IMPACT OF WORKFORCE DIVERSITY ON EMPLOYEES' PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT - **Organizations today are facing a myriad of human resource management challenges arising from workforce diversity. Employees differ in terms of gender, age, religion, cultural background, race and ethnicity and also in terms of lifestyle, choices available, perspectives, attitudes, value system, beliefs, behaviour. expectations, skills and experiences.**

How well or how prepared managers are able to invest in the concept of diversity will impact not only on work issues but also on sensitivity to customer's needs, legal compliance, business' ethical issues, profitability and even social cohesion.

This paper attempts to analyse the effect of workforce diversity on employees' performance from a sample of 75 employees in a pharmaceutical company in Chennai. The study indicates that the company has been able to adjust with various diverse cultures and has also made the work climate more convenient for their workers.

Key words : Workforce diversity, ethnicity, gender diversity, generational diversity

I.   INTRODUCTION

Workforce diversity is a valuable asset for any business that seeks a competitive advantage in the global economy. Workforce diversity management requires creation of an organisational climate, in which people from different cultural, social backgrounds and being diverse in many other respects (e.g. age, gender, education etc.) can co-exist and work, with full co-operation of one another. Diversity not only involves how people perceive themselves, but how they perceive others. An organization's success and competitiveness depends upon its ability to embrace diversity and realize the benefits. Managing diversity is one of the most important challenges faced by manager sand their organizations. Workforce diversity management is a strategy that is intended to foster and maintain a positive workplace environment. Usually initiated by Human Resources professionals and managed by department heads and supervisors, an effective diversity management program will promote recognition and respect for the individual differences found among a group of employees.

Dimension of Workforce Diversity:

1) Age
2) Gender
3) Culture
4) Education
5) Psychology

Techniques of Workforce Diversity Management:
1) Creating Awareness of Diversity

2) Creating Conditions for Common Organisational Culture
3) Programmes of Special Care for Diversified Workforce
4) Avoiding Discriminations
5) Career Development Programmes
6) Prevention of Sexual Harassment
7) Committees of Diverse Members

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Primary Objective: To study the workforce diversity in the organization and its impact on the employees' performance.
Secondary Objectives:

☐   To determine organizational diversity management strategies.

☐   To determine whether there is a relationship between gender diversity and its effect on employees' performance.

☐   To ascertain the extent to which the generation diversity effects the employees' work performance.

☐   To find the role of ethnicity in employee performance.

☐   To find suggestive measures to improve the climate of workforce diversity in workplace.

II.   REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Subhash.C.Kundu, Janhavi Bansal & Mukesh Pruthi [1](2019), Perceived workforce diversity and firm performance; A study of an Indian public sector organization

The public sector organization taken for the study was BSNL, where the researchers took 619 employees as the

sample. The findings resulted in proving that workforce diversity does have an effect in the firm performance. The gender and ethnic diversity has a diverse effect in work performance of the employees as it was reported that the female employees and minorities face discrimination in certain cases. The study was helpful to reveal certain aspects of the workforce diversities and also showed its benefits in improving the employees' work performance.

Himani Sheth [2] (2018) Impact of workforce diversity on employee performance with special reference to

IT, FMCG & Telecom Industry in Gujarat

The research was conducted in three industries namely IT industry, FMCG industry and Telecom industry in 4 selected cities of Gujarat - Ahmedabad, Surat, Baroda and Rajkot. The findings revealed that in Telecom industry, educational diversity and generation diversity has an impact on the employee performance, whereas in the IT industry and FMCG, gender diversity and ethnic diversity has an impact on the employee performance.

Christiana Ekot [3] (2017) Effect of workforce diversity on employee performance in the Nigerian Banking Industry

The result showed that the workforce diversity, except for ethnic diversity, has a significant positive relationship with employees' performance. From the theoretical, conceptual and empirical findings, employee behaviour, capacity or ability, their motivation, organizational commitment, organizational culture are some factors that moderate and explain the relationship between workforce diversity and employee performance.

Waseem Noor & Saule Serikova [4] (2016) Diversity and Inclusion: A study on Pharma50 companies

The paper proves a correlation by showing that most of the diverse companies have made an improvement in customer orientation, employee satisfaction and decision making, leading to a virtuous cycle of increasing returns. The result shows that the organizations with diverse culture have ranked highest as compared to the other organizations and have proved their worth, thus promoting diversity management.

