About the Journal

The **BIITM Business Review** provides an academic forum for encouragement, compilationand dissemination of research on various aspects of management and business practices. Itincludes original empirical research as well as theoretical and conceptual works related to thefield of management. It also publishes case studies, critical evaluation of existing businessmodelsandtheories, andreviews ofthelatestbooks relevantto thecorporate world. The articles / papers featured in this issue of BIITM Business Review have been meticulously curated from the esteemed pool of submissions presented at the ICMESG'24 (International Conference On Managerial Excellence & Sustainable Growth: IT & Operational Issues) held at BIITM, Bhubaneswar on 17th February 2024. The conference convening committee and editorial committee have contributed significantly to the selection of papers that encapsulate cutting-edge research and insights into the realms of managerial excellence and sustainable growth.

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BIITM

Vision:

To achieve excellence in management education, as a nationally acclaimed Business School for developing leaders, who can contribute meaningfully to the society.

Mission:

M1: To provide excellent academic ambience and adequate exposure to the business world, in order to develop successful business leaders.

M2: To consistently endeavor to achieve holistic development of the students in terms of knowledge, skills and attitude.

M3: To provide a supportive ecosystem for developing innovative mindset and encouraging entrepreneurship.

M4: To inculcate professional values, ethics and concern for environmental sustainability and society at large.

Executive Director's Message

"Research is seeing what everybody else has seen and thinking what nobody else has thought."- Albert Szent-Györgyi.

At BIITM, we take profound pride in embodying this idea in our practices, consistently striving to equip our students with the knowledge and skills essential for navigating the ever-evolving landscape of management. Our institution has forged a distinctive reputation in the realm of management education, cultivating a cadre of competitive managers attuned to the exigencies of the dynamic industry milieu. Central to this ethos is the pivotal role of research in augmenting the learning experience. Here at BIITM, we are privileged to foster an environment where students are not merely confined within the boundaries of classrooms and textbooks but are encouraged to delve deeper into the realms of inquiry and exploration.

Designed as a platform for both students and faculty to push the boundaries of knowledge, BIITM Business Review serves as a catalyst for intellectual exploration and advancement. Tailored for management practitioners, researchers, and academics alike, this journal rigorously engages with contemporary practices, concepts, and ideas in the management domain, with a steadfast focus on delivering actionable managerial insights.

The articles and papers featured in this journal aspire to catalyze transformative change within the field of management, empowering managers to make informed decisions and navigate complex challenges with acumen and foresight. Through our collective efforts, we endeavor to create a ripple effect, empirically shaping the landscape of management and fostering a community of leaders equipped with the power of to drive meaningful changes in their professional domains.

I cherish the hope that this issue of the journal will be another milestone in the institute's contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the field of management.

Mr. Pratap Balabantaray
ExecutiveDirector

Principal's Message

It is with immense pleasure that I introduce to you this issue of the BIITM Business Review, peer-reviewed bi-annual journal, our mission is to serve as a beacon for groundbreaking research across various domains of management, thereby fulfilling the Institute's vision of fostering intellectual excellence.

The BIITM Business Review stands at the forefront of the new frontier of research, acting as a catalyst for bridging the gap between academia and the corporate world through the dissemination of high-quality, research-based articles. In doing so, we endeavor to cultivate a vibrant culture of inquiry and exploration among both our esteemed authors and the students of BIITM.

I extend my heartfelt gratitude to the distinguished members of our newly constituted Board of Reviewers for their invaluable contribution. Their guidance and expertise will undoubtedly propel us toward greater heights of achievement in the field of research.

Featuring six meticulously crafted research articles spanning a diverse array of topics, from empirically researched finance articles to conceptual review articles on facility management, this edition promises to captivate and inspire our readers.

To our esteemed reviewers, authors, and readers, I express my deepest appreciation for their unwavering support and patronage over the years. It is their dedication and enthusiasm that drive us forward, and we look forward to their continued partnership as we embark on this journey toward excellence.

Prof.(Dr.) Mihir Ranjan Nayak
Principal

From the Chief Editor's Desk

It is with great pleasure that we present to you the latest issue of the BIITM Business Review. This issue represents our ongoing commitment to delivering insightful research perspectives on the ever-evolving landscape of business.

In this issue, we are delighted to showcase a selection of high-caliber papers presented at the International Conference On Managerial Excellence & Sustainable Growth: IT & Operational Issues (ICMESG'24)- jointly organized by BIITM & ORSI Bhubaneswar Chapter, Odisha, held on 17th February 2024. These papers, meticulously chosen through a peer review process, embody academic excellence and offer valuable insights into the realms of managerial excellence and sustainable growth. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to the dedicated members of the Conference Conveners' Committee, Editorial committee and Printing & Publishing Committee for curating content for this issue of the journal with precision, ensuring a diverse array of perspectives.

This issue features six research articles, each offering unique insights into critical areas of concern for modern enterprises and providing valuable contributions to academia and practice alike. The First article sheds light on the nuanced preferences and responses of rural consumers, elucidating the intricacies of marketing in this dynamic landscape. The second paper offers pragmatic approaches for cultivating enduring employee engagement and loyalty essential for organizational sustainability and growth. The next article unravels the evolving trends and patterns of CSR initiatives in Indian corporations, illuminating their alignment with broader sustainability objectives. The fourth paper confronts the pervasive challenge of unconscious bias in diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts, offering strategies to foster a more inclusive organizational culture. A compelling case study of technology's transformative potential in enhancing operational efficiency and performance exemplified by Orient Cement Ltd. has been included. Finally, the last entry presents the global trend of governments transitioning to e-governance, focusing on the digitization of government services, its benefits, and advancements in India and select countries, amidst ongoing technological developments. Collectively, these papers epitomize the scholarly rigor and practical relevance that define our journal's ethos.

I invite our readers to immerse themselves in these illuminating studies and glean valuable insights to navigate the complexities of contemporary business landscapes. We sincerely thank you for your continued support and readership.

Dr.Surjit Kumar Kar
Chief Editor

Editor's Message

It brings us immense joy to bring out the latest issue of the BIITM Business Review, Within these pages, we endeavor to provide you with a rich tapestry of insights into the dynamic world of business.

This edition features a selection of exceptional papers presented at the prestigious International Conference on Managerial Excellence & Sustainable Growth: IT & Operational Issues (ICMESG'24), a collaborative effort by BIITM and ORSI Bhubaneswar Chapter, Odisha.

We extend our sincere gratitude to the members of the Conference Conveners Committee, Editorial Committee, and Printing &Publishing Committee for their dedicated efforts in bringing out this issue.

We express our heartfelt appreciation to the esteemed scholars and authors whose contributions have enriched the scholarly discourse within our journal.

We also extend our gratitude to the diligent reviewers who have generously devoted their time and expertise to uphold the quality and rigor of the published papers.

We deeply appreciate the continued support of the academic community to our esteemed journal.

Dr.Sasmita Mohapatra
Editor

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An Empirical Study onthe Impact of Television Commercials ofFMCG Products among Rural Consumers ofOdisha

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Abstract

With the advancement of modern era, marketing has gained a significant place in the management of business and industry. Various innovative advertising techniques have lagged the traditional approaches. Rural marketing can be precisely defined as the identification and fulfilment of needs of the rural people. A large chunk, almost 75 percentage of the Indian population, is placed in the rural basket. Rural marketing generates nearly 30% of the national income. The present study was conducted on the advertising of Fast-Moving Consumer Goods which are sold quickly at low prices in rural areas. Advertisement is an integral component of marketing communication process where a message is delivered to motivate the rural people towards promoting or selling a product or service.

In Odisha 275 rural consumers were selected randomly from different districts. The primary data were analyzed by use of simple tables and graphs with the Garrett ranking technique to get an accurate result of the study. Non-parametric data analysis using Chi-Square hypothesis testing of the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variables and ANOVA. The result of the study revealed interesting facts on the type of commercials those are contributing to increase the sales of FMCG companies and the problems associated with the present communication for the rural consumers. And also highlighted the required details of the content of communication which is expected in FMCG advertisements. Thus, the FMCG companies have identified the vast potential to capture the rural market through advertising and push up the sales to earn profit.

Keywords: Rural Market, Advertisements, Rural Consumers, FMCG Companies

Introduction

Among the most all-encompassing and inclusive terms is marketing. It is considered a philosophy, expertise, and direction for achieving corporate objectives. The business and industry management market has a unique function. The conventional method has been superseded by a plethora of innovative marketing tools and strategies. To accomplish the fundamental goals, contemporary methods must be taken into account. Client satisfaction is important and can help a business survive. The company's actions ought to be in line with the desires and satisfaction of the customer. Marketing methods, which encompass distribution, selling, and advertising, are a creative sector.

With "nearly 75% of the total population living in rural areas," India is an agrarian nation. Roughly thirty percent of our nation's income is at risk due to rural area marketing. The marketing of various items acknowledges and satisfies the needs of rural customers. It is evident that far too few of the isolated settlements have had access to contemporary amenities. It is obvious that a business's rural operations should be in line with the desires and happiness of its customers. Marketing methods, which encompass distribution, selling, and advertising, are a creative sector.

With "nearly 75% of the total population living in rural areas," India is an agrarian nation. Roughly thirty percent of our nation's income is at risk due to rural area marketing. The marketing of various items acknowledges and satisfies rural consumers' needs. It is evident that far too few of the isolated settlements have had access to contemporary amenities. It is clear that marketing sciences now view rural customers as an unexplored market.

It is clear that agriculture or related industries provide the majority of income for those living in rural areas. The unstructured nature of the rural market made many corporations wary of entering it. Because of the poor purchasing power of the local population, unpredictable demand patterns, and seasonality of the environment, marketing is more challenging in rural locations. In light of the current changing landscape, the government has launched numerous measures in order to effectively market farm produce in rural areas, regulated markets need be established. Products are supplied for both manufacture and consumption, from rural to urban areas, and vice versa, through the two-way process of rural marketing.

The primary means by which the many products under Fast-Moving raise awareness is through advertising. Ads for consumer durables like television sets, electrical appliances, and two-wheelers, as well as products like soaps, detergents, cosmetics, and agricultural inputs, are the primary means by which consumer goods raise awareness. Materials are sent from metropolitan areas to rural ones. When it comes to agricultural products, the majority of them are sold from rural to urban regions, although many are also sold within rural areas for domestic use.

Background

FMCG items, or fast-moving consumer goods, are another popular abbreviation for them. Due to strong customer demand, many products sell out rapidly and at a discount. Fruits, vegetables, meat, dairy products, and other perishable items are examples of FMCG products with limited shelf lives. Items that are pre-packed have high turnover rates. Many of the sales factors fall into the season and holidays of the product being sold. Some of the most famous FMCG companies are Procter and Gamble, Colgate-Palmolive India Hygiene and Health Care Limited, Nestle India Limited, Marico, Britannia India Limited, Hindustan Unilever Limited, Godrej Consumer Product Limited, Dabur India Limited, and Cadbury India Limited.

In the marketing communication process, television commercials are used to advertise or sell new goods, services, or industries. The specific delivery message is carefully controlled by the advertiser. One can advertise with any media to advertise their product: print, radio, television, online, point of sale, novelties, and celebrity endorsements. Advanced advertising is a new form of advertisement driven by data that uses so many tools and so much data.

Literature Review

Ravi Kumar (2011) claimed that TV commercials have a lot of promise for becoming an effective tool for promoting goods and services in both industrialized and developing nations. Owing to the rise in TV commercial costs, developing countries are now more appropriately viewed as expenses than investments. All these bring a fillip and dynamism, and hence, the manner in which people approach the promotion is changing at a feverish pace. Expectations based on products and opportunities have become an indispensable element of operations advertising. Therefore, it is acknowledged that advertising is a service that promotes greater growth.

Nithya,2013, studied the fast-moving consumer goods industry and attempted to understand television advertising strategies in an attempt to outperform their most formidable rivals and make a profit. The majority of FMCG businesses aim for a sizable market share. It is only feasible if you draw in customers and persuade them to make a purchase. Every day, a large number of items with fresh and creative concepts are manufactured. However, customers should be well informed about the new items. It can only happen with advertising. A simple commercial won't alter a consumer's thought process. A new type of advertising that combines effective technology and strategy aids in creating a lasting and powerful impression in the minds of consumers.

