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A Study on Diversity and Inclusion Initiative Challenges and Opportunities with Special Reference to Sree Mahalakshmi Garments

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ABSTRACT: The research highlights the significance of a customized strategy that takes into account the distinct operational and cultural context of each organization and offers practical insights for those trying to manage the intricacies of D&I efforts. This study adds to the larger conversation on diversity and inclusion by addressing both the potential and the obstacles and provides a framework for long-lasting and significant D&I initiatives. The research highlights the significance of a customized strategy that takes into account the distinct operational and cultural context of each organization and offers practical insights for those trying to manage the intricacies of D&I efforts. This study adds to the larger conversation on diversity and inclusion by addressing both the potential and the obstacles and provides a framework for long-lasting and significant D&I initiatives. Among them is resistance.

KEYWORDS: Diversity, Inclusion, Initiative.

I. INTRODUCTION

Initiatives centered around diversity and inclusion (D&I) have become essential to the success of organizations in the multicultural and globalized world. With the help of these programs, employers hope to create a work environment where a range of viewpoints, experiences, and backgrounds are not just acknowledged but also actively woven into the culture of the company. Beyond only being morally required, diversity and inclusion (D&I) programs have a significant impact on many aspects of an organization's performance, such as creativity, employee engagement, and competitiveness in the market.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM:
To close this gap, this study will look at the potential and difficulties associated with putting D&I initiatives into practice from the viewpoints of HR professionals, employees, and leadership. The research aims to uncover best practices, methods, and practical insights that can assist organizations in overcoming obstacles and realizing the full potential of diversity and inclusion (D&I) efforts through a thorough investigation. The ultimate goal of this research is to aid in the creation of a workplace that is more inventive, inclusive, and productive.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:
* To Examine the correlation between diversity and inclusion efforts and employee satisfaction, retention, and productivity in garment firms.
* To Analyze the barriers hindering the successful implementation of diversity and inclusion programs in garment companies.
* To Propose strategies and recommendations to enhance diversity and inclusion practices in garment companies.
* To Provide Recommendations for improving diversity and inclusion initiatives.

LIMITATIONS:
* The study may focus on a specific region or country within the garment industry, which could limit the applicability of the findings to other regions with different socio-cultural contexts.
* Reliance on self-reported data from surveys or interviews may introduce bias and inaccuracies, as respondents may provide socially desirable responses or misinterpret questions.

- The study may be influenced by external factors such as economic conditions, regulatory changes, and industry dynamics, which may affect the interpretation of results and recommendations.
- Depending on the research methodology chosen, the study may be limited in its ability to provide quantitative data or qualitative insights, which could impact the depth of analysis and conclusions drawn.
- The findings and recommendations of the study may be specific to the garment industry and may not be directly applicable to other sectors or industries, limiting the broader relevance of the research.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:
Research Methodology is defined as a highly intellectual human activity used in the investigation of nature and matter and deals especially with how data is collected, analyzed, and interpreted.

Research Design:
- A research design is the strategy for a study and the plan by which the strategy is to be carried out. It specifies the methods and procedures for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data.
- The researcher used a descriptive research design in collecting the data from respondents.

TYPE OF RESEARCH:
- Descriptive Research

SAMPLE DESIGN:
- Simple Random sampling

DATA COLLECTION:
Primary data:
- Questionnaire method
- Survey method

Secondary data:
- Literature review
- Company profile

STATISTICAL TOOLS USED:
- Simple Percentage Analysis
- Chi-Square Method
- ANOVA
- Correlation

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Langton Mutoya November 2023: "In 2018, the African Continental Free Trade Area (AFCFTA) agreement was introduced. Since the agreement was signed, member governments have shown an admirable degree of commitment. The political economy of Africa places a high value on women and youth, and the degree to which these groups are mainstreamed in financial-economic inclusion measures will likely determine the success of numerous continental initiatives, including the AFCFTA agreement. This is primarily due to the youthful demographics of Africa, where women and youth make up over 60% and 50% of the population, respectively. The degree to which women and young people are now included in AFCFTA initiatives falls short of what is anticipated of this demographic group. The primary implication of these.

