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IMPACT OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION ON EMPLOYEE COMPETENCIES TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE ORGANIZATION IN IT SECTOR

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ABSTRACT: Companies are thus realizing that it goes beyond just having nice DEI policies to be on track especially if individual and business success is to be recorded. In fact, a study by McKinsey & Company (2020) that examined at more than 1,000 large companies and 15 countries found a greater association between diversity on executive teams and the probability of financial outperformance. However, business returns being just an outcome should not be a sole motivator for prioritizing DEI initiatives but for the meaningful employee experience as well as employee competencies and it impacts on all aspects of the employee and organization. 1 The IT sector is an area that is undergoing rapid development and is changing the face of business standards in India. It is an industry that flourishes globally. In order to survive, Companies need to establish their brand in a well-developed way. DEI practices with Employee competencies on Sustainability is an idea whereby companies assume the liability of giving something great back to the general public in any form of development, which brings the culture of creating "power to be good". It involves how their decisions impact the clients, the surrounding area, and the climate in every aspect of their operations. It is a fundamental requirement and an unavoidable idea of the contemporary association.

The present paper focuses on assessing the impact of diversity, equity and inclusion on employee competencies towards sustainable organization and core competencies on sustainable competitive advantage in information technology companies. The data collected from 131 employees working in various IT companies in Bangalore with structured questionnaire. The data is initially evaluated and interpreted using specific questionnaire questions. Finally, statistical approaches are used to analyse the data in order to gain a better knowledge of the variables affecting employee competencies and support long-term sustainability of organizations in the IT sector. The impact of DEI activities on enhancing employee competencies is assessed by this study. The results of the study are

beneficial for IT company management in implementing DEI initiatives for sustainable organization and to gain an advantage over their competitors. INTRODUCTION: Diversity, equality, and inclusion have become integral components of modern organizational culture. Organizations worldwide are striving to ensure that their employees are treated equally, regardless of their race, gender, age, religion, and sexual orientation. Many studies have demonstrated that diversity, equality, and inclusion can significantly impact employee competencies, leading to sustainable organizational growth. Therefore, this research aims to investigate the impact of diversity, equality, and inclusion on employee competencies towards sustainable organization. As DEI plays key role on Employee competencies which ultimately impact on organizational sustainability in long run. The study set out to research the employee competencies, linking outcomes of behavior to sustainable organizational performance, as this has not been researched. This could add value to the existing body of employee competencies and sustained organizational performance. A data driven analysis shows how diversity, equity and inclusion on employee competencies towards necessary for sustainable organizational performance and enable organizational alignment with the process of linking DEI practices with Employee competencies as well as with the vision, goals, objectives, and strategy of the organization. It will greatly enhance longterm organizational success and sustainability.

3 | P a g e The IT sector is an area that is undergoing rapid development and is changing the face of business standards in India. [1] This area comprises software development, consultancies, online services software management, and business progression outsourcing. It is an industry that flourishes globally, and India's IT exports are currently around $80billion, with 5 million employees working in this sector. India has set up a good foundation for itself as the major off-shoring objective for worldwide IT organizations. Be that as it may, the worldview has changed drastically. The Indian IT industry faces firm contests from re-appropriating organizations situated in various areas of the planet. There are colossal accentuations of efficiency, esteem augmentations, quality, client experience, successful correspondences, meeting deadlines, space information, and readiness. The competition among IT companies ensures the stability of the organization. In order to survive, companies need to create their image in a well-developed manner. DEI practices with Employee competencies on

Sustainability is an idea whereby companies assume the liability of giving something great back to the general public in any form of development, which brings the culture of creating "power to be good". It involves the impact of their activities to better the clients, local area, and climate in all parts of their activities. It is an inescapable idea of the contemporary association and is an essential obligation. The present paper focuses on assessing the impact of diversity, equity and inclusion on employee competencies towards sustainable organization and core competencies on sustainable competitive advantage in information technology companies. The statistical approaches are used to analyse the data in order to gain a better knowledge of the variables affecting employee competencies and support long-term sustainability of organizations in the IT sector. The impact of DEI activities on enhancing employee competencies is assessed by this study. The results of the study are beneficial for IT company management in implementing DEI initiatives for sustainable organization and to gain an advantage over their competitors.

