**A REPORT ON**

**DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND INCLUSION IN**

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**OPTIMIZELY BANGLADESH**

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**Report on Policy and Practices of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**

**At Optimizely**

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are interrelated but different principles.

**Diversity** refers to the existence of differences among individuals. That can mean the differences in ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, gender, age, gender identity, and socioeconomic class in society.

**Equity** means providing fair opportunities to all employees based on their individual needs. It actually focuses on ensuring that everyone is at the same level. Unlike equality which presents everyone with the same facilities, equity analyses everyone’s needs and provides them with what is necessary for them to be on the same level as others.

**Inclusion** involves making such an environment where all employees will feel a sense of belonging in the workplace and contribute to their full potential.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion are major concepts that guide organizations, communities, and societies towards embracing new environments where every individual feels valued, respected, and welcomed regardless of their background, identity, characteristics or their orientations. These three are essential components of creating a culture, in this case a certain workplace environment that celebrates differences, ensures fairness, and promotes equal opportunities for all irrespective of their.

As we were supposed to visit a company and analyze their policies on ensuring diversity, equity and inclusion among the workers, we chose **Optimizely**, an American company that opened a branch in Dhaka which provides digital experience platform software as a service worldwide.

Some key findings from our observation and analysis which went through the three principles individually, are stated below in detail.

**I . Diversity**

**Gender Representation**: Looking at the company’s employee ratio, we got to know that it boasts a 30% female representation in their Bangladesh office, indicating a commitment to including women in the tech industry. It’s also stated in their company policy.

**Age Distribution**: The age distribution at Optimizely indicates a diverse workforce, with employees spanning a wide range of ages. While the average age falls within the 31-32 year range, the presence of senior employees along with interns highlights the company's commitment to fostering a diverse environment that values the individuals at various stages of their careers.

**Disability Inclusion:** The company has a physically disabled employee who is allowed to work remotely without any discrimination. It does not affect his/her work performance or salary. This allows the employees to contribute effectively without facing limitations due to their disability. Such opportunities inspire the new recruits to join the workforce without hesitations.

**Religion Diversity:** The company demonstrates religious diversity by welcoming employees from all faiths, including Muslims, Hindus, Christians and even Atheists. This diversity extends beyond mere acceptance as religion plays no role in employee evaluations or assessments. This encourages a work environment where individuals are valued for their skills only, regardless of their personal beliefs.

**Ethnicity and Nationality:** At Optimizely, a multinational company, we observed a diverse workforce representing various ethnicities and nationalities. Throughout my observation, I didn't witness any discriminatory behavior based on these differences. Employees from different cultural backgrounds and countries worked together harmoniously in an environment that promotes inclusivity and respect.

**Recruitment:** The company prioritizes competence by focusing on skills and experience during the recruitment process. They avoid targeting specific universities and maintain a globally consistent policy that ensures fairness for all genders and races. Additionally, they aim to recruit fairly from minority communities, further expanding the diversity of their workforce.

**Training:** The company offers training programs to help employees increase and sharpen their skills, creating a culture of continuous learning and growth. While budget may be a factor, sponsorship for these programs demonstrates a commitment to employee development.

**Leadership:** The company enables employees to take leadership roles if they are capable, but does not pressure them into leadership positions if they don’t want to be in one.

**II. Equity**

**Compensation & Benefits:** At Optimizely, individuals from diverse genders, ethnicities, and religious backgrounds receive equal pay. Their compensation model is strictly based on job roles, the skills each employee possesses, and their contributions to the company regardless of their background. Thus, they ensure that pay scales are determined solely by merit and job criteria, creating an environment of equity and fairness.

In spite of having a diverse workforce, Optimizely ensures that all employees receive inclusive benefits. For instance, along with maternity leave, they also offer 3 months paternity leave, which is quite rare in Bangladesh. This ensures that both parents have the opportunity to bond with their newborns. Additionally, they provide comprehensive health insurance that the company fully covers, without deducting any amount from salary. However, they don't enforce it if someone chooses not to take it for religious reasons.

**Training & Development:** The primary goal of Optimizely's training and development initiatives is the improvement of technical skills. All employees have access to skill development training, and if they want, they can take extra courses outside of the company. The company may consider covering the costs of these courses based on budgetary constraints.

Leadership positions at Optimizely are solely determined by merit, disregarding ethnicity or any other demographic factor. Therefore, based on qualifications and accomplishments, employees from any ethnic origin can be appointed to these posts. So, they don't have any training designed with minority groups in mind.

At Optimizely, team leads or managers help anyone who needs it, no matter what background they have. When a member of a minority group faces a problem, the management treats them with the same consideration and assistance that they would provide to a member of the majority group. Their main goal is to provide equal opportunity to every employee, for skill development and career growth.

**Promotion & Advancement:** At Optimizely, their policies for both promotion and advancement are based on equity. In order to ensure that every employee has an equal chance to develop and grow within the organization, the company places a high priority on impartiality and fairness. Their promotion cycles are made to assess performance in an unbiased and discrimination-free manner, considering each person's unique accomplishments and contributions.

