



**RESEARCH PAPER**

**Leadership Accountability and its Relationship with Diversity  
Recruitment, Diversity Training and Diversity Climate in MNCs of  
Pakistan**

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**ABSTRACT**

Significance of Leadership role has no question in managing diversity and establishing diversity climate. Indeed diversity management is top leadership agenda penetrates down wards to employees with a diligent support of managers, a cohesive systematic evolution of implementation and outcomes. These accountability determinants are purely top managerial task provides feedback for the company management policies and practices. This study has analyzed relationship of leadership accountability with diversity recruitment and diversity training .study has adopted quantitative research method and correlation analysis techniques. Findings indicated that a strong partial relationship between diversity recruitment with leadership accountability whereas diversity training has strong positive relationship with leadership accountability in establishing diversity climate. Findings helped in understanding importance of leadership evaluation for diversity management practices, recruitment and training.

**Keywords:** Diversity, Diversity Climate, Diversity Recruitment, Diversity Training

**Introduction**

The start of 21st century manifests a period of questioning of leadership practices (Williams, 2006). It has been determined that factors like globalization, technological advancement, demographic trends, feminist movement, equal employment laws, and social dynamics, international employment cause the effectiveness of an organization to become even more diverse and the demands of business clients to become more varied (Ashikali, & Groeneveld, 2015). The changing dynamics has affected workplace polices, employer and employee's expectations and organizational effectiveness. Today's workplace is more diverse than ever and management is expected to utilize diversity for organizational effectiveness. Diversity is the acknowledgment, valuing, and acceptance of individual variations in age, class, race, religion, region, sex, impairments, etc. (Bleijenbergh, et al 2010: Schwabenland, et al. 2015). Human resource specialists are equipped to make aggressive moves to improve the organization's work and climate. Zapata-Barrero, (2015) stated that the components of diversity differ from one nation to the next, but successful organizations increase cultural competency through diversity and leaders must persistently play a substantial role and forge long-term strategic connections with both internal and external parties to effectively manage workplace diversity (Rahman ,2019: Yadav, & Lenka, 2020).

In accordance with changing trends, organizations are focusing on organizational dynamics by adopting strategic approach of diversity management practices like recruitment, training, retention mentoring etc. These efforts are futile without an efficient accountability of top management. Abd Aziz et al.(2015) argued that accountability creates a transparent image and upholds the foundations of fair and equitable work place. This has been defined by Dwertmann & Boehm (20160), Nishii, (2013), Gonzalez & DeNisi, (2009) that diversity climate has been identified Employees' perception of how much their

company worth diversity as shown by the organization's formal agenda, informal ideals, and social integration of underrepresented groups. Gelfand et al., (2005) indicated in management research with a rise in interest in how a diverse workplace environment affects people as individuals, dyads, teams, and organizations for a varied workforce ,the organizational agenda without an effectiveness of leadership role is impossible in alignment of policies with desired outcome.

Top management commitment to diversity is a crucial component of any effective organizational interventions, leads to diversity management (Yadav, & Lenka, 2020: Samdanis, & Özbilgin, 2020: Park, & Liang, 2020). However, since organizational barriers are deeply penetrated, systematic and often undetectable, impede the way to establish a fair workplace. Inadequate funding for diversity management, a lack of time devoted to diversity initiatives, and poor leadership could all be considered diversity hurdles (Homan, et al 2020). Because of this, utilizing diversity for the organization's benefit requires persistent and reliable leadership (Çayak, & Eskici, 2021).

Organizational interventions are strategic decisions of top management predominantly involve in formulation and implementation. In today's workplace differences of workforce require special consideration of organization in recruitment process thoroughly signals respecting and valuing their differences. In compliance with global workforce trends an effective diversity recruitment effort, according to Elischer (2008), begins with distinctively defined diversity goals that represent its mission, objectives. The senior top management needs to allocate sufficient budget for an effective hiring process. The recruitment team should make sure that job adverts are placed across all channels of communication to appeal a wide range of possible candidates. Henceforth the organization's senior management must demonstrate dedication to the goal of acquiring a diverse pool of recruits.