Parul Dixit, Dr. B L Bajpai [5] (2015) Managing Workforce Diversity in Competitive Environment

For this research, the authors took four MNCs as an example to work on their study.These were- Accenture, IBM, Infosys and Citi Bank. Throughout their study they found out that these companies dealt with sensitive issues like LGBT and PWD, observing that these were the major issues that had a very minor consent of 1%-2% from the organizations . The results showed that age diversity and gender diversity had a positive impact w here people even made amends for the growth of the women in the organizations.

Sreelatha R. Rao & Dr.M.M. Bagali [6](2013), Workforce diversity management: an empirical study on relationship between diversity management practices, obstacles and acceptance of gender diversity among employees in IT Industry, Bangalore

Their study showed that diversity management is concerned with attracting the widest range of employees, treating all members of the workforce as asset and making the best use of their potentials in order to making the best use of their potential in order to maximize the capacity of the organization and simultaneously, greater acceptance of diversity among the employees

III.   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design used for this study is **Descriptive**, as the result of the study relies on the survey. The sampling technique used for this study is the **Convenience Sampling Technique** - The questionnaire was first given to those who were easily available to check the authenticity and its reliability .The **total population** in the pharmaceutical company. is **100 out of which 75** employees have been taken for the study. Through the Raosoft website, the sample error was determined **as- 0.05 or 5%.** The primary data collection used here is **Questionnaire survey method.** The questionnaire contained general questions on workplace diversity and the diversity was based on three dimensions namely age, gender and ethnicity and the effect of diversity on the employees' performance. Secondary data has been collected from company website & manuals, magazines and search engines.

IV.   DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1: SOCIO –ECONOMIC FACTORS:-

FACTORS	CATEGORIES	RESPONSES	PERCENTAGE
AGE OF THE EMPLOYEES	21-34	24	32%
	35-44	22	29%
	45-54	26	35%
	55 and above	3	4%
GENDER	Male	54	72%
	Female	21	28%
WORK-EXPERIENCE	0-2 years	17	23%
	2-5 years	10	13%
	5-10 years	16	21%
	More than 10 years	32	43%

INTERPRETATIONS:

AGE-The above mentioned table shows that majority of employees fall under the age group of 45-54 years and next in line are the young employees ranging between 21-34 years . Third in line are the employees in the age group of 35-44 and last in line are the employees who are 55 years and above.

GENDER-The above table shows that 72% of employees are male and the rest 28% of employees are female.

WORK EXPERIENCE-The above table shows that 43% of employees have more than 10 years of experience, 23% of employees with 0-2 years of experience, and those with 5-10 years of experience is 21%..Employees with 2-5 years of experience are least with 13%.

TABLE 5.2: MISCELLANEOUS FACTORS:-

TABLE 5.2.1: Table showing employees' opinion on the organization culture

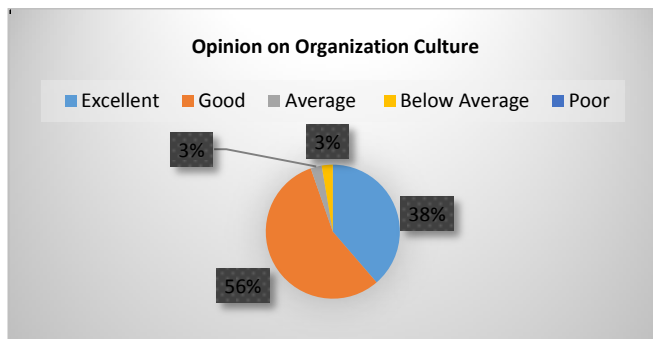| S.No.	Employees' opinion on Organization culture	Responses	Percentage
1	Excellent	29	38%
2	Good	42	56%
3	Average	2	3%
4	Below Average	2	3%
5	Poor	0	0%

Chart 5.2.1: Demonstration of opinions on organization culture

Interpretations

The above chart shows the employees' opinion on organization culture with Good at first position with 56%; Excellent, second with 38%; Average and below average in third position with 3%.