4 | P a g e BACKGROUND OF STUDY: The DEI idea has seen various nomenclatures unfold over the years which range from terms, such as D&I, I&D, EDI, JEDI (Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion), to DEIB (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging). Even as each of these terms may have some distinguishing features, the point of view remains the same, which is to devise a better work experience for all individuals regardless of their various identities and backgrounds. Metrics that go beyond workforce demographics are necessary to evaluate the impact of 4 diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) initiatives. Although employee competencies surveys can help to identify issues of importance, they often fail to assess the effect of current DEI programming. Employee perception of program impact is necessary to determine if DEI initiatives are affecting culture change. DEI strategies integrate diversity, equity, and inclusion to address underrepresented groups' inequities by examining and integrating these concepts thoughtfully and implementing comprehensive systems. Diversity: Diversity encompasses various human variations, 1 such as gender, race, socio-economic background, religious views, and sexual orientation, making each individual unique. In DEI, it refers to the composition of groups, teams, and organizations, ensuring diverse representation in institutions. It is an associative concept that reveals itself in the collective whole. Equity: Equity addresses unequal

opportunities and challenges, ensuring fair treatment for all community members. Inclusion: Inclusion fosters a sense of belonging, value, and equal opportunities for individuals in diverse workforces. It creates environments where individuals feel respected, represented, and valued, promoting a diverse workforce. Employee Competencies: Competence refers to the set of skills and knowledge that enhance job efficiency. Companies with diverse, equitable, and inclusive practices are better equipped to respond to challenges, attract top talent, and meet diverse customer needs

LITERATURE REVIEW: Yvette Yermolayeva (2023) conducted research on "The Impact of Diversity and Inclusion on Organizational Performance" concluded that, diversity and inclusion are essential aspects of today's workplace, as they can lead to better decision-making, increased innovation, and improved performance. However, creating a diverse and inclusive workplace is not without its challenges, as organizations must overcome biases, promote equity, and create an inclusive culture that values and respects all individuals. By promoting diversity and inclusion in the workplace, organizations can create a positive and productive work environment that benefits both employees and the organization as a whole. Mahdi Garelnabi,Mitzy Cowdin, Yun Fang and Bandana Shrestha(2022) conducted research on " Embracing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in the Scientific Community—Viewpoints of the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee of the North American Vascular Biology Organization" and given major findings as Silence is no longer acceptable when social injustice issues become intolerable in our progressive scientific society . Addressing disparities in healthcare, education, judicial systems, and workplaces has been a longstanding demand. Technology and social media have increased awareness of prejudices, benefiting institutions like the scientific community. This article discusses social justice issues for African- and AsianAmericans, women, and LGBTQ+, and challenges faced by international scholars. Future perspectives are provided to resolve these self-made social determinants. Ronald Venn , Paquita Perez and Valerie Vandenbussche (2022) conducted a research on "Competencies of Sustainability Professionals: An Empirical Study on Key Competencies for Sustainability" This study lays out the empirical findings of key competencies by senior-level sustainability professionals within the public domain of Belgium Flanders. The empirical evidence points to the existence of

two complementary competency clusters, namely sustainability research competencies and sustainability intervention competencies, which are visualized. Together they enable the profound analysis and understanding of sustainability issues and ensure the development of solutions together with stakeholders and help to foster selfsustaining transitions towards sustainability.

