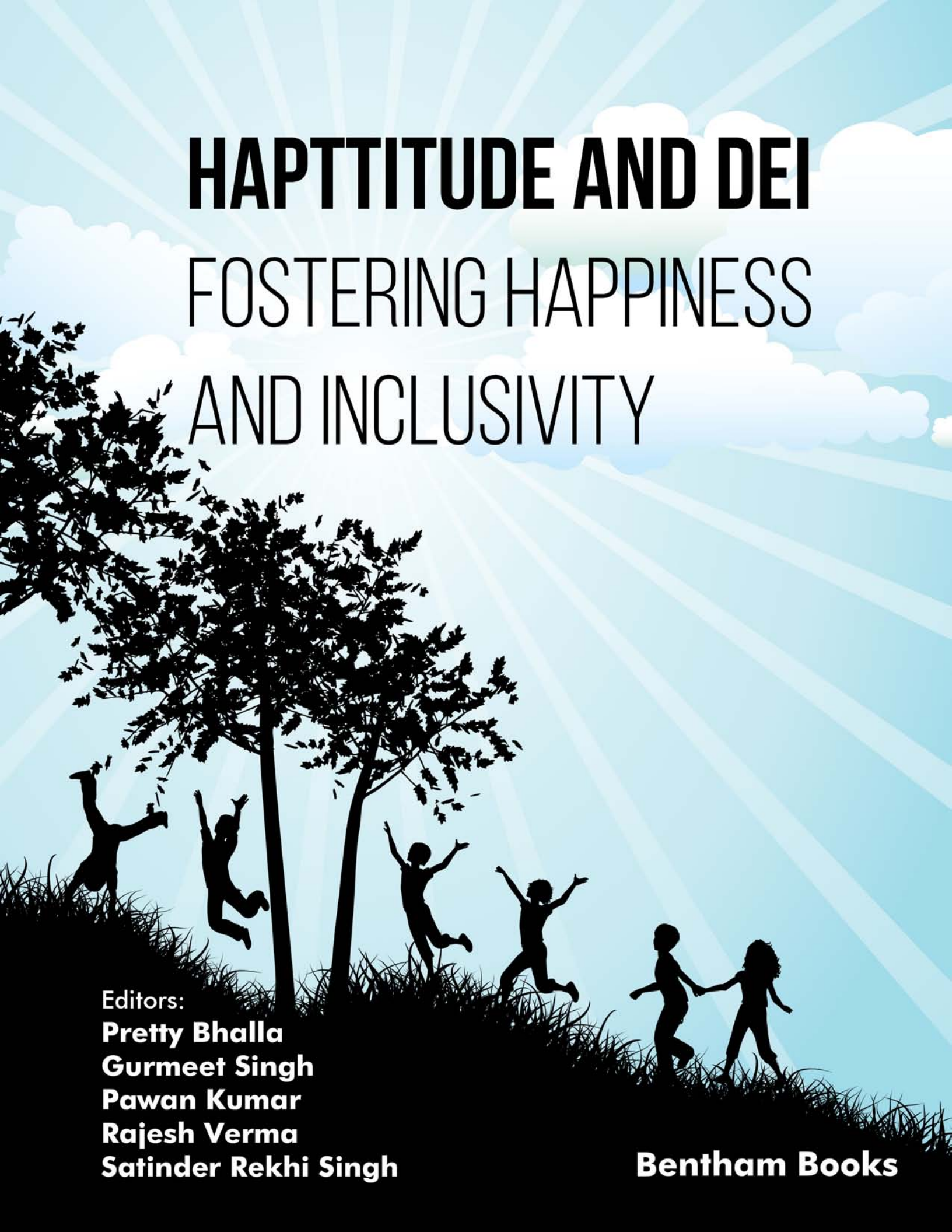


The background of the book cover is a vibrant blue sky with white clouds and bright sunbeams radiating from behind the title. In the foreground, there is a silhouette of a grassy hill. On the left side of the hill, there is a large, leafy tree. To the right of the tree, five children are depicted in various playful poses: two are jumping or running towards the tree, and three are running away from it. The overall scene conveys a sense of joy, freedom, and community.

HAPTTITUDE AND DEI

FOSTERING HAPPINESS AND INCLUSIVITY

Editors:

Pretty Bhalla

Gurmeet Singh

Pawan Kumar

Rajesh Verma

Satinder Rekhi Singh

Bentham Books

Hapttitude and DEI: Fostering Happiness and Inclusivity

Edited by

Pretty Bhalla

*Mittal School of Business
Lovely Professional University
Phagwara, Punjab, India*

Gurmeet Singh

*Education Department
The University of the South Pacific
Suva, Fiji*

Pawan Kumar

*Lovely Professional University
Phagwara, Punjab, India*

Rajesh Verma

*Lovely Professional University
Phagwara, Punjab, India*

&

Satinder Rekhi Singh

*Department of Management
Chandigarh University, Ranchi, India*

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Editors: Pretty Bhalla, Gurmeet Singh, Pawan Kumar, Rajesh Verma & Satinder Rekhi Singh

ISBN (Online): 979-8-89881-555-4

ISBN (Print): 979-8-89881-556-1

ISBN (Paperback): 979-8-89881-557-8

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First published in 2026.

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FOREWORD

Hapttitude and DEI: Fostering Happiness and Inclusivity is an exceptional and timely contribution to the evolving landscape of organizational development, leadership, and workplace culture. With clarity, depth, and a forward-looking lens, the book offers a powerful framework that unites two transformative forces: Hapttitude—a unique concept combining happiness and attitude at work—and the critical pillars of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Together, these concepts form the foundation for building workplaces that are not only productive but also deeply humane, inclusive, and emotionally intelligent.

Divided into four well-structured parts, the book begins by laying the conceptual groundwork of happiness at work and the scientific, emotional, and psychological value it brings to employees and organizations alike. The early chapters make a compelling case for why happiness should not be seen as a “soft” or secondary priority, but as a central factor driving employee engagement, innovation, retention, and well-being. Simultaneously, the text underscores how genuine DEI efforts—rooted in equity, representation, and belonging—are essential to organizational excellence, sustainability, and ethical leadership.

The authors offer a rich synthesis of research, real-life case studies, neuroscience, and emotional intelligence frameworks to present strategies that foster both inclusion and joy. Particularly powerful is the exploration of the intersection between happiness and inclusion, framed through the lens of psychological safety—a condition where individuals feel valued, respected, and free to be themselves without fear of judgment. The book argues that without inclusion, happiness is incomplete; and without happiness, DEI becomes a compliance exercise rather than a lived culture.

Leadership is given its rightful place as the cornerstone of this transformation. The book outlines how transformational leaders, who lead with empathy, authenticity, and purpose, can inspire a shift in organizational culture. Emotional intelligence, mentorship, inclusive policies, and conflict resolution through connection are emphasized as key levers of change. Tools, frameworks, and metrics are also provided to help institutions assess their progress and continuously improve.

What sets this book apart is its strong emphasis on practical implementation—providing not just a vision, but a blueprint. From inclusive decision-making and technology-driven DEI practices to cross-cultural competencies and the integration of DEI into wellness and sustainability programs, the book offers actionable steps for organizations of all sizes and geographies.

As it looks ahead to the future of work—shaped by hybrid models, Gen Z values, and digital transformation—the book reinforces that happiness and inclusivity are not optional, but necessary conditions for resilience, innovation, and long-term success.

In summary, Hapttitude and DEI is more than a management book; it is a call to action. It challenges outdated paradigms and presents a holistic approach to organizational life that centers on the human experience. For its originality, interdisciplinary insight, and practical impact, this book merits recognition as a pioneering and transformative resource for leaders, educators, HR professionals, and anyone striving to make the workplace a space of growth, dignity, and joy.

Sayeed Zafar
University of Jeddah
Saudi Arabia

PREFACE

In an era defined by global disruption, social awakening, and a redefinition of the workplace, two interconnected forces have become critical to organizational vitality: Hapttitude and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). This book, *Hapttitude and DEI: Fostering Happiness and Inclusivity*, responds to the growing need for emotionally intelligent, purpose-driven, and people-first work cultures that prioritize both employee well-being and equitable opportunity.

The concept of Hapttitude—a synthesis of happiness and attitude—emerges as a vital paradigm shift. It moves beyond surface-level perks and motivational slogans, rooting itself in evidence-based practices that cultivate engagement, psychological safety, and meaningful contribution. This is not merely aspirational. Research from Gallup (2023) reveals that only 23% of employees worldwide are engaged at work, and a staggering 44% report daily stress. Meanwhile, the American Psychological Association highlights that burnout, anxiety, and disconnection are on the rise—driven in part by toxic workplace cultures and lack of inclusion.

At the same time, DEI is no longer an optional initiative; it is a strategic imperative. A McKinsey report (2023) found that companies in the top quartile for ethnic and gender diversity were 36% more likely to outperform those in the bottom quartile. Yet, despite the business case, many organizations still struggle to implement DEI effectively. Employees from underrepresented backgrounds continue to face microaggressions, bias, and systemic barriers that erode trust and well-being.

This book brings together these two essential domains—Hapttitude and DEI—to show how they complement and reinforce each other. A workplace that values happiness without equity risks superficiality. Conversely, one that champions inclusion without emotional well-being risks burnout and disillusionment. Together, they create environments where people not only stay—but thrive.

Structured in four parts, the book begins by laying the scientific and practical foundations of Hapttitude and DEI. It then explores leadership strategies and emotional intelligence as levers for cultural transformation. The third section focuses on implementation, providing tools, frameworks, and real-world case studies. Finally, the book casts its gaze forward, examining how organizations can future-proof themselves through sustainable, inclusive, and joyful cultures.

