

Importance of Encouraging Diversity Practices, Equity, and Inclusion in Bangladeshi Workplaces

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Abstract

Background: Diversity, equity, and inclusion in the work place relates to the measures done to establish awareness and modify mindsets, behaviors, and practices to create and sustain a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment. **Objective:** To identify the importance of encouraging diversity, equity and inclusion processes to achieve them. **Methodology:** The study executed both quantitative and qualitative approach (mixed method). Data collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary quantitative data collected by structured survey questionnaire and qualitative data collected from unstructured open-ended questionnaire. Secondary data collected from published books, journal articles and different websites. The study was carried out on Private Limited Companies from Dhaka City. The HR managers of 210 specifically chosen companies were given survey questionnaires, and a total of 200 completed surveys were returned. **Results:** Among the 200 respondents highest (60%) were from 40-44 years old followed by (40%) were from 45 to 49 years old and highest (80%) were male and (20%) were female. most of the respondents strongly agreed that encouraging diversity, fairness and inclusion processes developing corporate culture (60%), providing equal employment opportunity (54%) , advance employee morale and productivity (52%), allowing organization to move emerging markets (49%) and Focusing on success and maintaining a competitive environment (40%).(88%) respondents pointed out about gender followed by religion (85%) and age (82%). (18%) respondents said about race whereas only (3%) respondents mentioned about color. It is clear that gender, age and religion are the most important dimensions of diversity as mentioned by most of the respondents, color is not important at all. According to respondents exchange of ideas (28%), Assessment of training (45%), Feedback/Suggestion system (60%), One to one interview (55%), Focus group (30%), Customers opinion (58%), Employee opinion (65%), Cultural Audit (30%). Association between diversity, equity and inclusion with cultural values, job satisfaction, motivation and high productivity and organizational growth are significantly associated with each other $p < .05$.

Conclusion: Encouraging Diversity Practices, Equity, and Inclusion in is very important for cultural values, job satisfaction, motivation and high productivity and organizational growth Bangladeshi Workplaces.

Keywords: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, Work place

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Introduction

Diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace also known as DEI in the workplace — relates to the measures done to establish awareness and modify mindsets, behaviors, and practices to create and sustain a diverse, equitable and inclusive environment. But in the year 2020, there was a summer of discontent that presented a chance for change. Change was no longer a choice; it had become necessary due to racial injustice, an unexpected global pandemic, and the crushing impacts on many populations. In today's competitive business environment, it's crucial that companies find ways to leverage their diverse workforces for maximum profit (Alserhan, Forstenlechner, & Al-Nakeeb, 2010). The difficulty of coping with a diverse workforce has grown in importance. Managers in modern businesses must acquire the skills necessary to function effectively in a multiethnic setting. For the sake of maintaining an environment where everyone is treated with respect and appreciation, it is imperative that supervisors and managers learn to identify and account for cultural differences in their workplace practices (Greenberg, 2004). In the past year, many organizations have made diversity and inclusion less of a strategic priority as they continue to deal with threats to business continuity and recovery. Workforces are more spread out because some employees work from home while others are at the office or worksite or are going back there. These new ways of working can make diversity problems worse and show up any unconscious biases that may be there. Basically, a dispersed workforce can make it harder for employees and teams to work together. This can hurt efforts and programs for inclusion that were in place in the traditional workplace. Human resource is the most valuable thing a country, a company, or an organization has (Chowdhury 2011). Bangladesh, with its many people living close together, is the only place where this is not true. A plan for this country's development that doesn't put people at the top of the list would hurt the development process itself. Bangladesh's biggest development successes all used its people, which are the country's best asset. Human resource management is changing quickly, just like everything else. It's time for all organizations to realize that the real challenge for Human Resource Management is to lead the way on a number of strategic fronts, including