Table 5.2.2: Table showing the employees' opinion on the management openly communicating ideas

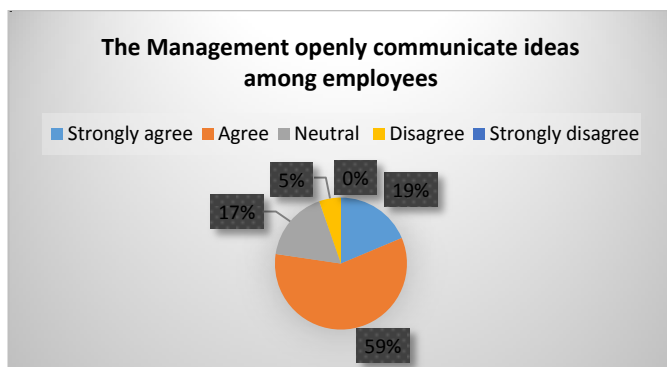| S.No.	The management openly communicates ideas among employees	Responses	Percentage
1	Strongly disagree	0	0%
2	Disagree	4	5%
3	Neutral	13	17%
4	Agree	44	59%
5	Strongly agree	14	19%

Chart 5.2.2: Demonstration of opinion on open communication of ideas among employees

Interpretations

The above chart shows 59% of employees agree, 19% of employees strongly agree, 17% of employees neither agree nor disagree and 5% of employees disagree that the management openly communicates ideas among employees.

Table 5.2.3: Table showing the employee's opinion on the company's environment facility   employee relationships

S.No.	Does the company's environment facilitate employee relationships?	Responses	Percentage
1	Yes	71	95%
2	No	4	5%

Chart 5.2.3: Demonstration of opinion on organization environment facilitating employee relationships

Interpretations

The above chart shows 95% of employees have agreed and 5% of employees have disagreed that the company's environment facilitate employee relationships.

Table 5.2.4: Table showing the company's policies and procedure discouraging discrimination

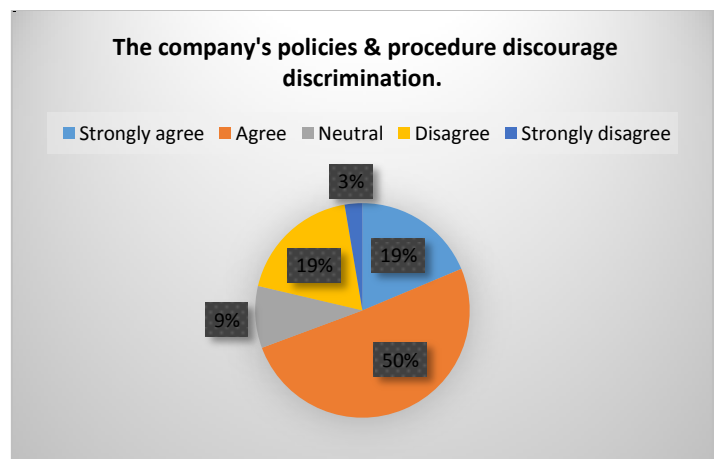| S.No.	The Company's policies & procedure discouraging discrimination	Responses	Percentage
1	Strongly disagree	2	3%
2	Disagree	14	19%
3	Neutral	7	9%
4	Agree	38	50%
5	Strongly agree	14	19%

Chart 5.2.4: Demonstration of opinion on organization policies and procedures discouraging discrimination

Interpretations

The above chart shows that 50% of employees have agreed, 19% of employees have strongly agreed and 19% have disagreed, 9% of employees neither agree nor disagree and 3% of employees have strongly disagreed that the company's policies and procedure discouraging discrimination.

Table 5.2.5: Table showing involvement of women in decision-making

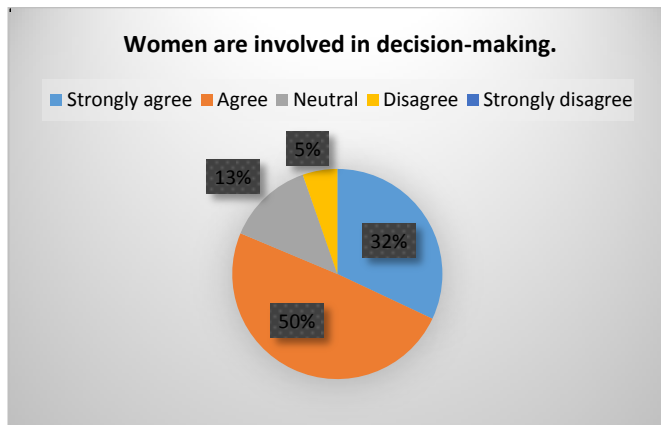| S.No.	Women are involved in decision –making process	Responses	Percentage
1	Strongly disagree	0	0%
2	Disagree	4	5%
3	Neutral	10	13%
4	Agree	37	50%
5	Strongly agree	24	32%