Sivanesan,2014, identified the fact that "advertisements have a great impact on the buying behaviour of rural and urban customers". This is related to the statement that consumers gathered necessary product information and then made a concrete decision before buying. Therefore, the commercial led the consumer to gain knowledge. It was found that social and personal factors had more impact on consumer buying behaviour. It has been noted that consumer decisions to buy products are also influenced by the opinions of others. As mentioned, "in the Kanyakumari district of Tamil Nadu, advertisements play a crucial role in the buying behaviour of rural and urban consumers."

Priya & Bhatia, 2014, studied the "unconventional media and its impact on the buying behaviour of rural consumers". Additionally, they looked at "the importance of non-conventional media in rural markets and the challenges of communication in rural Uttar Pradesh." It has also been observed that unorthodox media can effectively advertise new product launches and product launches. When it comes to FMCG products, excitement can increase sales volume if it is supported by a robust advertising campaign and effective distribution network. "By highlighting some national advertisement campaigns which was carried out by corporate giants to communicate with the target audience in rural markets," the report explains "the shortcomings of conventional media." For effective communication and promotion, marketers need to be aware of the social, cultural, demographic, and economic obstacles that rural areas face.

Maheshwari & Brindha, 2015, stated that one type of tool that aids in raising awareness and distributing product information is advertising. TV ads are very influential in the promotion of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG). A few encouraging reviews were gathered, and the significant yearly reports were talked about. Experts in marketing have shown how important television ads are in comparison to other media advertising.

Problem Statement

The FMCG sector is the fourth largest sector in the Indian economy. Therefore, FMCG marketers need to probe into why sales are declining in the rural parts. The most crucial element in increasing sales is promotion. To understand the sorts of marketing strategies that will be successful for FMCG in the rural market, along with the kinds of commercials and methods that rural buyers seek, this study analyses the following vital scenarios.

1. Type of commercials available for FMCG market in rural areas,
2. The approach to advertising on television and the method of impactful advertising with which they manage to succeed in the rural market of Odisha.
3. And what was expected in FMCG advertisements by rural consumers.

An obligation existed for the FMCG research. India's economy is mostly reliant on its rural markets; thus, marketers must focus their efforts there to improve the nation's economic situation. FMCGs sell quickly and risk-free in rural areas. As such, it presents an excellent chance to improve the country's economic position.

Objectives of the Study

- To assess the impact of the FMCG TV commercials on the rural consumer in the hinterland market.
- To assess what types of TV advertising are able to stimulate FMCG sales in rural markets
- To understand what type of information the rural consumer needs for FMCG products

Methodology and Coverage

In this investigation, prearranged interviews and questionnaires were used to collect primary data. Secondary data was acquired from numerous books, journals, and websites. From July to October 2022, 275 consumers were chosen from diverse rural parts of Odisha, representing different districts and demographics, using an easy sample technique. To analyse the raw data, a straightforward table and graphs using the Garrett ranking technique were employed. For non-parametric data analysis, the chi square hypothesis test is employed, and an ANOVA was utilised to examine the impact of the independent variable on the dependent variables.

The present research study's objective is to promote specific FMCGs in rural areas. Although there are many ways to market things to consumers, only a small number of techniques and advertising plans work. The research was conducted in rural Odisha. This study's main objective was to identify the advertising strategies and elements that would boost FMCG sales in rural areas.

This will greatly help the FMCG sector in knowing the role of advertising in the life of FMCG products and what rural consumers expect from FMCG products. FMCG firms may also be enlightened about the problems of rural consumers through their marketing. Thus, FMCG marketers could rectify their mistakes and heed the demands of rural consumers.

FINDINGS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Table No. 1 shows that there are 275 responses, 68% of which are Male, 34% of them are 25–35 age group, 35% having only finished elementary school, 31% working in agriculture and farming, and 234 having learned about FMCG through advertisements. These findings are

consistent with the study. Of them, 79% find advertisements enjoyable because they use local language, and 41% learn about FMCG from radio commercials.

Table no.1: Details of the Demographics of consumer

Question Type	Attributes	Response rate	Response (%)
Gender	Female	88	32
	Male	187	68
Age	Below 25 Years	93	34
	26 - 35 Years	55	20
	36 - 45 Years	50	18
	> 45 Years	77	28
Education qualification	Matric below but educated	95	35
	10th pass	45	16
	Below graduation	62	22
	Above graduation	36	14
	Professional	37	13
Occupation	Cultivator	84	31
	Private employment	75	28
	Government Jobs	25	8
	Unemployed	56	21
	Others	35	12

Out of overall responses, 87% frequently purchase personal care products, and 92% are familiar with Cadbury India Limited and Britannia India Limited FMCGs. According to every respondent, FMCG advertisements should truthfully depict FMCG products, including their costs and places, their sites and expiration dates, their usage instructions, any possible side effects, their ingredients, terms and conditions, and so on. The dearth of product information in the TV ads caused problems, according to almost 65% of respondents.

Table no 2: Preference distribution of the consumers

Question Type	Attributes	Response rate	Response (%)
Sources of awareness	Co	152	65
	Word of Mouth	23	10
	Retail store sales persons	30	13
	Friends and relatives	12	5
	Representative	5	2
	Others	12	5
Recall FMCG companies	HUL	185	68
	Nestle India Limited	195	72
	Marico	115	37
	Godrej	53	20
	Hygiene & Healthcare Ltd	51	18
	Colgate - Palmolive	175	58
	P & G	95	35
	Dabur India Limited	75	28
	Nirma Limited	62	22
	Britannia India Limited	185	69
	Cadbury India Limited	175	58
	Local products	60	21
	Others	68	23
Types of advertisement seen	Printed media platform	50	18
	Television	113	41
	FM/Radio	38	14
	Outdoor advertisement	27	10
	In store displays	28	10
	Pull/Push Messages	11	4
	Others	8	3
Factors likes in the advertisements	Clarity of advertisement	41	15
	Facts in reality	107	39
	Local language	126	46
	involvement of the Celebrity	11	4
	Duration of advertisement	5	2
Rural consumers expectations	Truth details	184	67
	Product price details	197	72
	Expiry credential	191	69
	Usage of product	152	55
	Side effects	61	22
	Disclosure ethics	77	28
	Detail content of the product	33	12
	Others	11	4
Problems faced due to advertisement	Untrue statement	74	27
	Production & Expiry details	14	5
	Pricing clarity	58	21
	Warranty	33	12
	Promotional details	63	28
	Others	19	7

Use of Garrett Ranking and Rating Technique to understand factors expecting among Fast Moving Consumer Goods(FMCG) commercials

Table 3: Ranking of various factor

Factors	Total score	Mean score	Rank
Type of commercials	14981	45.64	5
Content/details of advertisement	15571	56.78	2
Description/Details of product	15144	47.18	4
Slogan and Dialogues	14289	32.16	6
Strategies for attractive advertisement	13011	13.57	7
Clarity in the content of advertisement	15613	59.33	1
Level of the statements	15292	53.28	3

The above table indicates rural FMCG customer's expectation of the television advertisement. Clearly in advertisement was on top with a mean score 53.28 and total score 15292. Conclusion: Advertisements that are clear and easy to understand are preferred to those that are visually attractive.

Testing of Hypothesis Chi – Square Test (χ2)
- H1: No relationship exists between the age of the buyer and the kind of FMCG products that people are predisposed to buy under the influence of TV commercials.
- H2: No gender relates to the type of FMCG that is primarily being bought under the influence of TV commercials.
- H3: There is no relation between the educational background and the sort of FMCG that the consumer purchases typically in the influence of TV commercials.
- H4: No relationship can be established between the occupation and the type of FMCG goods commonly bought in a TV advertisement-induced scenario.

Table 4: Hypothesis significance test

Hypothesis	Calculated value	Table value	DF	Level of Significance
H1	6.0111	16.919	9	It is Sign.
H2	1.3376	7.815	3	It is Sign.
H3	11.1915	19.681	11	It is Sign.
H	12.761	19.681	11	It is Sign.

Source: Primary Data

Since the calculated value for the null hypothesis H01 is higher, 16.919, at a 5% significance level, the null hypothesis is accepted. The computed value for the 5% level of significance under H02 is 7.815, which is also a higher value than the test value. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Table 5: Distribution of ANOVA data

Source	Sum of Square	d.f	Mean of Sums	F Distribution	P value
Rows	4632.71	3	1544.66	1.1401	3.85
Columns	9142.55	3	3055.34	2.256	3.85
R x C	12202.75	9	1359.82		
Total value	25997.71	15			

Since the approximate F-Ratio of 1.1402 is less than the table value of 3.83 between rows and 2.255 is less than the table value of 3.88, the ANOVA table explained the many unimportant sources of awareness.

Conclusion

The success of marketing also depends on the television commercials. The rate of FMCG deals also reckons upon television commercials. The study tried to figure out the kind of creation or television commercials which is helping the FMCG associations to make better deals terrain. Also, the problems faced by the pastoral consumers and the mottoes they await in the FMCG television commercials. Hence, the FMCG companies, through announcements, tried to retain and motivate the pastoral consumers. This will compound deals, which will compound turnover.

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Maximizing Employee Retention: Strategies for Improving Long-Term Commitment and Loyalty in Human Resource Management

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Abstract

Employee retention is a critical concern for organizations, as the cost of turnover can be substantial in terms of time, effort, and resources. This paper provides a comprehensive literature review on strategies for maximizing employee retention by improving long-term commitment and loyalty in the context of human resource management. The review synthesizes findings from various studies on key strategies, including transformational leadership, authentic leadership, psychological capital, corporate culture, organizational climate, employee recognition and rewards, work-life balance, and diversity and inclusion. The literature review highlights the importance of these strategies in fostering a supportive and engaging work environment that promotes employee commitment and loyalty. The findings suggest that organizations should invest in leadership development, create a positive organizational culture, and implement policies and programs that support work-life balance and diversity and inclusion to enhance employee commitment and loyalty. This literature review provides valuable insights for human resource practitioners, managers, and researchers to effectively develop and implement strategies to maximize employee retention and improve long-term commitment and loyalty in the workplace.
Keywords: Employee retention, Commitment, Loyalty, Human resource management, Strategies.

Introduction

Employee retention is a critical concern for organizations in today's competitive business environment. High turnover rates can result in increased costs associated with recruitment, training, and loss of institutional knowledge, which can impact organizational performance and financial stability. Therefore, it is imperative for organizations to develop effective strategies to improve long-term commitment and loyalty among their employees. Human resource management (HRM) plays a crucial role in this process, as it involves designing and implementing strategies that create a positive work environment, foster employee engagement, and provide career development opportunities. This research paper aims to explore various strategies that organizations can adopt to maximize employee retention and enhance long-term commitment and loyalty among their workforce, based on an in-depth review of existing literature on the topic.

Employee retention has become even more critical in recent times as the job market has become more competitive, and employees have become more mobile and willing to explore new

opportunities. Organizations need to proactively address the challenges of retaining top talent and ensuring that their workforce remains committed and loyal to the organization's goals and objectives. This requires a strategic approach to human resource management that focuses on creating a supportive work environment, engaging employees, providing career growth opportunities, and fostering effective communication.

The literature on HRM and employee retention has evolved over the years, highlighting the importance of various strategies that can positively impact long-term commitment and loyalty among employees. This research paper will critically review the existing literature on this topic, synthesizing findings from various research articles, journals, books, and reports to identify effective strategies for maximizing employee retention. The paper will then discuss the implications of these strategies for HRM practitioners and provide recommendations for organizations to implement in their HRM practices. By understanding and implementing these strategies, organizations can create a work environment that promotes employee retention, enhances long-term commitment and loyalty, and ultimately contributes to organizational success.

Literature Review

Transformational leadership has been widely recognized as a key strategy for enhancing employee commitment and loyalty (Eisenbeiss, Knippenberg, & Boerner, 2008; Bass & Riggio, 2006). Eisenbeiss et al. (2008) found that transformational leadership positively influenced team commitment by fostering a supportive team climate. Bass and Riggio (2006) argued that transformational leaders inspire and motivate employees to go beyond their self-interests and commit to the success of the organization.

