



Diversity management practices in Finnish and Bangladeshi hotels

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Abstract

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<p>The objective of the thesis is to study and explore the diversity management practices that are implemented in the hotel industries of Bangladesh and Finland. The study is aimed to find extensive understanding to promote inclusiveness, ensure equal opportunities and facilitate cultural integration within these unique cultural environments.</p> <p>The theoretical framework is based on diversity management practices in both Finnish and Bangladeshi hotels. While Finnish hotels shows strong emphasis on gender diversity, Bangladeshi hotels exhibit a more pronounced focus on cultural and religious diversity. The variations can be tracked back to the distinctions in culture, societal contexts, and legal frameworks in the two regions.</p> <p>This study is a qualitative research design that involves surveys including multiple choice and open-ended questions with hotel employees and managers in Bangladesh and Finland. Moreover, the study also includes a review of relevant policies and practices aimed at promoting diversity practices in the industry. The data collection from the surveys are analysed using thematic analysis.</p> <p>The findings collected from the surveys revealed the practicality of diversity management initiatives is determined by various factors including leadership strategies, employee awareness and trainings. The results indicate that Finnish hotels, generally characterized by larger establishments and a more developed legal framework, tend to have more robust diversity management programs in place compared to their Bangladeshi counterparts.</p> <p>In sum, the findings of this study highlighted the need for targeted policies and practices that addressed the root causes of uniformity in the hotel industry. Furthermore, the study also underscores that, hotels can reap numerous benefits and improve their overall success by embracing diversity and creating inclusive workplaces.</p>
Key words Diversity management, hotel industry, culture, society, organisation

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1 Introduction

Diversity management within the hospitality industry stands actively while valuing the diverse backgrounds of the employees, employers, and guests. This thesis undertakes a comprehensive exploration of diversity management strategies within the context of Finnish and Bangladeshi hotels, a topic chosen after careful consideration of how crucially relevant it is in the present globalized environment.

The selection of this thesis topic arose from an understanding of the critical role diversity plays in modern businesses and particularly in the highly engaged and culturally diverse realm of the hotel industry. It is based on the concept that recognizing and effectively managing diversity is not just a moral necessity but also a strategic benefit for organizations working in a world that is becoming increasingly linked.

1.1 Selection and significance of the topic

The recognition and appreciation of diversity within modern organizations, particularly in the highly engaged and culturally diverse realm of the hospitality industry, have led to the selection of this thesis topic. Such recognition is not only a moral imperative but also bestows upon companies operating in a globally interconnected market a distinct advantage by way of successfully managing and harnessing this diversity.

1.2 Relevance within a broader context

The topic of diversity management in hotels is not limited to the hospitality industry. It has a strong societal resonance, reflecting a global conversation on inclusivity, fair opportunity, and peaceful co-existence. Understanding how diversity is managed within the hospitality sector gives useful insights for businesses across industries as it continues to function as a melting pot of cultures.

1.3 Nature of Research and Research Background

This thesis is an example of a research-based strategy based on empirical inquiry and analysis. It derives from the recognition that, while theoretical frameworks are informative, they frequently require validation and modification through actual application. The study expands on the foundational work of scholars who have investigated diversity management, attempting to apply their findings in the context of Finnish and Bangladeshi hotels.

1.4 Motivation for the study

The impetus for this research stems from the need to bridge the gap between theoretical frameworks and the actual implementation of diversity management practices. It is motivated by the desire to provide practical recommendations that can be implemented by hotels in both Finland and Bangladesh, as well as serve as a model for other hospitality establishments around the world.

This thesis aims to contribute not only to the specialized domain of diversity management in the hospitality industry, but also to the larger discourse on inclusive practices in modern organizations. It aims to provide actionable insights through empirical research that have the potential to foster more inclusive and harmonious work environments within hotels, influencing practices in related industries and beyond. The methodology, findings, and conclusions are discussed in the following chapters.

2 Theoretical Framework

To thrive in an increasingly diverse landscape, the hotel industry, a globalized sector employing millions worldwide, requires effective diversity management strategies. (Bowen 2022). In this chapter the author will discuss different factors of diversity in the Bangladeshi and Finland hotel industries.

2.1 Significance of diversity management and its effects in Finnish and Bangladeshi hotels

This research's potential clients and applications are diverse. It provides a blueprint for hotels and hospitality professionals to implement robust diversity management strategies that can result in increased employee satisfaction, improved guest experiences and increased profitability. Diversity and inclusion consultants can use this research to inform their services, thereby promoting diversity and inclusivity in the hospitality industry. Furthermore, academics and researchers can use this study as a foundational resource, laying the groundwork for future research into diversity management practices in cultural contexts.

Studies have shown that companies with diverse workforces outperform those with less diverse ones (Hunt & Wilson, (2022) Jackson & Harris, (2021) Chon & Lau, (2020) Leong & Ko, (2019) Hinkin & Lowe,(2017)). This correlation is attributed to the factors mentioned above – increased employee engagement, innovation, and customer satisfaction – which ultimately contribute to improved financial performance for hotels (Bell & Srikanth, 2009).