Chart 5.2.5: Demonstration of opinion involvement of women in decision making

Interpretations

The above mentioned chart shows that 50% of employees agree, 32% of employees strongly agree, 13% of employees neither agree nor disagree and 5% of employees disagree that women are involved in decision – making process.

Table 5.2.6: Table showing employees' opinion on the opportunities for the growth and advancement exists for women

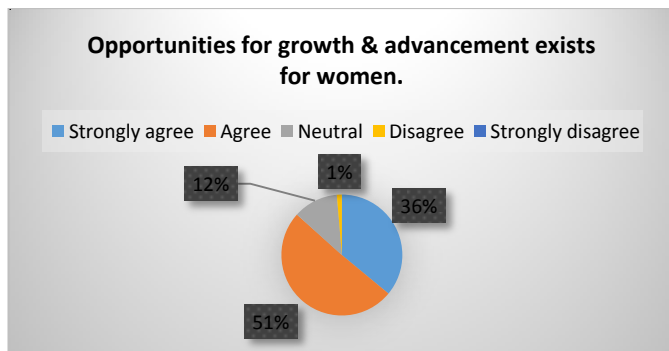| S.No.	Opportunities for women for the growth & advancement exists for women	Responses	Percentage
1	Strongly disagree	0	0%
2	Disagree	1	1%
3	Neutral	9	12%
4	Agree	38	51%
5	Strongly agree	27	36%

Chart 5.2.6: Demonstration of opinion on opportunities given to women for growth and advancement

Interpretation

The above chart shows that 51% of employees agree, 36% of employees strongly agree, 12% are undecided and 1% of employees disagree on existence of growth and advancement opportunities for women

Table 5.2.7: Table showing employees' opinion on the equal opportunities given to them on career development

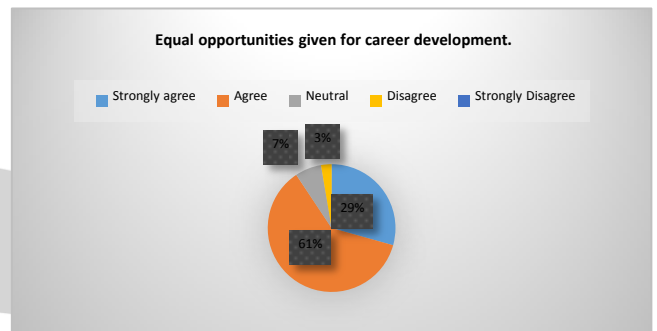| S.No.	Equal opportunities given to employees for their career development	Responses	Percentage
1	Strongly disagree	0	0%
2	Disagree	2	3%
3	Neutral	5	7%
4	Agree	46	61%
5	Strongly agree	22	29%

Chart 5.2.7: Demonstration of opinion on equal opportunities given for career development

Interpretation

The above chart shows that 61% of employees agree, 29% of employees strongly agree, 7% of employees neither agree nor disagree and 3% of employees disagree that equal career developmental opportunities are given to employees ..