Authentic leadership has also emerged as a significant factor in promoting employee commitment and loyalty (Avolio & Gardner, 2005). Avolio and Gardner (2005) proposed that authentic leaders who demonstrate genuine concern for employees and exhibit ethical and moral behaviors can foster a sense of trust, engagement, and commitment among employees.

Psychological capital, which refers to the positive psychological resources of employees, has been found to have a significant impact on employee commitment and loyalty (Luthans, Youssef, & Avolio, 2008). Luthans et al. (2008) argued that employees with higher levels of psychological capital, including self-efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience, are more likely to be committed and loyal to their organizations.

Corporate culture, defined as the shared values, beliefs, and norms within an organization, has been shown to influence employee commitment and loyalty (Denison, 1990; Schein, 2010). Denison (1990) argued that a positive organizational culture characterized by strong values, supportive leadership, and a sense of belonging can foster commitment and loyalty among employees. Schein (2010) further emphasized the importance of aligning the organizational culture with the values and expectations of employees to enhance their commitment and loyalty.

Organizational climate, which refers to the collective perceptions of employees regarding their work environment, has also been found to impact employee commitment and loyalty (Eisenbeiss et al., 2004). Eisenbeiss et al. (2004) found that a positive team climate characterized by trust, cooperation, and support can significantly enhance team citizenship behavior, which in turn can contribute to increased commitment and loyalty among employees.

Employee recognition and rewards have been recognized as effective strategies for promoting employee commitment and loyalty (Buckingham & Coffman, 1999). Buckingham and Coffman (1999) argued that recognizing and rewarding employees for their contributions can enhance their commitment and loyalty by reinforcing their sense of value and appreciation within the organization.

Work-life balance has been identified as a crucial factor in improving employee commitment and loyalty (O'Reilly, Caldwell, & Barnett, 2014). O'Reilly et al. (2014) found that employees who are able to balance their work and personal responsibilities are more likely to be committed and loyal to their organizations. This can be achieved through flexible work arrangements, supportive policies, and programs that promote work-life balance (Kalliath, Brough, &O'Driscoll, 2012).

Diversity and inclusion have also been recognized as important factors in promoting employee commitment and loyalty (Jackson, Ruderman, & Ruderman, 2003; Mor Barak, 2017). Jackson et al. (2003) emphasized the need for leaders to effectively manage diversity and create an inclusive work environment where employees feel valued and included, which can contribute to their commitment and loyalty. Mor Barak (2017) further highlighted the positive impact of diversity and inclusion on employee engagement, commitment, and retention.

Research Methodology

The research study utilized a qualitative approach, specifically a literature review, to explore the strategies for maximizing employee retention in the context of human resource management. A systematic and comprehensive review of relevant academic articles, books, and other scholarly sources was conducted to gather information and insights on the topic. The search involved using keywords related to employee retention, human resource management, and retention strategies, and was limited to peer-reviewed articles, books, and reputable sources published within the last 10 years. Inclusion criteria for the literature review included articles written in English, peer-reviewed and published in reputable journals or books, and focused on strategies for maximizing employee retention. Data collection involved systematically reviewing and analysing the identified articles and sources based on their relevance to the research questions and objectives. Thematic analysis was used to identify common themes and sub-themes related to the strategies for maximizing employee retention. The findings from the literature review were synthesized to provide a comprehensive overview of the strategies for maximizing employee retention.

The synthesized findings were analysed and interpreted in the context of the existing literature and relevant theoretical frameworks. The research methodology employed in this study ensured the validity and reliability of the findings, and the synthesized insights can inform HR practitioners, policymakers, and researchers in developing effective retention strategies and policies.

Data Analysis

The data analysis for the literature review on maximizing employee retention strategies involved a comprehensive review and synthesis of relevant articles and sources. Thematic analysis was used to identify common themes and sub-themes related to the strategies for improving long-term commitment and loyalty in human resource management.

The analysis revealed several key strategies for maximizing employee retention. One of the prominent themes identified was "Competitive Compensation and Benefits". Many studies highlighted the importance of offering competitive compensation packages, including salaries, bonuses, and benefits, to attract and retain employees. This was found to be particularly effective in enhancing employee commitment and loyalty in the long term.

Another prominent theme was "Opportunities for Career Growth and Development". Employees are more likely to stay with an organization that provides ample opportunities for professional growth and development. This includes offering training programs, mentoring, and career advancement opportunities. Studies emphasized the significance of investing in employee development to increase their engagement and commitment to the organization.

"Positive Work Environment and Culture" was another important theme that emerged from the analysis. Organizations that foster a positive work environment and culture, characterized by open communication, mutual respect, and supportive leadership, tend to have higher retention rates. A healthy work environment and positive organizational culture were found to contribute significantly to employee commitment and loyalty.

The analysis also revealed the theme of "Supportive Management". Employees are more likely to stay with an organization when they feel supported by their managers. This includes providing regular feedback, recognition, and support for their professional growth. Studies highlighted the role of effective leadership and supportive management practices in increasing employee retention.

In addition to the strategies for improving employee retention, the analysis also identified potential challenges. "Resistance to Change" was one of the challenges identified in the literature. Implementing new retention strategies may face resistance from employees or other stakeholders, which can affect their effectiveness.

Overall, the data analysis of the literature review on maximizing employee retention strategies highlighted several key themes, including competitive compensation and benefits, opportunities for career growth and development, positive work environment and culture, and supportive management. These findings can provide valuable insights for human resource management practitioners, policymakers, and researchers in developing effective strategies to enhance employee commitment and loyalty in the long term.

Major Findings of the Study

The literature review on maximizing employee retention strategies revealed several key findings. First, employee retention was identified as a critical factor for organizational success, with its impact on continuity, turnover costs, and workforce stability. Second, various factors, including competitive compensation, career growth opportunities, positive work environment, and supportive management practices, were found to influence employee retention. Third, a proactive approach that addresses potential issues and contextual factors was deemed necessary for effective retention. Fourth, regular review and updates of retention strategies were emphasized to align with changing employee needs and expectations. Fifth, challenges such as resistance to change and limited resources were identified as potential hindrances to retention efforts. Overall, these findings underscore the importance of developing tailored, proactive, and contextually-relevant strategies to maximize employee retention in human resource management.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the literature review on maximizing employee retention strategies highlights the critical role that human resource management plays in creating an environment conducive to long-term commitment and loyalty among employees. Factors such as competitive compensation and benefits, opportunities for career growth, positive work environment and culture, and supportive management practices are key drivers of employee retention. However, challenges such as resistance to change and limited resources may hinder the successful implementation of retention strategies.

Based on the literature review, it is evident that effective employee retention strategies require a proactive approach that encompasses various aspects of human resource management. Organizations need to prioritize the development and implementation of retention strategies that align with the needs and expectations of their employees. This includes regular review and updates of retention strategies to ensure their effectiveness in a dynamic business environment.

The findings from this literature review emphasize the significance of employee retention in enhancing organizational performance and overall success. Organizations that invest in effective employee retention strategies are likely to experience improved employee satisfaction, increased productivity, and reduced turnover rates. These outcomes can contribute to the organization's competitive advantage, as retaining talented and committed employees is crucial for long-term success.

However, it is important to note that every organization is unique, and the effectiveness of retention strategies may vary based on the organization's size, industry, culture, and other contextual factors. Therefore, organizations should carefully analyse and tailor their retention strategies to fit their specific needs and circumstances.

Overall, the literature review underscores the importance of maximizing employee retention as a critical aspect of human resource management. By implementing effective strategies that address the key factors influencing employee commitment and loyalty, organizations can create a supportive work environment, retain top talent, and achieve long-term success. Future research and practical application of these findings can contribute to the advancement of employee retention strategies in human resource management practices.

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Strategic Management for Sustainable Development
CSR practices across India: Analysis of trend and pattern of CSR in Indian Corporations and its alignment with sustainability

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Abstract

Analysis and review of past Corporate Social Responsibility practices adopted by corporations across India amongst different industries. There has been a whooping investment of approximately Rs. 15,000 crores by nearly 20,000 companies every year under CSR in the country. Sole objective of this study is to check whether these CSR activities stick to the Sustainability standards of Govt. of India and suggestions are given on the better adoption of sustainability CSR activities. This study is solely based on secondary data i.e. magazines, Newspapers, Websites of ministry of corporate affairs. This study is focused on CSR practices of corporations in past years and its future with aim to achieve sustainability. This research sheds light on CSR practices adopted by Indian corporates and with respect to modern day environment-dynamics. As GOI is betting on Indian firms to contribute towards sustainability to achieve the sustainable development goals.

Keywords: CSR,GOI,Sustainability, Environment-dynamics

Introduction:

CSR or Corporate Social Responsibility, in its essence, is a contribution of Corporates or business firms to the society showing concerns towards social and environmental issues. CSR practices are adopted by all the companies registered under Indian Companies Act 2013, that fulfill any of the following conditions (as per section 135 of the same law) in the preceding financial year:
- Net worth of more than Rs.500 Crore
- Turnover of more than Rs.1000 Crore
- Net profit of more than Rs. 5 Crore

Board of Director of the companies that fulfill aforementioned conditions must ensure that the very company spends in every financial year at least 2% of its average net profits made during the immediately preceding three financial years.

Abiding the same, corporations established in India as well as globally spend more than 200 billion USD collectively. Companies operating India, alone spend Rs. 12,890 Crore (1.753 billion USD) https://indiacsr.in/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/India-CSR-Outlook-Report-2023.pdf .

Although the 'voluntary' efforts of Indian companies are seen in large number, the very companies have different priorities with respect to their domains and specialization. 26% of the Companies prioritize healthcare most, 23% of the companies focus on environment and sustainability, 18% of Indian companies focus on promotion of education and 9% of the same focus on Rural development and many other social concerns like women empowerment, skill development, livelihood promotion (employees work-life balance) etc.
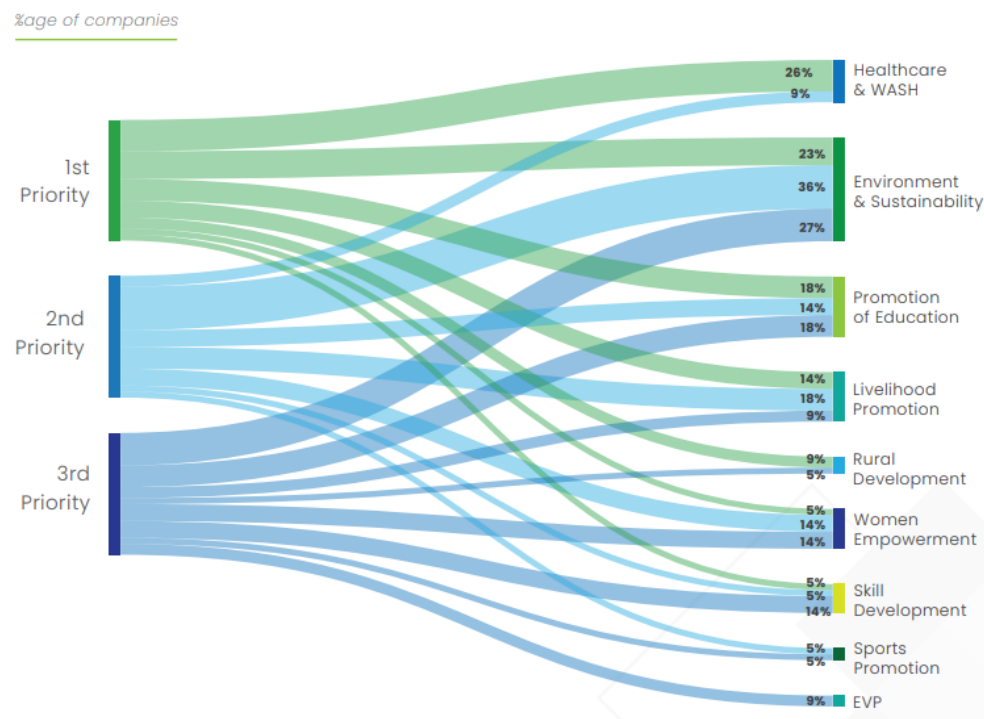
Figure-1 showing Indian Companies prioritizing and channelizing efforts to different social issues.

