

Managing Diversity in a Hybrid Workplace

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ABSTRACT

Purpose- The purpose of this study is to analysis how the hybrid work structure handles employee diversity. **Design/methodology/approach-** This study uses primary data analysis; the primary data were gathered from 104 employees who are working in hybrid work environment from IT Sector. Quantitative analysis is used. **Findings-** The results of the investigation showed that in a Hybrid workplace diverse employees have different perspectives when they were evaluated on several factors of organization such as Common principles, belief system, cooperation, unity, and taking risks or coming up with innovative solutions. In order to effectively promote workplace diversity, the study came to the conclusion that organizations are gradually making their diverse workforce more tolerant of hybrid work arrangements. **Research limitations/implications-** There are not any limitations on the study's scope. By integrating the literature on managing diversity with the hybrid work framework and offering fresh perspectives on managing diverse people in this model, the study advances theoretical understanding. Additionally, For managers, there are practical consequences. By taking into account the findings of this study, managers employing the hybrid work model may ease any concerns about how to handle employees with a variety of traits. **Originality/value-** Significant contributions are made by the study, particularly to companies that deal with diverse workforces. This study looked at managing diversity, which has not been taken into account in the hybrid work model, paving the way for path for additional research for organizations

Keywords-Hybrid Work Arrangement, Diversity, Survey.



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INTRODUCTION

High performance and a competitive edge for businesses are linked to on-site work and efficient administration of different workforces (Apgar, 1998). The traits of employees are a reflection of their individuality and diversity. Diversity can be revealed by elements like motivational factors, perspective on work and jobs, and levels of responsibility. Accordingly, the decision on how to manage diversity may be made by looking at elements like the personality, character, habits, and job-related viewpoints of employees as well as the demographics of the workers in the hybrid work model.

Some workers are on-site, while others operate remotely (Dowling et al., 2022a). Globally, hybrid work is starting to take centre stage (Carroll & Conboy, 2020). The success of a company depends on managers successfully overseeing diversified workforce under the two distinct work frameworks (Beno, 2022). Because they can have a direct impact on business performance, The best work model for employees, which employees would work under which model, inclusive and fair behaviors among employees, and

how demographic impacts would be managed are all important considerations.

The widespread use of a hybrid work model with varied employees requires an inclusive strategy (Dowling et al., 2022a). The effectiveness of the hybrid work Approach and employee job performance can be raised by highlighting employees' diversity and fostering collaboration among varied workers (Cousins et al., 2007).

Diversity Management

Diversity is the recognition, appreciation, understanding and embracing personal differences in status, gender, race, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, among other things (Esty et al., 1995).

A crucial component of any organization's practice is diversity management, which entails skilfully management of workplace diversity. According to O'Leary and Sandberg (2016), managers play a key role in integrating organizational diversity policies and initiatives into daily operations. Diversity management includes a number of elements, including differences

in demographics (gender, age etc.), ethnicity, culture, nationality, networks, personal competencies (talents, educational background), Management processes and roles, as well as many types of diversity (sexual preferences, occupational disabilities) (Danullis & Dehling, 2004).

Enhancing the efficiency and efficacy of a workforce comprised of people with varying genders, races, nationalities, cultural backgrounds, and educational backgrounds is the goal of diversity management.

To enable individuals to reach their greatest potential, organizations must acknowledge the distinct knowledge that each person contributes. Effectively managing diversity is crucial for information sharing and the overall development of companies (Yadav & Lenka, 2020).

Diversity management is defined as planned and intentional actions seek to enhance communication amongst individuals from various cultural, ethnic, or gender backgrounds (Stockdale and Crosby, 2004). Additionally, the above initiatives aim to use diversity to promote overall efficacy, innovation, and complementarity.

Diverse teams guarantee excellent performance and foster creativity, but they also foster conflict and lessen peace (Kankanhalli et al., 2006; Castellano et al., 2017). Therefore, handling diversity in the workplace successfully can be challenging and difficult.

Remote and Hybrid Work Style

Different work styles were discussed by Larsen and Andersen (2007) in relation to expectations and goals. Remote working overseas, teleworking, working from home, and temporary employment teleworking based on supply of goods and services, as well as remote work in a nearby office are some examples of these work methods. Prior to COVID-19, several studies divided remote work into several categories (Eriksson & Petrosian, 2020): telecommunicating (online and in-person, known as the hybrid work model), working from home, working from anywhere, and full-time remote working (Eddleston & Mulki, 2017).

When it comes to remote work styles, managers must provide employees with additional feedback when employee control is somewhat difficult (Nickson & Siddons, 2004). Managers must therefore communicate with their staff. In this context, one of the things that needs to be stressed is providing feedback on employees' performance. This can surely be further challenging in management of people who work remotely. It is advised that managers concentrate mostly on two main strategies: empowerment and coordination, as it will be considerably more difficult to closely supervise staff in this manner of working (Moon & Stanworth, 1999).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Companies were looking for ways to increase the productivity of their on-site workers prior to the pandemic, and diversity was thought to increase employee productivity in addition to the many other factors that affect it. It is evident that numerous sectors are now successfully utilizing Hybrid work which is blend of on-site and remote work. Both on-site and remote work have started to be used in corporate life as the pandemic's impacts have subsided.

The idea of how to manage employees with various diversity to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of work processes emerged during this phase. However, it is unknown how to manage varied employees in a mixed work arrangement i.e Hybrid Work arrangement. Thus, there was a desire to add to the body of knowledge regarding how to deal with employees in this system. In this regard, studies were conducted to make sure that employees with various traits could be managed within the hybrid work model while accounting for diversity and business life. This concept serves as the primary research issue for this investigation.