Table 5.2.8: Table showing employees' opinion on the age differences in work group not causing any conflict

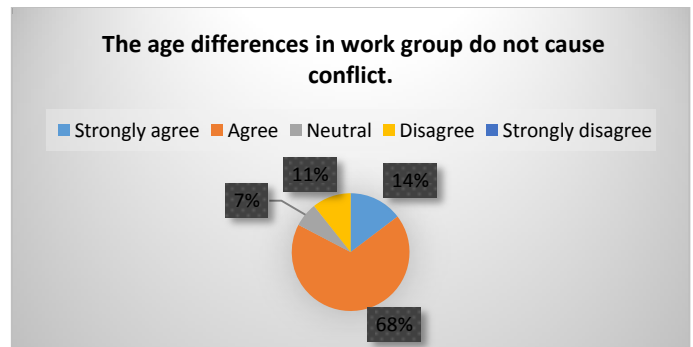| S.No.	Age difference in the work group do not cause conflict	Responses	Percentage
1	Strongly disagree	0	0%
2	Disagree	8	11%
3	Neutral	5	7%
4	Agree	51	68%
5	Strongly agree	11	14%

Chart 5.2.8: Demonstration of opinion on the age differences that do not cause conflicts

Interpretations

The above chart shows that 68% of employees agree, 14% of employees strongly agree, 11% of employees disagree and 7% of employees neither agree nor disagree that age difference in the work group do not cause conflict.

Table 5.2.9: Table showing employees' opinion on the team leaders include members of different age groups in problem solving and decision making

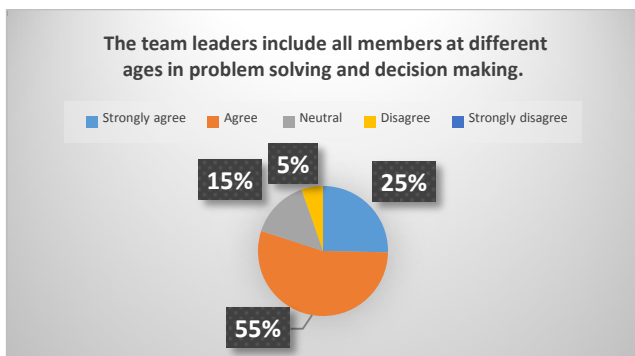| S.No.	The team leaders include all members of different ages in problem solving and decision making.	Responses	Percentage
1	Strongly disagree	0	0%
2	Disagree	4	5%
3	Neutral	11	15%
4	Agree	41	55%
5	Strongly agree	19	25%

Chart 5.2.9: Demonstration of opinion on the team leaders include members of different age groups in problem solving and decision making

Interpretations

The above chart shows that 55% of employees agree, 25% of employees strongly agree, 15% are uncertain and 5% of employees disagree that the team leaders include all members of different ages in problem solving and decision making.

Table 5.2.10: Table showing employees' opinion on the fair treatment given to members of all three generations

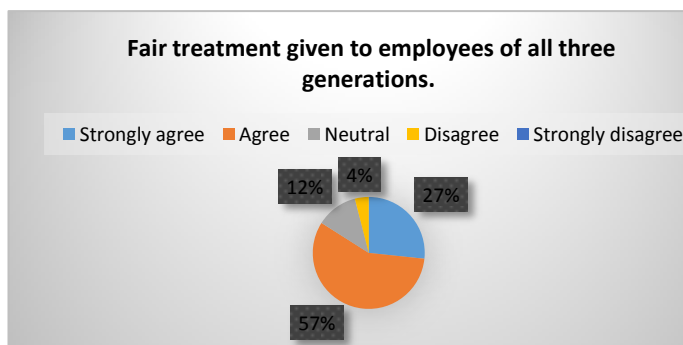| S.No.	Fair treatment given to employees of all three generations.	Responses	Percentage
1	Strongly disagree	0	0%
2	Disagree	3	4%
3	Neutral	9	12%
4	Agree	43	57%
5	Strongly agree	20	27%

Chart 5.2.10: Demonstration of opinion on fair treatment given to members of all three generations

Interpretations

The above chart shows that 57% of employees agree, 27% of employees strongly agree, 12% of employees neither agree nor disagree and 4% of employees disagree on fair treatment given to employees of all three generations.