Source: India CSR Outlook Report 2023

Since, sustainability is very much linked with companies' CSR practices, it is very essential to question how these companies design their CSR strategies and implement the same. In this study we propose to answer following three research questions:

1. Who are the leading businesses in India that practice CSR and promote sustainability?
2. What are the CSR practices done by these companies that promote sustainability?
3. What is the future impact of these practices and how these practices can be improved for further achievement of SDGs?

These questions are very relevant now-a-days and answering the same is important to clear the doubts of effectiveness of CSR done in India and to get a clear view of contributions of Indian companies towards sustainability, not only for India but for world at large.

Methodology:

This study is primarily based on secondary data. The CSR data is collected from various sources available around the web, like official reports of CSR Box, leading companies contributing money, time and efforts for the betterment of society. This Data do not consider all the companies so for the sake of CSR data; Just analyzing few companies of selection. The data used in this study is based on the reports collected and prepared for the year 2022-23 as CSR reports are published in March of every financial year and the companies have not published their reports till this study is being read/published/presented.

Literature Review:

"Business leaders and senior managers actively involved in shaping CSR in India revealed that participant understandings of the drivers of CSR in India simultaneously negotiated apparently contradictory notions of moral and economic imperatives." Dhanesh, Ganga S. "Why corporate social responsibility? An analysis of drivers of CSR in India."
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Analysis and Results:

The word "sustainability", part in managerial aspects we can say sustainability is meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. There are three key pillars of CSR: Environmental, Social and economic.
These CSRs are framed in such a way to address all these aspects like:

- Reducing Carbon footprints and minimizing the waste
- Upholding the rights of people and encouraging diversity and inclusion
- Community engagement and fair labor practices
- Ensuring sustainable supply chain
- Responsible investment and creation of shared value.

Before we get into the analysis of data of various kinds, we must remember that CSR being a
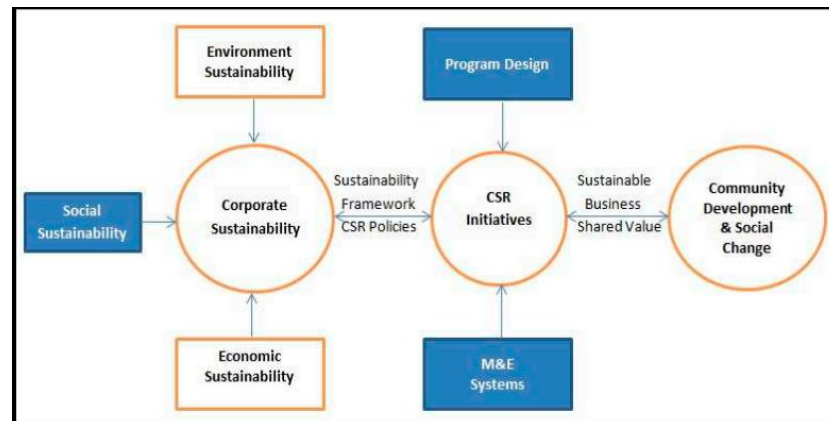
contribution by companies also includes efforts towards environmental sustainability, cultural sustainability and social sustainability.

For better understanding of trends, patterns, priorities and design of CSR, we are taking data from official websites, reports of various companies leading in their respective industry like Reliance, ITC, and Mahindra etc.

Taking Reliance as the first case, Reliance Ltd. in 2010, founded in Reliance Foundation to practice CSR in India. Reliance foundation focuses on some pressing challenges of India like Rural transformation, health, education, disaster response etc.

If we focus on the CSR spendings of Reliance foundation for last two of years, we can see that there is an aggregate increase

Particulars	2022-23	2021-22	Growth (%)
CSR Amount Required to be Spent	Rs 739 cr	Rs 737 cr	+0.27%
Total CSR Expenditure	Rs 744 cr	Rs 813 cr	-8.49%
Rural Transformation	Rs 105 cr	Rs 101 cr	+3.96%
Health (including COVID-19)	Rs 282 cr	Rs 475 cr	-40.63%
Education	Rs 281 cr	Rs 202 cr	+39.11%
Sports for Development	Rs 56 cr	Rs 27 cr	+107.41%
Disaster Response (including COVID-19)	Rs 3 cr	Rs 4 cr	-25.00%
Arts, Culture, Heritage, and Urban Renewal	Rs 17 cr	Rs 4 cr	+325.00%
Contribution to Reliance Foundation	Rs 397 cr	Rs 494 cr	-19.64%
Contribution to Reliance Foundation Youth Sports	Rs 34 cr	Rs 22 cr	+54.55%
Contribution to Reliance Foundation Institution	Rs 207 cr	Rs 142 cr	+45.77%

Source: India CSR official website - https://indiacsr.in/these-are-the-csr-projects-of-reliance-for-fy-2022-23/

Reliance foundation, led by its chairperson Mrs. Nita Ambani, has been focusing on various projects like community and public health projects like mission Covid Suraksha – support to Covid-19 pandemic projects including preventive and public healthcare initiatives, promoting educational institutes like establishing Jio education institute, providing scholarships.

Moving on to sustainability projects, Reliance foundation started initiatives like Climate Resilience for Sustainable Development (for rural transformation), Mission Van Dhan program that aims to create sustainable livelihoods for tribal communities by collection, processing, and marketing of non-timber forest products in a sustainable manner.

Reliance Foundation's future focus to integrated value chain development will seek to value for farmers in identified crop value chains through interventions from sowing to end consumer markets. *https://reliancefoundation.org/rural-transformation*

Coming on to ITC, it is one of the leading FMCG companies globally. In 2022-23, ITC has spent Rs. 345.79 crores in CSR initiatives. During FY 2022-23, company collected and sustainably

	FY 2022-23			FY 2021-22		
	Re-used	Recycled	Safely Disposed	Re-used	Recycled	Safely Disposed
Plastics (Including Packaging)	-	Approx. 27,500 tonnes	Approx. 32,500 tonnes	-	Approx. 5,400 tonnes	Approx. 48,600 tonnes

managed more than 60,000 tonnes of plastic waste across 28 states and 8 Union Territories.

Source:https://www.itcportal.com/about-itc/shareholder-value/annual-reports/itc-annual-report-2023/pdf/ITC-Report-and-Accounts-2023.pdf

ITC's Ghod Basin project in Maharashtra (tributary of Krishna River) has resulted in making the water of Ghod cleaner and more habitable for aqua life, and as it is a great source of water for sugarcane and onion crops. This project was partnered by government and other firms as well. Green temple project, another initiative by ITC, a closed loop waste management model, has been expanded to cover 950 places of worship to process waste from temples to provide biogas and compost.

ITC's CSR plans for future is much focused on sustainability with programs like sustainability 2.0 agenda, which envisages to 100% of packaging of products to be reusable, recyclable, or compostable/ bio-degradable by 2028 and ITC's flagship WOW programme (well being out-of-waste) a public-private-partnership with municipalities and communities, which has collected 64,000 MT of dry waste from 1270 wards in Bengaluru, Mysuru, Hyderabad, Coimbatore, Delhi, Chennai, major towns of Telangana and several districts of Andhra Pradesh. ITC has also installed Vapor Absorption Machines (VAM), Automation in tube cleaning system of heating, ventilation, and Air-conditioning (HAVC). In FY 2022-23 investments made on these projects and equipment has saved ITC more than 200TJ energy which is equivalent to 24,000 tonnes of GHG emissions.

Now taking Mahindra's case, one of leading automobile manufacturing companies and trusted brand icons in India. Projects included in CSR program focused on education, economic empowerment, gender equality, environ sustainability and Rural development etc.

Mahindra Logistics Limited target to reduce carbon emissions. The company remains on course to meet the long-term sustainability goal. This achievement of carbon reduction targets has been

(In INR million)

Environmental Investment	Amount
STP/ETP Maintenance	32,843
Air Emission Monitoring	2.00
Water Quality & Noise Monitoring	0.707
External Certification of Management Systems	2.18
Renewable Energy Certificates	0.005
Pollution Control	43,788
Waste Disposal/Treatment	1.46
Total Environmental Expenditure	76,637

set in line with the level of reduction needed to limit global warming to 1.5 degree C, as per Paris Agreement.

Source: https://www.mahindra.com/sites/default/files/2023-10/Mahindra-Sustainability-Report-2022-23.pdf

Decarbonizing business is a pathway to achieve Mahindra Group's carbon-neutrality goal. Mahindra is developing green homes in India to achieve Net-Zero by 2030. Buildings and construction sectors combined are responsible for 36% of global energy consumption and nearly 40% of total direct and indirect CO_2 emissions.

Climate responsive design will focus orientation, wall-window ratio, building envelope to minimize energy requirements, make systems and operations efficient and use of renewable energy. These projects were executed by Happinestkalyan 1 and HappinestKalyan 2.

"Project Pani" in Rajasthan in the year 2020, partnering with Sarv MangalGraminVikasSansthan NGO, to renovate and conserve mud ponds doubled the water holding capacity leading to 36 lakh cubic meters, Installation of Flow Aerator for reduction of water consumption. It was later expanded tp water-stressed regions of Punjab by Swaraj Tractors.

Mahindra Logistics Limited introduced 3-wheel electric vehicles (EVs) as a competitive alternative to traditional 4-wheel ICE vehicles, aiming to avoid greenhouse gas emissions as much as possible.

Results and discussion:

As we have taken the examples of three major companies in their respective fields, CSR activities adopted by each are the same and so are the stressed areas in which the companies have invest.

1. Rural Transformation
2. Healthcare
3. Environment

These are the three fields in which the companies are investing to address the issues of society. The answers of the questions asked in the introduction are answered in Analysis part of this study. However, the overview of CSR spendings of all the three firms mentioned shows the willingness of the firms towards promotion of sustainable use of resources and achievement of
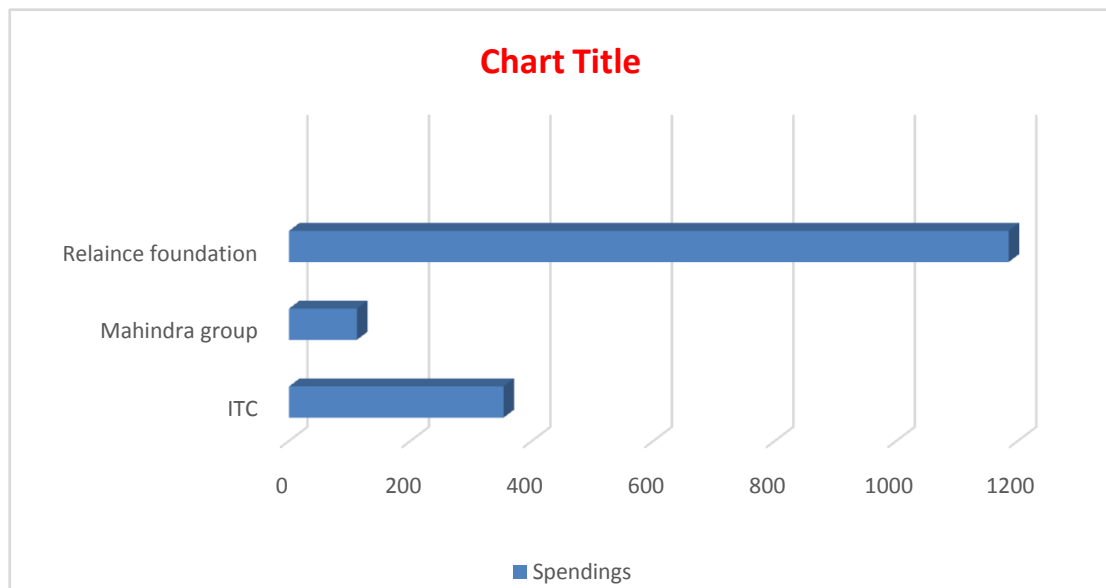
SDGs. These spendings are for the year 2020-21 (as the data for the year 2022-23 for specific spendings was not available during publishing).

Source:https://indiacsr.in/csr-itc-limited-spends-rs-363-crores-to-create-significant-and-sustainable-societal-value/

Stressing on the data that is available, Reliance foundation has spent more than Rs. 1180 crores, ITC has spent more than Rs. 350 crores and moreover Mahindra group contributed Rs. 112 crores in the year 2020-21.

