A Comprehensive Assessment on Policies and Practices of Inclusive and Harmonious Workplace – Inclusive Pulse Check

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ABSTRACT

The study was undertaken at one of the leading manufacturers of precision engineering components providing customized quality service which is based in Bangalore. Though this paper an attempt has been made to know the strategic importance of diversity management and understanding the pulse of the employees on the state of workplace inclusiveness and harmony and to understand the perception of the employees on continuous commitment towards building harmony at workplace and cohesiveness among employees which would affect the performance of the company at managerial and operational level. The study was done using structured questionnaire method and stratified random sampling for selecting the samples under study. The Data was collected from 50 respondents from production and assembly department. The data thus collected was then checked and validated to find out whether there is statistically significant difference between the above parameters between production department and assembly department for which the ANOVA Single Factor Test was used.

Keywords: Workplace Diversity, Inclusiveness, Workplace Culture, Employee Morale and Performance, Ethnicity, Channels of Communication, Perception

Introduction:
The world's increasing globalization requires more interaction among people from diverse backgrounds. People no longer live and work in an insular environment; they are now part of a worldwide economy competing within a global framework. For this reason, profit and non-profit organizations need to become more diversified to remain competitive. Maximizing and capitalizing on workplace diversity is an important issue for management.

The concept of 'Workplace Diversity' has become increasingly prevalent in organizations all around the world. Workplace diversity refers to the variety of experiences and perspectives arising from differences in a broad category of attributes such as race, religion, age and gender. It is essential to be aware of the other characteristics which contribute to workplace diversity that may not be directly apparent to individuals.

A study on Inclusive and Harmonious Workplaces conducted by the Ministry of Manpower in 2010 found that managers and organizations faced the greatest challenge in managing diverse teams of different generations and nationalities. This was often due to differences in culture, communication styles, attitudes, perspectives and social norms.

In recent years, diversity within organizations has become an agenda in most boardroom discussions. Multi-national organizations have been the front-runner as the global nature of their businesses has necessitated greater emphasis on inclusive practices due to the presence of diversity in employee demographics.

Embracing Inclusive Practices

To maximize the collective knowledge and experiences of the workforce, organizations have begun investing efforts in inclusive practices. For instance, in embracing different religious needs, many organizations have dedicated areas where employees may conduct their religious practices within the workplace.

Having a diverse team brings fresh ideas and innovative approaches. The challenge is that these members will also have different communication styles, understandings and expectations. Effective management is important to enable the team to work effectively together and help all members reach their full potential, thereby harnessing the advantages of a diverse team. There are great variations amongst individuals and each individual may not demonstrate all the characteristics identified with their profile. It is important to get to know all team members at an individual level to understand their personal characteristics and how you can bring out the best in each of them.

In addition to being able to effectively manage your team members, it is also important to build a culture of inclusiveness and harmony within the team to facilitate effective communication, trust and teamwork between team members. Inclusive practices ought to be viewed as a business imperative and strategic
response to diversity. Failure to effectively manage racial and religious diversity at the workplace may increase workplace conflicts and result in a disengaged workforce and reduced productivity.

**Benefits of Inclusive and Harmonious Workplace**

- **Increased Profitability:** Organisations with an inclusive and harmonious workplace have been found to perform better.
- **Increased Employer Branding and Access to Talents:** Developing a strong corporate brand across ethnic groups as a fair and representative employer will enable organisations to attract the best applicant from a wider pool of talent.
- **Increased Creativity:** Creating an inclusive workplace enables inherent differences in perspectives and experiences present in a diverse workforce to be harnessed. This will decrease emphasis on ‘old ways of working’ and can hence result in increased creativity.
- **Increased Customer Alignment and Loyalty:** An inclusive workplace with employees from cultural backgrounds reflective of the consumer profile and business markets of the organisation, will allow products and services offered to be tailored according to customer needs and demands.