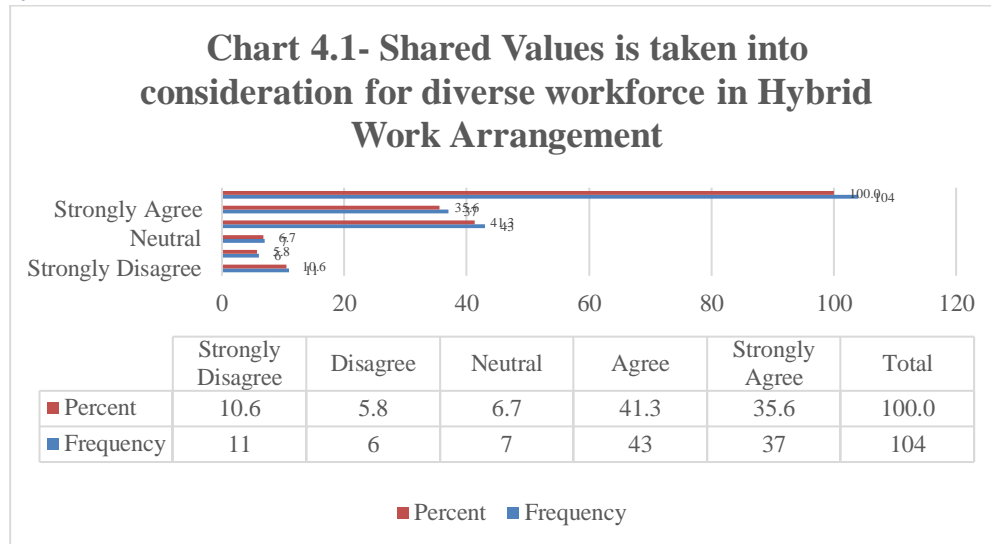
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research investigation is basically descriptive. The research aimed to investigate the management of diversity within the hybrid work framework. This study employs a quantitative analysis utilizing primary data. The data collection approach involves a survey. The questionnaire is used through online method. The sample size (n), representing how many participants and observations there were in the investigation, i.e. 104. The study employed a probability method, as the selected sample was random. Consequently, the study employed a random sampling technique, which is among the most often utilized techniques of sampling. The data is gathered using a Likert scale from employees at IT companies that have adopted a 'Hybrid Work Arrangement' strategy. MANOVA and factor analysis are the study's methods.

Research questions were developed in this regard to ascertain how diverse employees are managed under the hybrid work model. These questions are- whether shared values, belief systems and team work are considered, whether there is bond with colleagues and strong cohesiveness, whether Risk taking /Revolutionary Solutions are stronger, whether communication level, equal opportunity for training and development, gender specific roles, platform to voice concerns and suggestion, participation in team building activities, support from managers and colleague, recognition for contribution, involvement in decision-making processes, fair access to resources and equitable opportunities for advancement for diverse employees under the hybrid work model..

Data Analysis and Interpretation

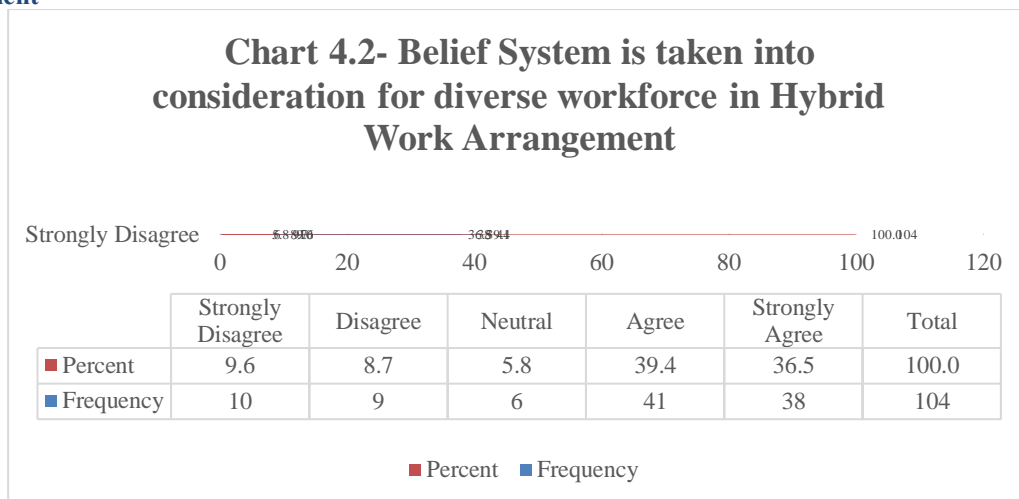
Chart 4.1 Represents - Shared Values is taken into consideration for diverse workforce in Hybrid Work Arrangement



Outcome:

The table above displays that 41.3 % of the participants agreed that shared values for diverse workforce in hybrid workplace is being considered, whereas 35.6 % strongly agreed for this statement, 6.7% participants were neutral, 5.8 % were disagreed and 10.6 % of the participants strongly disagreed.

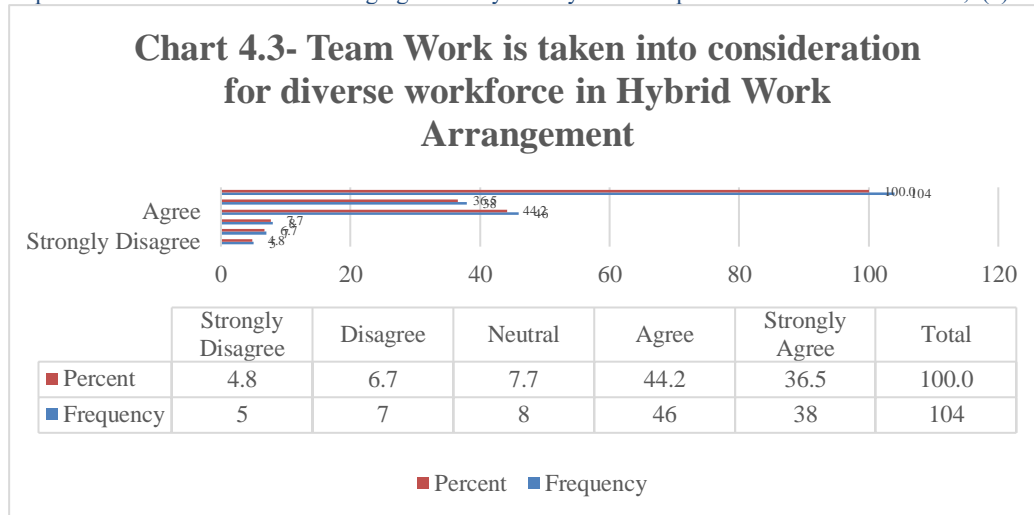
Chart 4.2 Represents– Belief System is taken into consideration for diverse workforce in Hybrid Work Arrangement



Outcome:

The table above displays that 39.4% of the participants were agreed that belief system for diverse workforce in hybrid workplace is being considered, whereas 36.5 % strongly agreed, 5.8% participants were neutral, 8.7 % disagreed and 9.6 % participants were strongly disagreed.