Reliance being a bigger firm (with respect to turnover, sales, market share) than the other two spends more on CSR and has more reliable and practical projects towards sustainability like improving livelihood of underserved people, encouraging use of bio-degradable resources and manufacturing products that are environmental-friendly (promoting circular economy).

ITC has been installing Vapor absorption machines and Automation in tube cleaning system in heating, ventilation and air-condition for better sustainable practices in work and processes.

Mahindra group is using Mahindra Logistics Limited (a subsidiary company of the same group) for better supply chain management. MLL is relying more on three-wheeler electrical vehicles rather than traditional four-wheelers to encourage EV adoption in India and more safer and sustainable supply chain structure.

The future of these companies and the respective industry in which they are operating are booming with new projects like Decarbonizing technologies to achieve carbon-neutrality, climate resilience programs and vapor absorption machines etc. Achievement of SDGs through CSR has been possible in last few years and for that reason Government has been helping the registered companies filing for CSR are benefitted by tax exemptions and subsidies.

Conclusion

The effort of CSR in India is supported by Indian companies Act 2013 section 135. The main highlight of this study is that most of the corporates invest a huge portion of their spending on rural transformation, which includes construction of roads, bridges, monumental renovation, ponds & mud-filled water sites. Corporates might not spend in sustainability projects in the same proportion as they spend in healthcare & rural transformation however, they have been adopting sustainable methods in work-settings to update with industry standards. This shows promotion of underserved people to get them up on the surface and fair achievement of SDGs for global benefits and a long healthy future.

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Following are the sources from which this data (secondary data) is derived, i.e. official sustainability reports of firms mentioned, reports from Ministry of corporate affairs, etc.

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Bridging the Gap: Unconscious Bias in DEI and Building a Thriving Organization

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Abstract

"Bridging the Gap: Unconscious Bias in DEI and Building a Thriving Organization" explores the nuances of unconscious bias, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), and the essentials of a thriving workplace. It delves into the origins and manifestations of unconscious bias, advocating for awareness, education, and proactive measures to foster inclusivity. Transitioning to DEI principles, the narrative emphasizes leadership commitment, transparent policies, and continuous education as pillars of organizational success. Despite challenges like resistance to change, the narrative outlines best practices for bridging the gap, including training and accountability measures. By prioritizing DEI initiatives at every stage of the employee lifecycle, organizations can mitigate unconscious bias and cultivate environments conducive to innovation, engagement, and long-term prosperity. Even before we get into the discussion on the topic, let us first try to understand the three terms; unconscious bias; diversity, equity and inclusion and; thriving organization. This is needed as it will eventually help us identify and bridge the gap.

Keywords: Unconscious bias, DEI (Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion), Thriving organization, Bridging the gap

PART 1: Unconscious Bias

Imagine that you are trying to park a car in a parking area, and you spot a car which is unruly parked. What are your first thoughts?

"The car must be parked by a woman"

Let me give you another scenario: you are travelling in the metro and you see a young person sitting and is not moving to leave space for an elderly commuter. What will be your first thoughts on this young person?

"This is one lazy, irresponsible person"

Some more:

The colour blue is for boys and pink for girls.
Someone who can converse in impeccable English is more intelligent than someone who uses their mother tongue.
Do not cry like a girl
Do not walk like a boy
And many more..

These are the examples of Unconscious Bias. The question hence is, how do we define unconscious bias?

Unconscious bias refers to attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions unconsciously. These biases are unintentional, automatic, and often deeply ingrained, influencing our perceptions of others based on characteristics such as race, gender, age, ethnicity, or other factors. They can shape our preferences, judgments, and behaviours without us even being aware of it.

Unconscious bias can manifest in various ways, leading to unintentional discrimination or favouritism. It can occur in the workplace, education, healthcare, and other areas of life. Common types of unconscious bias include affinity bias (favouring people who are similar to oneself), confirmation bias (preferring information that confirms existing beliefs), and halo effect (making overall judgments about a person based on one positive trait).

Addressing unconscious bias involves raising awareness, providing education and training, and fostering a culture of inclusion and diversity. Organizations often implement diversity and inclusion programs to mitigate the impact of unconscious bias and create a more equitable environment. Individuals can also take steps to recognize and challenge their own biases through self-reflection and open-mindedness.

Reasons for Unconscious Bias:

Unconscious bias can arise from various factors, often rooted in cognitive processes and socialization. Here are some common reasons for the existence of unconscious bias:

1. **Evolutionary Heritage:** Human brains have evolved to quickly categorize and make judgments about others for survival. In a primitive context, quick assessments of whether someone is part of the group or an outsider could have been crucial for survival.

2. **Cognitive Simplification:** The brain uses cognitive shortcuts, or heuristics, to process information quickly. These shortcuts can lead to generalizations and stereotypes, contributing to bias.

3. **Socialization:** Cultural and societal norms, beliefs, and values are often ingrained in individuals from a young age. Exposure to certain messages, media, and social environments can shape biased attitudes without conscious awareness.

4. **In-Group Favoritism:** People tend to favor those they perceive as part of their own social, cultural, or identity group. This can result in unintentional bias against individuals perceived as outsiders.

5. **Confirmation Bias:** The tendency to seek or interpret information in a way that confirms existing beliefs can reinforce stereotypes and biases.

6. **Categorization and Pattern Recognition:** The brain naturally categorizes information to make sense of the world. However, this categorization can lead to oversimplified views of individuals or groups, contributing to bias.

7. **Limited Exposure:** Lack of exposure to diverse experiences, cultures, and perspectives can contribute to biased thinking. Limited interactions with people from different backgrounds may reinforce existing stereotypes.

8. **Implicit Association:** Unconscious biases can be formed through repeated exposure to certain associations between groups and attributes. These associations become automatic and influence perceptions without conscious thought.

9. **Fear of the Unknown:** Humans may naturally feel more comfortable with the familiar and may harbor biases against what is perceived as unfamiliar or different.

It's essential to understand that unconscious bias is a natural part of human cognition, but awareness and efforts to mitigate these biases can help foster more inclusive and equitable environments. Training, education, and intentional efforts to challenge stereotypes can contribute to reducing the impact of unconscious bias.

Types of Unconscious Bias:

There are several types of unconscious bias, each influencing our perceptions and behaviors in different ways. Here are some common types of unconscious bias, along with examples:

1. **Affinity Bias:**
   - **Definition:** Favoring individuals who are similar to oneself.
   - **Example:** A manager promoting or giving preferential treatment to an employee who shares similar hobbies, backgrounds, or interests.

2. **Confirmation Bias:**
   - **Definition:** The tendency to seek or interpret information that confirms existing beliefs.
   - **Example:** A hiring manager may focus on positive aspects of a candidate who shares similar views or experiences, overlooking potential red flags.

3. **Halo Effect:**
   - **Definition:** Making overall positive judgments about a person based on one positive trait.
   - **Example:** Assuming that a person who excels in one area, such as intelligence, must also be skilled in other unrelated areas.

4. **Stereotype Bias:**
   - **Definition:** Applying stereotypes to certain groups, influencing perceptions and decisions.
   - **Example:** Assuming that a woman is less competent in a leadership role based on the stereotype that women are not as assertive or capable as men in such positions.

5. **Attribution Bias:**
   - **Definition:** Making judgments about the cause of someone's behavior, often in a way that is biased.
   - **Example:** Attributing a colleague's success to luck but attributing their failures to personal shortcomings.

6. **Conformity Bias:**
   - **Definition:** Adopting the opinions or behaviors of a majority, even if they are incorrect or unjust.
   - **Example:** Going along with a group decision, even if one disagrees, to avoid conflict or social exclusion.

7. **Gender Bias:**
   - **Definition:** Favoring one gender over the other in various situations.
   - **Example:** Assuming that a man is more suitable for a leadership role and a woman for a supportive or administrative role, regardless of their qualifications.

8. **Ageism:**
   - **Definition:** Discrimination or bias based on a person's age.
   - **Example:** Assuming that older employees are less adaptable to change or less technologically savvy than their younger counterparts.

9. **Beauty Bias:**
   - **Definition:** Favoring individuals perceived as physically attractive over those considered less attractive.
   - **Example:** Subconsciously associating physical appearance with competence, leading to biased hiring or promotion decisions.

10. **Name Bias:**
    - **Definition:** Making assumptions about a person based on their name, which may be influenced by cultural or ethnic stereotypes.
    - **Example:** Unconsciously assuming that someone with a foreign-sounding name is less proficient in the language or may not fit into the workplace culture.

It's important to note that these biases often intersect, and individuals may exhibit multiple types of unconscious bias simultaneously. Addressing and mitigating these biases involves awareness, education, and a commitment to fostering inclusive environments.

What creates Unconscious Bias?

Unconscious bias takes its form through a combination of cognitive processes, socialization, and exposure to various influences. Here are some key factors contributing to the formation of unconscious bias:

1. **Socialization and Cultural Influences:**
   - Learning from Others: Individuals absorb biases from family, friends, media, and society. Cultural stereotypes and societal norms contribute to the development of unconscious biases.

2. **Cognitive Processes:**
   - Categorization: The brain naturally categorizes information to simplify complex environments. This categorization can lead to the formation of stereotypes and biases.
   - Pattern Recognition: The brain seeks patterns and connections to make sense of the world. However, this process may result in oversimplified views of individuals or groups.

3. **Evolutionary Heritage:**
   - Survival Instincts: Quick judgments about others based on limited information may have provided an evolutionary advantage. People tended to trust those within their immediate group for safety and survival.

4. **Media and Stereotypes:**
   - Media Representation: Biased portrayals in media can shape perceptions and contribute to the reinforcement of stereotypes. Limited or distorted representations may lead to biased thinking.

5. **Fear of the Unknown:**
   - Prejudice Against Differences: The human brain may naturally fear what is unfamiliar or different. This fear can contribute to biases against individuals or groups perceived as outsiders.

It's important to recognize that unconscious bias is a natural part of human cognition and not necessarily indicative of intentional prejudice. However, understanding the factors contributing to bias formation is crucial for addressing and mitigating its impact. Increasing awareness, and education, and fostering diverse and inclusive environments are essential steps in minimizing the influence of unconscious bias.

Part 2: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

DEI stands for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. These are key principles and practicethose organizations, institutions, and communities focus on to create a more inclusive and fair environment. Here's a brief explanation of each component:

1. **Diversity:** This involves recognizing, respecting, and valuing the differences among individuals in terms of race, ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, physical abilities, socioeconomic status, and other characteristics. Embracing diversity acknowledges that a variety of perspectives and backgrounds contribute to a richer and more dynamic community or workplace.

2. **Equity:** Equity is about ensuring everyone has access to the same opportunities and resources, regardless of their background. It involves identifying and addressing disparities in outcomes that may result from systemic or structural barriers. The goal is to create a level playing field where individuals have the tools and support they need to succeed.

3. **Inclusion:** Inclusion refers to creating a culture and environment where all individuals feel welcomed, respected, and valued. It goes beyond merely having diverse representation and involves fostering a sense of belonging. Inclusive practices aim to break down barriers and promote collaboration and engagement among people with different backgrounds and experiences.

DEI initiatives are crucial in various settings, including workplaces, educational institutions, and communities, as they contribute to building more equitable and harmonious environments that benefit everyone. Organizations often develop policies, programs, and training to promote and integrate these principles into their practices.

Need for DEI in Organizations:

The need for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in organizations is increasingly recognized as crucial for several reasons:

1. **Enhanced Creativity and Innovation:** A diverse and inclusive workplace brings together individuals with different perspectives, experiences, and problem-solving approaches. This diversity can foster creativity and innovation, as diverse teams are more likely to generate a wide range of ideas and solutions.

2. **Better Decision-Making:** Inclusive organizations benefit from a variety of viewpoints, which can lead to more well-rounded and informed decision-making. When different voices are heard and considered, it reduces the likelihood of groupthink and encourages a more comprehensive understanding of issues.

3. **Increased Employee Engagement and Satisfaction:** Employees are more likely to be engaged and satisfied in a workplace that values and respects their individual differences. An inclusive environment promotes a sense of belonging, leading to higher morale, loyalty, and productivity.

4. **Improved Talent Recruitment and Retention:** Organizations that prioritize DEI are more attractive to a diverse talent pool. A commitment to inclusion signals to potential employees that they will be valued and have equal opportunities for growth. Furthermore, diverse individuals are more likely to stay in an organization that actively supports their professional development.