Moreover, the research provides valuable guidance for Hospitality Industry Associations in implementing diversity and inclusion initiatives that can greatly benefit member organizations. It provides practical insights and strategies for creating inclusive environments in the hospitality industry, resulting in higher employee satisfaction and better guest experiences.

In addition, Bangladeshi government agencies can use this research as supporting evidence when developing or updating workplace diversity and inclusion policies. The findings and recommendations provide empirical support for initiatives aimed at making workplaces more inclusive and equitable.

Also, educational institutions, particularly those offering hospitality management programs, will benefit from incorporating this research into their curricula. It allows them to incorporate current best practices in diversity management, ensuring that students are knowledgeable.

2.2 Cultural and societal influences on diversity management

Because of the increasing cultural and societal diversity of both employees and guests, diversity management in the hotel industry has become increasingly important. Hotels must keep up with changing societal norms and attitudes toward diversity. This entails adapting recruitment practices, training programs, and workplace policies to reflect societal inclusivity expectations. (Bowen, 2022)

2.2.1 From Bangladesh's perspective

Bangladesh's cultural fabric, which is deeply rooted in traditions, religions, and customs, is crucial in shaping the perception and acceptance of diversity within hotel organizations. Understanding the impact of cultural values on workplace dynamics, communication styles and interpersonal relationships is critical for developing effective diversity management strategies. Furthermore, the concept of collectivism, which is prevalent in Bangladeshi culture, emphasizes the importance of cohesive and inclusive work environments.

Class, caste, and gender roles distinctions can all have a significant impact on diversity management approaches. Exploring the intersections of these societal norms and organizational policies sheds light on potential challenges and opportunities. Addressing gender disparities in leadership roles, for example, may necessitate strategies that align with societal expectations and perceptions.

Bangladesh has a diverse religious landscape with Islam being the most prevalent religion. Understanding how religious beliefs influence workplace interactions, practices and accommodations is critical for creating a welcoming environment. Furthermore, religious diversity must be acknowledged and respected in order for diversity management initiatives to be successful.

The communication style of Bangladeshi culture can be described by politeness, indirectness added with some preference for non-confrontational communication. There can be times when people avoid confrontation and tell you what you want to hear. The Bengali proverb "face is the index of mind" is one to remember. (Culture Crossing Guide 2017)

2.2.2 From Finland's perspective

As a member of the Nordic region, Finland is defined by values such as individualism, equality, and social welfare. These values serve as the foundation for diversity management strategies, emphasizing equal opportunities and a commitment to creating a welcoming workplace culture. Understanding the deeply ingrained societal commitment to equality is critical for developing initiatives that are consistent with Finnish cultural values. (Maria Duca Palarie 2023)

Finland is well-known for its progressive approach to gender equality, which is reflected in the workplace as well. Examining how gender dynamics influence diversity practices, particularly in leadership roles, sheds light on the changing landscape of Finnish hotels. Furthermore, the emphasis on work-life balance contributes to a one-of-a-kind approach to diversity management. (Gender Equality Index 2022)

Directness and an emphasis on factual information are common characteristics of Finnish communication styles. Understanding these communication norms is critical for effective hotel diversity management communication. Furthermore, investigating how the Finnish organizational hierarchy influences decision-making and inclusivity initiatives yields useful insights.

Social trust and collaboration are highly valued in Finnish culture. Using these values to foster a sense of belonging and shared responsibility can improve the effectiveness of diversity management. Diversity initiatives benefit from strategies that align with the Finnish cultural inclination toward teamwork.

The legal framework in Finland strongly encourages diversity and inclusion, emphasizing equal rights and opportunities. Investigating how hotels comply with legal requirements and incorporate social responsibility into their diversity management practices provides a thorough understanding of the societal context in which these initiatives operate.

2.3 Challenges in implementing diversity management both in Bangladesh and Finland's Hotels

Bangladesh's conservative culture may be resistant to changes in traditional workplace dynamics. Gender roles are frequently deeply ingrained, making it difficult to promote gender diversity. Whereas, Because Finland has a relatively homogeneous population, achieving diversity in terms of ethnicity and cultural backgrounds is difficult but because of the existing homogeneity, promoting diversity may be viewed as less urgent.

In Bangladesh, there can be some lack of awareness in terms of the benefits of diversity management. Acceptance may be hampered by a lack of education about the importance of inclusive practices. Also in Finland, Employee language differences may obstruct effective communication. Non-native speakers may feel marginalized if language diversity is not adequately supported.

Moreover, having traditional hierarchical structures in Bangladesh, may obstruct open communication and the free exchange of ideas. Employees may be hesitant to express concerns about

diversity issues. Many organizations, particularly smaller organizations, may lack the resources to implement comprehensive diversity programs. Also, budget constraints may limit training and development programs.

Additionally, Seasonal variations in employment may occur in the hospitality industry, particularly in tourism-dependent countries such as Finland. It can be difficult to maintain diversity throughout the year including peak and off-peak seasons.

In both Bangladesh and Finland, successful implementation of diversity management in hotels will necessitate a blend of cultural sensitivity, legal support, education, and ongoing efforts to address the unique challenges that each context presents. Collaboration among government agencies, industry associations and individual hotels will be critical in overcoming these obstacles.