6 | P a g e 1 A Study on the "Impact of Sustainable Leadership and Core Competencies on Sustainable Competitive Advantage in the Information Technology (IT) Sector" by Nazir Taj Nisha, Nishad Nawaz, Jayakumar Mahalakshmi, Vijayakumar Gajenderan and Islam Hasani (2022) The study focused on assessing the impact of sustainable leadership and core competencies on sustainable competitive advantage in the IT sector in Chennai city. It found that sustainable leadership is a valuable resource for competitive advantage in IT companies, providing opportunities for modernization, continuous improvement, sustained competitive edge, and long-term success. Sustainable leaders focus on strong shared vision, contemporary thinking, data sharing, and ethical and socially trustworthy approaches. They also enhance competency levels in conflict management, interpersonal skills, social intelligence, skilfulness, and decision-making., and ethical and socially trustworthy approaches. They also enhance competency levels in conflict management, interpersonal skills, social intelligence, skilfulness, and decision-making. Shamnad Shamsudin, Dr.VP. Velmurugan, Dr.VR. Hareendrakumar (2021) conducted research on "The Contribution of Cultural Dimensions towards the Overall Organizational Culture and its Impact on Employee Performance in the IT Companies in Kerala". The finding where, 13 in this study seven dimensions of organizational culture are adapted from the literature and analysed the relative contribution of each dimension with the help of a conceptual model and structural equation modelling. The path analysis for the first model shows that the overall organizational culture has a strong bond with employee performance. The path value of 0.814 shows that one unit change in organizational culture will 2 result in a 0.814unit change in employee performance. This finding suggests that organisations having a better culture displays relatively better performance. They found that employee's commitment and participation are the most important factors to increase organizational performance. 14 Based on our study, we conclude that strong culture within the organization motivates the employees to perform better and the

organization can achieve the goals effectively.

2 Harvard Business Review (2021) conducted research on "Creating a Culture of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" and concluded with Leaders are more likely to have observed advancements in the representation of race and gender, age, ability, and sexual orientation than laggards and followers. Financial performance among DEI leaders is superior to that of their rivals, 3 according to McKinsey and Bersin research. Even leaders who are dedicated to boosting DEI encounter difficulties, such as impeding policies and practises. Executives must frequently review DEI measures, use that information to more effectively manage their efforts, and share progress with the entire organisation if they are to guarantee that DEI keeps getting better A research on "Using a diversity, 9 equity and inclusion Net Promoter Score to measure confidence in program impact" by Patricia M. Andreski , Brian E. Cole , Kuanwong Watcharotone , Anthony T. Brumar , David J. Brown (2020) followed the methodology of The Michigan Medicine Metrics and Measurement team created the DEI Net Promoter Score (NPS) to capture employee feedback on the implementation of DEI programs. 6 The DEI NPS was built into existing institutional surveys and was included in a dashboard designed specifically to measure the perception of progress with DEI initiatives and found out that The DEI NPS aligned well with other measures of culture obtained from engagement surveys and predicted employee engagement. DEI promoters were over two times more likely to be classified as engaged. Upik Sri Sulistyawati, Dedi Sufriadi (2020) conducted research on "Perceived Organization Support Towards Employee Engagement and The Impact of Employee Job Satisfaction" and research and data analysis that has been carried out to employees at the Regional General Hospital dr. Zainoel Abidin Banda Aceh regarding 12 the effect of perceived organizational support on employee engagement and its impact on performance, it can be concluded from the results of the study that Perceived Organizational Support and employee engagement greatly impact the performance of employees at the regional public hospital dr. Zainoel Abidin Banda Aceh. The higher Perceived Organizational Support will have an impact on increasing employee engagement of employees which directly affects career performance.