**Strategies for managing Inclusive and Harmonious Workplace**

- **Respect differences:** Value the uniqueness of every individual.
- **Keep an open mind:** Be open to new ways and approaches and encourage your team to do so.
- **Build self-awareness:** Be aware of your own behaviour and beliefs and how they may affect the way you treat others. Be proactive in asking for feedback to understand other people's point of view.
- **Get to know your team members on an individual level:** Be careful not to stereotype someone based on his/her profile. Get to know and understand your team members and adapt your management style to meet their needs. (Go through the reflection exercise on page 7 to ascertain how well you know your team members).
- **Acknowledge differences in communication styles and languages:** Be mindful that some employees may have difficulty expressing themselves in our business language, English. Be attentive and take time to clarify any doubts. Be prepared to vary your communication style to communicate effectively with your team members if necessary. Consider enrolling these employees for English language courses.
- **Make decisions based on team members’ abilities and task specifications:** Avoid assigning projects, assessing performance, selecting training participants or assigning roles and responsibilities based on factors such as gender, nationality, culture, or age, unless specific traits are necessary to perform the job.

**Research Methodology**

**Need for the Study:** The business are heavily influenced by new trends and talent market characterized by various forms of diversity, organizations needs to place emphasis on receiving the harmony that currently exists within the workplace through inclusive practices to enhance the collective knowledge and experience of workforce, organizations needs to invest the efforts to make it inclusive workplace, research has shown that well managed diverse teams outperform than homogeneous teams as they tend to be more creative and effective at problem solving. However if the diverse teams are not managed well communication on trust can break down resulting in lower performance. Hence there is need for studying to understand the pulse of the employees on the state of workplace inclusiveness and harmony to understand the strategic importance given by the organization on the workplace inclusiveness.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To access employees perception of the state of inclusiveness and harmonious workplace and also to compare the perception regarding the same with respect to production and assembly department.
2. To know whether the differences in the perception of company policy and practices, senior management support, company culture, relationship with supervisor, relationship with subordinates and overall parameters are statistically significant.

**TYPE OF RESEARCH:**

The research is descriptive type. Descriptive research provides the researchers with a general understanding of the problem and seeks conclusive data to answer question necessary to determine a particular cause of action.
SAMPLE UNIT:
The study was comprised of totally 173 employees out of which the employees from production department and assembly department unit were considered from one of the manufacturers of precision engineering components. The data is prepared based on the information being gathered. The sample size of 25 each from both the departments that is production and assembly department is taken to understand the differences in perception in the state of harmonious and inclusive workplace. The method being used for the selection of the sample was stratified probability sampling, to do the comparative study for comprehensive assessment.

PERSONAL PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

[Bar charts showing gender distribution and age distribution for production and assembly departments, with data indicating different percentages for each category.]
Graph 4.11 Showing level of indication of respondents

Graph 4.11 – A Showing Perception of Company Policy and Practices
Inference

A. Perception of Company Policy and Practices

1. It is evident that the perception on different parameters which were taken into consideration on knowing the perception of company policy and practices it can be seen that there was more understanding of the strategy on achievement on workplace inclusiveness at production department that at assembly department as production department had more heterogeneous group than assembly department which have more homogeneous group.

2. The belief of the employees on diverse workplace having impact on performance was stronger in the assembly department than the production department.

3. The belief on the impact of policies and practices on managing diversity helping them to work better was relatively more in assembly department than production department.

4. The other parameters that are continuous commitment of the employees to create inclusive and harmonious workplace, the organization support for professional development and growth, it is found that both the departments had the same kind of perception which was positive.

Graph 4.11 – B Showing Senior Management Support
Inference:
The perception of the employees regarding the senior management supporting workplace inclusiveness through work and action, senior management respecting all employees as individuals and valuing their differences was strong in both production and assembly department.

Graph 4.11 – C Showing Company Culture

Inference:
1. It is evident that the perception of the employees regarding the colleagues being co-operative to work with was stronger in assembly department than production department the reason for this could be more homogeneous team in assembly department makes them more co-operative and less homogeneous team may have made them less co-operative in production department as compare to assembly department.
2. The belief of the employees regarding the treatment received by others upsets them was strong in production department than assembly department. The reason could be same as production department has less homogeneous teams than the assembly department.
3. It is established that for the parameters the employees finding fit with the organization culture, the feeling that the colleagues from different natives are easy to work and communicate and there is a concern with the way how some employees treat others, for all these dimensions the perception of the employees from both the departments is same.