the development of formal systems for creating a "learning" organization, the effective deployment of human resources to get the most profit for the company, and the improvement of the skills of the workforce. Six activities need to be in place for an enterprise's management system to be efficient and effective. Some of these are "Procurement," "Production," "Personnel," "Finance," "Marketing," and "Research and Development." The term "Innovation" is replacing "R&D" as the new name for "Research and Development." For an organization to reach its goals, it needs to take a holistic, synergistic approach. This article looks at HRM/HRD from a future perspective. Since every organization is made up of people, it is important to get their help, improve their skills, motivate them to do their best, and make sure they stay committed to the organization if the organization wants to reach its goals.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace are more than just training modules, mentorship programs, and new rules. Employers who are fair make workplaces that are diverse and welcoming, where employees can share their different points of view, respect each other's needs, and reach their full potential without barriers. Because of this, workplaces that are inclusive see more innovation and financial returns, do better than their competitors, and make employees' lives better. Because of how important this topic is, this study was done to find out more about the cultural and linguistic differences in the workplaces of Bangladesh. Because there are so many different kinds of people in the workforce, it's important to find out how their personal traits and experiences shape how they see the workplace.

Rationale of the study

The management of the organization is in charge of ensuring diversity, fair and inclusion. It can be difficult to manage a diverse, fair and inclusion workforce, thus this study provides an overview of importance of encouraging diversity, equity and inclusion methods for achieving those goals, diversity policies and strategies, diversity initiatives, and indicators that firms have adopted. In order to effectively manage a diverse workforce in their organizations, managers and practitioners can benefit from the ideas presented in this paper. The study also offers a fact-based understanding of several strategies that may be used to bring together people with various histories, perspectives, and orientations in order for them to work together for the benefit of both the organization and the employees. The research adds to the body of literature that academics who wish to pursue future research in workforce diversity, fair and inclusion management can refer to. If worries about culture, age, or gender imbalance in the workplace exist in a developing, multi-cultural nation like Bangladesh that has opened up to globalization, there needs to be more conscious research on how to manage workforce diversity. There haven't been many studies done in Bangladesh that specifically examine the methods, techniques, goals, programs, indicators, and their use and efficacy in managing workforce diversity, fair and inclusion. Therefore, by examining workforce diversity, fair and inclusion management strategies used by top Bangladeshi companies, this research aims to close the gap.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of this study was to identify the importance of encouraging diversity, equity and inclusion processes to achieve them.

The specific objective of this study was

- To pinpoint the dimensions and feedback mechanisms of diversity, equity and inclusion process.
- To find out the association between diversity, equity and inclusion with cultural values, job satisfaction, motivation and high productivity and organizational growth.

Methodology

The study adopted both quantitative and qualitative approach (mixed method). Data collected from both primary and secondary sources. Primary quantitative data collected by structured survey questionnaire and qualitative data collected from unstructured open-ended questionnaire. Secondary data collected from published books, journal articles and different websites. The study was carried out on Private Limited Companies from Dhaka City. The HR managers of 210 specifically chosen companies were given survey questionnaires, and a total of 200 completed surveys were returned. Out of 200 HR manager 40 (20%) were chosen from the banking sector, 20 (10%), the insurance sector, 20 (10%), the garment sector, 20 (10%), pharmaceutical sector, 20 (10%), Developer sector 20 (10%), IT sector 20 (10%), NGOs 20 (10%), Private Hospital 20 (10%). 05 interviews were conducted from senior HR manager. The efficiency of feedback systems and diversity, fair and inclusion management programs was also evaluated using Likert scale. Data were analyzing by using Excel and SPSS-23. Both descriptive and inferential statistics executed. Data were presented by tables, figures and charts. $p < .05$ considered as significant.

Results

Socio-demographic profile

Age of the respondents

Among the 200 respondents highest (60%) were from 40-44 years old followed by (40%) were from 45 to 49 years old.