As work continues to evolve—with remote models, AI integration, and generational shifts—the call to action is clear: organizations must reimagine success to center well-being, belonging, and shared humanity. This book is for leaders, HR professionals, educators, and change agents committed to building workplaces where every voice is heard and every individual can flourish.

Let this journey equip and inspire you to lead with empathy, act with equity, and build a workplace where happiness and inclusion are not goals—but lived realities.

Pretty Bhalla
Mittal School of Business
Lovely Professional University
Phagwara, Punjab India

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Gurmeet Singh
Education Department
The University of the South Pacific
Suva, Fiji

Pawan Kumar
Lovely Professional University
Phagwara, Punjab, India

Rajesh Verma
Lovely Professional University
Phagwara, Punjab, India

&

Satinder Rekhi Singh
Department of Management
Chandigarh University, Ranchi, India

List of Contributors

Animesh Kumar Sharma	Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India
Arpit Tiwari	Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India
Chandni Keswani	Shri Vaishnav Institute of Management and Science, Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India
Ekta Anuruddha Singh	Department of Psychology, Lovely Professional University, Jalandhar, India
Farasat Ullah Khan	Human Resources and Learning & Development, Agilus Diagnostics, Gurugram, India
Gaurav Jassal	Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India
Jaskiran Kaur	Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India
Kanishka Bhardwaj	Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India
Komal Diwakar	Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India
Mandakini Paruthi	ICFAI Business School, Hyderabad, India
Omvir Gautam	Faculty of Commerce & Management, Vishwakarma University, Pune, Maharashtra, India
Pooja Agrawal	Faculty of Commerce & Management, Vishwakarma University, Pune, Maharashtra, India
Prashant Kushwaha	Shri Vaishnav Institute of Management and Science, Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India
Pretty Bhalla	Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India
Rahul Sharma	Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India
Razia Nagina	Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India
Ruchi Verma	Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India
Sandeep Singh	Training and Management, Designistic Group, Mohali, Punjab, India
Sayeed Zafar	University of Jeddah, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia
Shabnam Gulati	Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India
Shikha Batra Goyal	Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India
Shyam Sunder Agrawal	Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India
Vivek Bhuchar	Department of Psychology, Lovely Professional University, Jalandhar, India

Yannam Swathi

Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India

Yasmeen Shamsi Rizvi

Department of Management Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, India

Part 1: Foundations of Hapttitude and DEI

CHAPTER 1

The Hapttitude Paradigm - The Science of Happiness at Work

Animesh Kumar Sharma^{1,*} and Rahul Sharma¹

¹ *Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India*

Abstract: The objective of this study is to identify how Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion (DEI), organizational culture, and happiness affect workplace well-being. This study utilizes the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) method to identify research trends, famous academics, institutions, and subject clusters, and then analyzes them with VOSviewer and R Studio's Bibliometrics. Findings of the study highlight that publications have grown considerably over the previous decade, demonstrating that academics and businesses are becoming more interested in employee well-being. This study provides publication trends, top publications venues, keywords co-occurrences, top institutes, top countries, top authors in the field of DEI, organization culture, and happiness, along with co-citation analysis, thematic map, and factorial analysis in the field. The research identified crucial subjects such as work-life balance, leadership, psychological safety, and the impact of DEI on job satisfaction. Localized DEI techniques are essential because regional and cultural differences indicate different approaches to well-being. The study's findings focus on inclusive and sustainable workplace practices that align with the SDGs, such as good health and well-being, gender equality, and reduced inequality. Future studies should investigate adaptive DEI frameworks, mental health assistance, and the role of leadership in wellbeing. This study offers practical implications for businesses and policymakers looking to foster a more encouraging and inclusive atmosphere, along with adding to the literature on the subject of knowledge.

Keywords: Employee engagement, Hapttitude, Organizational culture, Sustainable development goal, Workplace wellbeing, Workplace happiness.

INTRODUCTION

The success of the modern organization is affected by the employees' engagement, organizational culture, and workplace happiness (Joo & Lee, 2017; Kun & Gadanez, 2022). In today's rapidly changing corporate landscape, where

* **Corresponding author Animesh Kumar Sharma:** Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India; Tel: +91 9891599311; E-mail: mr.animesh@gmail.com

people are seen as the most precious asset, organizations all over the globe are dedicating unprecedented attention and resources to developing cultures that boost employee happiness and productivity (Moody, 2023; Mousa *et al.*, 2020). These three factors are now seen as strategic imperatives that could make or break an organization's capacity to thrive in cutthroat markets, rather than just elements of human resource planning.

Workplace Happiness

An employee's emotional and psychological well-being in their workplace environment is called workplace happiness. This also indicates how much the employees feel appreciated, fulfilled, and driven towards their work. Research suggests that happy employees are more productive, resilient, and imaginative in hard situations (García-Buades *et al.*, 2020; Fey and Kock, 2022). An employee's workplace happiness is influenced by a positive work environment, job completion, opportunity, and a leader's support. Therefore, contented employees are more devoted and loyal, thereby reducing turnover and improving company performance.

Organizational Culture

In the development of workplace happiness, organizational culture works as the foundational pillar (Akpa *et al.*, 2021; Kim & Jung, 2022). The common values, beliefs, customs, and behaviors that shape an organization's identity and operations are its culture. Positive company cultures foster transparency, inclusivity, and respect, creating a setting where workers can flourish (Bijalwan *et al.*, 2024; Okatta *et al.*, 2024). Strong, positive corporate cultures are typically associated with higher employee morale, stronger teamwork, and greater ability to attract top talent (Miller *et al.*, 2017). Conversely, toxic cultures can result in high turnover rates, disengagement, and reputational harm (Sulaeman *et al.*, 2024; George, 2023). Building and sustaining an organizational culture that is in line with the company's vision and objectives is a crucial responsibility of leaders (Warrick, 2017).

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement encompasses people's emotional and intellectual ties to their employment and organizations, going beyond job happiness (Chandani *et al.*, 2016; Ngwenya & Pelser, 2020). Engaged employees are highly motivated, actively enthusiastic about their work, and fervently dedicated to the goals of the company (Green *et al.*, 2017; Erum *et al.*, 2020; Firouznia *et al.*, 2021). Engagement is influenced by meaningful work, good communication, opportunities for personal growth, and a feeling of purpose. Increased

productivity, customer satisfaction, and financial success have all been associated with high levels of engagement (Eklof *et al.*, 2020; Islam *et al.*, 2021). Conversely, disengagement can be expensive, resulting in lower output, elevated absenteeism, and lower morale all around (Afrahi *et al.*, 2022; Voordt & Jensen, 2023).

The Relationship Between Engagement, Culture, and Happiness

Even though employee engagement, company culture, and workplace happiness are distinct ideas but they are closely interrelated (Gutermann *et al.*, 2017; Virgiawan *et al.*, 2021). Employee engagement increases when the organization adopts a positive working culture (Osborne & Hammoud, 2017; Ababneh *et al.*, 2021). On the other hand, engaged employees help foster a vibrant, dynamic culture and a sense of belonging. When these components work together, they create a positive feedback loop that benefits both employees and the organization. When these elements are out of balance, there may be dissatisfaction, disengagement, and a drop in organizational performance. In today's workplace, organizations are pushed by innovation, agility, and a never-ending search for perfection, making the human aspect of organizational performance increasingly important (Carvalho *et al.*, 2023). From the fringe of HR theory, employee engagement, corporate culture, and workplace satisfaction have developed into essential pillars of strategic planning and execution (Meybodi *et al.*, 2024). These interconnected elements influence organizational productivity, define an organization's long-term performance, and mold the employee experience. More employees are calling for more than just monetary compensation; they want a workplace that values their opinions, fosters their well-being, and enables them to reach their full potential. Similarly, organizations have recognized that developing a successful workforce is not only a question of compassion but also an economic need (Kreitzer *et al.*, 2020).

Challenges in Promoting Happiness, Culture, and Engagement

Employee engagement refers to an employee's emotional and cognitive devotion to the organization (Rameshkumar, 2020; Nienaber & Martins, 2020). Engagement is based on motivation, involvement, and a strong sense of one's job and tasks, whereas workplace happiness focuses on emotional well-being. Engaged employees are more inclined to go above and beyond job requirements, actively support company objectives, and represent their employer's brand. Employee engagement is influenced by several elements, including alignment and purpose; employees are more engaged when they see a clear link between their job and the organization's goals. Employees remain involved and dedicated to their employment when they have possibilities for growth, such as skill

CHAPTER 2

DEI - A Pillar of Organizational Excellence**Komal Diwakar^{1,*}, Pretty Bhalla¹ and Sayeed Zafar²**¹ *Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India*² *University of Jeddah, Jeddah, Saudi Arabia*

Abstract: In today's corporate landscape, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) has emerged as a fundamental pillar of organizational excellence. This chapter explores the significance of DEI in shaping inclusive work environments, where diversity in demographics, cognitive perspectives, and experiences contributes to organizational success. A key focus is the relationship between DEI, haptitude, and employee happiness, emphasizing how an inclusive and supportive workplace fosters psychological well-being, motivation, and a sense of belonging. Haptitude, a concept that integrates happiness with workplace attitude, highlights how positive organizational environments enhance employee engagement, satisfaction, and long-term retention. The chapter presents a qualitative approach by incorporating case studies of six companies—Microsoft, Unilever, Salesforce, Tata Steel, Accenture, and Cisco Systems demonstrating how DEI implementation enhances workplace happiness and organizational effectiveness. Results suggest that when employees feel valued and empowered, they exhibit higher levels of productivity, creativity, and job satisfaction. By integrating DEI principles and fostering haptitude, organizations can cultivate a thriving workplace culture, attract top talent, and maintain a competitive edge in a globalized economy.