Similar to recruitment, diversity training outmatch leadership vision of fair and inclusive place by allocation of reasonable budget and need assessment of type of trainings(Chang et al., 2019) Diversity training comprehend its intents in addressing issues like Affirmative action, multicultural training , multi-generational disparity, cohesiveness, orientation about diversity concerns, decreasing biases, and altering behaviors to manage a diverse workforce and customer base are some of the diversity training programs (Alhejji et al, 2016). Diversity training, like any other training, begins with an assessment of the organization's readiness for programme implementation. Royall, et al (2021) advocated that the organization should strive to develop level of managerial support and top management involvement in the planning process of diversity trainings. Mayes, & Gethers, (2018) indicated that Accountability means that top management interacts with staff members, responds to their concerns, considers their various needs and viewpoints, and actively involves them in decision-making. The accountability refers to being open to employees and having a constant conversation with them while sharing a lot of diversity-related information. Accountability can increase the sustainability of activities by allowing ownership of decisions and projects and in the end it offers a way to improve performance. By identifying four fundamental dimensions, Lloyd, Oatham, and Hammer (2007) breakdown the idea of diversity management accountability in terms of involvement, assessment, and channels for filing complaints and getting feedback. Also, Mumford, (2007) differentiated five separate aspects of accountability: responsiveness, responsibility, controllability, and transparency.

Therefore, the study has examined the role of leadership accountability with diverts recruitment, encourages representation of societal segment in workforce, and diversity training as an enabling process of employees with diverse background for their productive assimilation in organizational culture of Multi-national companies of Pakistan.

## **Literature Review**

This study based on review of literature has connected importance of leadership accountability with recruitment, representation of societal variation in organizational workforce, trainings which specifically designed to establish diversity perspective, inclusivity and fair work place. In consequent top management employ efforts to develop employee positive perception about strategic role of diversity management, predictor role of leadership and diversity climate.

### **Leadership Accountability**

Senior management is a crucial component in any organisational intervention (Ng, & Sears, (2012). Ancona & Cardwell, (2004) recommended that the senior management should include diversity in its mission statements and frequently define equal opportunity more explicitly in the business strategy. In similar vein Salahuddin, (2010) supported that the diversity management goals should be clearly stated for the people within and outside of organization.

Aucoin and Heintzman (2000), stated that senior management must regularly monitor and review its progress in relation to diversity targets and aims, and must then report the process' outcomes. Management must create forum for employee's reporting concerns about diversity, and they must make sure that the complaints are thoroughly scrutinized and promptly addressed. Managers have a plenty of options to incorporate diversity's positive characteristics into daily decision-making and to add these aspects while establishing their company's goals. When policies are implemented properly and skilfully, the inclusion of social diversity in a firm increases the potential for innovation, customer satisfaction, and financial performance

Olson et al (2006) endorsed that the senior management should include diversity in its mission statements and explicitly define equal opportunities for all. In the business strategy, the diversity management goals should be clearly stated. Group based formulation and implementation of DM and promotion of work life balance are required to achieve the strategic goal. It is also probable that when job are advertised , managers still have a propensity to fall back on their old custom of selection of their favourite employee if the aims of diversity management are not carefully recognised and evaluated (Davenport et al.,2022)

Well-managed diversity programme, according to Ely and Thomas (2001), is one in which performance targets and diversity reviews are carried out at least semi-annually or quarterly. To develop a more balanced and inclusive workforce, a progressive report on objectives and diversity initiatives is provided and thoroughly debated. The commitment to diversity is thought to be strengthened through the sharing of successes and difficulties. The status of diversity and whether it reflects the community it serves must be determined by leaders.