5. **Market Competitiveness:** In an increasingly globalized world, diverse perspectives and cultural competence can be advantageous in understanding and serving diverse markets. Companies that embrace diversity are often better positioned to connect with a broader customer base.

6. **Legal and Ethical Considerations:** Many regions and industries have legal requirements and ethical expectations related to fair treatment and equal opportunities. A commitment to DEI helps organizations comply with these standards and demonstrates a commitment to ethical practices.

7. **Social Responsibility:** Organizations are increasingly expected to contribute positively to society. Embracing DEI principles is viewed as a responsible and ethical business practice that aligns with societal expectations.

8. **Mitigation of Bias and Discrimination:** DEI initiatives aim to identify and eliminate systemic biases and discriminatory practices within organizations. By addressing these issues, organizations create a fairer and more just working environment.

9. **Crisis Preparedness:** Organizations that have cultivated a diverse and inclusive culture may be better equipped to navigate crises or changes, as they often have a more resilient and adaptable workforce.

The need for DEI in organizations is multifaceted, ranging from ethical considerations and legal compliance to tangible business benefits such as increased innovation, employee satisfaction, and market competitiveness. It is an integral part of fostering a positive organizational culture and ensuring long-term success.

Benefits of DEI:
The implementation of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives in organizations brings about a range of benefits. Here are some key advantages:

1. **Enhanced Creativity and Innovation:** Diverse teams bring together individuals with different perspectives, backgrounds, and experiences. This diversity fosters creativity and innovation as team members contribute unique ideas and approaches, leading to more robust problem-solving and product development.

2. **Improved Decision-Making:** Inclusive environments encourage open dialogue and the consideration of diverse viewpoints. This, in turn, leads to better-informed decision-making. Teams that embrace DEI are less prone to groupthink and are more likely to make decisions that reflect a broader understanding of complex issues.

3. **Increased Employee Engagement and Satisfaction:** Inclusive workplaces create a sense of belonging and acceptance for all employees. When individuals feel valued and respected, they are more likely to be engaged in their work, leading to higher levels of job satisfaction and overall well-being.

4. **Enhanced Recruitment and Retention:** Organizations that prioritize DEI are more attractive to a diverse pool of talent. A commitment to creating an inclusive environment helps attract skilled individuals from different backgrounds, and inclusive practices contribute to higher retention rates as employees feel supported and valued.

5. **Better Problem-Solving:** Diverse teams are better equipped to tackle complex challenges by leveraging a variety of perspectives and skills. This diversity of thought enables organizations to develop comprehensive solutions to problems and adapt to changing circumstances more effectively.

6. **Market Competitiveness:** Companies that embrace diversity are often better positioned to understand and serve diverse customer bases. This can lead to increased market share and competitiveness, especially in global markets where diverse cultural insights are valuable.

7. **Financial Performance:** Studies have suggested a positive correlation between diverse and inclusive workplaces and financial performance. Companies with diverse leadership and inclusive practices may experience improved profitability and shareholder value.

8. **Enhanced Reputation:** Organizations that prioritize DEI contribute positively to their reputation. Customers, clients, and other stakeholders often view a commitment to diversity and inclusion as a sign of social responsibility and ethical business practices.

9. **Crisis Resilience:** Diverse and inclusive organizations may be more resilient in the face of crises or changes. A workforce that is accustomed to navigating diverse perspectives is often more adaptable and better equipped to handle unexpected challenges.

10. **Innovation and Adaptability:** A diverse and inclusive workplace fosters a culture of continuous learning and adaptation. Employees are more likely to embrace change and innovation, contributing to the organization's overall agility and competitiveness.

The benefits of DEI extend beyond moral and ethical considerations to encompass improved organizational performance, innovation, and employee satisfaction, making it a strategic imperative for many successful organizations.

Challenges in DEI

While Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives bring numerous benefits, organizations often face various challenges in implementing and maintaining them. Some common challenges include:

1. **Resistance to Change:** Resistance from individuals or groups within the organization who may be uncomfortable with or resistant to changes in the status quo. Some may perceive DEI efforts as a threat to established norms and practices.

2. **Implicit Bias and Stereotypes:** Unconscious biases and stereotypes can influence decision-making processes, hiring practices, and overall workplace culture. Addressing and mitigating these biases can be challenging but is essential for creating a truly inclusive environment.

3. **Lack of Leadership Commitment:** For DEI initiatives to be successful, it's crucial that leadership is fully committed and actively involved. Without visible support from top management, efforts may lack direction and fail to gain traction throughout the organization.

4. **Inadequate Resources:** A lack of dedicated resources, both in terms of funding and personnel, can hinder the effective implementation of DEI initiatives. Organizations need to allocate sufficient resources to support training, awareness programs, and ongoing efforts.

5. **Limited Diversity in Leadership:** The lack of diversity in leadership positions can impede progress in DEI initiatives. Organizations need to actively work towards increasing representation at all levels, including executive and managerial roles.

6. **Tokenism:** Simply meeting diversity quotas without fostering a truly inclusive culture can lead to tokenism, where individuals from underrepresented groups feel like they are included only to fulfill a numerical requirement rather than being valued for their contributions.

7. **Communication Challenges:** Miscommunication or a lack of effective communication about DEI goals, policies, and expectations can lead to confusion and resistance. Clear and transparent communication is vital to ensure that everyone understands the purpose and benefits of DEI initiatives.

8. **Unclear Metrics and Measurement:** Establishing clear metrics to measure the success of DEI initiatives is challenging. Organizations may struggle to define and track meaningful indicators of progress, making it difficult to assess the impact of their efforts.

9. **Inclusive Culture Development:** Building an inclusive culture requires sustained effort. Organizations may face challenges in creating an environment where individuals feel comfortable expressing themselves, sharing ideas, and collaborating across diverse teams.

10. **Intersectionality:** Recognizing and addressing the intersectionality of individuals (considering multiple aspects of identity such as race, gender, sexual orientation, and disability) can be complex but is essential for understanding and addressing the unique challenges faced by different groups.

11. **Global and Cultural Differences:** Organizations operating in multiple regions must navigate diverse cultural norms and legal frameworks. Implementing DEI initiatives globally requires a nuanced approach that respects and adapts to local contexts.

12. **Retaining Diverse Talent:** While recruiting diverse talent is important, retaining and advancing individuals from underrepresented groups can be challenging. Organizations need to create an inclusive environment that supports the professional growth and development of all employees.

Part 3: Thriving Organization

A thriving organization is one that not only survives but prospers and excels in its operations, achieving sustained success and growth. Characteristics of a thriving organization typically include:

1. **Adaptability:** Thriving organizations are able to adapt to changing circumstances, whether it be in response to market trends, technological advancements, or other external factors.

2. **Innovation:** Successful organizations often foster a culture of innovation, encouraging employees to come up with new ideas and solutions to improve products, services, or processes.

3. **Effective Leadership:** Strong and visionary leadership is crucial for a thriving organization. Leaders should be capable of making strategic decisions, inspiring their teams, and guiding the organization toward its goals.

4. **Employee Engagement:** Thriving organizations recognize the importance of their employees and strive to create a positive work environment. Engaged and motivated employees contribute to increased productivity and innovation.

5. **Customer Focus:** Satisfying customer needs and providing value is at the core of thriving organizations. They understand their customers, adapt to their preferences, and consistently deliver high-quality products or services.

6. **Financial Health:** A thriving organization maintains financial stability and profitability. Sound financial management ensures the ability to invest in growth opportunities and weather economic challenges.

7. **Social Responsibility:** Thriving organizations often demonstrate a commitment to social responsibility and ethical business practices. This can enhance their reputation, attract talent, and contribute to long-term success.

8. **Continuous Improvement:** Thriving organizations are committed to continuous improvement. They regularly assess their processes, seek feedback, and implement changes to enhance efficiency and effectiveness.

9. **Strategic Planning:** A clear and effective strategic plan is essential for a thriving organization. This involves setting goals, defining objectives, and outlining the steps needed to achieve success over the long term.

10. **Resilience:** Thriving organizations can withstand challenges and setbacks. They can bounce back from adversity, learn from failures, and use setbacks as opportunities for growth.

Ultimately, a thriving organization is dynamic, forward-thinking, and capable of evolving in response to the ever-changing business landscape.

Now that we are more acquainted with these terminologies, let us explore.

In today's dynamic and interconnected world, organizations are increasingly recognizing the importance of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) as essential elements for fostering innovation, creativity, and overall success. However, achieving true diversity and inclusion requires addressing the deep-seated issue of unconscious bias. Bridging the gap between unconscious bias, DEI initiatives, and building a thriving organization is crucial for creating a workplace where everyone feels valued, respected, and empowered.

Despite the growing awareness of the importance of DEI, many organizations face challenges in effectively implementing these initiatives. Resistance to change, lack of understanding, and insufficient commitment from leadership can hinder progress. Additionally, organizations must address systemic barriers, such as biased hiring practices and unequal opportunities, to create a truly inclusive workplace. Bridging the gap requires a comprehensive and holistic approach that goes beyond superficial changes.

To build a thriving organization, leaders must actively engage in creating a culture that values diversity and inclusion. This involves incorporating DEI principles into all aspects of the business, from recruitment and training to performance evaluations and promotions. Leadership commitment is crucial, as leaders set the tone for the entire organization. By fostering an inclusive culture, organizations can leverage the diverse talents of their workforce, leading to increased innovation, employee satisfaction, and overall success.

Best Practices for Bridging the Gap:
1. **Education and Training:** Implement ongoing unconscious bias training programs to create awareness and foster a culture of inclusivity.
2. **Leadership Commitment:** Ensure that leadership is committed to DEI initiatives and actively communicates the importance of diversity throughout the organization.
3. **Transparent Policies:** Establish clear and transparent DEI policies and practices, including hiring and promotion procedures, to eliminate bias and promote fairness.
4. **Employee Resource Groups:** Foster employee resource groups to provide a platform for underrepresented employees to connect, share experiences, and contribute to the organization's DEI efforts.
5. **Metrics and Accountability:** Set measurable goals for diversity and inclusion, track progress regularly, and hold leaders accountable for achieving these goals.

I am sure; we all agree that the major element for a thriving organization is its workforce. If the employee does not feel valued, visible, or heard then the organization will not be able to survive for long.

For more clarity let us take the example of an entire employee lifecycle from the interview till the employee bids adieu to the organization. Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) have become integral components of organizational success, fostering innovation, productivity, and employee

satisfaction. However, the insidious presence of unconscious bias throughout the employee lifecycle can impede the attainment of true diversity and hinder the creation of inclusive workplaces. We shall explore the pervasive effects of unconscious bias at various stages of the employee lifecycle and suggest strategies to mitigate its impact.

Recruitment and Hiring:

Unconscious bias can significantly influence recruitment and hiring processes, affecting decisions related to candidate selection. When recruiters and hiring managers unknowingly harbor biases, they may lean towards candidates who resemble their own background or experiences, perpetuating homogeneity within the organization. This can hinder diversity from the outset, limiting the potential for varied perspectives and skills.

To address this, organizations should implement blind recruitment strategies, anonymizing resumes to focus solely on skills and qualifications. Additionally, providing diversity training for those involved in hiring processes can raise awareness of unconscious biases and encourage fairer decision-making.

Onboarding and Integration:

Once hired, new employees face the challenge of integration into the organizational culture. Unconscious biases can manifest during this phase, affecting the extent to which individuals from underrepresented groups feel included. Microaggressions, stereotyping, or exclusionary behaviors can create a hostile environment, hindering the development of a sense of belonging.

To counteract this, organizations should prioritize inclusive onboarding processes. This involves fostering a welcoming atmosphere, promoting diversity and inclusion from day one, and assigning mentors or buddies to help new hires navigate the organizational culture. Continuous training on cultural competency can further sensitize employees to the impact of their words and actions.

Career Development and Advancement:

Unconscious bias continues to exert its influence when it comes to career development and advancement opportunities. Employees may find themselves excluded from high-visibility projects, mentorship programs, or leadership roles due to biases that affect perceptions of capability or potential. This perpetuates inequalities and limits the diversity of voices at decision-making levels.