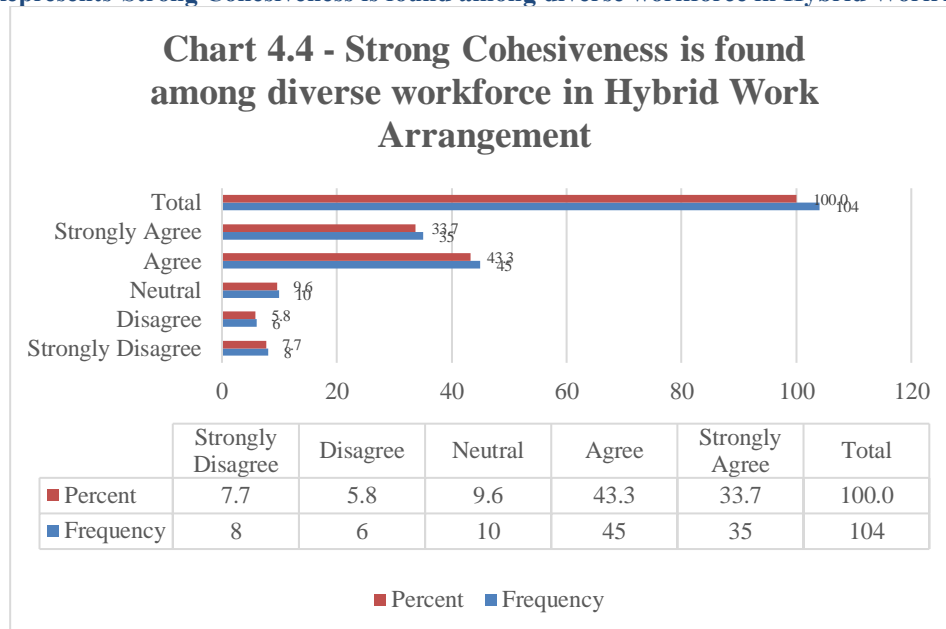
Chart 4.3 Represents- Team Work is taken into consideration for diverse workforce in Hybrid Work Arrangement



Outcome:

The table above displays that 44.2% participants were agreed that Team Work for diverse workforce in hybrid workplace is being considered, whereas 36.5 % strongly agreed, 7.7% participants were neutral, 6.7 % disagreed and 4.8 % strongly disagreed.

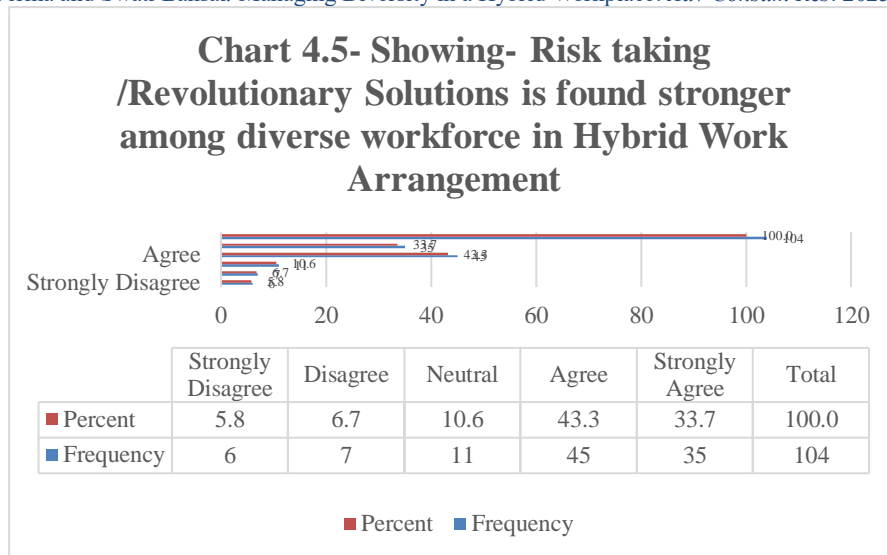
Chart 4.4 Represents-Strong Cohesiveness is found among diverse workforce in Hybrid Work Arrangement



Outcome:

The table above displays that 43.3% participants were agreed that there is strong cohesiveness among diverse workforce in hybrid work arrangement, whereas 33.7% strongly agreed, 9.6 % participants were neutral, 5.8% disagreed and 7.7 % strongly disagreed.

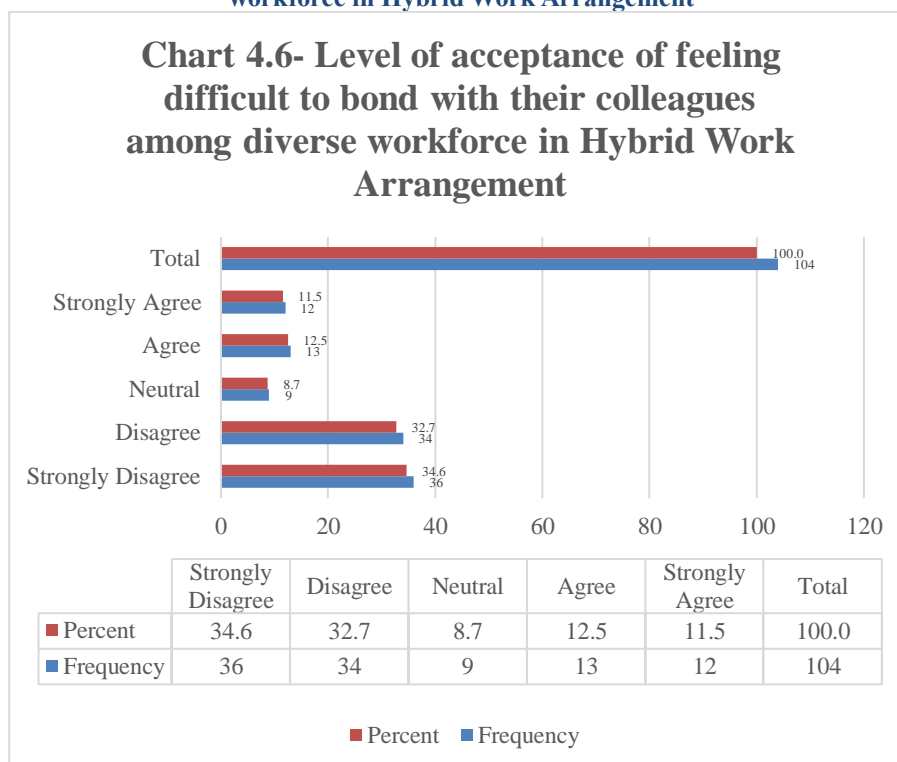
Chart 4.5 Represents- Risk taking /Revolutionary Solutions is found stronger among diverse workforce in Hybrid Work Arrangement



Outcome:

The table above displays that 43.3% participants were agreed that Risk taking /Revolutionary Solutions is found stronger among diverse workforce in Hybrid Work Arrangement, whereas 33.7 % strongly agreed,10.6 % participants were neutral,6.7% disagreed and 5.8% strongly disagreed

