

# Workplace Culture: Creating A Positive and Inclusive Environment

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**D. Arvind**

*II year, Department of MBA*

*Dwaraka Doss Goverdhan Doss Vaishnav College, Chennai, Tamil Nadu*

**Banu Priya. S**

*Assisnant Professor*

*Dwaraka Doss Goverdhan Doss Vaishnav College, Chennai, Tamil Nadu*

## Abstract

*The purpose of this paper is to provide an overview of how companies approach diversity training in the workplace and effectiveness for fostering an inclusive workplace environment. Research indicates that resistance may accompany diversity training programs which may in turn undermine efforts to create inclusive workplace environments. By defining inclusion and differentiating between diversity and inclusion, we argue for a contemporary approach to developing diversity training in the workplace for creating an inclusive environment. Using theoretical frameworks for workplace training and development, organizational culture, and research related to diversity training programs, this paper presents a conceptual model for creating an inclusive workplace environment. This model indicates a reciprocal relationship between diversity training and an inclusive workplace culture that includes four dimensions of organizational culture: adaptability, involvement, mission, and consistency*

**Keywords: Diversity, Inclusion, Culture, Workplace Environment**

## Introduction

A thriving organization is built upon the foundation of a positive and inclusive workplace culture. This environment ensures that each team member is esteemed, honored, and empowered, irrespective of their background or adversities. This piece will delve into the fundamental actions required to establish such a culture, its foundational principles, and the crucial role it plays in both business prosperity and the overall welfare of employees. Additionally, a compelling personal narrative will be presented to underscore the profound influence of inclusivity and a positive culture.

## What is a Positive and Inclusive Culture

In a workplace culture that is positive and inclusive, diversity becomes a cause for celebration, and each person is accorded respect and dignity. This environment is marked by a feeling of belonging, equitable opportunities, and the liberty to authentically express oneself.

Foundational Elements of an Inclusive and Positive Workplace Culture for Employees Navigating Life Altering Events like a Stroke:

1. **Supportive Leadership:** Leaders who actively endorse inclusivity through tangible actions, creating an environment where employees feel genuinely heard, valued, and supported in both personal and professional aspects.
2. **Empathy and Compassion:** The bedrock of understanding and kindness, where colleagues and leaders display empathy towards individuals undergoing life-altering events, offering unwavering support and establishing a secure space for open communication about challenges and needs.
3. **Respect and Empathy:** Cultivating a culture of respect involves treating each individual with courtesy, dignity, and empathy. This encompasses recognizing differences and demonstrating kindness, ultimately fostering stronger interpersonal relationships.
4. **Flexibility and Adaptability:** Acknowledging the unique nature of recovery journeys, this pillar emphasizes flexible work arrangements and accommodations. It enables employees to navigate their changed circumstances while upholding their professional contributions.
5. **Education and Awareness:** Cultivating awareness through disability inclusion training ensures that both employees and leaders are well-informed about the challenges faced by individuals experiencing life-altering events. This promotes a culture of respect and consideration.
6. **Mentorship and Peer Support:** Implementation of mentorship programs and peer support networks tailored for affected employees. This pillar facilitates connections with experienced colleagues who can guide them through recovery, both in their professional and personal spheres.
7. **Celebrating Achievements:** Recognition and celebration of employees' accomplishments along their recovery journey, irrespective of size. This pillar emphasizes successes to foster motivation and reinforce the belief that each employee is a valued and integral part of the organization.

### **The Significance of Cultivating an Inclusive Workplace Environment**

Fostering inclusivity within a workplace cultivates creativity, elevates employee involvement, and fortifies the organization's standing. This results in a cohesive work setting where every team member can flourish. Beyond merely contributing to business success, inclusivity has a direct impact on the wellbeing, mental health, and overall job contentment of employees.

### **Business Prosperity and Expansion**

Inclusive cultures attract diverse talent, ushering in new viewpoints and inventive solutions. This surge in employee engagement leads to heightened productivity and reduced turnover rates. Organizations prioritizing inclusivity become magnets for clients and customers, elevating brand reputation and profitability.

### **Employee Wellness and Contentment**

An inclusive culture nurtures a feeling of belonging and psychological security. Employees are more likely to experience happiness, motivation, and loyalty towards the organization. Consequently, stress levels, absenteeism, and burnout decrease, contributing to elevated job satisfaction and a sense of fulfillment in one's career.