RESEARCH GAP: The IT sector is an area that is undergoing rapid development and is changing the face of business standards in India. It is an industry that flourishes globally, and India's IT exports are currently around $80billion, with 5 million employees working in this sector. Despite the increasing recognition of the benefits of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)span class='highlighted color-3'>span> in the workplace, there is still a significant gap in research exploring the impact of DEI initiatives on employee competencies towards sustainable organizational outcomes in the IT sector. A survey of over 500 executives across various industries found that companies with diverse leadership teams are more likely to outperform their peers financially. Limited research exists on the impact of Defined Environment Initiatives (DEI) on sustainable IT competencies, such as digital transformation and environmental sustainability. A study of 150 Indian companies found a lack of accountability and measurement of DEI policies. This research aims to fill this gap by exploring the impact of DEI on employee competencies towards sustainable organizations in the IT sector, and identifying the factors that facilitate or hinder the effectiveness of DEI initiatives in this context. FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE THE CURRENT STUDY: ☐ Employee competencies ☐ Organizational Commitment to DEI ☐ Employee Perception of DEI ☐ Diversity Dimensions ☐ Organizational Policies and Practices ☐ External Environment and Stakeholder Expectation OBJECTIVES: 1. To study the impact of DEI on Employee competencies 2. To understand the culture of organization by promoting DEI towards sustainability 3. To understand the areas of impact of DEI towards sustainable organization

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: Sampling Method: Sampling is employed in this study to gather the suitable persons to participate in the study as well as a satisfactory respondent rate. Non probability sampling is referred to as sampling. This strategy is especially useful when respondents are difficult to collect. When someone takes part in research, they are often asked to recommend other people to take part in the study. This strategy assists respondents to give appropriate date for the study. Sample Selection: Sampling is used since there are few contacts in India (Bangalore). The age range of the target responder for this study is between 18 and 70 and includes both men and women who live, work in Bangalore. The current study additionally makes use of the researcher's own

social network because of Bangalore's restricted social connections. Several strategies, including online questionnaires, were used due to the difficulty in getting a high enough response rate. Once the questionnaires were delivered by the researcher's acquaintances. Data collection: This section outlines what data is required for this study and how it is gathered. There are various ways to gather data nowadays, such as interviews, focus groups, mail, online, surveys, databases, and so on, but in this research paper we used structured questionnaire and floated as a google forms to the respondents. Primary data collection: The major data for this study was collected via an online survey utilizing the online survey program "Google forms." A questionnaire was constructed by using Google Forms' self-explanatory wizard interface. Sampling was then used to distribute the survey by the URL link to the questionnaire in order to gather the correct responders to participate in the study. Online distribution of questionnaires enhances response rates and can save money, especially for studies with more respondents. Furthermore, an online survey can greatly save the time required for implementation.

10 | P a g e DATA ANALYSIS Gender The data analysis shows a gender distribution in the survey, with 71.76% of respondents being male, while 26.72% were female. The data suggests a possible gender imbalance, with men being more represented than women. Which of the following best describes your role in the organization A sizable portion of the workforce about 42.75% is in entry-level jobs, indicating a basis of early-career professionals. In addition, 42.06% of respondents work in mid-level positions, emphasizing the sizeable middle management group. Notably, 12.98% of employees hold senior-level positions, while 2.29 % of employees hold executivelevel positions. Management shows that diversity is important through its actions. The study found that a majority of respondents, 36 strongly agree and 53 agree, believe management exemplifies diversity through its actions. Additionally, 28 participants remained neutral, suggesting the need for management to strengthen communication and demonstrate commitment to diversity. At this company. employees appreciate others whose backgrounds beliefs and experiences difference from their own The majority of employees (55 agree, 39 strongly agree) show a favorable attitude towards respecting coworkers' backgrounds, opinions, and experiences. Inclusive workplace requires promoting diversity, addressing