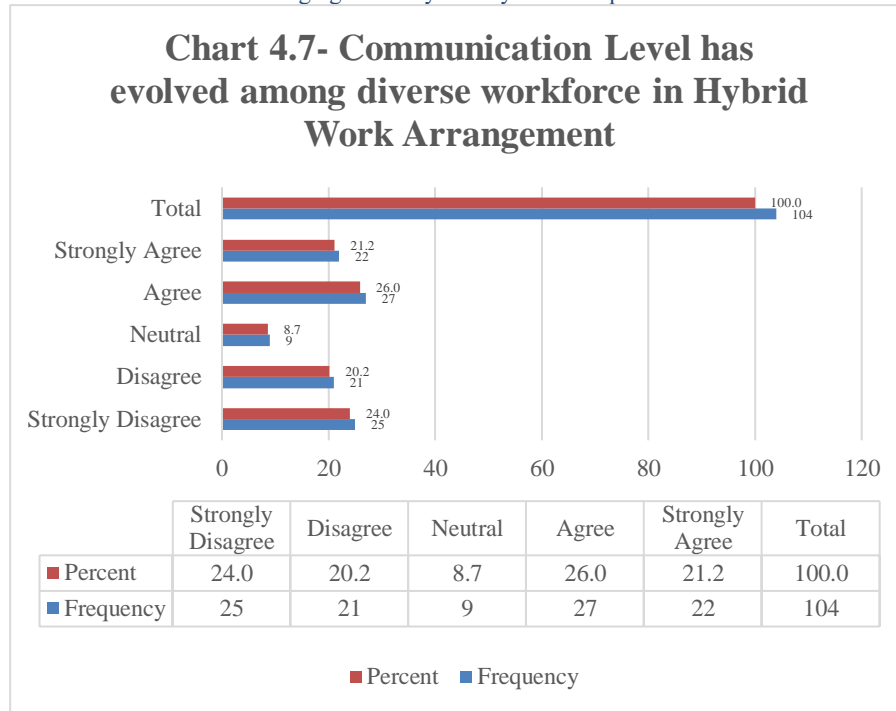
Chart 4.6 Represents- Level of acceptance of feeling difficult to bond with their colleagues among diverse workforce in Hybrid Work Arrangement



Outcome:

The table above displays that 34.6 % participants were strongly disagreed that diverse workforce faces the difficulty to bond with colleagues in the organisation, 32.7 % disagreed, 8.7 % participants were neutral, 12.5 % agreed and 11.5 % of the respondents strongly agree

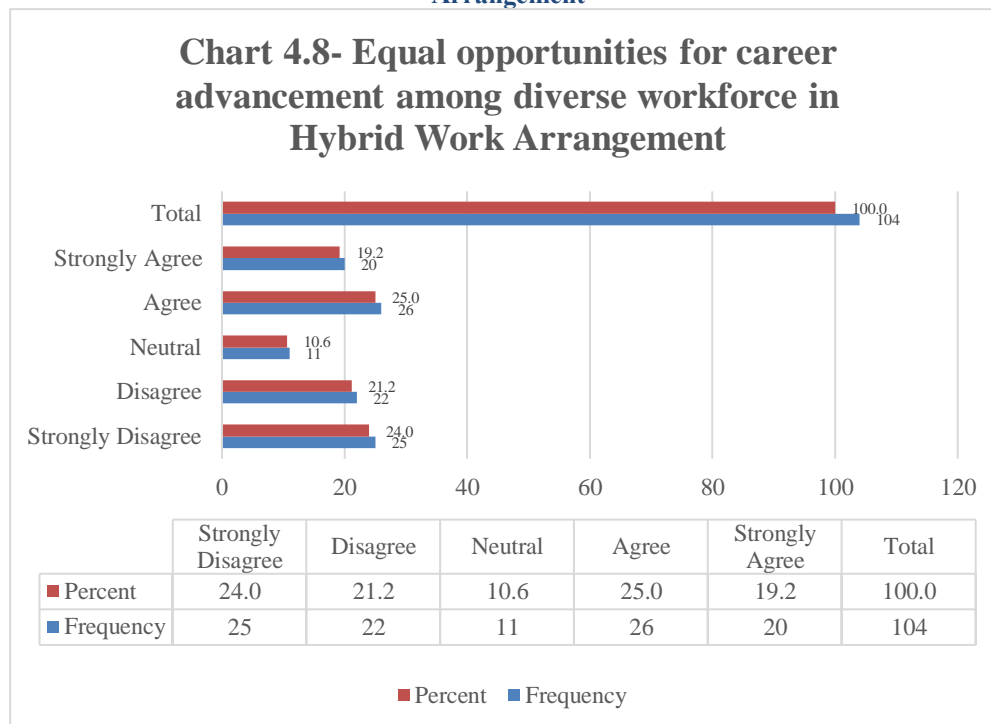
Chart 4.7 Represents- Communication Level has improved among diverse workforce in Hybrid Work Arrangement



Outcome:

The table above displays that 24 % participants were strongly disagreed that Communication Level has improved among them, 20.2 % disagreed, 9 % responded neutral, 26 % agreed and 21.2 % of the participants were strongly agreed

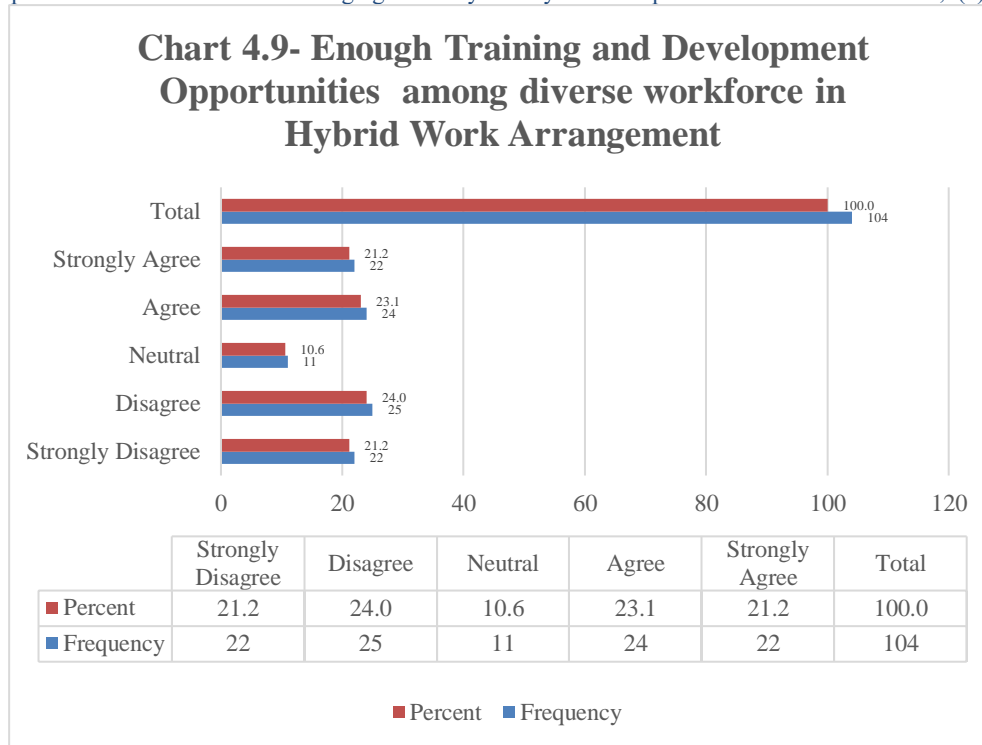
Chart 4.8 Represents- Equal opportunities for career advancement among diverse workforce in Hybrid Work Arrangement