To combat this, organizations should establish transparent and merit-based promotion criteria. Mentorship and sponsorship programs that pair individuals from underrepresented groups with senior leaders can also provide guidance and advocacy. Regular performance reviews should be conducted with an awareness of potential biases, ensuring that all employees are evaluated fairly.

Workplace Policies and Practices:

Unconscious bias can infiltrate various workplace policies and practices, from dress codes to communication norms. If these policies are not carefully examined for their potential to perpetuate bias, they may inadvertently disadvantage certain groups of employees. For instance, rigid work hours may disproportionately impact employees with caregiving responsibilities,

potentially affecting gender diversity.

Organizations must conduct regular audits of their policies and practices, seeking feedback from employees to identify areas that may inadvertently perpetuate bias. Flexibility in work arrangements, inclusive language in communication, and accessible facilities are just a few examples of policies that can contribute to a more inclusive workplace.

The effect of unconscious bias on DEI within the employee lifecycle is profound and multifaceted. By understanding and actively addressing biases at each stage - from recruitment and hiring to onboarding, career development, and workplace policies - organizations can break down barriers and create environments where diversity is not only acknowledged but celebrated. Continuous education, transparency, and a commitment to fostering an inclusive culture are essential in mitigating the impact of unconscious bias and achieving true diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout the entire employee journey.

Best Practices:
1. **Diverse Hiring Panels:** Implementing diverse hiring panels helps reduce the impact of unconscious bias in the recruitment process. Organizations like Amazon and IBM have successfully adopted this practice, ensuring that hiring decisions are made collectively, drawing on a range of perspectives to assess candidates fairly.
2. **Inclusive Language in Job Descriptions:** Crafting inclusive language in job descriptions helps attract a more diverse pool of candidates. Companies such as Airbnb and Dropbox have revised their job postings to eliminate biased language and attract a broader range of talent, contributing to a more inclusive hiring process.
3. **Employee Resource Groups (ERGs):** Establishing Employee Resource Groups provides a platform for underrepresented employees to connect, share experiences, and contribute to the organization's DEI initiatives. Companies like Facebook and Intel actively support ERGs, recognizing their role in building a sense of community and fostering inclusivity within the workplace.
4. **Measurable Goals and Accountability:** Setting measurable goals for diversity and inclusion and holding leadership accountable for achieving these goals is crucial. Companies such as IBM and Johnson & Johnson have demonstrated the effectiveness of this approach, showcasing how tracking progress and reporting results regularly can drive organizational change.

Some examples of organizations that have bridged the gap and is now thriving on the DEI skills.

Sales force: Leading with Equality: Sales force, a global leader in customer relationship management, has been at the forefront of DEI efforts. The company's commitment to bridging the gap is evident through its implementation of diverse hiring practices. Sales force analyzes its workforce data regularly, ensuring that underrepresented groups are given equal opportunities. By setting specific goals for diversity and regularly reporting progress, Sales force demonstrates the importance of transparency and accountability in building a thriving organization.

Google: Unconscious Bias Training: Google, a technology giant, recognizes the impact of unconscious bias on decision-making processes. The company has incorporated mandatory unconscious bias training for its employees. This initiative aims to increase awareness and understanding of biases, fostering a culture where employees actively work to mitigate their own biases. By addressing the issue at its roots, Google exemplifies how education and training can contribute to creating an inclusive workplace.

Microsoft: Inclusive Leadership: Microsoft emphasizes the role of inclusive leadership in building a thriving organization. Satya Nadella, Microsoft's CEO, promotes a growth mindset and encourages leaders to listen to diverse perspectives. The company recognizes the importance of leadership commitment and champions inclusivity in its organizational culture. By actively engaging in conversations around DEI, Microsoft showcases the impact of leadership in setting the tone for the entire organization.

Bridging the gap between unconscious bias, DEI initiatives, and building a thriving organization is an ongoing journey that requires commitment, innovation, and a willingness to challenge the status quo. Organizations like Sales force, Google, and Microsoft exemplify the positive impact of addressing unconscious bias head-on, while best practices such as diverse hiring panels, inclusive language, ERGs, and measurable goals contribute to creating workplaces where diversity is celebrated and inclusion is a priority. As more companies recognize the value of building thriving organizations through DEI, these examples and best practices serve as beacons, guiding the way toward a more equitable and prosperous future for businesses worldwide.

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Technology Integration for Operational Excellence
A study of Orient Cement Ltd. (A CK Birla Group Company)

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Abstract

This study explores the impact of technology on business operations, highlighting its crucial role in enhancing productivity, creativity, efficiency, and overall performance in delivering business excellence. The study examines Orient Cement's shift from traditional business practices to digital transformation, focusing on creating value and trust in low tech-savvy population. Digital tools like workflow automation, data analytics, and collaboration software have significantly optimized operations, ensuring timely execution and enhanced value for creating operational excellence. In the process, the key contributions were sales force automation, electronic mode for proof of delivery [E-POD], workflow automation, and data analytics. Sales Force Automation reduced resource usage, automated tasks, and empowered channel partners.   E-POD improved efficiency, customer satisfaction, and faster reimbursement for transporters. Automated workflow approval processes for SOPs and DOA matrix compliance could save hours, while data analytics provided actionable insights for sales and support functions. By enabling agility, awareness, and transparency through digital changes, Orient Cement Ltd.'s working environment for both internal and external customers has made it easier to connect to the last mile.Notable Honors include Best Company to Work by "Great Place to Work "three times and bagging the 3rd Fastest Growing Cement Company (Medium Category) at the 5th Indian Cement Review Award.

Keywords: Business Excellence, Digital Transformation, DOA matrix, Operational Excellence, SOPs.

Introduction: Any procedure that does not use technology to its full potential has either become antiquated or unimportant in today's world. The following invention is always anticipated to go over the earlier restrictions or bottlenecks as and when there is an upgrade. Orient Cement Ltd. has embraced world-class technology to make its operations impactful and life-changing for its users, all while maintaining this understanding as the fundamental objective. Let's first examine the background before delving into the milestone accomplishments.

Technology integration is the process of incorporating technological resources and tools into various aspects of daily life, business, education, and other fields to boost efficiency, productivity, and overall performance.

Operations Excellence (OpEx) is a management concept and practice that focuses on continuous improvement, efficiency, and effectiveness in an organization's operations. OpEx aims to add value to consumers, employees, and stakeholders by optimizing operations,

reducing waste, and enhancing overall performance. It requires a continuous improvement mindset and a commitment to maintaining the highest standards in all aspects of an organization's operations.

Thus, using technology to streamline procedures improves overall operational performance by reducing the chance of mistakes and increasing efficiency.

Now that you have a better knowledge of the context, let me explain to you how Orient Cement came to embrace these different technologies. First, we made an effort to group every task completed by team members into one of two major categories: direct or crucial tasks and indirect or desired tasks. After classifying the activities, we discovered that between 40 and 50 percent of them took a lot of time and could not provide the desired miles. With this as a starting point, we tried to come up with ideas for self-sufficient procedures that involve little to no involvement from team members. Subsequently, we comprehended the adoption phase, which was predominantly controlled by a non-technical populace spread out across large geographic areas where internet connectivity and infrastructure facilitation were obstacles. Due to these constraints, it was evident what the deliverables would be: multi-interface functionality, little technology participation, and either no or slow internet bandwidth.

This marked the foundation for a change in the lives of internal and external stakeholders, who could utilize the limited time more efficiently, thereby improving the brand image. Among many such initiatives, we are presenting to you our most significant technological integrations for operational and business excellence at Orient Cement.

Sales Force Automation: A multi-functional and groundbreaking utility designed for sales and sales support functions as well as channel partners. This application aimed to support them in multiple ways, ranging from critical to noncritical activities, to be performed smoothly within a few clicks on smart phones, tablets, and laptops. For our employees, the utility varies from attendance management, order management, journey cycle plans, call activity, market intelligence, cement counter and influencer census, lead management, channel appointment, retailer and influencer scheme management, brand-wise monthly sales data, and feedback from managers. While for channel partners, the utility provided immense help, primarily eliminating the barrier of communication, which was a challenge. Today, channel partners, who are primarily non-tech Savvy or low-tech Savvy, can book their sales directly from the app in a mere 3 to 4 clicks and avail themselves of the information without depending on the concerned managers. This helps them in a variety of ways, such as order management, real-time sales performance, outstanding and pending orders, age-wise outstanding, monthly statement and credit/debit note updates, retailer and influencer sales capturing, invoices downloading, balance confirmation, GST notification and reverse confirmation, commission notification, complaint management, and profile updates.

The biggest advantage that fueled its adoption and dependency was its usage, which could be exercised even in offline mode, with one-time online synchronization at the end of the day to update all day's information on record. Thus, in remote locations where Internet connectivity was a challenge, there was no limitation for the users.

E-POD/Electronic Proof of Delivery: The Electronic Proof of Delivery (EPOD) system is a revolutionary solution for managing delivery processes, streamlining information capture, and automating Transporter bill settlement. It enhances efficiency, transparency, and automation in logistics and transportation relationships.

This process of getting a confirmation from the business partners to whom the material was delivered conventionally involved the collection of the receiver's signature as proof, and upon submission of those signed bills, the transporters bills were settled. This practice caused delay and reconciliation issues as the time to raise a bill after delivery and the total number of times the bill was raised often messed up due to incomplete documentation or partially presented bills. Though this was a common practice across the industry and was mostly a habit of taking the delays as normal, With refinements in the process, most of the challenges were addressed, but still, the challenge faced was approximately 1 out of every 120 deliveries were found to have issues such as missing quantity reconciliation, destination mismatch, etc., which led to a huge amount of time consumption in validating issues and thereby delayed the timely settlement of bills for transporters, who were a major contributor to the sales and distribution function.

Now the challenge was "how to address such missing links," and then we emerged with a solution of embracing technology-enabled utility, "E-POD," or Electronic Proof of Delivery. Through this, our same process, which involved manual intervention to get signatures, was moved to digital mode. While the materials were dispatched, details were shared in the registered mobile number of the business partners with details such as quantity, mix of products, and tentative time of delivery, which were shared in advance. Upon physical delivery, the business partner used to reconcile and accordingly accept, reject, or modify the delivery in the app. Therefore, upon receiving the same confirmation for closing the transaction, it was integrated with our accounting to compute the transporters' bill amount. The major advantage was saving time for bill settlement and unnecessary follow-up from vendors, sorting reconciliation issues, and building credibility among the transporters.

Hence, the power of digital confirmation eliminated confusion and enabled trust among business partners for future partnerships.

Workflow Automation: In workflow automation, our primary goal was to replace manual intervention involving different roles from different departments and exchanging emails spreading across weeks to come to a conclusion. Therefore, at Orient Cement, we have adopted the practice of doing the same task more structurally and effectively. The process here involves the adoption of the DOA, i.e., delegation of authority, which addresses the roles and departments

to be involved as per the need or objective for a policy or any action that needs to be instituted across departments, verticals, or the organization. The process considers all the necessary information with details like the objective, amount of expenditure required, the difference in terms of benefit to the organization, and the structure in which the policy is to be implemented, adhering to the SOPs. This way, all the supporting functions communication, action involved, and interpretations are made clear, leaving no ambiguity, which was prevalent during the earlier practice.

The icing on the cake is the structure, which culminates in different roles and departments either approving or disapproving, with remarks in columns provided aside in each stage of the workflow as per the delegation. This helped in concluding actions required to be closed within timelines. In addition to this facility, another advantage was "notification via mail." This feature helped in acting as required by the respective approving authority instead of going back to the portal to check or being prevented from giving a status update by the initiator or previous approver. This adoption has not only streamlined the process of getting approvals timely but also generated a unique number that can be traced and displayed to the initiator as a ready reckoner for record keeping, which in disguise acts as an advantage in auditing, reference, etc.

Data Analytics: Data analytics is the systematic examination and interpretation of data to extract valuable insights to support decision-making and establish patterns and relationships within the information. To enable sales and sales support teams, information was the key difference, which, through our automated reports, was sent duly to each respective team member before 10:00 AM, especially to those who were exposed to the market. The operational involvement requires updates on a real-time basis and provides insights for improvements to take place in a timely manner. For other functions, the analytics used to make decisions are provided with various insights that aim to solve larger problems by showing the degree of success and showcasing certain blips or outliers that are preventing success.