3 Methodology

In this study, the author chose two Bangladeshi hotels and one Finnish hotel. The hotels the author chose for the research were likely selected based on the combination various factors; such as their reputation for diversity management initiatives, their ownership structure, their sizes and locations and their brand. Additionally, for the research method the author chose to use qualitative research method.

Diversity management is a critical aspect influencing workplace dynamics, employee engagement, and organizational success in the multifaceted world of hospitality. While quantitative research can provide valuable insights into numerical trends and patterns, qualitative research has emerged as an essential tool for delving into the complexities of human experiences and perceptions.

3.1 Research Design

In this section the author will discuss about the research methods, while explaining the rationale behind the chosen approach.

3.1.1 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is a technique for comprehending and interpreting the complexities of human behaviour and social phenomena. (Smith, 2021). It employs non-numerical data such as words, images, and sounds to gain insight into people's experiences, thoughts, and feelings. (Braun & Clarke, 2006)

Qualitative research goes beyond individual experiences to shed light on the larger dynamics of workplace interactions and organizational culture. (Emerson et al., 2011). Researchers can gain insights into the unspoken rules, power dynamics, and cultural norms that shape employee behaviour and organizational practices through participant observation and document analysis (Yin, 2023).

3.1.2 Mixed Method Survey

A mixed-methods survey is a type of research that combines quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques. (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). This method enables researchers to collect more data and gain a more comprehensive understanding of a research question (Morse, 2003).

Non-numerical data collected through open-ended interviews, focus groups, or observations is referred to as qualitative data (Bryman, 2016). This information can be used to better understand individuals' or groups' experiences, perspectives, and motivations.

On the other hand, Bryman (2016) defines quantitative data as numerical data that can be measured and analysed using statistical methods. Quantitative data is frequently collected through structured questionnaires or surveys in mixed-methods surveys. This information can be used to evaluate trends, patterns, and relationships between variables.

The mixed-methods approach used by the author for her thesis on diversity management in the hospitality industry seemed to be an effective research strategy, providing a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the topic.

The author gained a holistic perspective on diversity management practices in the industry by combining quantitative data and qualitative data. The author was able to identify areas for improvement and develop effective interventions using this approach.

3.2 Data Collection

The data collection chapter of a thesis typically outlines the methods used to collect relevant information for the study (Baum & Locke, 2023). It describes the procedures, instruments, and strategies used to collect data, ensuring the research findings' transparency and replicability (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

The method of data collection chosen is determined by the research question and the type of data required. Surveys (Baum & Locke, 2023), interviews (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), observations (Yin, 2023) and focus groups (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2019) are some common methods used in hospitality research.

3.2.1 Primary Data Collection

Creswell (2014) defines primary data collection as gathering information directly from the source, such as through surveys, interviews, observations, or experiments. This method has a number of advantages, including accuracy, relevance, and adaptability (Punch et al., 2010; Saunders et al., 2007). However, generalizing to a larger population can be time-consuming, costly, and difficult (Babbie, 2016).

The author chose mixed method survey to collect the primary data. Begin by writing personalized emails to the hotel managers. Later, the hotel managers handed the email to their employees to

collect employee's responses. The author also explained briefly about the purpose of the survey and its significance in improving the hospitality industry in her email.

3.2.2 Secondary Data Collection

Secondary data collection entails gathering information that has already been gathered by another person (Saunders et al., 2018). This means that the researcher is not the first to collect the data, but rather uses data that has already been published or made available in another way. Books, journals, articles, websites, and government reports are all good places to look for secondary data (Creswell, 2014).

The author studied the responses to her mixed-method survey in order to gain insights from a group of respondents. This data gave the author both quantitative and qualitative information, allowing her to gain a thorough understanding of the subject. Also, she conducted an extensive review of relevant academic literature in order to gather existing knowledge and theoretical frameworks related to the research topic. This method assisted the author in contextualizing her findings and identifying gaps in existing research. Moreover, the author reviewed previous studies on similar topics to learn about methodologies, findings, and limitations. This procedure assisted her in refining the research design and avoiding potential pitfalls.

3.3 Participants

Hotels from two different geographical locations; Bangladesh and Finland, was chosen to ensure a diverse perspective. This enabled broaden study of diversity management practices across cultures and contexts.

In total, there were nine respondents including Bangladeshi and Finland's hotel. Five responses were from the Finnish hotel and four responses from the two Bangladeshi hotels.

Both employers and employees responded to the survey. Employers have direct oversight of diversity management initiatives, so their perspectives are critical. Also, employees from various backgrounds including gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and age, was chosen to study the impact of diversity management practices on various groups of employees.

The above-mentioned selection criteria were directly relevant to the research objectives, which were to investigated diversity management practices in hotels across different cultures and contexts. The research helped to gain a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the factors that contribute to effective diversity management in the hospitality industry by carefully selecting hotels, employers, and employees.

3.4 Limitations and challenges

The author's sample size and scope may limit the generalizability of her findings to a larger population. Considering whether her sample is representative of the population the author wants to research. Additionally, diversity management is a broadened topic itself.

The author's study relies on participant self-reported data, which may be subject to biases such as social desirability or recall bias.