Outcome:

The table above displays that 24 % participants were strongly disagreed that there with the response of equal opportunities for career advancement, 21.2 % disagreed, 10.6% responded neutral, 25% agreed and 19.2 % participants were strongly agreed.

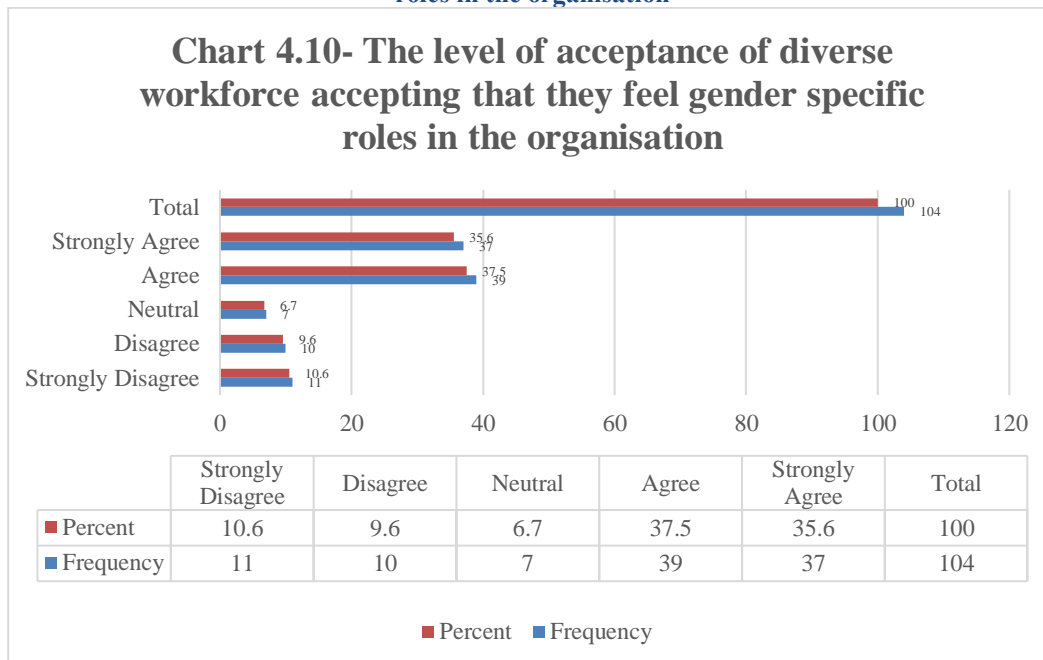
Chart 4.9 Represents- Enough Training and Development Opportunities among diverse workforce in Hybrid Work Arrangement



Outcome:

The table above displays that 21.2% participants were strongly disagreed that there is Enough Training and Development Opportunities, 24 % disagreed, 10.6% responded neutral, 23.1% agreed and 21.2 % of the participants were strongly agreed.

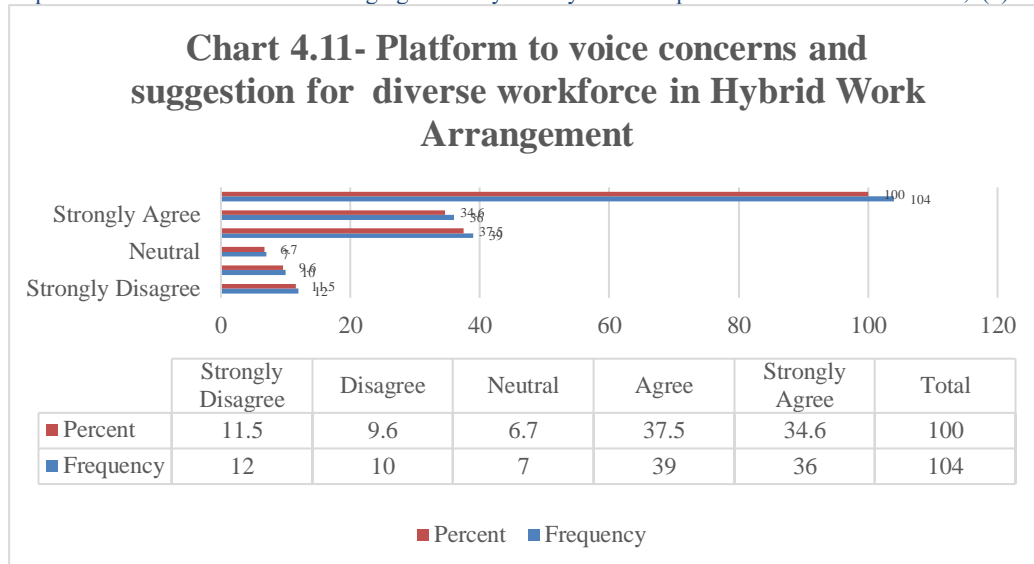
Chart 4.10 Represents-The level of acceptance of diverse workforce accepting that they feel gender specific roles in the organisation



Outcome:

The table above displays that 35.6 % participants were strongly agreed that the level of acceptance of diverse workforce accepting that they feel gender specific roles in the organization, 37.5% agreed, 7 % participants were neutral, 9.6% disagreed and 10.6% participants were strongly disagreed.