Keywords: Diversity, Equity, Happiness, Haptitude, Inclusion, Workplace.

INTRODUCTION

Organizations today recognize that Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) are integral to organizational success in the modern, dynamic corporate environment (Chauhan, 2020; Chukwudi & Eusebius, 2023; Hassan, 2025). Businesses around the world understand that implementing diversity should be combined with equitable policies and inclusive cultures to generate innovation, increase employee commitment, and create long-term organizational success (Pless & Maak, 2004). Diversity refers to the representation of various social, demographic, and cognitive differences in a workforce (Mannix & Neale, 2005).

* **Corresponding author Komal Diwakar:** Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India; E-mail: komaldiwakar007@gmail.com

A specific environment contains diverse elements, which include racial differences along with gender diversity and age distributions, together with sexual orientations and disability status, and cultural affiliations (Healey & Stepnick, 2019). Different workforce structures unite multiple viewpoints, thus creating conditions for new ideas to emerge and drive innovation. Equity requires that all people receive unbiased treatment, yet the path to equity requires identifying existing barriers that prevent certain groups from participating fully (Minow, 2021). Equity differs from equality because it recognizes the distinct situations facing each person, enabling appropriate resource distribution to achieve equitable outcomes (Baciu *et al.*, 2017). The practice of inclusion involves building spaces that welcome all members while granting them worthy usage and a respectful attitude toward participation (Pless & Maak, 2004). A workplace that promotes inclusivity provides employees with a sense of belonging and safety, enabling them to exchange ideas without fear of discrimination or bias (Malhotra, 2024). The implementation of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) concepts underwent major changes across multiple organizational environments over several decades (Jaiswal, 2024). Business organizations continue to transform their practices in response to shifting public opinion supporting equal opportunities in workplace environments (Harrington & Ladge, 2009). Initiatives for DEI emerged first from civil rights movements during the 1960s, which led to equal employment opportunity laws aimed at eliminating workplace discrimination (Jaiswal, 2024). The priority for organizations was to comply with these legal requirements through purposeful discrimination prevention and affirmative action support. As diverse awareness grew in society, people recognized that meeting minimal requirements without creating actual inclusive workplaces proved insufficient (Pless & Maak, 2004). During the 1980s and 1990s, organizations embraced diversity management, which recognized diversity as a corporate business advantage and drove them to evolve beyond basic legal compliance toward creating inclusive workplace cultures (Kelly & Dobbin, 1998). Research in recent years has expanded the focus from basic diversity representation to inclusion and equity, because organizations require both to benefit from diversity. The inclusion element establishes a workplace experience in which staff members feel they belong to the organization, yet equity requires equal opportunities alongside unbiased career development for every individual (Mor Barak, 2015). The change in approach showed that diversity, by itself, fails to yield benefits when inclusion and equity policies are absent, as it promotes tokenistic practices (Barak, 2013).

DEI initiatives have expanded their strategies to include multiple practices that create inclusive organizational cultures over the past several years. Organizations implement several strategies, which include both training about bias prevention and mentoring employees, along with equal hiring and promotion practices, in addition to forming diversity councils (Alabi & Mahmuda, 2024). Organizations

acknowledge that their DEI strategies must receive leader-Level commitment and core operational implementation (Roberson, 2019). Research has proven the business value of DEI by showing that organizations that embrace diversity and inclusion exceed matching organizations in both fiscal performance, employee fulfillment, and innovative capabilities (Hunt et al, 2015). DEI initiatives continue to advance, yet they face obstacles and criticism during their implementation. Research shows that particular diversity training approaches deliver minimal positive outcomes while also potentially generating negative reactions whenever such programs are executed insensitively (Dobbin & Kalev, 2016). DEI efforts face increased political and social opposition across industries as controversy surrounding these initiatives continues to escalate (Rius-Ulledemolins *et al.*, 2025). The ongoing views and opposition against DEI make it essential to use proven research methods to develop and monitor these strategies until they deliver their intended results. The discussion explores the complex nature of DEI and evaluates its organizational impact on happiness while connecting these principles to the workplace philosophy of “Hapttitude.” A workplace embracing diversity, equity, and inclusion guarantees that workers will be more satisfied and committed to their tasks because “Hapttitude” connects DEI with organizational happiness principles (Labarca *et al.*, 2024; Atan, 2023; Moss, 2025). A well-developed inclusive working environment fosters a positive organizational culture, leading to increased job satisfaction and better overall well-being for employees. An organization should integrate DEI principles since this practice improves innovation while strengthening employee engagement, which results in greater organizational happiness. Organizations that adopt hapttitude principles establish spaces where diversity is recognized through the pursuit of equity and create environments that uphold standard inclusion practices to foster harmonious, productive workplaces (Pless & Maak, 2004; Shrivastava *et al.*, 2024; Barak, 2022). Implementing hapttitude practices that unite DEI principles alongside attitude and happiness dimensions produces important improvements in worker wellness and company operational success (Khair, 2023; Singha & Singha, 2024). DEI initiatives produce an organizational structure that helps diverse employees feel respected and included, thus improving job satisfaction and stress reduction. The feeling of being part of an organization directly creates optimistic perspectives that drive employee engagement, together with workplace productivity (Federman, 2009). The workplace attitude consists of three fundamental elements, namely cognitive beliefs and affective feelings, as well as behavioral actions that determine how employees think about their responsibilities along with their conduct toward colleagues (Abun, 2021). Strong DEI principles effectively tackle these aspects through their implementation, which ensures fairness together with respect and equality, leading to the development of hapttitude within employees (Chukwudi & Eusebius, 2023). Organizations

CHAPTER 3

The Intersection of Haptitude and DEI - Creating a Culture of Psychological Safety

Ekta Anuruddha Singh^{1,*}, Vivek Bhuchar¹ and Farasat Ullah Khan²

¹ *Department of Psychology, Lovely Professional University, Jalandhar, India*

² *Human Resources and Learning & Development, Agilus Diagnostics, Gurugram, India*

Abstract: To establish a workplace culture that encourages creativity, fosters team building, and promotes overall well-being, employees need to be valued, involved, and have a sense of psychological safety. This chapter will explore how Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) and happiness (haptitude) affect one another as they contribute to workplace culture development. The chapter will discuss ways businesses can create a culture where employees feel they “belong” and can express themselves without fear of judgment or rejection.

Additionally, this chapter will demonstrate how exclusion affects employee productivity and mental health while also emphasizing the importance of fostering a respectful and trusting workplace environment. Finally, the chapter will outline strategies to build psychological safety within the workplace, such as open and transparent communication, compassionate leadership, and equitable opportunities for advancement.

In order to effect change toward a more inclusive workplace culture, leaders must model the behaviors of inclusion and encourage a variety of perspectives.

By integrating haptitude with DEI principles, organizations can create a workplace culture that fosters a resilient, motivated workforce that thrives in a supportive, inclusive environment.

This chapter provides research-based analysis, expert views, and practical suggestions that will help organizations create a workplace culture where employees feel supported, encouraged, and empowered to perform at their highest levels.

Keywords: Diversity, Equity, Haptitude, Inclusion, Leadership, Psychological safety.

* **Corresponding author Ekta Anuruddha Singh:** Department of Psychology, Lovely Professional University, Jalandhar, India; E-mail: ektaanuruddhasingh@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Happiness and attitude in the workplace have become very important in today's workplace environment to support diversity, equity, and inclusion for organizational success. A successful workplace culture is not simply about meeting the numbers but also about providing an ecosystem for employees to feel psychological safety, supported, and valued.

HAPPTITUDE

This refers to an employee's ability to stay positive and fulfilled in various job-related situations. This concept focuses on how an employee's behaviors and thoughts can support their overall well-being and resilience as well as their optimism in the workplace.

As a result of having happy employees, they will be more likely to be proactive, engaged, and solution-focused; this will create an environment at work that supports teamwork and creativity.

Theoretical Foundations

Research has shown that there is a relationship between worker happiness, job performance, and job satisfaction.

A happy workforce contributes to the development of a positive work culture with better teamwork and a feeling of belonging, which can have a positive impact on the entire organization (Diener *et al.*, 2017).

Fredrickson's Broaden and Build Theory (2001) states that happiness not only contributes to one's personal well-being, it also contributes to expanding one's social networks and enhancing one's cognitive abilities; both contributing to team cohesiveness and productivity.

Moreover, organizations that prioritize the happiness of their employees, through wellness programs, leader support, and recognition, will experience increased employee retention, engagement, and decreased burnout (Lyubomirsky, King, & Diener, 2005).

By developing an environment where employee happiness and career advancement are prioritized, businesses can develop a high level of employee engagement and secure long term success.

PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY

Edmondson (1999) was the first to define “psychological safety” as confidence that employees can take risks in the workplace without concern regarding the outcomes. Psychological Safety describes a culture where employees feel comfortable expressing themselves, asking questions, owning their mistakes, and sharing their concerns and ideas, all without fear of reprisal, negative reactions, *etc.* Psychological Safety is important to developing an environment of diversity, innovation, and teamwork within organizations.

Theoretical Foundations

Humanistic psychology, specifically Carl Rogers' 1954 emphasis on expression and acceptance within an environment that nurtures the person, is the earliest known source of psychological safety.

Schein & Bennis (1965) later expanded upon this concept when they linked psychological safety to organizational development; their belief was that employees had to be able to feel at ease to challenge conventional methods and develop new ones if major improvements were to occur.