Graph 4.11 – D Relationship with Supervisor
Inference

The perception of the employees regarding working well with the supervisor, able to communicate well with the supervisor, supervisor treating them fairly and with dignity, supervisor valuing contribution to the team, providing feedback and guidance and evaluation of the supervisor provides them on performance regardless of any background was same across both the departments.

Graph 4.11 – E Relationship with Subordinates

Inference

1. It is evident that the insight of the employees regarding the understanding of the subordinates of the instruction and communication is strong in assembly department than in production department, the perception of the employees able to work with their subordinates was strong in assembly department than production department and supervisor finding it challenging to manage employees of different generation and gender the perception was strong in production department than assembly department. All this difference is due to the reason that the work force is more diverse in production department than assembly department.

2. As regards the perception of the employees on finding it challenging to manage employees of different natives there was no difference both in production department and assembly department.

A. Perception of Company Policy and Practices

To know whether there are any differences between the perceptions of company policy and practices between production and assembly departments.

Null Hypothesis

H0: There are no statistically significant differences between the perceptions of company policy and practices between production and assembly departments.

Alternative Hypothesis

H1: There are statistically significant differences between the perceptions of company policy and practices between production and assembly departments.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anova: Single Factor</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUMMARY</td>
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<tr>
<td>ANOVA</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source of Variation</td>
<td>SS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Paper
### Between Groups
- Count: 10
- Sum: 1
- Average: 0.207039
- Variance: 0.661192
- SS: 5.31765

### Within Groups
- Count: 386.4
- Sum: 8
- Average: 48.3

### Total
- Count: 396.4
- Sum: 9

**Interpretation:**
As the calculated value i.e., F=0.207039 is less than the F_{critical} value = 5.317655 and P-value = 0.661192 > α = 0.05, we have no evidence to reject the null hypothesis and therefore we accept null hypothesis. Therefore, it can be concluded that the differences of perception between production and assembly department in terms of perception of company policies and practices are not statistically significant.

### B. Senior Management Support
To know whether there are any differences regarding perceptions on senior management support between production and assembly departments.

**Null Hypothesis**
H₀: There are no statistically significant differences regarding perceptions on senior management support between production and assembly departments.

**Alternative Hypothesis**
H₁: There are statistically significant differences regarding perceptions on senior management support between production and assembly departments.

**Anova: Single Factor**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>F_{crit}</th>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.022222</td>
<td>0.895172</td>
<td>18.51282</td>
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<td>Within Groups</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>45</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>91</td>
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**Inference:**
As the calculated value i.e., F=0.022222 is less than the F_{critical} value = 18.51282 and P-value = 0.895172 > α = 0.05, there is no evidence for rejecting the null hypothesis and hence the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, it can be concluded that the differences of perception between production and assembly department in terms of senior management are not statistically significant.

### C. Company Culture
To know whether there are any differences regarding perceptions on company culture between production and assembly departments.

**Null Hypothesis**
H₁: There are statistically significant differences regarding perceptions on company culture between production and assembly departments.

**Alternative Hypothesis**
H₁: There are statistically significant differences regarding perceptions on company culture between production and assembly departments.

**Anova: Single Factor**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Variation</th>
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<th>Sum</th>
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<th>Variance</th>
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<td>Production</td>
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<td>449</td>
<td>89.8</td>
<td>98.7</td>
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### D. Relationship with Supervisor

To know whether there are any differences regarding perceptions on relationship with supervisor between production and assembly departments.

#### Null Hypothesis

\( H_0: \) There are no statistically significant differences regarding perceptions on relationship with supervisor between production and assembly departments.

#### Alternative Hypothesis

\( H_1: \) There are statistically significant differences regarding perceptions on relationship with supervisor between production and assembly departments.

#### ANOVA Table

| Source of Variation | SS    | df  | MS     | F       | P-value | F crit 
|---------------------|-------|-----|--------|---------|---------|--------
| Between Groups      | 21.33 | 1   | 21.33  | 0.2346  | 0.6385  | 4.9646 |
| Within Groups       | 909.33| 10  | 90.93  | 0.2346  | 0.6385  | 4.9646 |
| Total               | 930.67| 11  |        |         |         |        |

#### Inference:

As the calculated value i.e., \( F=0.234604 \) is less than the \( F_{\text{critical}} = 4.964603 \) and \( P = 0.638564 > \alpha = 0.05 \), there is no evidence to reject the null hypothesis and therefore we accept null hypothesis. Therefore, it can be concluded that differences of perception between production and assembly department in terms of relationship with supervisor are not statistically significant.