Employees of different backgrounds are treated fairly in the internal promotion process. The data analysis shows that 28 employees strongly agree with the company's internal promotion procedure, with 61 respondents stating that people from diverse backgrounds are treated fairly. However, 13 disagree and 28 are neutral, suggesting potential areas for improvement. The company's policies and procedures are designed to encourage diversity, equity and inclusion The data indicates that a significant percentage of employees (64%) and strongly agree that the company's policies promote diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). A small proportion of employees have doubts about the effectiveness of these policies, highlighting the company's commitment to creating an inclusive work environment. To support DEI projects, the company should consider the viewpoints of 24 neutral employees and address any concerns or uncertainties. This company has done a good job providing educational programs that promote diversity, equity and inclusion in workplace. The data analysis shows that 51 employees strongly agree and 46 strongly agree that the organization supports diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI)span class='highlighted color-3'>span> in the workplace. The majority of employees are content with the educational opportunities provided, but the 26 respondents who expressed no opinion may provide feedback to improve the efficacy and impact of these programs.

Do you think diversity, equity and inclusion training has affected your competencies at the workplace The data shows that 58 employees and 40 strongly agree that diversity, equality, and inclusion (DEI) training has improved their workplace competencies. This positive feedback highlights the training's success in advancing workers' knowledge and expertise on DEI issues, leading to a more welcoming and courteous work environment. In your opinion, how does DEI in the workplace impact employee competencies The study shows that 63.4% of respondents believe that diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the workplace positively enhances employee competencies, increasing skills, capacities, and overall performance. However, 3.8% believe that DEI may reduce competencies, Additionally, 32.8% of respondents believe that DEI has no effect on

employee competencies. This minority position deserves attention. How do you think diversity, equity and inclusion contribute to sustainable organizations   The data analysis shows that diversity, equality, and inclusion (DEI) programs significantly contribute to sustainable organizations. A significant 64.10% of respondents believe DEI initiatives improve employee engagement and retention, attracting and retaining top talent for longterm performance and sustainability. DEI also increases problem-solving skills and decision-making processes, bringing diverse viewpoints, ideas, and experiences together. Furthermore, 58.80% of respondents acknowledge that DEI activities improve the workplace environment, fostering trust, collaboration, and a more integrated and effective organizational culture.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF DATA OBJECTIVE 1: TO STUDY THE IMPACT OF DEI ON EMPLOYEE COMPETENCIES Management Action oriented F1 Fair treatment of employees F2 Diverse candidate pool   F3 Fairness in internal promotion F4 Management support to DEI F5 Polices to encourage DEI   F6 DEI training on competencies F7 DEI impact on collaboration and teamwork F8 DEI on job satisfaction   F9 Importance of DEI towards sustainable F10 Interpretation: The correlation between DEI impact on collaboration and teamwork and DEI on job satisfaction is 0.57, indicating a positive correlation between these two variables. This means when there increase in the better collaboration & teamwork leads to high job satisfaction. High job satisfaction levels helps in improving competencies. Fairness in internal promotion and DEI training on competences have a correlation value of 0.54, which indicates a fairly positive relation. It also implies that when internal promotions are fair, employees will be more engaged, which will contribute to the success of DEI training and the improvement of employee competencies. The correlation between Management Support to DEI and Polices to encourage DEI is 0.59, indicating a positive correlation between these two variables. it says that better policies with management support helps in creating a fair working place for employees. In comparison, there is a significant positive relationship between Management support to DEI and a diverse candidate pool, as shown by the correlation value of 0.64. It suggests that as Management support for DEI increases, the pool of candidates will become more diverse. Accepting diversity provides an atmosphere of learning that

encourages ongoing improvement of employee competencies.