Marco Marabelli October 2023: Opportunities and Difficulties for DEI The abstract goal of artificial intelligence (AI) tools and capabilities enable the metaverse to collect and analyze vast amounts of data in the workplace, far more than traditional people analytics methods. The metaverse may present opportunities for more equitable performance reviews and better employee experiences, particularly in the areas of diversity and inclusion in the workplace, gender and race, and inclusiveness, despite privacy and discrimination concerns and surveillance concerns.

Erin Meyer-Gutbrod January 2023: A growing number of professional and scientific societies are working to establish a science community that embodies inclusion, diversity, equity, and justice (JEDI). But evaluating success is

difficult, and there aren't many chances to get community input. The Oceanography Society (TOS) JEDI committee organized an interactive Town Hall during the Ocean Sciences Meeting in 2022 to get input from conference attendees and TOS members on three main areas: obstacles, steps forward, and prospects for improving JEDI in ocean sciences. The TOS membership was given a survey to complete before to this Town Hall.

Alicia Hemsley October 2022: In today's public discourse, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) is widely acknowledged, supported by calls for reduced discrimination and social acceptance of inequity. Furthermore, brands are using DEI more and more as a tool to convey their identities and connect with customer values. But putting DEI into practice as a brand management approach calls for more than just lip service and can be dangerous if not properly accepted. For example, when DEI projects are badly executed, customers may view them as being inauthentic. Alternatively, they may not resonate well with target consumer groups.

III. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

1. SIMPLE PERCENTAGE ANALYSIS

Table 1: Demographics

Demographics		No. of Respondents	Percentage
Age Group(in Years)	18-25 years	62	62
	26-35 years	18	18
	36-45 years	16	16
	46-55 years	3	3
	Above 56 years	1	1
	Total	100	100
Gender	male	63	63
	female	37	37
	Total	100	100
Position/Role	Executive/Leadership	35	35
	Middle Management	38	38
	Frontline Employee	26	26
	Associate	1	1
	Total	100	100
Years of Experience	0-2 years	44	44
	3-5 years	37	37
	6-10 years	15	15

Above 10 years	4	4
Total	100	100

INTERPRETATION:

A significant majority of the respondents are young adults aged 18-25 years (62%), indicating a predominantly young sample. There is a noticeable drop in representation from older age groups, particularly those aged 46-55 years (3%) and above 56 years (1%). The majority of respondents are male (63%), suggesting a potential gender imbalance in the sample, with females constituting 37% of the respondents. The sample includes a diverse range of positions, with the largest groups being middle management (38%) and executive/leadership roles (35%). Frontline employees make up 26%, while associates are the smallest group at 1%. The majority of respondents have 3-5 years of experience (37%), followed by those with 0-2 years (44%). Those with 6-10 years (15%) and above 10 years (4%) of experience form a smaller part of the sample, indicating a relatively less experienced workforce.

2 CHI-SQUARE ANALYSIS:

Chi-square test for Age and Inclusion.
HO= There is no significant relationship between Age and Inclusion.
H1= There are significant relationship between Age and Inclusion.

2.1 Table from the Chi-square test for Age and Inclusion.

ACTUAL VALUE						
	A	B	C	D	E	TOTAL
AGE	62	18	16	3	1	100
INCLUSION	22	46	29	2	1	100
TOTAL	84	64	45	5	2	200
EXPECTED VALUE						
	A	B	C	D	E	TOTAL
AGE	42	32	22.5	2.5	1	100
INCLUSION	42	32	22.5	2.5	1	100
TOTAL	84	64	45	5	2	200
	CHI.SQ	0.01				

CHI SQUARE=X^2=0.01

INTERPRETATION:

From the table, X^2 =0.01 is lesser than 0.05 for H1= There are significant relationship between Age and Inclusion.

Chi-square test for Age and Inclusion.
HO= There is no significant relationship between Year of Exp and Diversity.
H1= There are significant relationship between Year of Exp and Diversity.

2.2 Table from the Chi-square test for Year of Exp and Diversity.

ACTUAL VALUE						
	A	B	C	D	E	TOTAL
YEAR OF EXP	44	37	15	4	0	100
DIVERSITY	27	30	31	11	1	100

TOTAL	71	67	46	15	1	200
EXPECTED VALUE						
	A	B	C	D	E	TOTAL
YEAR OF EXP	35.5	33.5	23	7.5	0.5	100
DIVERSITY	35.5	33.5	23	7.5	0.5	100
TOTAL	71	67	46	15	1	200
	CHI.SQ	0.00				

CHI SQUARE=X^2=0.00

INTERPRETATION:
From the table, X^2 =0.00 is less than 0.05 for H0= There is no significant relationship between Age and Decision to shop in the E-commerce platform.