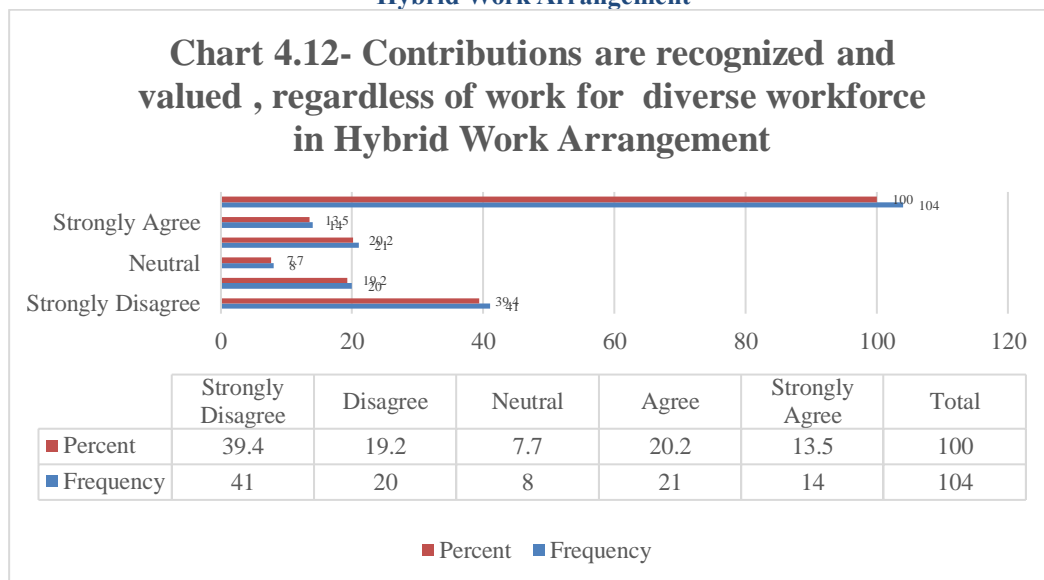
Chart 4.11 Represents-Platform to voice concerns and suggestion for diverse workforce in Hybrid Work Arrangement



Outcome:

The table above displays that 37.5 % participants were agreed that there is platform to voice concerns and suggestion for diverse workforce in hybrid work arrangement, 34.6% strongly agreed, 11.5 % strongly disagree ,9.6 % disagree and 6.7 % participants were neutral.

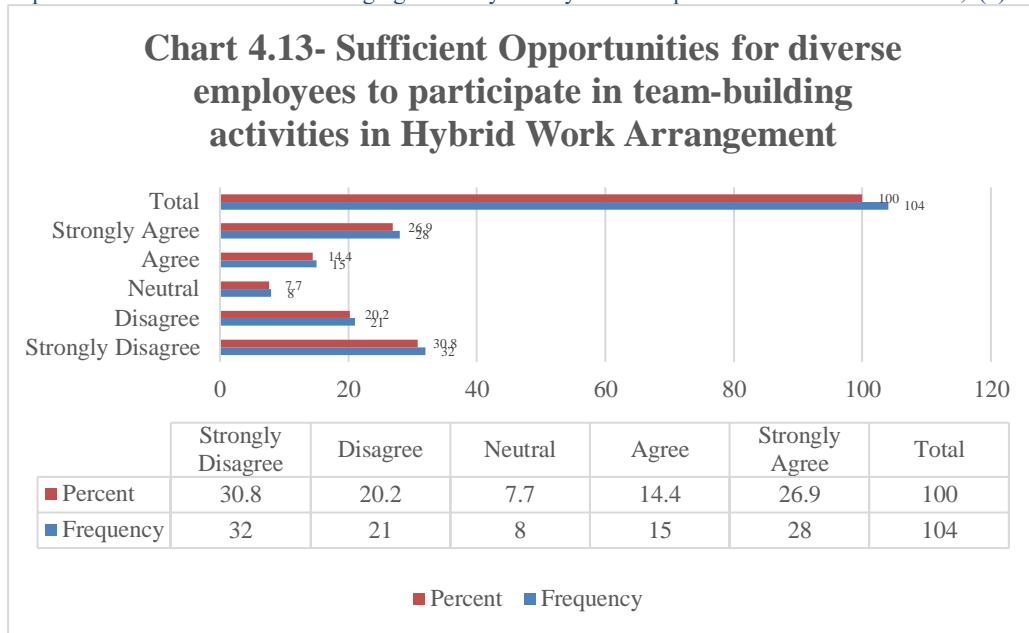
Chart 4.12 Represents- Contributions are recognized and valued, regardless of work for diverse workforce in Hybrid Work Arrangement



Outcome:

The table above displays that 39.4 % participants were strongly disagreed that their contributions are recognized and valued, regardless of work in hybrid work arrangement, 19.2 % disagreed, 20.2 % agreed, 13.5 % strongly agree and 7.7 % participants were neutral.

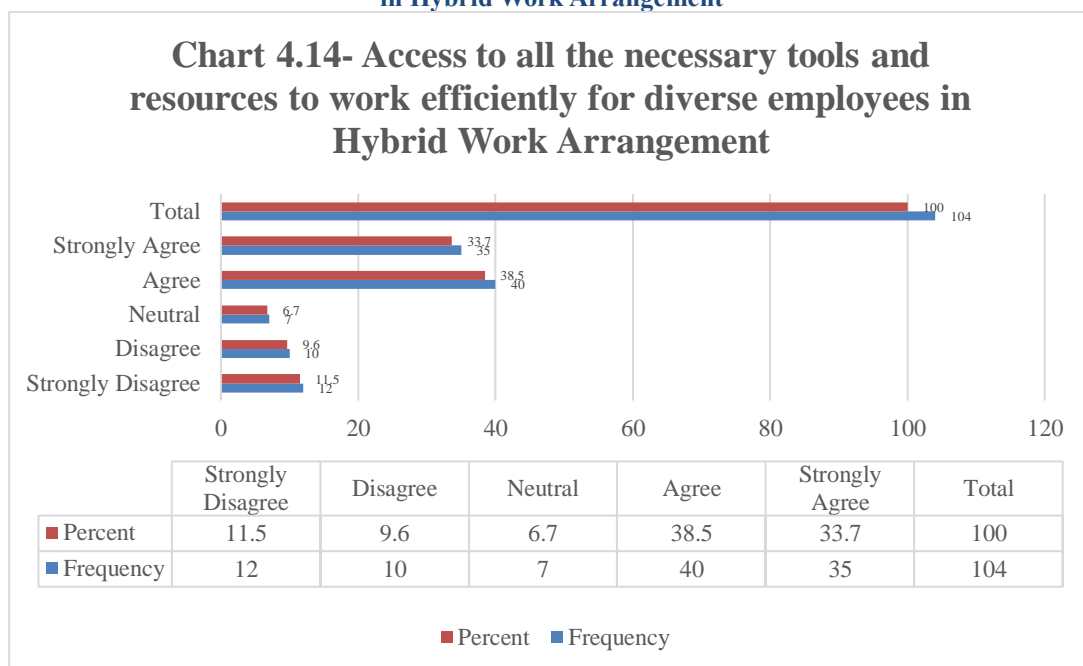
Chart 4.13 Represents- Sufficient Opportunities for diverse employees to participate in team-building activities in Hybrid Work Arrangement



Outcome:

The table above displays that 20.2 % participants were disagreed that diverse workforce has sufficient opportunities to participate in team-building activities, 30.8% strongly disagreed, 26.9 % strongly agree, 14.4% agreed and 8 % participants were neutral.