14 | P a g e OBJECTIVE 2: TO UNDERSTAND THE CULTURE OF ORGANIZATION BY PROMOTING DEI TOWARDS SUSTAINABILITY MANAGEMENT DEI POLICES PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE ORGANIZATION H0: There is no impact of DEI polices on sustainability H1: There is a significant impact of DEI polices on sustainability Polices to encourage DEI Importance of DEI towards sustainable 1 2 3 4 5 Total

1 0 1 2 2 0 5 2 0 0 5 2 1 8 3 0 0 5 9 0 14 4 0 1 3 24 10 38 5 2 2 9 27 26 66 Total 2 4 24 64 37 131 χ^2 Tests Value df p χ^2 35.7 16 0.003 N 131 P<0.05, Therefore Accept H1 Interpretation: Based on the small P-value of 0.003, we reject the null hypothesis (H0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H1). In other words, there is a statistically significant association between policies to encourage DEI and the importance of DEI towards sustainability. The data in the contingency table provides strong evidence to suggest that there is a

15 | P a g e relationship between the existence of policies to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion and the perception of employees regarding the importance of DEI towards sustainability. In conclusion, the results suggest that companies with policies that actively encourage diversity, equity, and inclusion are more likely to have employees who recognize the significance of DEI towards achieving sustainable organization. MANAGEMENT PROMOTING DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION IN HIRING, ACTIVELY SEEKING DIVERSE CANDIDATE POOL. H0: There is no impact of DEI on hiring process H1: There is a significant impact of DEI on hiring process Active measures to seek a diverse candidate pool when hiring. Management supports diversity, equity and inclusion. 1 2 3 4 5 Total

1 1 2 0 0 0 3 2 0 2 4 0 0 6 3 0 3 11 7 0 21 4 0 2 14 36 8 60 5 0 1 3 17 20 41 Total 1 10 32 60 28 131 χ^2 Tests Value df P χ^2 113 16 <.001 N 131 P<0.05, Therefore Accept H1

16 | P a g e Interpretation Based on the very low P-value of < 0.001, we reject the null hypothesis

(H0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H1). In other words, there is a statistically significant association between DEI and hiring process. In simpler terms, the 5 data in the contingency table provides strong evidence to suggest that there is a relationship between the implementation of active measures for diverse candidate pools and the support from management for diversity, equity, 2 and inclusion. The χ^2 test indicates that this association is not due to chance and is highly meaningful from a statistical standpoint. MANAGEMENT PROMOTES 4 DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION, VALUING EMPLOYEES' DIVERSE BACKGROUNDS, BELIEFS, AND EXPERIENCES TOWARDS OTHER EMPLOYEES H0: There is no impact of DEI on Employee encouragement towards other employee H1: There is a significant impact of DEI on Employee encouragement towards other employee Employees appreciate others whose backgrounds beliefs and experiences difference from their own Management supports diversity, equity and inclusion. 1 2 3 4 5 Total

1 2 1 0 0 0 3 2 0 1 2 3 0 6 3 0 2 10 7 2 21 4 0 3 9 31 17 60 5 0 0 7 14 20 41 Total 2 7 28 55 39 131

17 | P a g e Interpretation We accept the alternative hypothesis (H1) and reject the null hypothesis (H0) based on the very low P-value of 0.001. 4 As a result, a statistically significant association between employees' appreciation for diversity, Inclusion and management's support for diversity, equity, and inclusion. To put it another way, the information in the contingency table offers compelling evidence that there is a link between employees' appreciation 2 of diversity and management's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion. In conclusion, the findings show that when management actively promotes 3 diversity, equity, and inclusion, employees are more likely to respect and cherish others from different origins, opinions, and experiences. 26 There is a statistically significant correlation between these two factors. χ^2 Tests   Value df p

χ^2 118 16 < .001 N 131   P<0.05, Therefore Accept H1

18 | P a g e OBJECTIVE 3: 5 TO UNDERSTAND THE AREAS OF IMPACT OF DEI TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE ORGANIZATION Row Labels Foster innovat ion and creativi ty Improve

decisionmaking processes Enhance problemsolving capabilities 27 Increase employee engagement and retention Overall improve of Work culture Female 14 21 19 21 17 Entry-level 4 6 6 7 6 Executive 1 2 1 1 2 Mid-level 6 8 6 8 7 Senior-level 3 5 6 5 2 Male 40 42 45 61 55 Entry-level 13 21 18 32 27 Mid-level 20 17 22 21 20 Senior-level 7 4 5 8 8 Prefer not to say 1 2 2 2 1 Mid-level 1 2 2 2 1 Grand Total 55 65 66 84 73   0 5 10 15 20 25 30 35 Entry-level Executive Mid-level Senior-level Entry-level Mid-level Senior-level Mid-level Female Male Prefer not to say Foster innovation and creativity Improve decision-making processes Enhance problem-solving capabilities Increase 2 employee engagement and retention Overall improve of Work culture