Moreover, the author expected few more responses from the targeted participants and more answers help to develop strong base and easier to come to the conclusion about the certain topic of the thesis.

3.5 Research ethics

The study's purpose, procedures, risks, and benefits were communicated to participants in a clear and concise manner. Participants were allowed to ask further questions and freely choose whether or not to participate. Personal information about participants were kept secured. The author only collected data that was required for the study and kept it secured.

To prevent unauthorized access, loss, or misuse, participant data were securely stored in a google drive. The author took appropriate security precautions, such as password protection, encryption, and physical security.

4 Results

This section will explore diversity management practices in the hotel industries of Bangladesh and Finland in depth. This will include diversity metrics in the two countries, employee and managerial perspectives and will identify both barriers and success factors using a combination of quantitative and qualitative analyses. The concise overview that follows provides valuable insights into the nuanced landscape of diversity management in these distinct cultural contexts.

There was total 9 responses including two managerial positioned participants. One was from the Finnish hotel and another one from one of the Bangladeshi hotels. The participants were between age of 21 to 53.

For privacy purposes and to avoid repetitive words both Bangladeshi hotels are mentioned as “Hotel B”, and the Finnish hotel is referred as “Hotel F”.

Below here, Figure 1, shows the age range of the participants starting from age of 21 to age of 53.

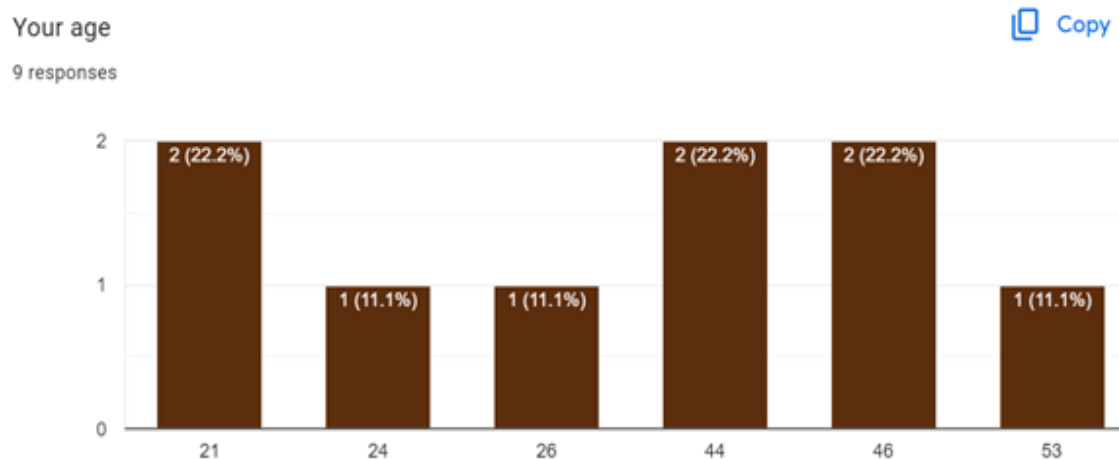


Figure 1

Below here, Figure 2, represents the percentage of participant's preferred gender. The figure shows that 55.6% of them were female whereas 44.4% were male.

You identify yourself as:

9 responses

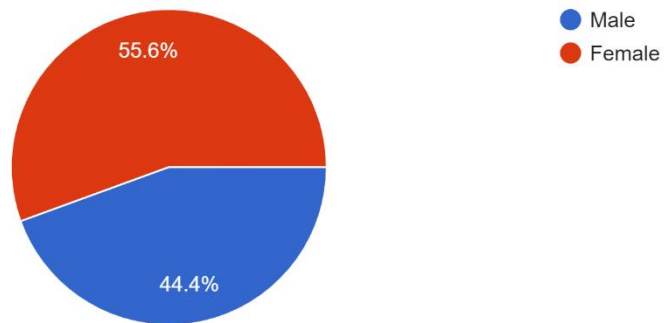


Figure 2

Below here, Figure 3, shows the percentage of the participant's roles in the company, which reveals that 77.8% of them were employees and 22.2% of them were employers.

Your role in the company:

9 responses

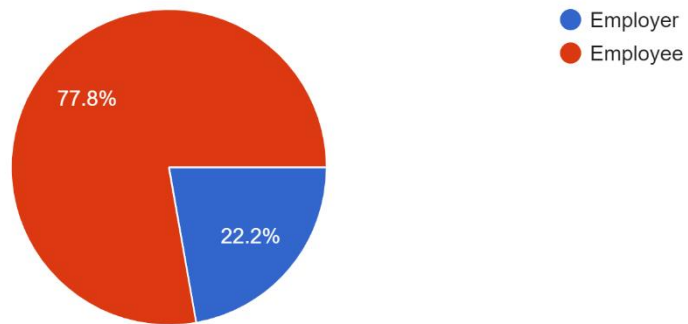


Figure 3

4.1 Questions for Employers

In this section all the questions made and answered by the employers will be presented for later discussion.

Below here, Figure 4, is the question to the employers where they were asked to rate the level of commitment their organization demonstrates towards diversity and inclusion on a scale of ten. It also shows that, one of them considered rating it seven out of ten, whereas the other employer from a different hotel rated it nine out of ten.