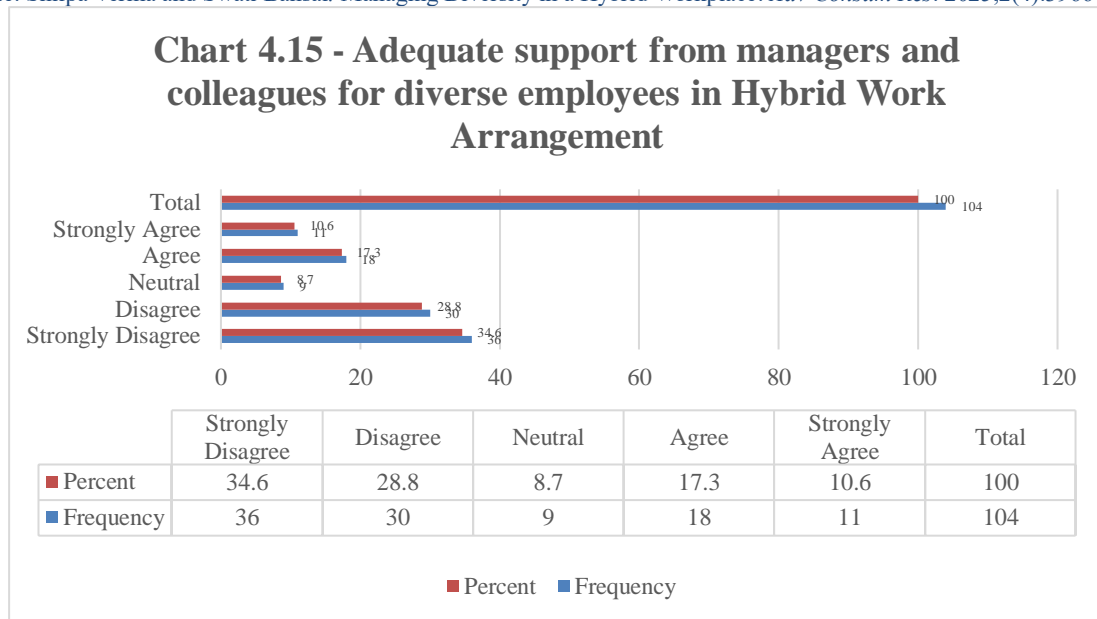
Chart 4.14 Represents- Access to all the necessary tools and resources to work efficiently for diverse employees in Hybrid Work Arrangement



Outcome:

The table above displays that 38.5 % participants agreed that they have access to all the necessary tools and resources to work efficiently in the organization, whereas 33.7 % strongly agreed, 11.5 % strongly disagreed, 9.6% disagreed and 6.7 % participants were neutral.

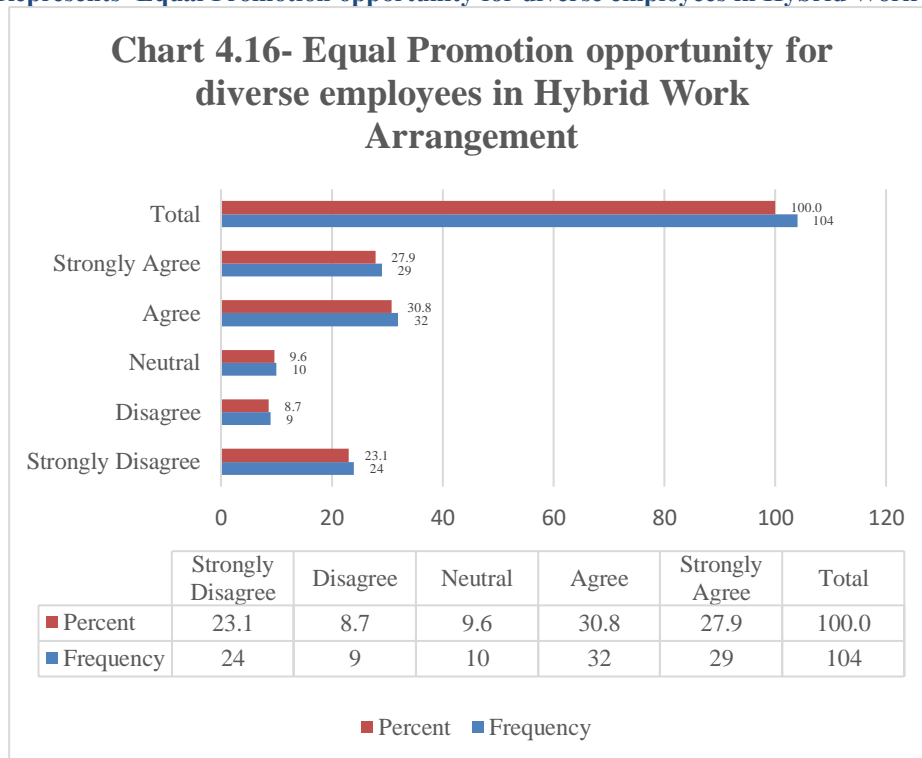
Chart 4.15 Represents- Adequate support from managers and colleagues for diverse employees in Hybrid Work Arrangement



Outcome:

The table above displays that 28.8 % participants disagreed that there is adequate support from managers and colleagues for diverse workforce in hybrid work arrangement, whereas 34.6 % strongly disagreed, 17.3 % agreed, 10.6% strongly agreed and 8.7% participants were neutral.