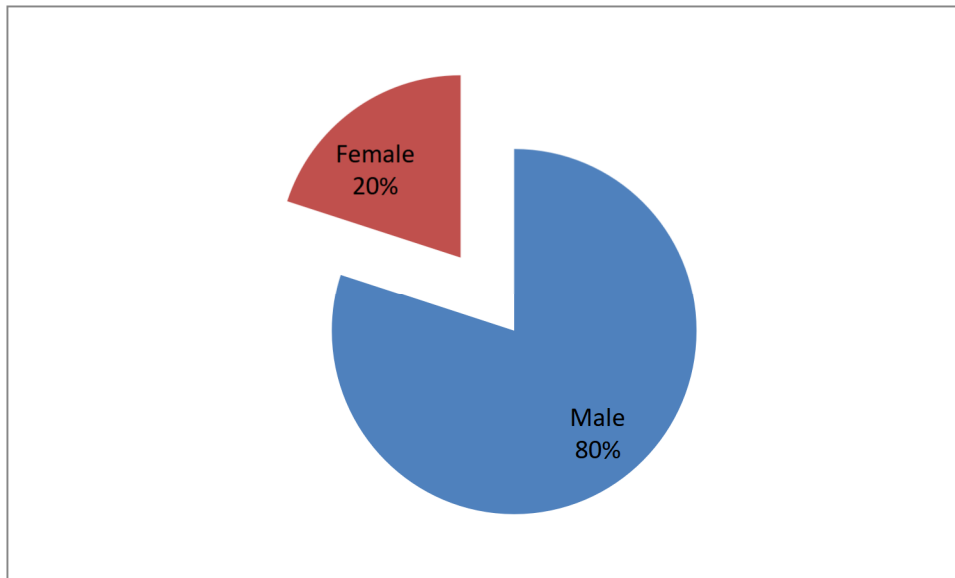


Figure 1: Age of the respondents

Gender of the respondents

Among the 200 respondents highest (80%) were male followed by (20%) were female.

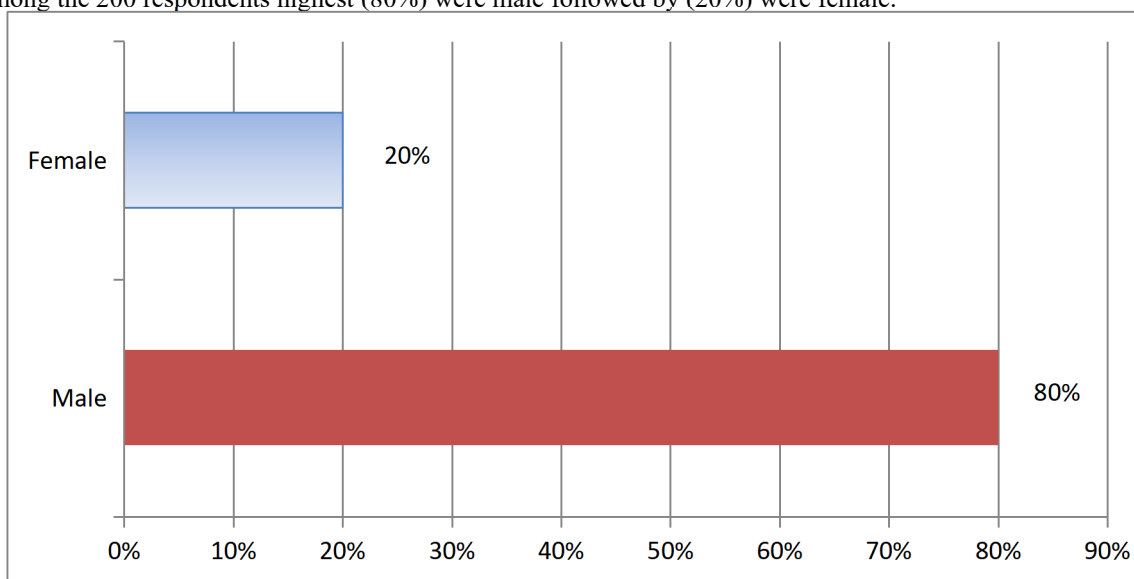


Figure 2: Gender of the respondents (n=200)

Table 1 show that most of the respondents strongly agreed that encouraging diversity, equity and inclusion processes developing corporate culture (60%), providing equal employment opportunity (54%) , advance employee morale and productivity (52%), allowing organization to move emerging markets (49%) and Focusing on success and maintaining a competitive environment (40%).