Edmondson (1999) laid the groundwork for the current body of psychological safety research through her empirical study. Her study of 51 teams across multiple industries found that those with a higher level of psychological safety engaged in behaviors like admitting mistakes, seeking feedback, and engaging in productive conversations; these behaviors led to enhanced team performance.

Research has since validated the importance of psychological safety:

- Psychological safety was found to be the most important characteristic that distinguished high-performing teams from low-performing teams in Google's Project Aristotle (2016); High-performing teams with higher levels of psychological safety demonstrated greater collaboration, better problem solving, and greater innovation (Duhigg, 2016).
- A meta-analysis by Frazier *et al.* (2017) of 136 studies determined that psychological safety is a strong predictor of employee engagement, job satisfaction, and overall well-being.
- The importance of psychological safety in diverse organizations was also stressed by Newman, Donohue, and Eva (2017), who stated that employees from diverse backgrounds are more likely to share ideas when there is no fear of being judged or discriminated against based on their background.

CHAPTER 4

The Neuroscience of Happiness in Inclusive Workplaces: Exploring the Roles of Emotional Regulation, Mindfulness, and Well-being

Chandni Keswani^{1,*}, Prashant Kushwaha¹, Shyam Sunder Agrawal² and Arpit Tiwari²

¹ Shri Vaishnav Institute of Management and Science, Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India

² Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India

Abstract: Happiness at the workplace can contribute to an overall improvement in employee well-being. The present study looks at the neuroscience of happiness in inclusive workplaces, emphasizing emotions, emotional regulation, mindfulness, and well-being. Neuroscientific investigations examine how neural circuits associated with optimistic emotions and attitudes, as well as well-being, are activated by an inclusive work environment. The paper has also touched on the roles of emotional regulation and mindfulness in improving the well-being of organizational and workplace employees. This study, therefore, aimed to determine the correlation between mindfulness, well-being, and emotional regulation among scholars in institutions of higher learning. There were 387 participants who took part in the sample of the city of Indore. A Likert-scale questionnaire was used to gather the data. The next stage of analysis involved linear and multiple regression models, and a mediation model. Based on the findings, there is a strong negative correlation between mindfulness and general well-being among the subjects. The paper combines results from cognitive neuroscience and well-being studies and offers insights into how organizations may cultivate inclusive cultures that increase happiness and mental wellness through mindfulness training, gratitude journals, and positive reinforcement, which help promote neuroplasticity and decrease work-related stress. These results can inform the current discussion on workplace diversity and provide practical advice on adopting neuroscience-based techniques to enhance employee well-being and performance.

Keywords: Academicians, Emotional regulation, Happiness, Mindfulness, Neuroscience, Psychological well-being, Subjective wellbeing.

* **Corresponding author Chandni Keswani:** Shri Vaishnav Institute of Management and Science, Indore, Madhya Pradesh, India; E-mail: drchandnisvim@gmail.com

INTRODUCTION

Scholars in many fields have been enthralled with the search for knowledge about happiness, a universal but elusive human feeling. The exploration of the nervous system, known as neuroscience, provides a comprehensive perspective for examining the fundamental aspects of happiness. To look into the structure, purpose, and abnormalities of the nervous system, neuroscience combines disciplines like biology, psychology, medicine, and computational sciences. According to Eric Kandel, the field of neuroscience addresses the significant challenge of deciphering the biological underpinnings of learning, reminiscence, behaviour, awareness, and consciousness. A subfield of neuroscience, cognitive neuroscience aims to understand mental processes, including emotions, and their neural connections. Over the last few decades, researchers have been trying to study the interplay and interconnections between neuroscience of happiness, well-being, mindfulness, and emotional regulation. These complex concepts relating to the human mind and behavior have fascinated scholars from varied streams and have been established with different perspectives.

The concept of quality of consciousness has been widely recognized as a fundamental aspect of overall well-being among spiritual, philosophical, and psychological traditions for a period spanning over two thousand years (Wilber, 2000 & Macae, 2007). The genesis of mindfulness has evolved from eastern religious traditions, particularly Buddhism, which has placed significant emphasis on the intentional development of one's awareness through contemplative practices as a pathway to spiritual attainment. This distinctive state of being in the current moment is facilitated through methodologies that expose individuals to the dynamic nature of their ideas, emotions, and physical and external experiences while maintaining mindfulness and non-judgment (Allen *et al.*, 2009).

The main focus of the research is inclusive workplaces, which contribute to the development of psychological safety, diversity, and fair opportunities that are essential to activating neural mechanisms related to happiness and well-being (Edmondson, 1999; Shore *et al.*, 2018). By promoting staff engagement and mental wellness through decreased stress and increased sense of belonging, inclusive workplaces are seen as having better policies that encourage diverse staff hiring, equal distribution of resources, and affirmative cultures. The chapter would be interested in examining how mindfulness, emotional regulation, and well-being, supported by neuroplasticity and positive reinforcement, are associated with happiness in these environments, especially among academicians in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Neuroscience of Happiness

Neuroscience studies have shown that people obtain much of their happiness from brain reward systems, especially the mesocorticolimbic dopamine pathway (Berridge & Kringelbach, 2013). Neuro-modulators like dopamine, serotonin, and endorphins are largely important in mood modulation and in determining the subjective experience of happiness (Wise, 2004). Dopamine is primarily associated with the anticipation and experience of pleasure, whereas serotonin promotes emotional balance and resilience (Carhart-Harris & Nutt, 2017). Neuroimaging has recently enabled the identification of the brain areas where happiness is felt as a precision tool. Prefrontal cortices are mainly involved in emotional regulation, control, and decision-making related to an individual's well-being (Davidson & Schuyler, 2015). Increased left prefrontal activity relates to happiness, as shown by findings indicating that subjects and patients develop this asymmetry (Urry *et al.*, 2004). Both the amygdala and the medial prefrontal cortices function to modulate emotional responses to both positive and negative stimuli (Tye *et al.*, 2013).

In addition, the Anterior Cingulate Cortex (ACC) and the insula, which contribute to self-awareness and social emotion, further contribute to happiness (Craig, 2009). The Default Mode Network (DMN), including medial PFC and posterior cingulate cortex, is associated with self-referential thought and mind wandering, affecting emotional well-being (Raichle, 2015). Neuroplasticity, the brain's potential to reorganize itself, underlies happiness. Mindfulness meditation, CBT, and other positive psychology interventions are proven to stimulate and promote long-term neuroplasticity for well-being (Tang *et al.*, 2015). Studies on meditation practitioners have demonstrated a higher density of gray matter in regions of the brain involved in emotional regulation, such as the hippocampus and prefrontal cortex (Luders *et al.*, 2011). Both pharmacological and non-pharmacological methods are treated in neuroscientific studies regarding happiness enhancement. Selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors, or SSRIs, are medicines used to treat depressed moods by influencing the levels of serotonin in the body (Harmer *et al.*, 2006). Some of them are non-pharmaceutical, such as grateful activities, exercises, and meaningful engagements that can really enhance neuro-phenomenological activity associated with happiness (Fredrickson, 2001).

Brain Response to Positive Emotions and Inclusive Environments

Positive emotional neural circuits are triggered by inclusive workplaces that put into practice Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI). Indicatively, psychological safety leads to more activity in the prefrontal cortex and decreased amygdala

Part 2: Crafting Joyous & Inclusive Workplaces

CHAPTER 5

The Role of Leadership in Fostering DEI and Happiness

Kanishka Bhardwaj^{1,*} and Shabnam Gulati¹

¹ Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India

Abstract: The leadership task in this chapter is defined to build Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) programs and, at the same time, invent workplace joy called Happtitude. It discusses transformational leadership concepts that entail developing vision and motivating colleagues, and giving them the strength to establish inclusive work environments. The chapter illustrates how leaders use empathy and authenticity to build trust, as these qualities provide the enabling environment to foster inclusion. Another issue discussed in this chapter is the accountability of leaders to DEI initiatives in which they develop measurement-based goals and sustainable transformation that continues to happen. Examples of companies, such as IBM and Microsoft, are discussed that have made successful application of these leadership techniques. The chapter discusses effective ways to develop inclusive leadership skills and evaluates the performance of DEI leadership training programs. Finally, leadership, in partnership with DEI and happiness, is an efficient approach to creating high-performance, diverse, and engaged workforces.

Keywords: Diversity, Equity, Happtitude, Inclusion, Transformational leadership.

INTRODUCTION

For predicting the success of any business unit, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) plays a vital role in the current marketplace. Now, organizations are building workplaces where employees can collaborate and achieve job satisfaction while simultaneously becoming key contributors in organizational success (Gill *et al.*, 2018). DEI obligations are no longer only legal or ethical; they have become a strategic business advantage. Teams enable organizations to achieve diverse workforces that combine various life experiences with new ideas for creative problem-solving of complex issues. Organizations that concentrate on DEI have a higher likelihood of getting better employee engagement, higher performance, and better financial results. With their importance now crystal clear, organizations that

* Corresponding author Kanishka Bhardwaj: Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India; E-mail: kanishkabhardwaj23@lpu.in

don't cultivate such a culture risk getting left behind in a competitive, fast-changing market (Holcombe *et al.*, 2024; Chukwudi, 2023).

The emergent 'Hapttitude' concept parallels DEI in organizational development. This term combines happiness and attitude into one, and it captures the core connection between leadership, happiness, and inclusion at work. The culture of organization plays a big role in the well-being and satisfaction of employees and, according to hapttitude, is largely shaped by leadership. Finally, this draws attention to the fact that happiness is not an attribute that belongs only to the individual, but rather a result of organizational practices, leaders, and workplace culture. In such environments where leaders are busy fostering positive attitudes, a sense of purpose, and well-being, employees are more likely to be engaged and feel valued, honoured, and encouraged. Having a sense of emotional fulfillment promotes one's happiness as an individual and also drives an organization's success (Claypool, 2017; Proctor, 2014).