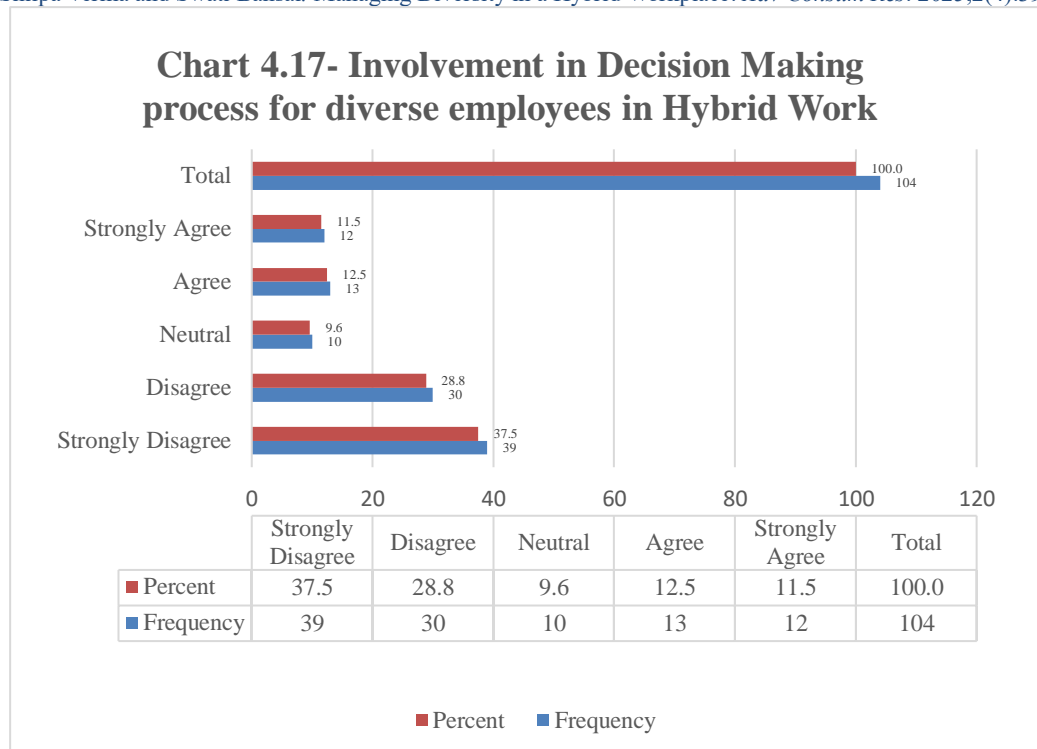
Chart 4.16 Represents- Equal Promotion opportunity for diverse employees in Hybrid Work Arrangement



Outcome:

The table above displays that 30.8 % participants were agreed that there is equal promotion opportunity for them in hybrid work arrangement, whereas 27.9 % strongly agreed, 23.1 % strongly disagreed, 8.7% agreed and 9.6% participants were neutral.

Chart 4.17 Represents- Involvement in Decision Making process for diverse employees in Hybrid Work Arrangement



Outcome:

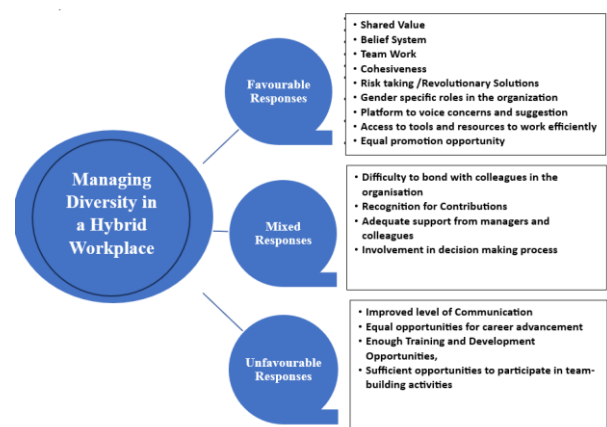
The table above displays that 37.5 % participants disagreed that they get any kind of involvement in decision making process in hybrid work arrangement, whereas 28.8 % strongly disagreed, 11.5% strongly disagreed, 12.5% agreed and 9.6% participants were neutral.

FINDINGS

The findings of the study came with mixed reviews about diversity management in hybrid workplace. Respondents gave positive response in the case of - shared values, a set of beliefs, teamwork, a strong sense of unity, taking risks and coming up with innovative solutions, gender specific roles in the organization, Platform to voice concerns and suggestion, Access to all the necessary tools and resources to work efficiently, Equal promotion opportunity.

Whereas Negative response has come from respondents in the case of - Bonding with coworkers in the organization is difficult, Contributions are recognized and valued, regardless of work , Adequate support from managers and colleagues, Involvement in decision making process

There are also responses which came with equal weight for Positive and Negative, almost 50-50 in the case of- Improved level of Communication, Equal opportunities for career advancement, Enough Training and Development Opportunities, sufficient opportunities to participate in team-building activities. The above-mentioned findings have been highlighted via a conceptual model on Managing Diversity in Hybrid Work Arrangement.



Conceptual Framework on Managing Diversity in Hybrid Workplace

CONCLUSION

Employees with a variety of backgrounds began working remotely as part of the remote work policy that practically all businesses adopted during the pandemic. Given this fact, it is thought to be insufficient to address diversity management solely in the physical workplace in order to contribute theoretically.

This study was carried out on diversity management in the hybrid work model. Considering the diversity of employees, it is necessary to update the diversity management approach in hybrid work model. Since every employee is valuable, and in order to ensure that they adjust to the hybrid work style, substantial modifications are required.

The findings of this study can provide an up-to-date guide for diversity management in hybrid work models. Diverse Employees have different outlook towards various dimension of work and organization. Organizations may face some difficulties while implementing the hybrid work structure, including a loss of social interaction and communication.

Therefore, it's the duty of manager to cater the needs of diverse employees under hybrid work model. Since diversity is beneficial to organizations, and diversity management would alter managers' and employees' perspectives (Kirton, 2020). Consequently, it will facilitate the efficient implementation of the hybrid work model.

Limitation

The study is affected by the participants' attitudes when responding to the questionnaire, which may alter because it somewhat resembles a psychometric test. This study has taken respondents from one sector only, responses might change if different sectors will be taken.

Implication

The study examines how working in a hybrid workplace affects a diverse workforce from a few perspectives: shared values, Belief system, Team work, strong cohesiveness, Risk taking /Revolutionary Solutions, Gender specific roles in the organization, Platform to voice concerns and suggestion, Access to all the necessary tools and resources to work efficiently, Equal promotion opportunity. Although the majority of the responses have been encouraging, the study reveals conflicting opinions about different employees working in a hybrid paradigm. One important feature that affects practically every organizational component, including those the report mentions, is diversity. Future research might examine the connections between all the elements that would enable a hybrid organization to implement groundbreaking, revolutionary workplace modifications to accommodate diverse workforce.

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