Table 1: Encouraging diversity, equity and inclusion processes to achieve them (n=200)

Encouraging diversity, equity and inclusion processes	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neither agree nor disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly disagree (%)
Developing corporate culture	60	20	10	7	3
Providing equal employment opportunity	54	24	15	5	2
Proper utilization of human capital	52	27	8	9	4
Advance employee morale and productivity	49	29	7	12	3
Allowing organization to move emerging markets	45	34	15	4	2
Focusing on success and maintaining a competitive environment	40	30	25	4	1

The figure 3 reveals that (88%) respondents pointed out about gender followed by religion (85%) and age (82%). (18%) respondents said about race whereas only (3%) respondents mentioned about color. It is clear that gender, age and religion are the most important dimensions of diversity as mentioned by most of the respondents, color is not important at all.

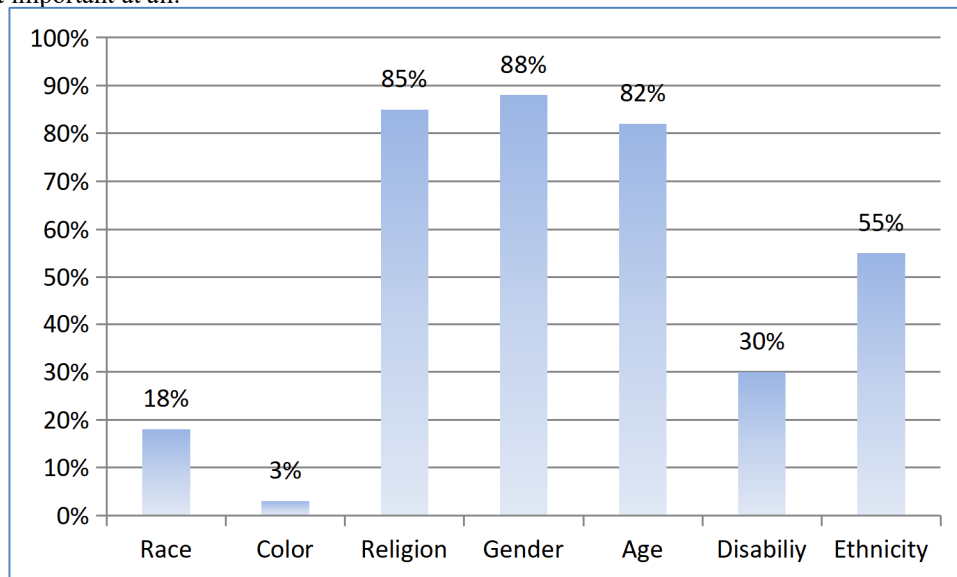


Figure 3: Dimension of diversity, equity and inclusion (n=200)

The figure 4 exhibits effectiveness of feedback mechanism of workforce diversity, fair and inclusion. According to respondents exchange of ideas (28%), Assessment of training (45%), Feedback/Suggestion system (60%), One to one interview (55%), Focus group (30%), Customers opinion (58%), Employee opinion (65%), Cultural Audit (30%).