Question for EMPLOYERS: How would you rate the level of commitment your organization demonstrates towards diversity & inclusion?

2 responses

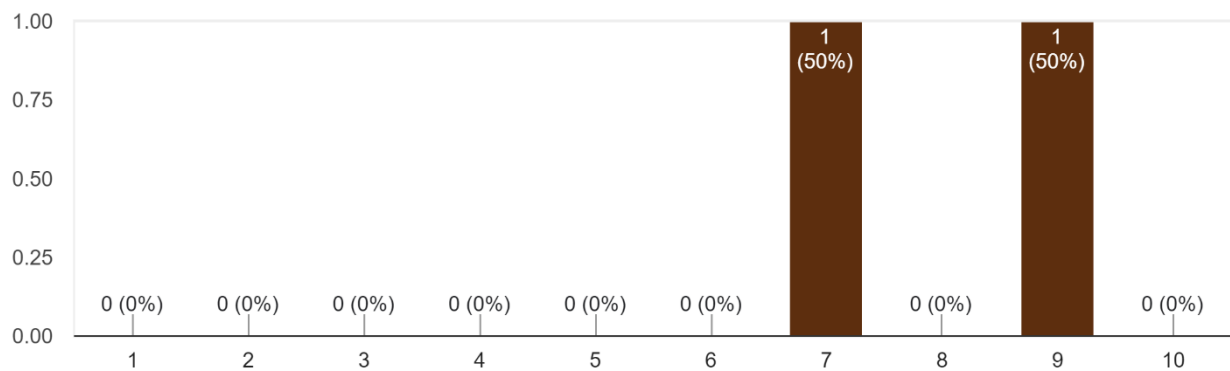


Figure 4

Below here, Figure 5, showcases the responses of the employers, towards different types of diversity management programs that have been implemented within their hotel strategies. It also shows that all of the programmes except gender inclusivity initiatives have a higher reach that indicates diversity practices on their organization.

Question for EMPLOYERS: Which specific diversity management programs have been implemented within your hotel? (Select all that apply)

2 responses

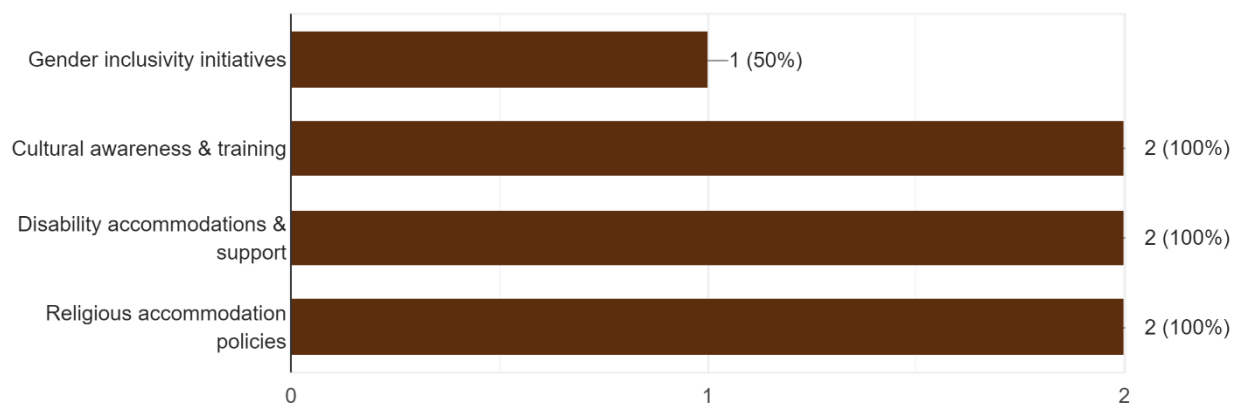


Figure 5

Question: How diverse is the workforce in your hotel in terms of gender, ethnicity & other relevant factors?

Answer from Hotel F: At the moment, we have a reasonably homogeneous work community. Mainly women, but the criteria to work in our hotel are not gender, ethnic background, etc., but competence, desire to develop, interest in the hospitality and the will to do one's best. All experts are welcome, regardless of background.

Question: What are the main challenges your hotel faces in implementing effective diversity management strategies?

Answer from Hotel F: The challenge of smaller towns, like Porvoo is still linguistic challenges. Customers are used to receiving service in their native language. Fortunately, this matter is going in a better direction and more and more people ok with English. However, written communication

still requires knowledge of the Finnish language. On the other hand, I feel that there are no other challenges if the hiring of the person is according to Finnish legislation. I do not see that there are any other major challenges e.g gender, religious, cultural.

Answer from Hotel B: Social norms

Question: What steps is your hotel planning to take to further improve diversity management in the future?

Answer from Hotel F: We are open to qualified workforce, and we take care of the working community by developing it. The necessary training/guidance for different cultures will also be added if necessary.

Answer from Hotel B: we will recruit more female and disable people

Question: Are both male & female workers being treated equally in terms of salary, promotion, or any other policies? If "Not" then why?