### **Diversity Recruitment**

Diversity recruiting cannot be regarded as effective just because new diverse personnel have joined the company (Bhatti et al 2019). DR refers to the a strategically planned, targeted policy based on organizational vision of representation of societal segment in their workforce. Therefore, it is equally important to integrate and retain a diverse staff. Organizations must dedicate effort to studying these individuals' personal objectives and motivators, which may differ drastically from those of present employees (Bleijenbergh et al ,2010)

Lauring and Ross (2004) stated that people on recruiting panels must to be knowledgeable about diversity issues and best practises for just and equitable hiring, they

claim. The interview questions should address diversity concerns, and the recruitment team should include members from underrepresented groups. Also, to give candidates the impression that the company is genuinely interested in them, interviews should be more than 60% flexible in terms of the time of day, location, type of questions asked, and manner of interaction (Kalev et al 2006). This will prevent the "take it or leave it" vibe that a fixed arrangement conveys. Accessibility concerns will be particularly crucial for those with disabilities. The interview questions shouldn't be entirely based on the expectations of a certain group (or groups), as this could negatively impact the possibilities of candidates from other cultural background (Herring, 2009).

According to Dubnick (2007) suggested some consideration for diverts recruiters. First, in order to conduct interviews properly, interviewers should receive training. Secondly recruitment questions addressing various diversity issues may be helpful in finding diversity perspective of employee. Third, for a successful diversity recruitment more than a third of the interview time should be spent on diversity-related questions like culture sharing, working relationships with diverse employees, adaptation in a diverse work environment, communication styles to work with diverse teams, and resolving diversity conflicts.

### **Diversity Training**

Diversity training aims at diversity awareness, valuing and respecting differences by creating inclusivity and workplace cohesiveness( Bezrukova, 2017), companies that encourage and assist employees to work well with various coworkers are essential for success in today's varied workplaces to ensure work coherence, efficiency, and improvements. Organizational diversity training initiatives in the workplace may be a key tool for eliminating intergroup bias and providing subgroups with an equitable opportunity to demonstrate their worth in helping the firm make better decisions. Diversity learning research must continue to explore new avenues in order to maximize staff learning about other people's perspectives in a way that is free of society categorizations, biases, and prejudices.

Kalinosk et al., (2013) conducted a meta-analysis in order to investigate the potentially different impacts on affective-based, cognitive-based, and skill-based results. This research gave an applied advantage to HR managers and mentors offering to implement diversity training within organizations, in addition to major theoretical advancements for academics. There was quantifiable proof that diversity training alters trainee outcomes in the emotional, cognitive, and skill domains. Additionally, this study discusses and supports the need for further investigation. Each field develops slowly and with a restricted emphasis because of this division. The domains of diversity education and training have grown independently (King, Gulick, & Avery, 2010).

In addition to the subject, Bezrukova et al (2016) conducted a study on "meta-analytical addition of over 40 years of investigation on diversity training appraisal". The results revealed an overall effect size with the major effect being for reactions to training and intellectual learning. Diversity training had an adverse impact on responses and behavioral/emotional learning over time, but it had a stabilizing or even increasing effect on cognitive learning in some situations. Results showed that good diversity training does happen, even if most of the diversity training programmes failed to determine efficacy on few training criteria. When diversity training was integrated with additional events aimed at raising awareness and building skills, the benefits were stronger and lasted longer.

Moreover, Devine and Ash (2022) hold research on "diversity training goals, limitations, and promise: a review of the multidisciplinary literature." According to this study, the excitement for and financial investment in diversity training has surpassed the body of data showing that these initiatives are successful in meeting their objectives. The

results of this study suggested that future studies into diversity training should involve collaboration between scholars and practitioners. The findings of this study provided a road map for developing a more arduous and pertinent discipline of diversity training.

Martin, (2007) have not demonstrated how much diversity training should contribute to the organization's overall requirements for skill, knowledge, and conduct in order to provide an acceptable level of organizational climate. The particular areas of leadership accountability for diversity management have not been revealed by the relevant study. For the organization to fully benefit from diversity management, organizational learning must be used to integrate diversity management into organizational culture.