However, there are instances where promotions may be awarded outside of the yearly cycle if deemed necessary by the company. In these cases, their goal is to uphold equity by taking into account the achievements and accomplishments of that employee. This strategy enables them to maintain an environment of equity and inclusivity, where worthy people are acknowledged and given opportunities correspondingly, creating a feeling of community and opportunity for everyone.

Also, Optimizely ensures equity in promotion decisions by focusing on objective criteria such as target accomplishment and timely delivery rather than subjective measures like attendance or working hours. So, the evaluation of employees is dependent on their capacity to fulfill goals and deadlines, with a focus on performance and outcomes rather than just showing up for work. This strategy fosters a productive and efficient culture by guaranteeing that opportunities for advancement are determined by merit and contributions to the organization's objectives.

By maintaining equity in their procedures for promotion and advancement, they foster an environment at work where merit and skills are valued and everyone has the opportunity to realize their full potential.

**III. Inclusion**

**Workplace culture:** At Optimizely, inclusion is seen in the decision-making process for all events, ensuring that every individual's perspective is valued and considered. The company embraces the rich diversity of its workforce by actively seeking input from employees of various backgrounds and beliefs, creating an environment where everyone feels heard and respected.

Again, Optimizely acknowledges diversity by actively celebrating religious festivals representative of its employees' diverse faiths . By recognizing and honoring these cultural observances, the company demonstrates its commitment to creating a sense of belonging and cultural appreciation among its staff.

In addition to accommodating religious observances, Optimizely also ensures that all employees benefit from government-recognized holidays, regardless of their individual religious affiliations.

But as a global organization, it gives privileges to workers of different countries according to their own calendar. This inclusive approach shows the company's dedication to equity and fairness, ensuring that all employees have the opportunity to observe holidays important to them while maintaining operational efficiency.

Overall, Optimizely's inclusive practices not only contribute to a harmonious and supportive workplace culture but also reinforce the company's commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion in all aspects of its operations.

**Psychological Safety:** While Optimizely's current framework doesn’t have an established anonymous reporting mechanism for employees to confidentially voice concerns regarding discrimination or harassment, the company's policy defines clear rules and regulations regarding workplace conduct. These guidelines are strictly followed by all employees, ensuring a culture of accountability and respect within the workforce.

Despite the absence of an anonymous reporting system, Optimizely emphasizes transparency and accountability in addressing workplace issues. Employees are encouraged to communicate openly with management or HR representatives to raise concerns and seek resolution.

Optimizely's commitment to upholding its policies on workplace behavior emphasizes its dedication to maintaining a safe and inclusive environment for all employees. While improvements, such as the establishment of an anonymous reporting mechanism, could further enhance the company's efforts in this regard, the existing framework reflects Optimizely's visible approach to creating a culture of fairness, integrity, and respect in the workplace.

**Conflict Resolution:** During any conflict within Optimizely's workplace, a structured resolution process is in place to address the issue quickly and effectively. Initially, conflicts are brought to the attention of the respective managers directly involved. These managers act as the first line of resolution with agreeable solutions.

If the conflict proves to be beyond the scope of resolution at the managerial level, the matter is taken to the Human Resources (HR) team.

Upon receiving the conflict report, the HR team conducts a thorough investigation to understand the nature and severity of the issue. Depending on the intensity and circumstances surrounding the conflict, the HR team determines the appropriate course of action. This decision-making process is guided by Optimizely's policies and values, with the ultimate goal of ensuring a safe and respectful work environment for all employees.

In some cases, the HR team may opt for corrective measures such as providing guidance and counseling to the parties involved, issuing warnings, or implementing additional training or support measures. In more serious cases where misconduct or violations of company policies are evident, the HR team may take disciplinary action against the offender, up to and including termination of employment.

There are indeed some other issues such as **Accessibility** and **Work-Life Balance** which should be taken into consideration while we’re analyzing the culture of Optimizely. They have been covered in the previous points. Employees with disabilities are given options to work from their own home which doesn't affect their pay whatsoever. And regarding the second part, the company does provide remote work options if any worker is capable of completing their tasks on time. Optimizely is also flexible with time management. The focus is on completing the specific individual tasks regardless of the time needed or from which place one is doing it.

**Comments and Suggestions**

While Optimizely has made significant strides in advancing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion initiatives, there remains room for growth and improvement. Stated below are some suggestions for Optimizely to enhance its functionality from our analysis:

i. **Implement Anonymous Reporting Mechanisms:** Establishing anonymous reporting mechanisms for employees to voice concerns about discrimination, harassment, or other workplace issues can encourage transparency and help address sensitive matters more effectively.

ii. **Regular Employee Feedback Surveys:** Conduct regular surveys to gather feedback from employees on their experiences related to diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace. Use this feedback to identify areas for improvement and measure progress over time.

**Conclusion**

Optimizely's commitment to ensuring Diversity, Equity and Inclusion is evident in its visible measures, such as recruiting diverse talent, providing equal opportunities for growth and advancement, and creating a culture of respect and belonging. The company's emphasis on celebrating cultural and religious diversity, accommodating employees' needs, and promoting open dialogue further contributes to its inclusive workplace culture.

In conclusion, I believe that Optimizely has a strong foundation for promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion within the organization. By building on existing efforts and implementing targeted initiatives, the company can further enhance its commitment to DEI and create an even more inclusive and equitable workplace for all employees.