This chapter explores the critical role that leadership plays in fostering both DEI and Hapttitude, ultimately contributing to a positive and inclusive workplace culture. A successful DEI initiative is positively perceived by managers who imbibe good leadership skills. These leaders primarily shape organizational culture by introducing powerful values and establishing strong behavioral patterns among their employees. Under their leadership, DEI initiatives are developed, and the establishment of a happiness culture takes place. Transformational leaders not only motivate the team but also empower them by creating an environment where they are valued. They encourage their employees to be open to diversity and inclusion to establish a conducive, cooperative, and even innovative workplace (Kim and Meganck, 2025; Nguyen *et al.*, 2023).

Moreover, authenticity and empathy are established by strong leaders. There are two types of leaders: one, empathetic, and the other, authentic. The former ones understand employees' emotional needs and concerns, while the latter ones emphasize sincerity, genuineness, and alignment between their actions and rulings. To create an inclusive workplace, both types of leaders are important. They make a place where employees are heard, respected, and safe to express their true selves. The authenticity and empathy engender trust, which is the springboard for a positive organisational culture within which DEI flourishes (Jian, 2022; Erickson, 2021).

This chapter also focuses on leadership accountability in DEI initiatives. While many organizations may have policies or programs in place to promote DEI, these measures are almost never enough to effect change unless there is accountability for leaders' behavior. DEI leadership responsibility involves setting distinct goals,

establishing metrics to track progress, and making additional cultural adjustments to maintain an inclusive environment. Leaders must assume responsibility for their part in creating and maintaining a diverse, equitable, and inclusive environment and driving the pursuit of DEI goals to their culmination and ultimately their perpetuation over time (Berg & Miller, 2023).

In conclusion, this chapter will examine the intersection of transformational leadership, empathy, and authenticity as leadership practices to help us understand how these elements can be leveraged to advance both DEI and Hapttitude. By focusing on both inclusion and diversity and demonstrating a happy, healthy workforce culture, leadership can develop workplaces where employees feel recognized, respected, and are inspired to commit and contribute their best work.

TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND ITS IMPACT ON WORKPLACE CULTURE

Defining Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership is a style focused on encouraging and motivating employees to achieve their full potential and exceed their self-interests for the betterment of the organization. It prioritizes vision, innovation, and the ability to bring meaningful change within an organization. Different from transactional leadership, which is based on routine and rewards, transformational leadership leads to the transformation of the leader-employee relationship into a more commitment-oriented relationship. The concept of personal empowerment lies at the roots of such leadership, which seeks to stimulate and develop followers' commitment to both individual and organizational goals (Alharbi & Aljounaidi, 2021).

Transformational leadership was defined by James MacGregor Burns (1978) as 'a process of raising one another to higher levels of motivation and morality by example of such considerate behaviour.' Transformational leaders usually motivate followers by sharing a compelling vision of the future, promoting innovation, and creating an organization that fosters followers' personal and professional growth. Effectively, this leadership style is highly suitable for fostering an inclusive, adaptable work environment by emphasizing employees' emotional and intellectual involvement (Eaton *et al.*, 2024).

Key Characteristics of Transformational Leaders

Transformational leaders have many key characteristics that make them unique and promising. These include:

CHAPTER 6

Emotional Intelligence and Haptitude in DEI Practices

Sandeep Singh^{1,*}, Ruchi Verma² and Gaurav Jassal²

¹ *Training and Management, Designistic Group, Mohali, Punjab, India*

² *Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India*

Abstract: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) practices depend on Emotional Intelligence (EI) to encourage work environments where every individual feels heard, respected, and appreciated. If leaders and staff can fine-tune the emotional aspects of their minds, they will be able to manage unconscious prejudices and cultural differences, which support DEI projects by developing compassionate leadership and psychological safety, further reinforcing DEI work. Indeed, aptitude- the ability to relate and interact with others through emotional and social intelligence—emits more light on the meaning of DEI. Emotionally intelligent training can significantly improve workplace relationships, reduce prejudice, and foster an inclusive culture. Significant change may happen more easily if organizations provide leaders with the means to “listen actively,” take people’s concerns seriously, and handle conflicts accordingly. This type of empathy-based leadership encourages creativity, as proven by real-life examples of emotionally charged leaders. Examples of emotionally intelligent leaders include Microsoft’s Satya Nadella. His focus on psychological safety and development has transformed Microsoft’s corporate culture into one that values diversity and fosters a sense of community. In addition, how employees feel about managing trauma in firms is largely determined by their Emotional Intelligence (EI). Employees who have received emotional intelligence training are better equipped to support colleagues experiencing difficult circumstances, prejudice, or crises at work, thereby promoting resilience and well-being. Organizations may build inclusive, emotionally intelligent environments that allow staff to thrive by combining EI-driven strategies into DEI frameworks. Organizational trauma can have significant psychological and operational repercussions, whether it is brought on by external crises, harassment, resignations, or workplace accidents. To overcome such obstacles efficiently, managers and staff nowadays need to have Emotional Intelligence (EI). The theoretical underpinnings, real-world applications, and organizational resilience implications of Emotional Intelligence (EI) in trauma management in business environments are all examined in this study. Through case studies and empirical research, the study demonstrates how emotional intelligence promotes empathy, communication, and resilient coping mechanisms, thereby enhancing working conditions and outcomes for both employees and employers.

* **Corresponding author Sandeep Singh:** Training and Management at Designistic Group, Mohali, Punjab, India; E-mail: sandeepsinghchahal07@gmail.com

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, Employee attitudes, Employee wellbeing, Leadership effectiveness, Organizational resilience, Trauma management.

INTRODUCTION

In increasingly complex organizational settings, handling emotional problems has become an essential indicator of success. Both individuals and corporations may experience significant psychological and operational consequences as a result of trauma. Accidents at work, harassment, layoffs, and external factors such as pandemics or natural disasters can all cause it. Increased absenteeism, lower productivity, and chronic mental health conditions, including depression, anxiety, and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), can all be signs of these experiences. To successfully handle trauma and promote resilience, employees and managers must have Emotional Intelligence (EI). In business environments, where individuals' well-being is directly related to their overall performance and success, Emotional Intelligence (EI) is particularly important for trauma treatment. Leaders with high emotional intelligence can create a psychologically safe work environment where employees can freely express their emotions and receive the required support. This is crucially important in high stress environment where trauma happens in emergency services, healthcare, and business settings. This study explores the intersection of EI and trauma management, highlighting its significance to encourage resilience, empathy, and effective communication in organizations.

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

In organizational environments, Emotional Intelligence (EI) has become increasingly important for understanding human behaviour. Drawing on psychology, cognitive science, and Organizational Behaviour (OB), its theoretical roots provide a framework for understanding how emotions affect both personal and group performance. Supported by the empirical data and theoretical insights, this part investigates the roots and development of emotional intelligence, its basic elements, and its significance to organizational behaviour.

Definition and Components of EI

John Mayer and Peter Salovey originally suggested the idea of emotional intelligence in 1990, defining it as “the ability to keep track of one's own and others' feelings and emotions, differentiate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions.” Later research and practical EI applications across a wide range of fields, including organizational behavior, have been made possible by this definition.

Four basic mechanisms make up Salovey and Mayer's EI model:

Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is the awareness one has of one's own feelings, strengths, shortcomings, and values. Since it helps people to see how their emotions shape their ideas and actions, it is the basis of emotional intelligence. Self-aware leaders, for instance, may identify when they are under stress and act to control their feelings before they influence their decisions or relationships with others (Goleman, 1995).

Self-Management

Self-management is the capacity of one to control their emotions and actions in several contexts. This covers controlling impulses, handling stress, and adjusting to the times. Strong self-managers can help leaders stay cool under pressure, thereby giving their teams consistency and comfort (Mayer *et al.*, 2008).

Social Awareness

Social awareness is knowing and relating to others' feelings. It covers abilities including active listening, empathy, and social cue reading. A manager who is socially conscious, for example, can recognize when an employee is struggling and provide tools or assistance to help them deal (Salovey & Mayer, 1990).

Relationship Management

Relationship management emphasizes effective communication, conflict resolution, and teamwork to build and sustain strong relationships. Excellent relationship managers may build trust, motivate group projects, and help to shape a good corporate culture (Goleman, 1998).

Evolution of EI Theory

With contributions from many academics and professionals, the idea of emotional intelligence has changed greatly since its introduction. Emphasizing EI's value in leadership and organizational performance, Daniel Goleman popularized it in the middle of the 1990s. Extending Salovey and Mayer's approach, Goleman's model added social skills and motivation, therefore augmenting their framework (Goleman, 1995).

The EI model proposed by Petrides and Furnham (2001), which views EI as a personality trait rather than a cognitive ability, is another powerful paradigm. Self-perceptions of emotional capacity, such as confidence, hope, and emotional

Haptitude Strategies for Equity and Belonging

Yasmeen Shamsi Rizvi^{1,*}

¹ Department of Management Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, India

Abstract: The idea of creating workplaces where individuals are genuinely recognized and supported has become a fashionable notion that is now a requirement in today's workplaces. This study intends to investigate “haptitude,” a mix of “happiness” and “attitude,” and consider it from Generation Z's perspective. The research will look at how organizations can double down on their equity and inclusion commitments by using person-centered, specific methods to support this, such as the removal of unconscious bias, creation of fair and inclusive policies, development of effective mentorship and sponsorship programs, and the use of inclusive decision-making at all levels of the organization. Creating a safe environment where employees can be their true selves and be genuinely heard often results in higher creativity, more engaged teams, and lower turnover. Yet it is not enough to have the policies; people must live them and feel them, no matter who they are or what their position is. Thus, this chapter provides evidence for the necessity of aligning organizational actions with the growing demand for equity and belonging, not only as ethical responsibilities but also as drivers of organizational energy. In addition, this chapter challenges readers to reframe culture building as a dynamic, human-centered path toward a common goal.