Answer from Hotel F: Yes they are. Salaries in accordance with the union

Answer from Hotel B: Yes, both are treated equally

4.2 Question for Employees

Question: How diverse do you believe the workforce is in terms of gender, ethnicity & other relevant factors? Please explain

Answers:

- (Hotel B) believes in Gender equity and liberty of religions. (Hotel name is anonymous for privacy purpose)

- Diverse perspectives and varied ideas can increase creativity in the workplace. Individuals with different cultural and professional backgrounds often contribute new ideas, alternative outlooks, and creative solutions for achieving important business goals. Increased creativity in the workplace can also inspire staff members to provide more input and take part in collaborations more often, resulting in creative developments that support business growth and success.

- Relevantly diverse

- At the moment our workforce is not very diverse, all the employees are Finnish with similar backgrounds. We do have many trainees throughout the year, and they come from different backgrounds. We have 6 female employees and 1 male employee. Gender does not play a role at Hotel Sparre. The truth is that the field of tourism attracts females more than males, at least in the Finnish hotel business. We as employees and our employers accept every gender and all kinds of backgrounds.

- I think that everyone is accepted and treated the same way. I think that everyone is treated very neutral. There haven't been much diversity during my time, for example. only one male employee. But the profession is quite female dominated.

- Most of the workers are young females from Finland so there is not that much diversity

- From my experience very diverse. I have worked with different people (age, gender, ethnicity, degree, lifestyle, status...)

Question: Have you participated in any diversity-related training or programs provided by your employer? If "NOT" then why?

Answers:

- I have not yet join any training pertinent to diversity as I joined recently.

-No. Not Yet. I did not get the opportunity yet. If I get an opportunity to join any program on diversity, I shall join. I have read articles on diversity.

-Yes

-No. No-one has arranged that kind of training. We are a small hotel with a very small staff so I think that is the reason for not arranging trainings. Our employer reminds us that every person with whatever gender/background is welcome to work at Hotel Sparre. I think we as employees are very open-minded and we take that mindset for granted.

-No, I haven't had any trainings or programs about this matter.

-Not, we have not had any training etc related to anything. The employer does not organize anything like that

-No, because I have not been offered trainings

Question: How fair and unbiased is the hiring process? Please give your opinion

Answers:

- The hiring process is genuine and free of biasness.

-The Hiring process is fair and unbiased as there was no gender discrimination, Introduced blind skills challenges. Made data-driven decisions, advertise roles through job portal, Made your interview process structured through an interview panel.

-Fair

-Our employer does not choose their staff based on gender/ethnicity. The personality of the person is what counts. Everyone who is interviewed are on the same line.

If one does not speak Finnish at all then they might not be considered to reception work. It is vital to know the Finnish language because we have so many Finnish travellers and I have seen that many older people do not speak any other language than Finnish.

Otherwise I feel that the hiring process is fair.

-As I mentioned before, I think everyone is welcome. Only thing that can be a problem is, that if the applicant can't speak Finnish. And that is a fair thing in my opinion, because the customer base is at least 60% Finnish speaking.

-I believe it is a bit biased but the hiring process is simple because it is only an interview and then you know if you got the job or not

-Very fair. I was proposed a place right after my interview

Question: Do you feel comfortable raising concerns about diversity & inclusion within the organization? If not then why?

Answers:

- yes.

-It is a service policy in terms of employee rights to the voices. I feel comfort raising my voice.

-i don't feel any concern to include diversity

-I have not faced these kinds of issues here but I would feel comfortable if I had concerns.

-Yes.

-No the employer does not listen almost anyone elses opinion on thing also all the workers are young so it is a bit hard to have opinion related to diversity etc, because we have no controll who employer hires

-Yes, I don't see problems of raising awareness because i am myself not native Finnish

Question: Have you personally experienced or observed any instances of discrimination or bias based on diversity factors (gender, ethnicity, religion) within the workplace? Please share your experience if any

Answers:

-No

-No. I did not experience any instance of discrimination in the workpalce.

-No.

-Not yet personally

-Not once.

-I have experienced and observed discrimination and unreasonable criticism towards some employees but I do not think that is because of the diversity factors

Question: What changes or improvements would you like to see in the hotel's diversity & inclusion initiatives?

Answers:

-I think and I have already raised an issue of employing more female colleagues at Radisson and Top management has given importance on this particular issue. .

-Discover how to promote diversity and Inclusion in the workplace and boost employee engagement

-I would like to see participation of less privilege class and cross section of people in hotel's diversity.

-When we have other language speaking employees I would like all the staff to better themselves to speak more English. Not only when they have something to say to the person but also for example on coffee breaks when the conversation flows freely.

-Every customer and applicant/employee is treated neutral whatever the gender, background or nationality is.

-I think it is about attitude towards workers because sometimes it feels like being always judged or blamed for others mistakes

-I don't have any

Question: Any additional comments regarding diversity & inclusion in the workplace?

Answers:

-Hotel B is contently working on the diversity and inclusivity issues.

-More than policies, programs, or headcounts, equitable employers outpace their competitors by respecting the unique needs, perspectives, and potential of their diverse workforce. As a result, diverse and inclusive workplaces earn deeper trust and more commitment from their employees.

-The industry should create more opportunity to movement of people cross boundary irrespective of their nationality and it should be based on qualification and performance.

-I think our employer is very tolerant and they encourages the staff for accepting everyone.