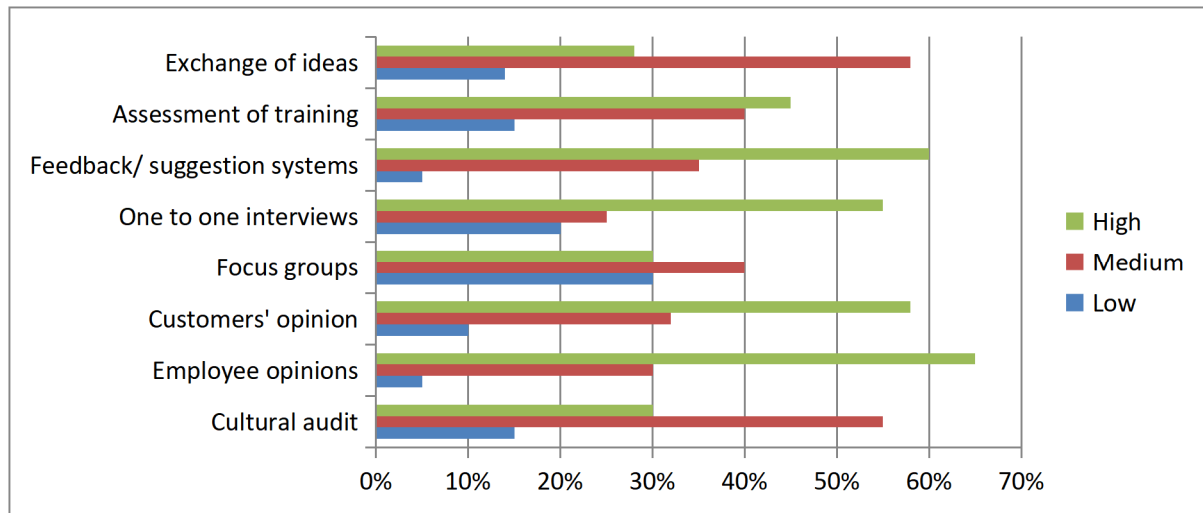


Figure 4: Effectiveness of feedback mechanism of workforce diversity, equity and inclusion (n=200)

Table 2 shows that association between diversity, fairness and inclusion with cultural values, job satisfaction, motivation and high productivity and organizational growth are significantly associated with each other $p < .05$.

Table 2: Association between diversity, equity and inclusion with cultural values, job satisfaction, motivation and high productivity and organizational growth

Description	Response	Diversity (%)	Equity (%)	Inclusion (%)	p value
Increase cultural values	Yes	96	94.5	93.5	.000
	No	4	5.5	6.5	
Increase job satisfaction	Yes	92.5	91	90.5	.002
	No	7.5	9	9.5	
Increase motivation and high productivity	Yes	90	88.5	87	.04
	No	10	11.5	13	
Increase organizational growth	Yes	89	87	85	.045
	No	11	13	14	

Discussion

Employing people who identify as women, minorities, disabled, etc. may help businesses reach these consumers (Fisher, 2008).⁵ The importance of diversity-related concerns is increasing as economies move from manufacturing to services. Effective relationships and communication with people are crucial for success in a service firm (Waiganjo, et al, 2012; Mayhew, 2013).⁶ Work teams with diverse people are more successful when they are flexible, quick to respond to change, and adjust to it (HP, 2008).⁷ (Kulik & Roberson, 2008).⁸ In order to strengthen human rights, managing a diverse workforce assists in addressing concerns about discrimination and inappropriate workplace practices. This in turn supports the advancement of fair treatment in the workplace. In order to manage a varied workforce, selection and promotion processes must be as efficient as possible (SHRM, 2014).⁹ This results in the growth of a diverse variety of skills and ideas, enhancing the human capital of an organization. Management of workforce diversity has some drawbacks. Diversity firstly raises the price of training. This cost increase results from holding lectures, seminars, programs, and workshops to encourage diversity practices in organizations (Catalyst, 2015).¹⁰ Conflicts is yet another drawback of workplace diversity. Conflicts occur when several people or organizations fail to communicate with one another and work together in a specific situation (NUL, 2014).¹¹ The presence of diversity in the workplace may result in higher employee turnover and absenteeism. Due to institutionalized bias and discrimination, minority work groups sometimes experience lower levels of honor and respect than majority work groups, which can negatively affect employee morale and productivity and impair job performance (Barak, 2005).¹² Managing workforce diversity refers to a comprehensive management strategy for creating a welcoming workplace for all employees from all different backgrounds. The company needs to create a link between diversity issues and decisions made about hiring, selecting, managing succession, rewarding performance, and other aspects of human resource management (Menke, Xu, and Gu, 2006).¹³ Performance standards should be developed with clarity and objectivity, properly conveyed, and applied without bias. Determine acceptable and unwanted behaviors based on talks about performance feedback with a varied staff. Prior to implementing diversity measures, organizations should first establish a culture that is inclusive of variety (Edeltraud and Ukur, 2011).¹⁴ The managers may be equipped to address the day-to-day issues of diversity through training and development programs. Systems and networks,

both formal and informal, may offer assistance in reducing discrimination and isolation. Language barriers in multicultural settings are a major barrier to creating organizations that value diversity. Employees should be able to receive advice from mentors and coaches on the value of successfully managing diversity in the workplace (ADC, 2011).¹⁵

Conclusion: Encouraging Diversity Practices, Equity, and Inclusion in is very important for cultural values, job satisfaction, motivation and high productivity and organizational growth Bangladeshi Workplaces.

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