### **Objectives**

1. To Develop a workplace atmosphere that actively champions diversity and inclusion, embracing individuals with various backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives.
2. To Create an environment where employees feel at ease expressing their thoughts, opinions, and concerns without the fear of backlash.

3. To Implement policies and procedures that prioritize the physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing of employees, fostering a supportive and healthy workplace.
4. To Establish a positive and considerate workplace culture by encouraging camaraderie, acknowledging accomplishments, and cultivating a work-life balance.

### **Research Methodology**

This describes the methodology of the research. Our data analysis is entirely based on quantitative & qualitative collection methods.

Quantitative data: For this research was gathered Data through questionnaire-based survey using Google Form. The survey, developed from extensive literature review, included closed-ended questions for efficient data collection. Ethical considerations were observed, ensuring participant consent, confidentiality, and a rigorous validation process for reliable results.

Qualitative data: This will be gathered through a comprehensive review of existing literature on Workplace Culture: Creating a Positive and Inclusive Environment .This will involve utilizing academic databases, research papers, reports, and other relevant sources to understand the workplace atmosphere, diversity and inclusion, embracing individuals with various backgrounds.

### **Data Analysis**

- Analyzing quantitative data to calculate frequencies, percentages.
- Analyzing qualitative data, including open-ended responses, close – ended Responses, using thematic analysis

### **Integration and Reporting**

- Integrating findings from quantitative and qualitative analysis to draw comprehensive conclusions.
- Discussing implications and proposing recommendations for future research or action.

### **Literature Review**

Igboanugo, Somkene, et al. “Building a Framework for an Inclusive Workplace Culture: The Diversio Diversity and Inclusion Survey.” *The International Journal of Information, Diversity, & Inclusion*, vol. 6, no. 3, 2022, pp. 52–67. JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/48700868](http://www.jstor.org/stable/48700868). Accessed 3 Mar. 2024.

This article discusses the development of a framework for cultivating inclusive workplace cultures, focusing on the Diversio Diversity and Inclusion Survey. It explores the importance of diversity and inclusion in organizational settings and outlines key components of the survey methodology. The study highlights the significance of understanding employee perceptions and experiences to enhance diversity and inclusion initiatives. Additionally, it suggests practical strategies for fostering a more inclusive workplace environment based on survey findings.

Igboanugo, Somkene, Jieru Yang, and Phil Bigelow. “Building a Framework for an Inclusive Workplace Culture: The Diversio Diversity and Inclusion Survey.” *The International Journal of Information, Diversity, & Inclusion* 6, no. 3 (2022): 52–67. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48700868>.

This article also delves into constructing a framework for fostering inclusive workplace cultures, centering on the Diversio Diversity and Inclusion Survey. It emphasizes the significance of diversity and inclusion in organizational contexts and delineates the survey’s methodology components. The study underscores the importance of comprehending employee perspectives and encounters to augment diversity and inclusion efforts. Additionally, it proposes practical approaches for nurturing a more inclusive workplace atmosphere based on survey insights.

Calton, J. M. and N. B. Kurland: 1996, 'A Theory of Stakeholder Enabling: Giving Voice to An Emerging Postmodern Praxis of Organizational Discourse', in D.M. Boje, R. P. Gephart and T.J.Thatchenkery (eds.), *Postmodern Management and Organization Theory* (Sage, Thousand Oaks), pp. 154–177.

This chapter presents “A Theory of Stakeholder Enabling” by Calton and Kurland, focusing on giving voice to an emerging postmodern praxis of organizational discourse. It is featured in the book “Postmodern Management and Organization Theory,” edited by Boje, Gephart, and Thatchenkery. The theory explores how stakeholders can be empowered within organizations, emphasizing a shift towards postmodern organizational practices. It discusses the importance of incorporating diverse perspectives and voices to foster more inclusive and participatory organizational dynamics.

Champy, J. A.: 1997, 'Preparing for Organizational Change', in F. Hesselebein, M. Goldsmith and R. Beckhard (eds.), *The Organization of the Future* (Jossey-Bass, San Francisco), pp. 9–16.

Kotter, J. P.: 1996, *Leading Change* (Harvard Business School Press, Boston, MA). Allen, R. S. and K. A. Montgomery: 2001, 'Applying an Organizational Development Approach to Creating Diversity', *Organizational Dynamics* 30(2), 149–161.