-No, I think Hotel Sparre is very welcoming for everyone.

-I think in our hotel we have mainly female employees because males are not applying for the job

4.3 Discussion

In this section the author will discuss the responses from the participants. For privacy purposes and to avoid repetitive words the Bangladeshi hotel is referred as Hotel B and the Finnish hotel is referred as Hotel F.

4.4 Discussion based on employer's responses

Hotel F acknowledged that their current workforce is relatively homogeneous, but they also drew attention to their hiring criteria that are based on competence, willingness to develop and interest in the hospitality industry, rather than gender, ethnicity, or other factors. They stated that they welcome experts from all backgrounds and work hard to create a workplace where everyone feels valued and respected.

Based on the responses from the survey, it can be said, that Hotel B also recognized the value of diversity in the workplace and stated that they intend to actively recruit more female and disabled employees. They reaffirmed their dedication to treating all employees fairly, regardless of gender or ability.

Moreover, both Hotel F and Hotel B's responses indicate a growing understanding of the importance of diversity management in the hospitality industry. Both hotels are actively working to address issues related to attracting and retaining a diverse workforce.

The emphasis on competence, development, and industry interest as primary hiring criteria at Hotel F is consistent with fostering an inclusive workplace. Their willingness to provide additional training and guidance to employees from various cultures demonstrates their dedication to creating a welcoming and supportive environment for all.

Hotel B's emphasis on recruiting more female and disabled employees reflects their commitment to increasing workforce diversity. Their dedication to equal treatment underscores their efforts to create an environment in which everyone feels valued and respected.

Furthermore, while both hotels have made commendable strides in promoting diversity management, more can be done. Data collection and analysis on the demographic makeup of their workforce could provide valuable insights into areas where additional efforts, such as recruitment and retention strategies, are required.

Overall, Hotel F and Hotel B's responses indicate that the hospitality industry is making progress in addressing the issue of diversity management. However, more work remains to be done in order to create workplaces that are truly inclusive and welcoming to all.

4.5 Discussion based on employee's responses

According to the responses of hotel employees, there is a growing awareness of the importance of diversity and inclusion in the workplace. However, in terms of representation and training, there is still room for improvement.

4.5.1 Diversity representation

Some of the employee responses indicate that the workforce is not always very diverse in terms of gender, ethnicity, and other relevant factors. However, there is a desire for more diversity in the workplace, and the hotel is working to improve its representation.

4.5.2 Diversity management training

Employee responses indicate that there is a lack of diversity training in the workplace. This is a missed opportunity for the hotel to educate its employees on the importance of diversity and inclusion, as well as to create a more welcoming environment for all employees. Diversity training can help employees understand the value of diversity and inclusion, as well as develop the skills needed to create a more inclusive workplace.

4.5.3 Language barriers

Based on one of the employee's responses, it can be said that sometimes speaking foreign language can create some difficulties. It is critical to consider whether requiring all employees to be fluent in required foreign language is discriminatory. On the one hand, hotel employees have a legitimate business need to be able to communicate with guests in their native or preferred language. Requiring a foreign language proficiency, on the other hand, may exclude qualified candidates who do not speak the required language.

4.5.4 Additional comments

The additional comments highlight that there are ongoing efforts to foster diversity and inclusion in their workplaces. These remarks also emphasize the importance of valuing and respecting the diverse contributions of a workforce.

The emphasis on respecting the unique needs, perspectives and potential of their diverse workforce demonstrates Hotel B has commitment to create an inclusive environment where everyone feels valued and respected. This approach is consistent with the idea that equitable employers who go above and beyond policies and programs can reap the benefits of a more engaged and committed workforce.

The suggestion to increase cross-border movement of people emphasizes the potential benefits of a more diverse talent pool. The hospitality industry can tap into a broader range of skilled individuals by considering qualifications and performance rather than nationality, fostering innovation and growth.

Moreover, employees at both hotels responded positively, indicating that their efforts to promote diversity and inclusion are creating a welcoming and accepting work environment. The observation that Hotel F has a disproportionately female workforce due to differences in job applications raises an intriguing point about the factors that influence workforce diversity.

To sum it up, the additional comments provide useful insights into the ongoing efforts and challenges of diversity and inclusion in the hospitality industry. These organizations can reap the benefits of a more engaged, innovative, and successful workforce if they continue to prioritize diversity and inclusion.

4.6 Recommendations

The hotel industry is dealing with a number of issues concerning diversity and inclusion. These challenges include a lack of workforce diversity, unconscious bias, a lack of diversity training, a lack of sponsorship for employees from diverse backgrounds and a lack of a culture of belonging.

A number of recommendations can help the hotel industry overcome these challenges. Setting clear diversity goals and tracking progress, conducting regular diversity training for all employees, partnering with local organizations that serve diverse communities, creating a culture of belonging, collecting, and analysing demographic data on the workforce, expanding recruitment efforts to reach a larger pool of applicants, considering blind hiring practices, providing mentorship and sponsorship opportunities, and creating a culture of belonging are among the recommendations.