### E. Relationship with Subordinates

To know whether there are any differences regarding perceptions on relationship with subordinates between production and assembly departments.

#### Null Hypothesis

\( H_0: \) There are no statistically significant differences regarding perceptions on relationship with subordinates between production and assembly departments.

#### ANOVA Table

| Source of Variation | SS    | df  | MS     | F       | P-value | F crit 
|---------------------|-------|-----|--------|---------|---------|--------
| Between Groups      | 0.1   | 1   | 0.1    | 0.000888| 0.9769  | 5.3176 |
| Within Groups       | 900.8 | 8   | 112.6  |         |         |        |
| Total               | 900.9 | 9   |        |         |         |        |

#### Inference:

As the calculated value i.e., \( F=0.000888 \) is less than the \( F_{\text{critical}} = 5.317655 \) and \( P = 0.976956 > \alpha = 0.05 \), there is no evidence to reject the null hypothesis and hence, we accept null hypothesis. Therefore, it can be concluded that differences of perception between production and assembly department in terms of company culture are not statistically significant.
Alternative Hypothesis

H₁: There are statistically significant differences regarding perceptions on relationship with subordinates between production and assembly departments.

<table>
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<th>Anova: Single Factor</th>
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<tbody>
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<tr>
<td>Groups</td>
<td>Count</td>
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<td>Assembly Department</td>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Source of Variation</td>
<td>SS</td>
<td>Df</td>
<td>MS</td>
<td>F</td>
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<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>57.6</td>
<td>0.186559</td>
<td>0.677202</td>
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<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>2470</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>308.75</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>2527.6</td>
<td>9</td>
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</table>

Inference:
As the calculated value i.e., F = 0.186559 is less than the F critical value = 5.317655 and P-value = 0.677202 > α = 0.05, there is no evidence to reject the null hypothesis and therefore we accept null hypothesis. Therefore, it can be concluded that differences of perception between production and assembly department in terms of relationship with subordinates are not statistically significant.

Conclusion
A diverse workforce is a reflection of a changing world and marketplace. Diverse work teams bring high value to organizations. Respecting individual differences will benefit the workplace by creating a competitive edge and increasing work productivity. Diversity management benefits associates by creating a fair and safe environment where everyone has access to opportunities and challenges. Management tools in a diverse workforce should be used to educate everyone about diversity and its issues, including laws and regulations. Most workplaces are made up of diverse cultures, so organizations need to learn how to adapt to be successful.

Workforce are becoming inclusively diverse, employees from different generations and natives work together in the same organization, with such workforce diversity it becomes important to put all policies and practices in place to understand the perception of the employees on workplace inclusiveness.

Specific conclusion: To conclude it can be seen that the belief of the employees on the impact of policies and practices on managing diversity was relatively more in assembly department than in production department, some of the parameters such as continuous commitment of the employees to create work to place inclusiveness and organization support for professional development the perception was same in both the departments which was positive.

Both the departments perceived that senior management supports work place inclusiveness through work and action and also respects all employees as individuals and values their differences.
As regards company culture the colleagues being co-operative the perception was more positive in assembly department than production department, the belief that the way employees were treated upset them was strong in production department than assembly department.
The perception of the employees both from production and assembly department was same in regard to finding fit with organization culture.
The perception of employees both from production and assembly department was same regards being able to work well, communicate well, and receive fair treatment, feedback, guidance and supervisor valuing the contribution.
The subordinates understanding the instruction and communication, able to work with their subordinates was strong in assembly department than production department, in contrast finding it challenging to manage diverse employees was strong in production department than assembly department.
This difference is due to the reason that the workforce is more diverse in production department than assembly department. To know the differences in the perception of the employees on the five parameters taken for the study, the same were considered to frame hypothesis and five hypotheses were prepared and
it is evident that through the analysis that for all the parameters, null hypothesis was accepted and alternate hypothesis was rejected. Therefore it can be concluded that the differences in the perception regarding all the five parameters taken was statistically insignificant.

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