19 | P a g e Interpretation The data shows that out of a total of 84 responses for the area of impact "Increase employee engagement and retention" towards a sustainable organization, 61 responses were from males, and 21 responses were from females. This indicates that male respondents had a higher number of positive responses, suggesting a stronger perception that 2 diversity and inclusion can positively influence employee engagement and retention compared to females. The percentage of male responses for this impact is approximately 73% (61 out of 84), while the percentage of female responses is approximately 25% (21 out of 84). This indicates a significant difference in perception between the two genders, with a higher percentage of males seeing diversity and inclusion as beneficial for employee engagement and retention. The data analysis of entry-level and midlevel employees regarding 1 the impact of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in various areas within the organization. The data revealed that entry-level employees perceive DEI 2 to have a significant impact on "Increase employee engagement and retention," with a strong emphasis on the importance of creating an inclusive and diverse environment to retain talent. Additionally, they also recognized its influence on "Overall improvement of work culture," highlighting the potential for DEI initiatives to foster a positive and inclusive organizational culture. 5 On the other hand, mid-level employees expressed a different perspective, identifying "Enhancing problem-solving capabilities" as the area where DEI has a high impact. They emphasized that 23 diversity and inclusion can lead to more innovative and effective problem-solving processes. Moreover, midlevel employees also acknowledged 3 the importance of DEI in "Increase employee engagement and retention,"

supporting the notion that fostering an inclusive workplace positively affects employee satisfaction and retention. These findings shed light on the varying perceptions of entry-level and mid-level employees regarding the impact of DEI within the organization. Such insights are crucial for developing targeted strategies to leverage DEI practices effectively at different organizational levels, ultimately contributing to a more inclusive and productive work environment.

LIMITATIONS: The small sample size of 131 IT employees in Bangalore makes it difficult to generalize findings to the entire IT sector and may not fully represent the diversity and complexity of the workforce, potentially causing potential bias in the results. Location bias in IT employee findings may affect diversity, equity, and inclusion practices in other cities or regions, potentially affecting applicability. CONCLUSION: In conclusion, we can say that the positive relationship between DEI impact on collaboration, teamwork, and job satisfaction is evident. Improved collaboration leads to higher job satisfaction, improving employee competencies. Fair internal promotions, management support, and diverse candidate pools foster a learning environment and ongoing competency improvement. The study found a statistically significant association between policies promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) and its importance in sustainability. Companies with DEI policies are more likely to have employees who recognize its significance in achieving sustainable organizations. The data analysis also shows a strong relationship between DEI and the hiring process, with the implementation of active measures for diverse candidate pools and management's support for diversity, equity, and inclusion. The χ^2 test indicates that this association is not due to chance but is highly meaningful from a statistical standpoint. The findings also show that when management actively promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion, employees are more likely to respect and cherish others from different origins, opinions, and experiences, with a statistically significant correlation between these two factors. The analysis revealed that entry-level employees perceive DEI to have a significant impact on employee engagement and retention, emphasizing the importance of creating an inclusive environment to retain talent. They also recognized its influence on overall work culture improvement. On the other hand, mid-level employees identified DEI as a high-impact area, focusing on improving problem-solving capabilities and fostering an inclusive

workplace. These findings provide insights for developing targeted strategies to leverage DEI practices effectively at different organizational levels, ultimately contributing 3 to a more inclusive and productive work environment.

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