Table 5.2.11: Table showing employees' opinion on improving their performance level while working with others of different age group

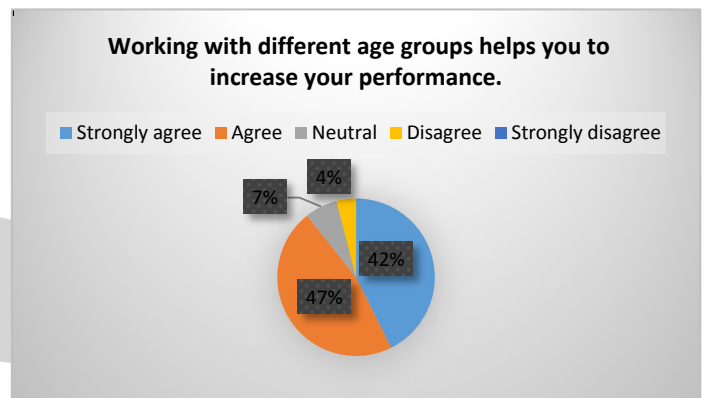| S.No.	Working with different age groups helps to increase the level of performance	Responses	Percentage
1	Strongly disagree	0	0%
2	Disagree	3	4%
3	Neutral	5	7%
4	Agree	35	47%
5	Strongly agree	32	42%

Chart 5.2.11: Demonstration of opinion on improving performance level while working with others of different age group

Interpretations

The above chart shows that 42% of employees agree, 42% of employees strongly agree, 7% of employees neither agree nor disagree and 4% of employees disagree that working with different age groups helps to increase the level of performance.

Table 5.2.12: Table showing employees' opinion on the organization concerning employee's culture, customs and values:

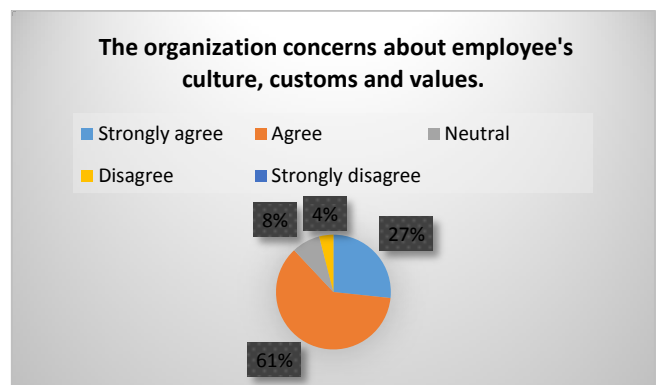| S.No.	The organization concerns about employee's cultures, customs and values	Responses	Percentage
1	Strongly disagree	0	0%
2	Disagree	3	4%
3	Neutral	6	8%
4	Agree	46	61%
5	Strongly agree	20	27%

Chart 5.2.12: Demonstration of opinion on the organization concerning employee's culture, customs and values

Interpretations

The above chart shows that 61% of employees agree, 27% of employees strongly agree, 8% of employees neither agree nor disagree and 4% of employees disagree that the organization concerns about employee's cultures, customs and values.

Table 5.2.13: Table showing employees on the ethnicity differences among that doesn't create any discouragement for them:

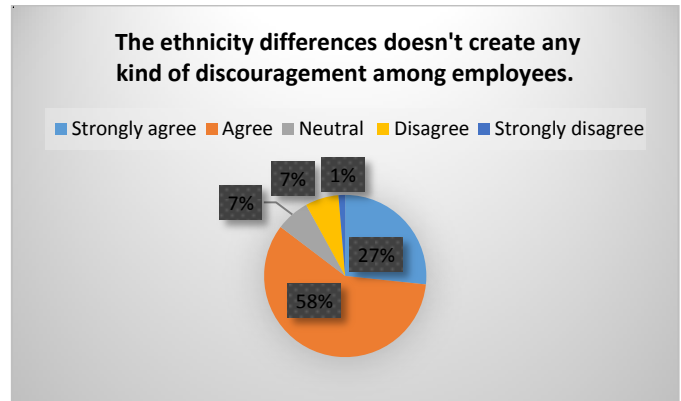| S.No.	The ethnicity differences doesn't create any kind of discouragement for employees	Responses	Percentage
1	Strongly disagree	1	1%
2	Disagree	5	7%
3	Neutral	5	7%
4	Agree	44	58%
5	Strongly agree	20	27%

Chart 5.2.13: Demonstration of opinion on the ethnicity differences among that doesn't create any discouragement

INTERPRETATIONS

The above chart shows that 58% of employees agree, 27% of employees strongly agree, 7% of employees neither disagree nor agree and 7% disagree and 1% of employees strongly disagree that the ethnicity differences doesn't create any kind of discouragement for employees.

