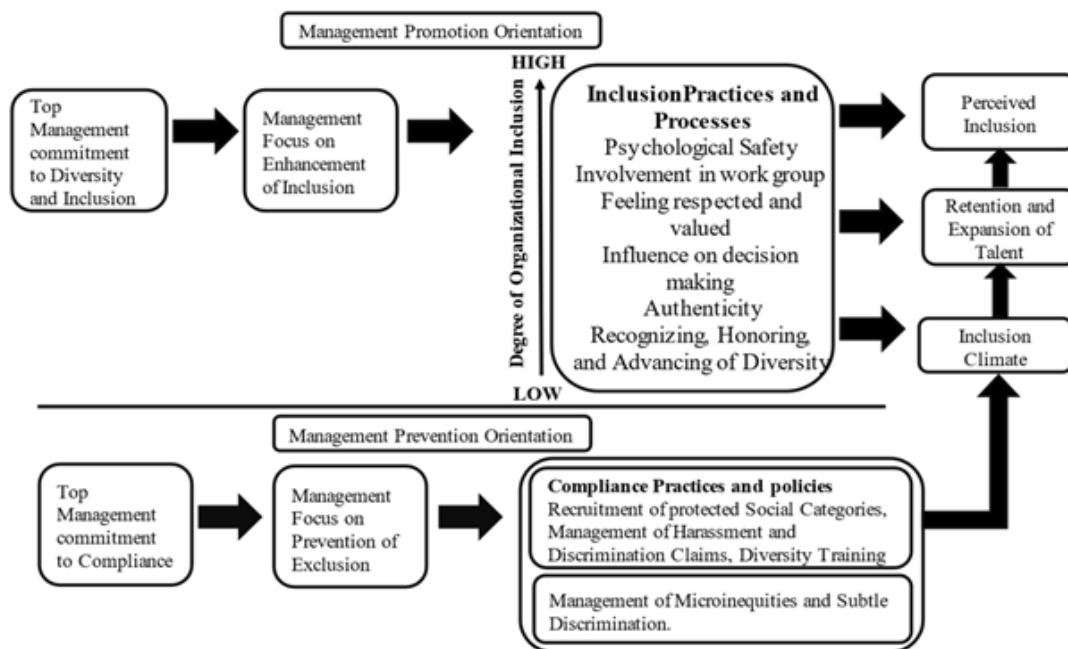
### **Organization has Diverse leadership Team**

The majority of the respondents agreed that they have a diverse leadership team that is 9 responses, while minimum respondents said that the team is not diverse that is 1 response only. (Ref Table no. 13)

### **Workplace Actively Recruits from Diverse Backgrounds**

The maximum respondents said that the workplace actively or somewhat actively recruits diverse workplace, that is 8 responses respectively. (Ref Table no. 14).

### **Recommendation Model**



**Source:** (Lynn M. Shore, Amy E. Randel, Beth G. Chung Michelle A. Dean Karen Holcombe Ehrhart Gangaram Singh, *Inclusion and Diversity in Work Groups: A Review and Model for Future Research*, 2011).



## VII. FUTURE SCOPE OF STUDY

1. Expanding the study beyond Vapi and Silvassa to encompass a broader geographic range.
2. Extending data collection to include input from employees in various departments, not limited to HR.
3. Exploring additional attributes and factors influencing diversity and inclusion initiatives to enrich the depth of analysis in subsequent studies.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the significance of Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) in the workplace, emphasizing its positive impact on organizational performance. The findings suggest that while D&I initiatives are valued and have made a difference, challenges like resistance to change and unconscious bias still exist. It's essential to continue promoting D&I, implement mandatory diversity training, and foster open dialogues on diversity. To address challenges effectively, organizations should focus on promoting diverse recruitment practices and actively recognizing and celebrating diversity.

This research has the potential to benefit organizations striving to create more inclusive workplaces and harness the benefits of diversity. Expanding the scope of the study and involving a broader range of participants could further enrich our understanding of D&I in diverse contexts.

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