Keywords: Belonging, Equity, Gen Z, Haptitude, Inclusive decision making, Mentorship, Sponsorship, Unconscious bias.

INTRODUCTION

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging (DEIB) concepts help organizations improve teamwork, innovation, and productivity. The best way to create a DEIB culture that fosters fairness, respect, and appreciation for each employee and encourages them to contribute to their full potential is to ensure each employee truly feels they belong to the organization. When employees know they have an opportunity to succeed without the fear of discrimination or bias, it creates a much more productive environment for both employees and employers. As reported by McKinsey (2023) and the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM, 2023), when organizations implement equitable practices to promote fairness in

* Corresponding author Yasmeen Shamsi Rizvi: Department of Management Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, India; E-mail: yasmeenrizvi44@yahoo.com

the workplace and provide equal opportunities and recognition for all employees, employees become more engaged and empowered, which increases their happtitude (Bohnet, 2016). Being part of a group, it is not just about employees. Those who are included, supported, and valued become psychologically safer, emotionally more stable, and more confident; they can even stay optimistic when facing tough times (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Companies can rely on the principle of equity and inclusion to create a culture where everyone can have a sense of belonging and, at the same time, the environment is healthy that develops happtitude, thus raising engagement, resilience, and emotional (Goler *et al.*, 2020). It is worth mentioning that even though many businesses nowadays have suitable policies concerning DEIB, very few of them have actually brought these policies into their everyday operations. As Gen Z is making its way in society, numerous studies have shown that equity and the culture of belonging are key factors one should think about while hiring new staff. Seventy-eight percent of Gen Z participants claimed that they would refuse a job offer if the employer was unfair to its workers (Deloitte, 2024). Those who put their efforts into the culture of equity and inclusion will also foster happtitude while at the same time enhance retention, employee engagement, and the overall success of the organization. Hence, this chapter will delve into issues related to equity and belonging through a Gen Z lens; thus, the organizations will gain a deeper insight into how to make the most of their talent pool. The present chapter aims to examine different approaches by which equity and belonging can be:

- Awareness and Recognition of Unconscious Bias in the Workplace
- Fair Policies that Promote Equity and Equal Opportunities
- Sponsorship and Mentorship to Create a Culture of Belonging
- Inclusive Decision-Making Practices

Defining Happtitude, Equity, and Belonging

The word “**Happtitude**” is a combination of two different words (happiness and attitude), and it refers to someone's natural ability to be optimistic, emotionally stable, and resilient when they encounter difficulties. Happtitude is about how an individual is likely to interact with their environment in a positive way, by participating in activities that foster gratitude, mindfulness, and optimism. Such traits are indicative of the main ideas that support positive psychology, emotional intelligence, and general well-being. **Equity** means giving each employee the same chance of success and giving each employee fair access to the company's . A company must take active steps to eliminate barriers to success to provide equity to its employees. In order to understand why equity is important, we first need to

understand the difference between equity and equality. Equality means that each employee is given the same resources or opportunities. Equity recognizes, however, that each employee has different strengths, weaknesses, experiences, and challenges, and it is these differences that are used to fairly distribute the resources to meet each employee's unique needs. A new employee with a disability is an example where a company can give a new employee with disabilities extra help through training, time off, *etc.*, in order to make sure that the new employee has the same chances of success as the rest of the employees. This shows that the company not only supports and values the diversity of its employees but also that it believes in the right of every employee to succeed, irrespective of their background. A key factor contributing to an individual's job satisfaction and performance is being a part of a team and feeling that you are a member of that team in the present business world. However, in essence, **belonging** refers to the question of whether employees feel that they are accepted and valued at work. If employees think that they are helping the organization to achieve its goals and their views are taken into consideration, then they will probably feel that they really belong to that organisation. Besides, being treated and seen as a member of the team lays the foundation for a person's high self-esteem and the feeling that his/her role in the team is of great importance. When someone feels like they belong in a team, they feel like their contributions matter and that they are making a positive impact on the team. Inclusion and belonging are two terms that are often used synonymously in today's workplace, but they have very distinct meanings. Inclusion refers to the specific strategies that organizations use to create a welcoming and inclusive workplace. Some examples include creating a fair and transparent hiring process, providing a positive onboarding experience for new employees, offering opportunities for employees to voice their opinions, and ensuring that all employees are treated with respect. The employee's sense of belonging is the direct result of these inclusive strategies. Therefore, while inclusion describes what the organization does to create a culture where employees feel welcome and valued, belonging describes the feelings that employees have towards the organization.

RECOGNIZING AND ADDRESSING UNCONSCIOUS BIAS IN THE WORKPLACE

Judgments of other people that are formed involuntarily and automatically, influenced by one's preconceptions and stereotypes, social norms, and individual experience, are called unconscious or implicit biases (Banaji & Greenwald, 2013; Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). Though they may be unintentionally made, these judgments can impact how individuals get hired, promoted, and treated at work and, therefore, create the environment of the team (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004). To develop a fair and equitable work environment in today's diverse and

Part 3: Implementing Hapttitude and DEI in Organizations

CHAPTER 8

The Role of AI in Promoting Engagement, DEI, and Happiness

Yannam Swathi^{1,*} and Shikha Batra Goyal¹

¹ *Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India*

Abstract: In recent years, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become central to how organizations attract, evaluate, and retain talent. From résumé screening to candidate assessments, AI-driven tools promise faster processes, greater consistency, and more data-informed decision-making. At the same time, their growing use has raised important concerns about fairness—especially the risk that digital hiring systems may unintentionally reproduce or amplify existing biases.

As organizations place increasing emphasis on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) to support employee well-being and organizational performance, questions around ethical and responsible AI use in HRM have become more urgent. This structured review draws on insights from more than 56 peer-reviewed studies to examine how algorithmic bias emerges in AI-enabled HR practices and what this means for DEI outcomes. Grounded in literature on people analytics, ethical AI, and digital recruitment, the review highlights recurring challenges, including biased or incomplete training data, limited transparency in algorithmic decision-making, insufficient representation of diverse groups in datasets, and weak regulatory and governance mechanisms.

Together, these issues risk undermining fair hiring decisions, reinforcing long-standing inequalities, and weakening trust among employees and job applicants. To address these concerns, the review underscores the need for fairness-aware algorithms, robust ethical governance frameworks, and greater transparency in AI systems. It also calls for closer collaboration among HR professionals, data scientists, ethicists, and policymakers in the design and deployment of AI tools.

Importantly, the chapter argues that AI systems in HR must be intentionally aligned with DEI principles if they are to support truly inclusive and equitable workplaces. It concludes by identifying key gaps in current research and offering practical recommendations for both scholars and practitioners seeking to strengthen fairness, accountability, and trust in AI-driven HRM. By taking a multidimensional perspective, this work contributes to the broader conversation on ethical AI and provides guidance for building more inclusive digital hiring ecosystems.

* **Corresponding author Yannam Swathi:** Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India;
E-mail: swathiyannammba@gmail.com

Keywords: AI-driven methodologies, Digital hiring, DEI, Employee well-being, Ethical considerations, Human resource management, Workplace happiness.

INTRODUCTION

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Human Resource Management (HRM) is on the rise, and it has changed a lot about how companies hire, train, and manage their employees. AI-powered tools are now widely used in HR for everything from screening job candidates and onboarding new employees with chatbots to analyzing employee performance and planning the workforce. These technologies enable organizations to process large volumes of data quickly, improve operational efficiency, and support more informed decision-making (Vrontis *et al.*, 2021; Malik *et al.*, 2021). However, as AI becomes more deeply embedded in core HR processes, it has also brought renewed attention to ethical concerns, particularly those related to bias, fairness, and accountability in algorithmic decision-making.

At the same time, organizations are increasingly recognizing that Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) are not just moral imperatives but strategic priorities. Inclusive workplaces are linked to higher levels of innovation, stronger employee engagement, and improved retention. Research consistently shows that organizations with robust DEI practices tend to perform better financially, as diverse teams contribute a wider range of perspectives and more effective problem-solving. When employees feel respected, represented, and included, they are more likely to experience job satisfaction and a sense of belonging, which in turn supports a healthier and more productive work environment.

Despite these benefits, AI systems used in hiring and performance evaluation can unintentionally reinforce existing social inequalities. Much of this risk arises from the data used to train algorithms, which often reflect historical patterns of discrimination based on gender, race, age, or socioeconomic status (Duggan *et al.*, 2019; Rodgers *et al.*, 2022). For example, recruitment algorithms trained on past hiring data may favor candidates who resemble previous hires, thereby excluding qualified individuals from underrepresented groups. The problem is further intensified by the “black box” nature of many machine learning models, which makes it difficult to understand, audit, or challenge biased decisions (Meijerink & Bondarouk, 2021). This lack of transparency can erode employee trust and expose organizations to ethical and legal risks.

In addition, many AI systems are not designed with DEI as a core principle. As highlighted by Budhwar *et al.* (2023), there is a growing disconnect between the promise of AI as a neutral, merit-based tool and the reality of biased outcomes shaped by incomplete data and culturally insensitive design choices. Addressing

these challenges requires a fundamental shift in how AI is developed and applied in HRM. Organizations and technology developers must move toward fairness-aware algorithms, stronger regulatory and governance frameworks, and closer collaboration among HR professionals, data scientists, ethicists, and policymakers.