Our objective with analytics was primarily to facilitate decision-making easier, as from an external environment perspective, the actions required normally face a huge amount of resistance. Therefore, the other way to deal with it is to look at our internal situation to make better decisions. Through analytics, we could spot certain trends and patterns, which helped us in prescribing and predicting the next course of action. One such instance was predicted in the sales funnel: "Guard railing the low hanging fruits." The competition certainly does good marketing, but the strategic method applied is to identify the weak spot, such as "a low profit-making channel partner" or "a low selling channel partner." Therefore, with the support of data analytics, we could identify the top 10 likely channel partners who are low-hanging fruit to competition and devise a strategy to guard rail and turn around.

By using data-driven insights to understand consumer demands, market dynamics, and internal processes, we could create plans for sustainable growth. This has guaranteed us the belief that strategic choices are in line with long-term goals.

Conclusion

Orient Cement has leveraged digital advancements to build trust with both Internal and External customers, fostering Operational Excellence and overall Business Excellence. These advancements have reduced validation time and bureaucracy, emphasizing the importance of Technology in Operational Excellence.

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The Digitalization of Government Departments: A Reality

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Abstract

Governments are changing with time by offering 'e-services' to the people. This trend is continuing across the globe and is supported by ongoing technological developments. The focus of this paper is on e-governance (i.e., digitization in government departments), and its further advancements in India as well as select countries in the world in the real sense. The paper will elaborate on what is e-governance, its benefits, and certain examples of the same.

*Keywords:**Digitization in government departments, e-governance, smart public government, enhancing public administration services through e-governance*

1.   Introduction

What is meant by digitalization?

Here are some of the definitions as presented in the literature:

According to (Gartner, n. d.) [1], "Digitalization is the use of digital technologies to change a business model and provide new revenue and value-producing opportunities; it is the process of moving to a digital business."

According to the European Union (EU, 2022) [2], "Digitalization means smart public services. This is also called eGovernment or digital public services. It refers to using and implementing the technology and ensuring delivery of services to citizens at local, regional, and national levels."

Digitalization may open up new opportunities to both citizens and businesses such as students can pursue their dream of studying abroad, citizens can pay utility bills online, and working/non-working people can file taxes with the click of a button.

What are the objectives of digitalization?

In a study undertaken earlier, there were about 28,000 Internet users in the European Union. Survey results indicated that the top three benefits of e-government (as mentioned by the respondents) are: time savings (80%), gaining flexibility (76%), and saving in cost (62%) (Duneja et al., 2018) [3].

Some of the objectives of the digital transformation are (Bunce, 2022) [4]:
- Enhanced collaborative efforts.
- More productive workforce/manpower.
- Making organizations more responsive and agile.
- Increased revenue (for the business).
- Spread the reach of governance and compliance.
- improvement is customer experience.
- Reduction in costs.

"The objective of all digital products is to serve the need (of the people), and transform the way of way of delivering public services to the billion people – be it UPI, Aadhar, and direct benefit transfer – DBT, etc." Abhishek Singh, CEO, MyGov, President and CEO of NeGD said while addressing the third edition of ET Government National Governance Virtual Summit recently (Gupta, 2022) [5].

2. E-Governance addresses the issue of the digital divide

What is meant by the digital divide? (Stoiciu, n. d.) [6]

The concept of the digital divide has been evolving over the years. This can be defined as the social aspect associated with the different amounts of information between the people who have access to ICT (information, communication, and technology) and those who do not (Stoiciu, n. d.) [6]. The nature of the digital divide is complex and debatable and a good e-governance with the support of technological tools can minimize the extent of the same.

Some of the major elements in the development of e-governance in the context of bridging the digital divide are (Stoiciu, n. d.) [6]:
- Increasing the quality of life (of people) in all aspects by using ICT and good governance that can assure and provide better e-services and access to relevant information (as required).
- Development of suitable e-learning content.
- Increasing transparency in the decision-making (of the government authorities) and capital spending by implementing e-services.

- Establishing different layers of cooperation at various levels – regional, national, and international.
- Assisting, educating, and preparing the community of the less-developed regions together.
- Using mobile technology for delivering different types of e-services.
- Encouraging e-participation of diverse social communities and including them in the policymaking and decision-making, by use of new, innovative technologies such as social networks.
- Encouraging the involvement of citizens in all aspects of the local and national administration processes.

3.   Examples of Digitalization in Government Departments in the Indian Context

India is not far behind in this context mentioning Jezamin Abdul Razak, Senior Research Manager, Government Insights, IDC Asia/ Pacific. According to her, India's rapid transition to digitization is largely governed by public sector enterprises (Ghatak, 2022) [7]. There are diverse technologies that are making entry into this domain- the use of blockchain, data analytics, cloud, IoT, and AI to list a few in government operations.

Example 1

The best example is 'Aadhar'. In 2010, India launched this ambitious project. Essentially, it is a biometric-based national identity system called Aadhaar (which means "foundation" in Hindi) in 2010 (Duneja et al., 2018) [3]. Within a few years, almost 95% of India's 1.25 billion people become part of this system. The benefits of the new system were far-reaching in that it not only reduced corruption but also helped organizations in the private sector meet "Know Your Customer (KYC)" regulatory requirements.

The successfully implemented Aadhaar-eKYC system has resulted in universal financial inclusion and has ensured that there is (at least) one bank account for every individual. This has also contributed to the empowerment of women in the country (Gupta, 2022) [5].

Example 2

Pune Municipal Corporation (PMC) is using WhatsApp for informing citizens about paying Property Tax. PMC has started using WhatsApp as its virtual assistant and currently, they are live with property tax service on WhatsApp. According to the sources, they are in the process of adding other services shortly.

Example 3

The public sector insurance company, Life Insurance Corporation of India -LIC is using SMS services to inform people that they will shortly use WhatsApp for providing policy-related services to their customers. The SMS received on the mobile reads as follows:

LIC soon will be on WhatsApp for Customers. To avail WhatsApp services, register your Policies at https://ebiz.licindia.in/D2CPM#Register, if not done already.

4. **Some of the recent advertisements in print media in the context of Digitalization in Government Departments (provided as examples in the Indian context)**

Example 1

Advertisement of Indian Mobile Congress highlighting 5-G Technology (Advt1, 2022) [8]
This advertisement highlights the benefits of the ongoing developments in mobile technology (especially the 5G technology) for various sectors such as agriculture and livestock, healthcare, fintech, education, transport, logistics, industry 4.0 and smart applications, etc. The said advertisement also incorporates QR (quick response) code that provides more information about the event, registration details, etc.

Example 2

Advertisement of National Logistics Policy (Advt2, 2022) [9]
This advertisement highlights the benefits of the National Logistics Policy. The said advertisement also incorporates a QR (quick response) code that provides more information about the policy as provided by DPIIT (Department for Promotion of Industrial Trade), Government of India.

Example 3
Advertisement of e-Invoice (Advt3, 2022) [10]
This advertisement enlists several benefits of e-invoice for taxpayers. The said advertisement also incorporates a QR (quick response) code that provides more information (such as details about exempted categories of the taxpayers, etc.) as provided by the Ministry of Finance, Government of India.

5. **Examples of Digitalization in Government Departments in the Global Context**
No one can deny the fact that this world is becoming increasingly digital. This process of 'becoming and using digital' is further accelerated by the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic (Wihilborg et al., 2017) [11]. In this context, Western Balkan countries have experienced activities such as video calls and meetings, online shopping, and virtual gatherings. This is happening to government services also as they are pushed to accept

this digital environment. Accordingly, government services are changing rapidly and taking digital formats, aiming to be more efficient, transparent, and accountable.

A few examples of good e-governance are provided herewith in the global context.

Example 1

Estonia is a country with a population of only 1.3 million. But, please note that it is referred to as a leader in the context of digital government. Estonia has a well-functioning digitalized platform that generates more than 30 transactions per citizen per month (Duneja et al., 2018) [3]. According to the Digital Futures Index (created by Microsoft), Estonia is leading in e-governance. Estonia outperforms all 16 European countries in the index regarding digital public services (Estonia, 2022) [12].

According to Microsoft, Estonia is considered to be among the global leaders in the digitalization of public services. However, there is scope for improvement in the digitalization of the educational system, investment in technical skills and talents, and enhancing connectivity to step up the country's digital journey (Microsoft, 2022) [13].

Example 2

Another technology that we see being explored to the large extent (in the government sector) is the blockchain. This is mainly because it could simultaneously improve trust and accountability, in addition to offering features such as data protection, enhancement in operations, fraud elimination, etc. (Ghatak, 2022) [7].
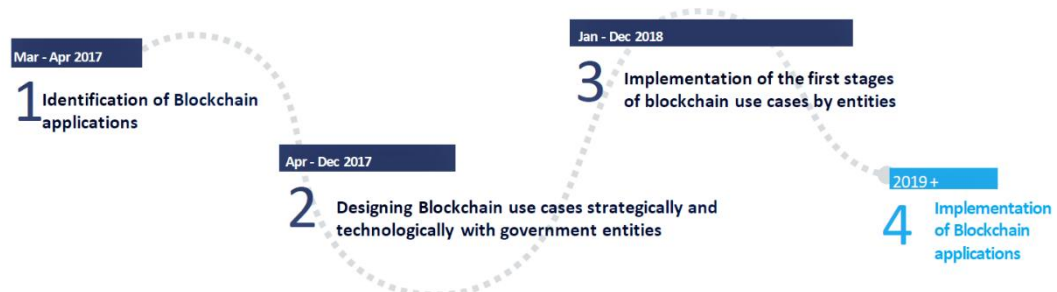
In this context, Dubai has decided to have its (own) blockchain strategy (Smart Dubai, 2018) [14]

Example 3

In Romania, a collaborative platform is established to have an evaluation of the public services (i.e., services provided by local as well as central government) by the citizens. This is because the citizens are the actual beneficiaries of these services (Wihilborg et al., 2017) [11]. Here, the principal idea is to use citizen-provided inputs/feedback to enhance the quality and delivery of the government service (provided to them). This is nothing but nurturing a culture of transparency and accountability within the public sector.

Example 4

Another example that illustrates the benefit of e-governance is the e-agriculture application designed by the Nigerian government to assist the agriculture sector (Stoiciu, n. d.) [5]. The application has advantages such as the provision of strategic information, as well as the promotion of new helpful ICT skills among Nigerian farmers.

Example 5

In the Philippines, the Department of Information and Communications Technology (DICT) is working on the "cloud-first" approach when it comes to digitization in the government (Duneja et al., 2018) [3]. In this context, various government departments and agencies are exploring cloud computing solutions as a primary part of their infrastructure planning and procurement. This also includes private sector organizations. These private sector entities will participate as accredited cloud service providers.

6.   Conclusion

In the Indian context, digital modes of delivering financial services and their benefits have transformed the nation. This has also helped the financial ecosystem and supporting governance mechanisms, feels the government authorities (Gupta, 2022) [5]. "*The next wave of digitization needs to ensure that digital opportunities may further reach Tier 2 cities as 'Digital India' eases access to services for millions*", asserted Rajendra Kumar,

Additional Secretary, Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, while speaking at the third edition of ET Government National Governance Virtual Summit recently.

Across the globe, as all organizations are making efforts to transform themselves with digital technologies, people are expecting the same thing in the context of government organizations and authorities (Corydon et al., 2016) [15]. This can be done through the digitization of government services. By digitizing, governments can provide services that cater to the needs of the people and meet their (increasing) expectations during the challenging times in the post-Covid era even if the authorities have less/tighter capital outlay and increasingly complex challenges.

With the changing times, and technological changes governments are changing the way they do business. As governments seek to modernize their operations, cloud infrastructure is becoming increasingly important. Governments can use cloud technology to access more data sources and analyze them in innovative ways. They can also take advantage of new technologies such as the Internet of Things, blockchain, Artificial Intelligence, and others (Ghatak, 2022) [7].

The author believes that digitization in the government department in the future will be aimed at building the APTS parameters. They are accuracy (A), perfection (P), transparency (T), and security (S). This fact is supported by the examples shown in the earlier sections.

By (having) digitizing processes (in place) and making suitable organizational changes, governments can enhance the delivery of (their) services, achieve cost savings, become more accountable, and improve citizens' quality of life.

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