### **Diversity climate**

Choi, (2013) described the diversity climate, in particular, represents unanimous agreement organizational-level perceptions of an organization's commitment to diversity-friendly managerial practices (e.g., diversity training, recruiting, and mentoring) (Opstrup & Villadsen, 2015) and diversity leadership to value all demographic groups.

Ehrhart, et al (2013) identified diversity climate phenomena as employee perception about the top management agenda for managing diversity, programs, policies and its expected outcomes. Organizational diversity initiatives, also known as programs and policies, are widely used to encourage inclusion, recruiting, retention, and advancement of underrepresented groups and to make organizations more equitable. Despite the broad adoption of diversity efforts, a number of empirical analyses highlight their challenges (Dover, Kaiser & Major (2020). According to Goyal and Shrivastava (2013), organizational climate is an organization's culture, whereas diversity climate is the 'culture' of diversity and inclusion. Organizations adopt best practice in managing diversity, as well as initiatives and programs, to improve the overall organizational diversity environment. In addition, Dwertmann, Nishii and Van Knippenberg (2016) presented a theory-based assessment of experimental research in diversity climate to highlight a number of issues with the existing state of the information and a research agenda to bring the area forward. It found that the perspective on fairness and discrimination is result of equal employment laws and organizational policies that have been implemented across the world to minimize both access and treatment discrimination. Employment discrimination is a severe and costly problem, necessitating efforts to promote greater justice and minimize prejudice.

Gelfand et al (2005) in their study emphasized the equal opportunity laws and organizational policies that have been implemented globally to reduce both access and treatment discrimination gave rise to the fairness and discrimination perspective. Employment discrimination continues to be a serious and expensive problem in terms of not only legal liability but also negative organizational perceptions among external stakeholders who prefer to invest in organizations with fair practices and high operational costs associated with diversity-related disengagement and/or turnover. Therefore, top management efforts to promote greater fairness and reduce discrimination are necessary.

The concept of leadership accountability is indeed new concept relevant to Pakistani context. Similarly there is scarcity of research in diversity management due to irrelevancy of DM context of homogeneity of population. The majority of the research has concentrated on diversity recruitment and how it may be handled to improve organizational performance. There is a research gap between the literature on leadership role and diversity recruitment (Pitts, 2016) There are little evidences of literature available, however Amin, (2022): Khan (2019): Mirza, (2012): Yasser, (2012): Al-Mamun (2011) had explored diversity management with dimension of gender diversity. Though, there is no evidence of any study focused leadership accountability linked with diversity efforts distinctly with diversity training and diversity recruitment with outcome of diversity climate. Otherwise, researches are commonly based on standalone practice or the diversity management "bundles"

(Kulik,2014). Public managers should try to understand these workers' perspectives and think about what their companies may do to help them feel more welcomed. Avery and McKay (2010) elucidated that theoretical evidence showed demographics, leadership accountability, and foremost is DM influence diversity climate. On the bases of above-mentioned literature this researcher study that a significant relationship between leadership accountability, recruitment and training.

### Material and Methods

This study adopted cross sectional research design. The study population was the entire number of people with the same characteristics from which the researcher selected the sample size. The target populations for this study employees working in Multinational Corporation in Pakistan. Multinational Corporation are characterized as global business environment (Mayrhofer & Prange, 2015). Therefore this study assumes that due to global perspective MNCs have Diversity management practices to manage its diverse workforce in host country. This study was quantitative in nature, and the multi stage sampling technique was employed since it gave the study population an equal opportunity to be chosen (Zikmund, Carr & Griffin, 2013) By creating smaller groups at each level of the multistage sampling technique, researchers were able to get a sample from the entire universe. Furthermore, in the multistage sampling technique, there was a need of sample frame which listed the members of population. At the 3<sup>rd</sup> stage, the employees from the selected multinational companies were selected by using the simple random sampling techniques.