4.6.1 Setting up diversity goals and tracking progress

Setting quantifiable and measurable diversity goals that are in line with the organization's overall strategic goals. Using metrics such as workforce demographics, representation in leadership positions, and employee engagement surveys, regularly monitor and evaluate progress toward diversity goals. Data-driven insights can be used to identify areas for improvement and to fine-tune diversity initiatives. (Diversity and inclusion in the workplace, 2016).

4.6.2 Conducting diversity management training

Create and implement comprehensive diversity training programs that address issues such as unconscious bias, cultural competency, inclusive communication, and creating a welcoming

workplace environment. All employees at all levels of the organization should be required to participate in diversity training on a regular basis. To increase engagement and understanding, use interactive learning strategies such as role-playing scenarios, case studies, and group discussions. (The diversity advantage, 2018).

4.6.3 Partnership with local organisations that serve diverse communities

Collaborate with non-profit organizations, advocacy groups, and cultural canterers that represent diverse groups in the local community. Engage with these organizations to learn about the needs and perspectives of diverse communities, identify potential candidates for employment, and take part in community events and initiatives to demonstrate the organization's commitment to diversity and inclusion. (Fostering a culture of inclusion, 2015)

4.6.4 Culture of belonging

Create an environment in the workplace where all employees feel valued, respected, and recognized for their unique contributions. Encourage employees from various backgrounds to communicate openly, collaborate, and respect one another. To maintain a safe and inclusive work environment, actively address instances of discrimination, harassment, or microaggressions. (Creating a culture of belonging, 2015)

4.6.5 Collecting and analysing demographic data

Collect and analyse data on the workforce's demographic makeup on a regular basis, including factors like gender, ethnicity, race, age, sexual orientation, disability status, and veteran status. Use this data to identify areas of the workforce where diversity is lacking and develop targeted initiatives to close these gaps. Monitor progress over time to ensure that diversity initiatives have a measurable impact on workforce composition. (Leveraging workforce analytics to drive diversity and inclusion. Harvard Business Review Press, 2014)

4.6.6 Wider pool of applicants

Job openings should be advertised through a variety of channels, such as online job boards, social media platforms, local community organizations, and minority-focused career websites. Attend job fairs and career events aimed at diverse communities to meet potential candidates. To increase the pool of qualified applicants, collaborate with educational institutions and training programs that assist underrepresented groups in pursuing hospitality careers. (Recruiting for diversity and inclusion: A practical guide for organizations, 2019)

5 Conclusion

This thesis discussed about diversity management practices in the hotel industry in Finland and Bangladesh. A mixed-methods approach was used in the study, combining quantitative and qualitative data from mixed method survey questions hotel employers and employees.

Additionally, the study's findings revealed several similarities and differences in the two countries' approaches to diversity management. Both countries have legal frameworks that encourage workplace diversity and inclusion.

In Finland, there is a strong emphasis on developing a workplace culture of belonging and inclusion. They have diversity and inclusion policies, training programs, and employee resource groups, which reflect this.

Bangladeshi hotels, however, are beginning to implement diversity and inclusion initiatives. These initiatives are frequently motivated by a desire to attract and retain talent while also improving the company's diverse environment.

The study also discovered some issues with diversity management in both countries. Unconscious bias is one difficulty. Unconscious bias is a type of prejudice that is frequently unintentional and occurs below the level of conscious awareness. Unconscious bias can lead to workplace discrimination in areas such as hiring, promotion, and performance evaluation.

Despite the challenges, the study discovered that diversity management is critical in both Finland and Bangladesh's hotel industries. Hotels can benefit from diversity management by attracting and retaining talent, improving their reputation, and increasing their profitability.

Moreover, the study suggests that hotels in both countries take steps to address diversity management challenges. These steps include training on unconscious bias, raising awareness of the benefits of diversity, and putting diversity and inclusion initiatives in place.

Furthermore, the study also suggests that future research focus on the efficacy of various diversity management initiatives. This study could aid hotels in developing more effective practices for promoting workplace diversity and inclusion.

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Appendices

These were the survey questions for the employers that were used for the thesis purpose:

- How would you rate the level of commitment your organization demonstrates towards diversity & inclusion?
- Which specific diversity management programs have been implemented within your hotel?
- How diverse is the workforce in your hotel in terms of gender, ethnicity & other relevant factors?
- What are the main challenges your hotel faces in implementing effective diversity management strategies?
- What strategies does your hotel employ to attract a diverse pool of job applicants?
- What steps is your hotel planning to take to further improve diversity management in the future?
- Are both male & female workers being treated equally in terms of salary, promotion, or any other policies? If "Not" then why?

These were the survey questions for the employees that were used for the thesis purpose:

- How diverse do you believe the workforce is in terms of gender, ethnicity & other relevant factors? Please explain
- Have you participated in any diversity-related training or programs provided by your employer? If "NOT" then why?
- How fair and unbiased is the hiring process? Please give your opinion
- Do you feel comfortable raising concerns about diversity & inclusion within the organization? If not then why?
- Have you personally experienced or observed any instances of discrimination or bias based on diversity factors (gender, ethnicity, religion) within the workplace? Please share your experience if any
- What changes or improvements would you like to see in the hotel's diversity & inclusion initiatives?
- Any additional comments regarding diversity & inclusion in the workplace?