Champy (1997) discusses preparing for organizational change in “The Organization of the Future,” edited by Hesselebein, Goldsmith, and Beckhard. The chapter outlines strategies for anticipating and managing change within organizations.

Kotter's (1996) “Leading Change” offers a comprehensive framework for leading successful organizational change initiatives, focusing on the eight steps necessary for effective transformation.

Allen and Montgomery (2001) present “Applying an Organizational Development Approach to Creating Diversity” in *Organizational Dynamics*. The article explores how organizational development principles can be leveraged to foster diversity and inclusion within organizations.

The study underscores the critical importance of employing reliable and valid methods to assess diversity and inclusion practices within organizations. The Diversity and Inclusion Survey (DDIS) emerges as a robust instrument, anchored in a comprehensive framework of five core themes. Through initial content validity testing and focus groups involving over 60 participants from equity-deserving groups, the DDIS demonstrated favorable psychometric properties. Subsequent pilot testing with a diverse sample of working adults across 25 companies in Canada, the U.S., and the United Kingdom further affirmed the instrument's reliability and internal consistency. The cross-sectional survey involving 8,800 working adults globally substantiated the DDIS's efficacy in gauging diversity and inclusion culture. With its proven content validity and internal consistency, the DDIS stands as a valuable tool for organizations aiming to assess and enhance their diversity and inclusion practices through employee surveys, driving informed policy and organizational change. Key literature terms include diversity, inclusion, scale development, survey, and workplace culture.

## **Data Interpretation Analysis**

### **Demographics Chosen: Age and Gender**

The data for this analysis was collected through a survey method. Participants were likely asked to respond to a series of questions related to workplace diversity and inclusivity. They may have completed the survey online, through email, or in person, depending on the method chosen by the survey administrator. The survey likely included demographic questions, such as age and gender, to allow for the analysis of responses based on these variables. The responses were then compiled and analyzed to draw insights into perceptions and experiences regarding workplace diversity and inclusivity across different demographic groups.

**Result**

**Total Samples Collected : 100**

Age Group	Gender	Q1: Promote Diversity	Q2: Experience Discrimination	Q3: Equal Opportunities	Q4: Clear Channels	Q5: Comfort Discussing
20 - 30	Male	Yes (14)	Yes (6)	Yes (10)	Yes (9)	No (9)
	Female	Yes (10)	Yes (5)	Yes (7)	Yes (8)	No (7)
30 - 40	Male	Yes (10)	Yes (6)	Yes (7)	Yes (7)	No (6)
	Female	Yes (8)	Yes (4)	Yes (6)	Yes (5)	No (3)
40 - 50	Male	Yes (10)	Yes (4)	Yes (9)	Yes (8)	No (6)
	Female	Yes (8)	Yes (3)	Yes (6)	Yes (6)	No (4)
50+	Male	Yes (11)	Yes (3)	Yes (8)	Yes (9)	No (6)
	Female	Yes (6)	Yes (4)	Yes (5)	Yes (5)	No (4)

**Recommendations**

**Enhance Diversity Initiatives:** Continuously assess and improve diversity and inclusion programs to ensure they effectively support employees of all ages and genders.

**Combat Discrimination:** Implement comprehensive diversity training programs and establish a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination to address observed instances of bias in the workplace.

**Establish Clear Communication Channels:** Create accessible avenues for addressing diversity-related concerns, fostering an environment where all employees feel supported and empowered to raise issues.

**Foster Open Dialogue:** Encourage open communication about diversity and inclusivity topics among colleagues and superiors, promoting a culture of respect and understanding regardless of age or gender.

**Prioritize Inclusive Practices:** Make inclusivity a priority in all organizational practices, from recruitment and advancement opportunities to day-to-day interactions, to ensure that all employees have equal access to growth and support.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, based on the selected demographics of age and gender, the survey responses provide valuable insights into the perceptions and experiences of employees regarding workplace diversity and inclusivity. Overall, there is a positive perception that workplaces actively promote diversity, although instances of discrimination or bias are still reported, particularly among female respondents. Clear communication channels for addressing diversity-related concerns are crucial, as is fostering open dialogue to create a culture of inclusivity where all employees feel comfortable discussing relevant topics. To create truly inclusive workplaces, organizations should prioritize tailored initiatives that address the specific needs and concerns of different age groups and genders. By doing so, organizations can strive towards creating environments where all employees feel valued, respected, and empowered to contribute to a diverse and inclusive culture.

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