The employees' data was gathered about the diversity climate in the MNCs with the help of diversity climate scale. Study adapted the McKay et al. (2008) diversity climate scale to assess respondents' perception of the organization's diversity climate. The scale items concentrate on previously recognized important aspects of the diversity climate, diversity management practices, such as equal and fair treatment and support for diversity from top leaders. Responses were recorded on a 4-point likert-type scale, anchored at "never" and "always." Item analyses indicated acceptable internal consistency (Cronbach's  $\alpha = 0.79$ ).

Study was carried out in six multinational companies if Pakistan located in Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad. 722 questionnaires were distributed among employees of MNCs, 625 returned back and 44 were not utilized due to inadequacy .581 were utilized for analysis of responses with the response rate of 86.57%.

### Data Analysis

Study utilized descriptive and inferential analysis techniques. Descriptive analysis provided details the information about the respondents' gender and age. In this study, 79.5% respondents were male and 20.5% respondents were female. Whereas half of the respondents were from the age group of 21-30 and rest 39.25% were from the age group of 31-40. 8.26% respondents belong to the age group of 41-50 and the remaining 2.58% respondents were from the age group of 51-60. The study utilized correlation and data analysis technique to review the relationship between, diversity recruitment, diversity training, and leadership accountability.

**Table 1**  
**Relationship between leadership accountability and recruitment**

	Mean	St. Dev	Leadership accountability	Recruitment
Leadership accountability	25.58	6.568	1	
Recruitment	28.71	6.624	.460(**)	1

The results of above table partially supported the hypothesis H<sub>1</sub> (there is a strong significant relationship between leadership accountability and recruitment; as the leadership accountability has a moderate level of relationship with recruitment ( $r = 0.460$ ,  $n = 581$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ))

**Table 3**  
**Relationship between leadership and training**

	Mean	St. Dev	Leadership accountability	Training
<b>Leadership accountability</b>	25.58	6.568	1	
<b>Training</b>	22.30	4.537	.576(**)	1

The results of above table strongly supported H<sub>2</sub>, indicated a significant and strong positive relationship of leadership accountability with training ( $r = 0.576$ ,  $n = 581$ ,  $p < 0.01$ )

## Results and Discussion

It has been determined that factors like globalization, demographic, evolving new value systems, education level and aptitude, and changing roles and statues have led to the conclusion that the workforce of an organization is becoming more diverse and more demanding which necessitates an effective leadership. Leadership role is not confined to only policy formulation and implementation, indeed it is extended to accountability role for organizational policies and practices, this study analysed the relationship of LA with diversity climate. Cachat-Rosset, Carillo, & Klarsfeld (2019) stated that Diversity climate is operationalized as perception of employees about fairness of organizational policies and practices. It's time to create a reliable indicator based on these factors so that organizations can accurately assess their diversity climate and effectively implement DMP and procedures. Additionally, by putting more of an emphasis on how important organizational and societal circumstances are, practitioners will be better able to adapt diversity programs to these contexts. Choi and Rainey, (2010); Choi, (2008); and Pitts, (2009) evaluated on of the literature, earlier empirical research did not make a distinction between the impacts of organizational-wide diversity policies and the impacts of leadership actions that are strategically important for developing an inclusive organizational culture. Unfortunately, there is scarcity of research which uses DMP predicts diversity climate. Kunze et al., (2013) posited that DC is seldom treated as an outcome but as moderator or predictor. Second, employee reports of organizational activities rather than the formal organizational activities reflected in diversity programs are typically the predictor variables when diversity climate is evaluated as an outcome.