This chapter offers a comprehensive review of existing research on AI in HRM, with a particular focus on understanding and addressing algorithmic bias in digital hiring and related practices. It examines how fairness can be embedded in algorithmic systems, which ethical principles should guide AI use in HR, and how organizations can build inclusive, trust-based HR ecosystems in an AI-driven environment. By engaging with themes such as bias detection, ethical people analytics, DEI integration, transparency, and governance, this review seeks to contribute to a more responsible, equitable, and human-centered future for AI-enabled HRM.

METHODOLOGY

According to Moher *et al.* (2009), the PRISMA framework design structure literature review was adopted in this study. The studies discussed in the review involved algorithmic fairness as a diverse and evolving area of research and practice. The primary focus was to gather and critically synthesize previous scholarly work on artificial intelligence, digital hiring, and fairness within Human Resource Management (HRM).

To ensure enough methodological rigour, this review followed guidelines by Tranfield *et al.* (2003) for evidence-based management. These guidelines emphasise transparency, consistency, and replicability in evidence-based management. The process of identifying, screening, and evaluating studies used clear criteria to systematically and reliably work on the syntheses. Fig. (1) illustrates the step-wise approach of the paper selection and screening process in detail.

Search Strategy

In this particular study, an effort to systematically and methodically search for the research papers available on SCOPUS using the AND operator was made in order to maintain relevance to the objectives of the research. The study was conducted as follows: the researcher logged in to the Scopus database and conducted an advanced search. This is because this interface offers Boolean operators such as AND, which enable the construction of a logical, compiled search statement, using one or more keywords.

Part 4: The Future of Haptitude and DEI

CHAPTER 9

Global Perspectives on Hapttitude and DEI

Razia Nagina^{1,*}, Jaskiran Kaur² and Mandakini Paruthi³

¹ Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India

² Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India

³ ICFAI Business School, Hyderabad, India

Abstract: This chapter examines the integration of Hapttitude, a phenomenon that combines happiness with aptitude, with the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) framework in organizational and educational contexts. The chapter focuses on analyzing cultural approaches to workplace happiness and inclusivity, exploring insights from international companies that excel in integrating Hapttitude with DEI, investigating the adaptation of worldwide best practices to local workplace contexts, and evaluating the role of cross-cultural competence in promoting inclusivity in this globalized world. The chapter used primary data for the first objective and secondary data for all stated objectives, and employed Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to analyze the primary data. The results confirm significant positive correlations between Hapttitude-based leadership, employee engagement, and inclusive workplace culture. Other key findings suggest that organizations integrating Hapttitude report enhanced collaboration, lower attrition rates, and improved psychological safety among employees.

Additionally, leadership commitment to emotional intelligence fosters a culture of belonging and equitable opportunities. The chapter also identifies challenges, including resistance to behavioral change and the need for structured training programs. This chapter offers valuable insights into the existing discourse on the relationship between Hapttitude and DEI by providing empirical evidence of Hapttitude's positive role in fostering inclusivity. The chapter will act as a useful guide for entrepreneurs, organizations, business leaders, educators, and policymakers aiming to create an equitable and emotionally intelligent workplace.

Keywords: Cross-cultural competence, DEI, Diversity, Equity, Happiness, Hapttitude, Inclusivity.

INTRODUCTION

Workplace happiness and inclusivity have emerged as crucial elements of organizational success nowadays (Jha *et al.*, 2024). Businesses must address the

* Corresponding author Razia Nagina: Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University, Phagwara, Punjab, India; E-mail: razia.23646@lpu.co.in

challenges of diverse and varied workforces, changing employee expectations, and workplace well-being across cultural contexts as they operate in a highly interconnected world (Gabriel *et al.*, 2022). The integration of Hapttitude, a framework that combines happiness with aptitude, with the Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) framework has drawn extensive attention as organizations continue to strive to create workplace environments that are both productive and fulfilling. Hapttitude underscores the importance of employees feeling satisfied and purposeful in their work, as well as having the required skills for their jobs.

Happiness and inclusivity in the workplace are major factors that influence employees' productivity, engagement, and commitment. DEI promotes diversity, equity tackles structural obstacles and barriers, and inclusion gives workers more authority, thus empowering them. Existing research supports the idea that prioritizing employees' well-being results in higher employee retention, productivity, and the organization's financial success (Helliwell *et al.*, 2021; McKinsey, 2020). It is further discussed that less diverse teams perform comparatively less than diverse teams, thus making Hapttitude and DEI integration imperative (Carucci, 2024). Meanwhile, cultural variations require a global perspective to effectively promote workplace inclusivity and attract talent (Sausa *et al.*, 2024).

Globally, cultural dynamics influence DEI and the Hapttitude mechanism (MacArthur, 2025). To develop inclusive policies that work across varied organizations' cultural landscapes, it is essential to deeply understand cultural dynamics (Dogan *et al.*, 2024). For instance, East Asia emphasizes hierarchical structures; the United States and Canada value merit-based inclusivity; Scandinavian nations value work-life balance; and India integrates traditional and contemporary diversity initiatives (Johnson-Freese, 2025; Mitra, 2024; Solveig, 2024). Leading organizations such as Microsoft, Google, Unilever, Accenture, and Tata encourage mental well-being, gender equity, and a flexible work culture (Panda *et al.*, 2024). Microsoft supports neurodiversity hiring (Hennekam & Follmer, 2024), whereas Unilever encourages inclusive leadership (Nkpurukwe *et al.*, 2025). Tata blends global best practices with local needs (Aithal, 2024). These strategies and tactics foster employee well-being, company financial performance, and reputation, demonstrating that culturally adaptive DEI promotes organizational success and an inclusive workplace globally.

It is imperative to address cultural norms, economic structures, policies, and regulations to adapt global DEI strategies to the local landscape (Otegui, 2024). European Gender equity policies may require adjustments in the Middle East (Owusu, 2024), while caste diversity and employment access must be considered for India's DEI efforts (Sreedhar & Nayak, 2024). Organizations foster engaged

and productive workforces that excel in localizing inclusivity (Prabhakar, 2024). Cross-cultural competence is crucial for multinational organizations as it improves collaboration, reduces conflicts, and strengthens stakeholder relations (Sun *et al.*, 2024). Organizations that promote cultural awareness create diverse yet inclusive workplaces where employees feel valued (Javed, 2024). Organizations can build and maintain sustainable relationships and ensure long-term success by understanding cultural diversity in this evolving, globalized world (Bhutto, 2024).

The chapter examines worldwide implemented strategies for fostering workplace happiness and inclusivity, explores best initiatives and practices from international organizations that have effectively integrated Hapttitude with DEI. It further highlights barriers and opportunities in adapting these strategies to the local landscape, with a focus on the role of cultural sensitivity in ensuring workforce effectiveness. In addition, it discusses the evolving need for cross-cultural competence to promote innovation, collaboration, and business success. This chapter seeks to assist organizations in creating inclusive, sustainable, and competitive workplaces that attract top talent and drive long-term business success by providing useful insights for business leaders, policymakers, and HR professionals.

HOW DIFFERENT CULTURES APPROACH WORKPLACE HAPPINESS AND INCLUSIVITY

The chapter follows a quantitative research design for examining how different cultures approach workplace happiness and inclusivity. The following two objectives are set for the same.

1. To explore the factors of culture impacting the workplace happiness of an organization.
2. To explore the factors of culture impacting diversity and equity of an organization.

The research employs a quantitative, structured questionnaire to examine Workplace Happiness (WPH) alongside Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) concepts among IT professionals in Chandigarh, Panchkula, and Mohali. The authors collected 250 valid responses through purposive sampling. The research analysis included 226 valid responses after removing questionnaires with incomplete entries. The research instrument incorporated pretested scales from the study of Singh & Tarkar (2025), Srinivas *et al.* (2025), Aboramadan & Kundi (2023), Fitriana *et al.* (2022), Espasandín-Bustelo (2021), to measure Workplace Happiness. Also, Javed (2024), Irim *et al.* (2024), Singh & Banerji (2022), Mousa

CHAPTER 10

The Future of Work – Happiness, Inclusivity, and Beyond

Pooja Agrawal^{1,*} and Omvir Gautam¹

¹ Faculty of Commerce & Management, Vishwakarma University, Pune, Maharashtra, India

Abstract: The 21st century is the era of transformation. Previous researchers (Khanna *et al.*, 2025; Hibrida, 2023; Ramani, 2022; Verma *et al.*, 2022; Johnson, 2020) explored different workplace transitions, including technological advancement, demographic transition, the evolution of the remote-hybrid working model, the gig economy, and leadership. In line with this, the current research emphasizes the pivotal themes of happiness, inclusivity, and workplace adaptability to challenges, which foster employees' well-being, commitment, satisfaction, and organizational resilience. Additionally, this study focused on the generational shift and the organization's preparation to adapt to Gen Z and Alpha by promoting collaborative cultures, happiness, fairness, innovation, and ethical practices. This research also addressed the impact of COVID-19 on world-level happiness, equality, fairness, and justice. A systematic and extensive literature review was conducted on inclusivity, happiness, and workplace adaptability. The research methodology focuses on a comprehensive review of relevant studies using research databases such as Google Scholar, Web of Science (WoS), EBSCO, ProQuest, and Google Scholar.

The primary objective of the current study was to contribute thoughtful and valuable insights into the evolving nature of workplace frameworks, address modern challenges, and promote purpose-driven, positively engaged organizations. An in-depth literature review was conducted on constructs such as happiness and inclusivity, as prioritized non-negotiables in the workplace. The findings revealed more vital facts that organizations should emphasize: employee-centric CSR, inclusive leadership, and the cultivation of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) to create a sustainable workplace.