3 ONE - WAY - ANOVA:

ANOVA test for work-life, training, and culture.
Ho There is no significant relationship between work-life, training, and culture.
H1= There are significant relationship between work-life, training, and culture.

3.1 Table from the work-life, training, and culture.

WORK-LIFE	TRAINING	CULTURE					
12	14	13					
16	40	41					
37	28	26					
28	13	18					
7	5	2					
		Anova: Single Factor					
		SUMMARY					
		Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance	
		WORK-LIFE	5	100	20	150.5	
		TRAINING	5	100	20	193.5	
		CULTURE	5	100	20	213.5	
		ANOVA					
		Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
		Between Groups	0	2	0	0	1	3.885294
		Within Groups	2230	12	185.8333			
		Total	2230	14			

INTERPRETATION:
- The F-statistic is 0, indicating no between-group variability.
- The p-value is 1, which is much higher than any common significance level (e.g., 0.05), indicating that the null hypothesis (that all group means are equal) cannot be rejected.

- The critical F-value (3.885294) is much higher than the calculated F-statistic (0), further supporting that there is no significant difference between the group means.

ANOVA test for promotion, leadership, and resource.

Ho= There is no significant relationship between promotion, leadership, and resources.

H1= There are significant relationship between promotion, leadership, and resource.

3.2 Table from the promotion, leadership, and resource.

PROMOTION	LEADERSHIP	RESOURCE					
12	18	22					
47	34	40					
29	32	24					
9	11	12					
3	5	2					
	Anova: Single Factor						
	SUMMARY						
	Groups	Count	Sum	Average	Variance		
	PROMOTION	5	100	20	321		
	LEADERSHIP	5	100	20	162.5		
	RESOURCE	5	100	20	202		
	ANOVA						
	Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
	Between Groups	0	2	0	0	1	3.885294
	Within Groups	2742	12	228.5			
	Total	2742	14				

INTERPRETATION:

∟ F-value of 0 indicates that the variation between the group means is zero, which implies no difference between the group means.

∟ The P-value of 1 is much higher than any common significance level (e.g., 0.05), indicating that we fail to reject the null hypothesis. The null hypothesis states that there are no differences between the group means.

∟ The F crit value of 3.885294 is the threshold at which the F-value would indicate a significant difference at the chosen level of significance (typically 0.05). Since the F-value is 0, it is far below this threshold.

CORRELATION:

Correlation test for Garment offers and opportunities
X = Garment firms
Y= Opportunities

GARMENTS FIRMS	OPPORTUNITIES			
17	15			
40	25			
24	27			
15	27			
4	6			
		GARMENTS FIRMS	OPPORTUNITIES	
	GARMENTS FIRMS	1	0.673684433	
	OPPORTUNITIES	0.673684433	1	

Garment firms and opportunities:
Correlation Coefficient: 0.673684433

Interpretation: There is a positive correlation between garment firms and opportunities, with a coefficient of 0.673684433. This indicates a weak to moderate relationship.

CORRELATION:

Correlation test for workplace and productivity level
X = Workplace
Y= Productivity Level

WORKPLACE	PRODUCTIVITY LEVEL			
15	13			
14	24			
32	27			
32	26			
7	10			
	WORKPLACE	1	0.825318471	
	PRODUCTIVITY LEVEL	0.825318471	1	

Workplace and productivity levels:
Correlation Coefficient: 0.825318471

 Interpretation: There is a positive correlation between workplace and productivity, with a coefficient of 0.825318471. This indicates a weak to moderate relationship.

IV. CONCLUSION

There are many possibilities and challenges on the path to achieving diversity and inclusion in any organization. Overcoming unconscious prejudices and resistance to change, which can impede the implementation of successful diversity initiatives, is one of the main problems. Furthermore, leadership at all levels must maintain a persistent commitment and take strategic action to ensure actual diversity rather than tokenistic efforts. But there are also a lot of benefits to being inclusive and welcoming of others. A varied workforce fosters creativity and invention, which can improve decision-making and problem-solving skills. Diverse viewpoints are also a benefit. An inclusive workplace increases staff morale, engagement, and retention, resulting in a more vibrant and effective corporate culture.

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