This study sought out relationship of leadership accountability with the components of diversity climate components (diversity recruitment, diversity training) which collectively establishes diversity climate. These components collectively contribute and researcher was interested to understand their individual relationship with leadership accountability. The findings indicated a moderate level of positive relationship observed between leadership accountability and recruitment ( $r = 0.460$ ,  $n = 581$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). Diversity recruitment entails organizational planned effort to attract diverse candidates with different background on the basis of their age, gender, education, religion and disability (Clark et al,2019: Hunt et al,205: Hindorff et al,2018). Further, Holck, Muhr, and Villesèche, (2016) identified multiple stages a companies carried out in diverse recruitment, At the first stage companies signals their fair and indiscriminate treatment by advocating valuing diversity and equal employment opportunities in job advertisement. At the second stage hiring process priorities some consideration at the time of recruitment like value of difference on the bases of diverse background, interview time flexibly, evaluation on the basis of divers perspective. In this study responses analyzed on organizational treatment with diverse employees and fairness of recruitment process. The partially strong relationship between

DR and leadership accountability refers a partial establishment of diverse climate. Indeed, achieving a strong DC is herculean task for any company leadership encountering multidimensional environmental obstacles and employee expectations in cultural context of Pakistan. While intentions to draw conclusions on these findings are mainly effected by the socio-economic conditions, political instability and regional disparities. Similarly, organizational policies have multiple challenges for equal share of women representation in workforce due to male dominant cultural and social expectations. In this regard diversity recruitment process was analyzed publication of job advertisement in women journals and organizational formal policy for women recruitment for managerial positions.

The findings indicated a significant and strong positive relationship of leadership accountability with diversity training ( $r = 0.576, n = 581, p < 0.01$ ). DT is a diligent effort of employer to create a an inclusive wokplce free from biases, prejudices and harassment (Bezrukova, 2016). Indeed, DT focuses on identifying utmost need by training need assessment which should be ideally conducted quarterly (Bezrukova, et al 2012: Devine & Ash, 2022). Further DT objectively addresses the needs of current variation of employees' organization claim it diverse. Henceforth women have been mainly focused in DT agenda for an equal treatment by offering managerial trainings.

In this regard Top management was assessed with the fair complaint system with prompt feedback, diverse employee involvement in in decision making for policy formulation and sharing level of achievement of diversity goals with employees. Moreover role of leadership was assessed also for organizational perspective in establishing diversity culture and reward or reprimand for mangers if not adhering and implementing fair/indiscriminate policies. similar findings of Jin et al (2017), Mohamad Karkouti, (2016), Boehm, & Dwertmann, (2015) were found consistent, emphasizing effectiveness of double edge sword of diversity extensively depends on top management involvement and its procedural accountability.

McKay et al, (2007) stated that despite the fact that organizational diversity policies and processes can be successful in fostering a diverse climate; these efforts might only be the beginning of generating productive work environments for employees. Cox and Blake (1991) asserted that the success of diversity management initiatives heavily depends on managerial commitment and involvement of leadership. Wolfe, et al (2015) expounded that diversity managers need to be actively involved in handling diversity issues if they want to foster an inclusive organizational environment. Similarly, Myers (2003) claimed that execution of DMP depends on the decisive role of managers and crucial evaluation of top management.

### **Research Limitations/ Direction for future Research**

This study has envisaged the assessment and evolution of diversity management practices and diversity climate in multinational companies of Pakistan. The study was executed with possible practical results, indeed comprehend some limitations, Role of leadership has been analyzed in establishing diversity climate whereas future research can analyze moderating role of managerial perception about diversity culture and perspective. This study has utilized two diversity management practices to analyses role leadership accountability. Future research can incorporate other diversity practices like retention, mentoring and rewards. This study has carried out with quantitative research method while qualitative method can bring forth more in-depth underpinning context and perspectives about top management role in establishing diversity climate. Further studies can uptake effort to explore other than fairness & discrimination perspective of diversity climate like synergic or access and legitimacy. Study sample was MNCs assumed to be with better policies and procedures .the public and private sector leadership can use such lenses for evaluation of their human resource practices to maximize their role significance.



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