5.3: HYPOTHESIS TESTING:-

1. Relationship between the years of the experience and the employees' opinion on leaders encouraging diversity.

H0= There is no association between the work experience of the employees and their opinion on leaders encouraging diversity.

H1= There is an association between the work experience of the employees and their opinion on leaders encouraging diversity.

TABLE 5.3.1: TABLE OF CHI SQUARE-

Experience of the respondents * Leaders encouraging diversity
Cross tabulation

Count		Leaders encouraging diversity					Total
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree	
Experience of the respondents	0-2 yrs	0	0	2	8	7	17
	2-5 yrs	0	1	5	4	1	11
	5-10 yrs	1	0	2	6	3	12
	More than 10 yrs	1	3	1	28	2	35
Total		2	4	10	46	13	75

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	29.309a	12	.004
Likelihood Ratio	28.494	12	.005
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.151	1	.143
N of Valid Cases	75		

P= 0.004;
Inference:
Since P< 0.05, therefore we accept H1 and reject H0. This signifies that there is an association between the work experience of the employees and their opinion on the leaders encouraging diversity.

2. Relationship between the gender of the employees and the employees' opinion on higher performance criteria for men than women.

H0= There is no association between gender of the employees and their opinion on higher performance criteria for men than women

H1= There is an association between gender of the employees and their opinion on higher performance criteria for men than women

TABLE 5.3. 2: TABLE OF CORRELATION

Correlations

		Gender of the respondents	Performance criteria expected higher for men
Gender of the respondents	Pearson Correlation	1	.084
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.474
	N	75	75
Performance criteria expected higher for men	Pearson Correlation	.084	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.474	
	N	75	75

P= 0.084.

Inference:

Since P>0.05, therefore we accept H0 and reject H1. This signifies that there is no association between gender and opinion on higher performance criteria for men than women.

3. Relationship between the gender of the employees and the employees' opinion on workplace is a gender inclusive culture.

H0= There is no association between the gender of the employees and their opinion on workplace is a gender inclusive culture.

H1= There is an association between the gender of the employees and their opinion on workplace is a gender inclusive culture.

TABLE 5.3 3: TABLE OF ONE-SAMPLE T-TEST-

One-Sample Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Gender of the respondents	75	1.2800	.45202	.05220
Workplace is a gender inclusive culture	75	1.4800	.64431	.07440

One-Sample Test

	Test Value = 0				95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Lower	Upper
Gender of the respondents	24.523	74	.000	1.28000	1.1760	1.3840
Workplace is a gender inclusive culture	19.893	74	.000	1.48000	1.3318	1.6282

P=0.000;

Inference: Since P<0.05, therefore we reject H0 and accept H1. This signifies that there is an association between the gender of the employees and their opinion on workplace having a gender inclusive culture.

4. Relationship between the work experience of the employees and their opinion on different languages used in the office that doesn't create any problem for them.

H0= There is no association between the work experience of the employees and their opinion on different languages used that doesn't create any problem.

H1= There is an association between the work experience of the employees and their opinion on different languages used that doesn't create any problem.

TABLE 5.3.4: Table of Chi Square-

Experience of the respondents * Different languages that are used to communicate do not create problem among the employees Crosstabulation

Count

		Different languages that are used to communicate do not create problem among the employees					Total
		Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neitral	Agree	Strongly agree	
Experience of the respondents	0-2 yrs	1	0	2	7	7	17
	2-5 yrs	0	0	1	8	2	11
	5-10 yrs	0	0	2	9	1	12
	More than 10 yrs	0	4	3	18	10	35
Total		1	4	8	42	20	75

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	13.897[a]	12	.03
Likelihood Ratio	15.285	12	.016
Linear-by-Linear Association	.427	1	.514
N of Valid Cases	75		

P= 0.03;

Inference:

Since P<0.05, therefore we accept H1 and reject H0. This signifies that there is a
relationship between work experience of the employees and their opinion on different languages that doesn't create any trouble for them.

1. 5. Relationship between the work experience of the employees and their opinion on the positive effect of ethnic diversity on work performance.

H0= There is no association between the work experience of the employees and their opinion on the positive effect of ethnic diversity on work performance.

H1= There is an association between the work experience of the employees and their opinion on the positive effect of ethnic diversity on work performance.