Keywords: Adaptability, Alpha, Gen-Z, Happiness, Inclusivity, Transformation, Workplace.

INTRODUCTION

In the twenty-first century, many organizations are experiencing significant transformation due to rapid technological advancements, shifting workforce

* Corresponding author Pooja Agrawal: Faculty of Commerce & Management, Vishwakarma University, Pune, Maharashtra, India; E-mail: poojaagrw1985@gmail.com/pooja.agrawal@vupune.ac

demographics, and continuously evolving workplace structures (Adams, 2024; Shalini, 2024; Yilmaz, 2024; Daraojimba *et al.*, 2023; Trenerry *et al.*, 2021). In the present context, the organizational landscape, this study stresses some pivotal themes, such as happiness and inclusivity. These two dimensions have emphasized the mechanisms for enhancing employee well-being and for nurturing contemporary work environments (Daraojimba *et al.*, 2024; Monteiro *et al.*, 2023; Stallman *et al.*, 2023; Anitha *et al.*, 2020). It has also been noticed that many organizations in the present era started gradually adopting more collaborative cultures, innovative approaches, and equitable practices to ensure that employees remain valued, motivated, and engaged.

Apart from organizational priorities for employees, many organizations have initiated practices to improve work culture and ethics, along with strategic parameters such as sustainability-oriented practices and employee adaptability in today's work environment. Some most common challenges faced by employees at workplace includes automation, onsite and off-site work models, the expansion of the gig economy, and the embryonic prospects of newer workforce cohorts such as Generation Alpha and Generation Z (Westover, 2025; Urrila *et al.*, 2025; Osorio & Madero, 2024; Askew, 2023; Shevchuk *et al.*, 2022; Pastor-Escuredo, 2021; Schroth, 2019; Nyholm *et al.*, 2018).

By focusing more on dimensions such as happiness, inclusivity, and workplace adaptability challenges, the workplace may emerge as a hub of positive engagement and motivational centers. The current study is an attempt to examine how emerging workplace trends, generational shifts, and leadership evolution collectively influence the integration of happiness and inclusivity in the future of work, as the Research Question (RQ-1).

Furthermore, the global scenario, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, had a significant adverse impact on levels of happiness, equality, and justice worldwide (Furendal *et al.*, 2024; Cohen & Levy, 2022; Petrovic *et al.*, 2021; Greyling *et al.*, 2021). The limited years of research post-COVID-19, a comprehensive literature compilation, and its analysis have left a gap for researchers to understand the future of the workplace, with happiness, inclusivity, and workplace adaptability to challenges. Recognizing these critical and demanding issues, this research study endeavors to gather and analyze available studies on workplace happiness, inclusivity, and adaptability. Furthermore, through this endeavor, *what interventions and strategies can organizations implement to enhance employee well-being, happiness, and inclusivity in future workplace settings (RQ-2)?*

CONCEPTUAL FOUNDATIONS AND ANALYTICAL INSIGHTS

The future of the workplace with happiness, inclusivity, and workplace adaptability challenges continues to capture the interest of researchers, philosophers, and academicians, emerging as a popular and widely discussed subject worldwide (Jaswal *et al.*, 2024; Jha *et al.*, 2023; and Anuradha *et al.*, 2020). In line with this understanding, this research study focuses on the development of the workplace landscape with happiness, inclusivity, and workplace adaptability as pivotal elements in shaping the future. Before exploring the current research, it is critical to understand the basics of happiness, workplace adaptability, and inclusivity to have a strong conceptual discussion about them.

Happiness and Workplace

The term Happiness is very broad and vast for researchers, and across the globe it has been defined as a state of emotional well-being and pleasure amongst individuals, frequently considered a feeling of joy or satisfaction. The term happiness appears in both forms, like internal and external factors, thrusting on gratifying relationships, partaking in meaningful activities, along with the achievement of some personal goals, and experiences gratitude. Moreover, it is perceived in an individual's mindset, actions, and overall perception towards life. As a result, its connotation differs and relics across individuals in multiple layers. This concern or point gained significant attention from researchers, theorists, academicians, and the general public since the early 1980s. Furthermore, happiness is also defined as the presence of positive emotions alongside certain negative experiences (Diener, 1984), and it encompasses key foundations such as satisfaction, joy, and the absence of stress or depression (Argyle & Crossland, 1987).

Earlier, many Greek and European authors researched the dimension of happiness mostly through philosophical inquiry; nevertheless, it is also supported by some empirical, thoughtful theories, but due to a lack of systematic and in-depth research always remained a matter of exploration. Although imperative and conceptual questions were raised, and many researchers attempted sound methodological and comprehensive investigations to establish the term Happiness as an important dimension of employee satisfaction. The development of social science research methods examined the term happiness in a more structured manner. Many successive studies hypothesized happiness as an incorporation of gathered emotional responses and reflections on past cognitive experiences (Kim Prieto *et al.*, 2005; Hills & Argyle, 2001). With more research, the term happiness has been identified as a motivational and positive factor with implications for employee mental health and well-being (Cohen, 2002; Lu *et al.*, 2001).

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Pretty Bhalla

Dr. Pretty Bhalla is a Professor and HAPTTITUDE Coach at the Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University (LPU). She is known for her contributions to organizational culture, emotional intelligence, and human-centered leadership.

She is the creator of the HAPTTITUDE framework, a coined and research-backed concept integrating happiness and attitude to enhance individual and organizational effectiveness. Her work has impacted 20,000+ individuals globally through academic sessions, corporate trainings, and international engagements.

An active researcher, she has presented at national and international conferences and published in reputed journals on themes such as technology adoption, job satisfaction, and consumer behavior. Her work reflects a strong commitment to bridging academic research with practical application.

Through her workshops on stress management, workplace wellbeing, leadership, and life coaching, she continues to translate research into meaningful real-world impact.



Dr. Gurmeet Singh

Dr. Gurmeet Singh is currently serving as Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation – Acting) and Head/Dean of Business & Management at the University of the South Pacific (USP), Fiji. With over 29 years of experience in teaching, research, consultancy, and executive training, he has held key leadership roles, including Associate Dean (Research, Internationalisation, and Postgraduate Affairs).

A distinguished academic, Dr. Singh has been featured in the prestigious Stanford University list of the world's top 2% scientists. His research expertise lies in marketing, with a strong focus on customer experience, consumer psychology, and strategic marketing insights. He has published extensively in high-impact journals and is deeply engaged in advancing customer-centric research and innovation. His work continues to contribute significantly to global academic discourse and industry practices.



Pawan Kumar

Dr. Pawan Kumar is a Professor and Head of the Department of Marketing at the Mittal School of Business, Lovely Professional University. With over 18 years of academic experience alongside corporate exposure, he has held multiple leadership roles, including Alumni Coordinator, Industry Coordinator, and Research Coordinator.

An expert in research methodology and business analytics, Dr. Kumar is a certified trainer in tools such as SPSS, Smart PLS, R, and NVivo. He has authored 15 edited books with leading publishers such as IGI Global, Emerald, Springer, and Taylor & Francis and has published over 40 research papers in reputed Scopus- and ABDC-indexed journals.

He has successfully guided numerous doctoral and MPhil scholars and is currently supervising several PhD candidates. Additionally, he has contributed as a guest editor and editorial board member for various Scopus-indexed journals. His areas of expertise include marketing research, data analytics, and digital marketing, and he has organized and contributed to numerous international conferences and faculty development programs.



Satinder Rekhi Singh

Dr. Satinder Rekhi Singh is a distinguished philanthropist, entrepreneur, and founder of the Rekhi Foundation for Happiness. He is a global advocate for the "Science of Happiness," promoting positive psychology and wellbeing through academic and institutional collaborations.

An alumnus of IIT Kharagpur and California State University, with further academic engagement at Harvard and UC Berkeley, Dr. Rekhi has received numerous accolades, including the Distinguished Alumni Award from IIT Kharagpur and the President's Gold Medal from California State University. He also holds the title of Professor Emeritus from Chandigarh University.

Through the Rekhi Foundation, he has partnered with leading institutions such as IIT Kharagpur, IIM Amritsar, DTU, and Amity University to establish Centers of Excellence focused on happiness and wellbeing. He also serves in key advisory roles, including Honorary Chairman at the IIT Kharagpur Happiness Center and International Advisor to the Gross National Happiness Center in Bhutan. His mission is to integrate scientific approaches to happiness into education and leadership for a more fulfilled and productive society.



Rajesh Verma

Dr. Rajesh Verma is a Professor and Senior Dean at the Mittal School of Business (NBA Accredited, NIRF Ranked #43), Lovely Professional University. He holds a PhD in Marketing from Himachal Pradesh University, an MBA from Utkal University, and has completed an Executive Programme in Data-Driven Product Management from IIM Lucknow. He is also a Wiley Certified Design Thinking Practitioner.

With nearly 25 years of experience in teaching, research, and consulting, Dr. Verma specializes in business models, strategic management, and political marketing. He has published over 60 research papers, 20 case studies, and authored 7 books. He has successfully supervised multiple PhD and MPhil scholars.

A recipient of prestigious recognitions, including the UGC Fellowship, UKIERI Award, DST funding, ICSSR grant, and the Research Appreciation Award from the HRD Minister of India, he is actively involved in conducting training programs on design thinking, brand building, and customer orientation. He is a frequent speaker at national and international forums and has undertaken academic assignments across several countries, including the UK, Spain, Portugal, Russia, Dubai, Nigeria, Thailand, and Sri Lanka.