TABLE 5..3 5: TABLE OF CORRELATIONS-

Correlations

		Experience of the respondents	Ethnic diversity has a positive effect on the work performance
Experience of the respondents	Pearson Correlation	1	.059
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.02
	N	75	75
Ethnic diversity has a positive effect on the work performance	Pearson Correlation	.059	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.02	
	N	75	75

P= 0.02

Inference:

Since P<0.05, therefore we accept H1 and reject H0. This shows there is an association between the work experience of respondents and opinion on the positive effect of ethnic diversity on work performance.

VI . FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- Majority of employees belong to the age group of 45-54 years.
- Majority of employees are male.
- Most of the employees have work experience of more than 10 years in the company.
- Majority of the employees agree that the organization culture of the company is Good and comfortable for them.
- Most of them agree that the company is making an effort to convey its ideas among the employees.
- Through the analysis, we found out majority of employees have agreed that women participation in decision making and problem-solving has been highly encouraged and also that women are provided with opportunities for their growth and development.
- The majority of respondents have also agreed that there is no bias between men and women over their performance criteria i.e., there is equally high performance criteria given for women.
- There are a few employees who have not agreed that the company is a gender inclusive culture.
- Majority of employees have agreed that they have never faced any feelings of resentment over difference in age group while working with their colleagues or seniors. In fact this motivated them to work more diligently and improve their work performance.
- Majority of the respondents have agreed they haven't faced any difficulties over language difference issues in the company.
- The survey indicates that the ethnic diversity has positive effect on their work.
- From the hypothesis testing, it is found that-
    - There is an association between the work experience of the employees and their opinion on the leaders encouraging diversity.
    - Gender is not related to employees opinion on higher performance criteria for men than women.
    - Gender of the employees is related to their opinion on workplace having a gender inclusive culture.
    - There is a relationship between work experience of the employees and their opinion on different languages that doesn't create any trouble for them.
    - There is an association between the work experience of respondents and their opinion on positive effect of ethnic diversity on work performance.

VII. SUGGESTIONS OF THE STUDY

- A lot of interactive programs may be initiated which may help to get to know people and make the office atmosphere friendlier and to enhance diversity management. The company should be more open to diversity management. Ethnic diversity should be encouraged along with gender and generation diversity. The company should work on its ethnic diversity to build trust among employees. Some changes should be made in the company's culture that includes policies regarding gender equity.
- More number of events can be arranged to eliminate the residual differences which can improve employee relationships. More inter departmental team building activities should be encouraged to improve relationship across departments.
- The company should make its culture more heterogeneous to attract more number of employees. It should also initiate diversity training o help the organization to be more inclusive It can help people understand the benefits of having a more diverse and inclusive workforce to create a more welcoming environment. Diversity should be practised not only at entry level, but also at upper levels to reassure the employees of their personal goals and also encourage them to put in more efforts for the company.
- Educate employees on workplace diversity to make them aware of diversity and its importance.
    The employers should also consider the different career goals of their employees to build trust in them.
    The leaders should set an example to encourage the diversity among the employees. The managers and heads should also be educated on workplace diversity management to support all employees to foster a diverse workforce. The diversity policy should be communicated on a daily or weekly basis.
- Create mentorship programs as it is a key component of workplace diversity programs to ensure that everyone has the opportunity for advancement. Employees with high potential should be offered mentors regardless of their age, race, sex, or other factors. Build diversity-friendly workforce policies like offering on-site day care, and extending the option for flexible work hours.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The research titled **Impact of Workforce Diversity on the employees' performance,** was conducted among the employees working in a Pharmaceutical company in Chennai. The main objective of this research was to determine the impact of workplace diversity on the employees' performance. The effect of workplace diversity was studied in three sectors- Gender, Generation and Ethnicity. The findings of the study showed that the organization culture is good, the leaders encourage diversity, employee relationships, age differences doesn't create any conflicts among employees ,equally high performance criteria is expected for both men and women. Moreover the company is concerned about the employees' cultures, customs and values.

The study depicts that the workforce diversity management in the company is stable having a profound effect on employees' performance. The area of diversity such as the gender and generation diversity has positive effect on the employees' work performance, while ethnic diversity has an average effect on them. Overall, the company.

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