People management, diversity practices and workforce productivity: Basis for development of strategic IT optimization

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Abstract

This study aimed to assess the people management practices, diversity practices, and workforce productivity among IT companies in China that was made the basis in developing an independent optimization framework for IT companies. The study utilized the descriptive design as it provided an overview and described the existing state of people management practices, diversity practices and their impact on workforce productivity within IT companies. The survey questionnaire was the gathering instrument tool to gather information about these practices and data reveal potential relationships between variables. The respondents of the study were the 400 employees from IT companies. Based on the results, respondents demonstrate moderate agreement on the effective people management practices highlighting talent acquisition, talent development, and talent retention; they revealed agreement on the diversity practices encompassing demographic representation, inclusion, and equity which signifies a shared understanding of the value diversity and inclusion brings to the IT workplace. IT respondents have agreed that skilled and knowledgeable workforce, effective collaboration practices and strategic use of technology were substantial in achieving high productivity in the field of IT. There is a statistically significant relationship between talent acquisition and skills and knowledge. There is no statistically significant relationship between people management and diversity practices. Further, there is no statistically significant relationship between talent retention and the sub variables of workforce productivity. No significant relationship is also found between diversity practices and workforce productivity. An independent optimization framework has been developed for IT companies.

Keywords: people management, diversity practices, workforce productivity, independent optimization framework

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1. Introduction

Industries are driven by innovation, and the information technology (IT) sector is one of its dynamic drivers. Improving IT capabilities is more than simply having the latest and hardware and software. Organizations place a high priority on managing people in today's competitive world. This includes developing a diverse staff and fostering an environment that is conducive to productivity. To establish strategies for strategic IT optimization, this study looks at the crucial connection of labor productivity, diversity practices, and people management. In businesses such as information technology, where a significant level of expertise and knowledge is necessary, human resources play a crucial role. In this highly modern and competitive industry, the key to growth and development lies in the effective utilization of human resources, which are more crucial than any other resources. Companies require employees that possess remarkable expertise, aptitude, and education. The quality of human resources, which requires ongoing and versatile training, determines the quality of both services and products. Information technology firms usually prioritize the creation and maintenance of a plan that is centered around human resource development strategies in order to cultivate and support their workforce.

People management in the IT business encompasses the methods and approaches that firms employ to effectively attract, inspire, develop and retain their IT personnel. This includes a broad spectrum of tasks, ranging from constructing highly efficient teams to cultivating a favorable work atmosphere. The IT industry is currently experiencing a paradigm shift in its approach to personnel management, promotion of diversity, and enhancement of productivity. Several firms are adopting agile approaches, which empower teams and necessitate flexible leadership styles (Byrd et al., 2019). Furthermore, there is a growing emphasis on the well-being of employees, as seen by the implementation of stress management programs (Chang et al., 2020). The pandemic has had a substantial impact on remote work, leading to the implementation of flexible work arrangements by numerous IT organizations (Gunnarson et al., 2024).

The IT sector is currently experiencing a growing focus on diversity and inclusion. Ongoing endeavors are being made to attract and maintain women in the technology field, while endeavors such as acknowledging the significance of neurodiversity are gaining momentum (Ashford et al., 2022; Wang & Hung, 2019). Simply having a diverse workforce is insufficient. Businesses are becoming increasingly aware of the significance of cultivating an inclusive atmosphere that promotes a sense of worth and admiration for all individuals (Society for Human Resource Management, 2020). Technological innovations are significantly enhancing productivity in IT organizations. Project management tools, communication platforms, and automation technologies are simplifying workflows and liberating employees' time (Ahn et al., 2020; Berry et al., 2018). Traditional performance evaluations are being substituted with more regular check-ins and feedback tools to improve employee engagement and overall performance (Society for Human Resource Management, 2023).

Human resource management and development includes, among other things, hiring practices, training guidelines, performance and promotion guidelines, transfer guidelines, pay scales, social security guidelines, employee's welfare guidelines, recreational guidelines, employee/employer/management relations, trade unions, health guidelines, and so forth. Together, these components enable these organizations to develop highly skilled, productive, dynamic, and efficient people resources. The right person must be placed in the right role and have diversified, continuous training to maximize their potential if information technology organizations are to prosper (Wassell & Bouchard, 2020). Information and communication technology (ICT) includes things like the internet and mobile communication. New media has been around for a while, and ICT may help a lot in implementing an organization's personnel policy. Technological developments can have a big impact on a company's human resources division. Strengthening internal processes, critical competences, target markets, and

overall organizational structure are all made possible by this (Alami et al., 2016).

Aligning human resources with the organization's strategic goals should be the priority of every company. These strategies need to be guided by an organization-wide IT strategic plan. Information technology systems and product design (research and development) are two instances of activities related to technological improvements in the entity (Nugroho, 2020). Information technology may have a greater influence on organizations that work in dynamic environments. As a result, human resources will operate more effectively and efficiently. Consequently, the productivity of the company will increase with the implementation of an improved recruitment system and an IT program for database administration. HR and line managers share a common concern: the company's success. Assisting the organization's workforce requirements is the main responsibility of human resources. If line managers receive training and development in IT technology, they will be better equipped for a range of leadership positions. HR IT solutions have the potential to enhance management and boost productivity and efficacy, thereby improving the company's overall performance.

The current businesses have realized that using technology effectively for human resource systems is necessary. Businesses use HR IT technology to accomplish this goal in order to provide a wide range of products and diversify their revenue streams by offering superior goods and services. Businesses now use online job boards to identify the best candidates for available openings. Because more people are aware of the offer thanks to the internet, the hiring process has become more efficient, increasing the likelihood of finding qualified candidates. Employers can also utilize web portals to provide all relevant information on employment, careers, and personal development of workers. HR IT systems can also analyze employee performance data more frequently because of employee online. This is a wonderful advertising tool for the people management. HR IT solutions help with both talent management and keeping top people. Since the application of technology facilitates paperless and easier data administration, the efficacy and efficiency of the tasks are increased as a result.

One of the biggest challenges facing companies all over the world is building and sustaining a strong talent. Not only do businesses need to adjust to shifting demographics and work force preferences, but they must also build new capabilities Executives and HR management have always been focused on basic talent management—acquiring, hiring and retaining talented Employees especially in IT industry. One of the crucial elements of a successful business is having the best people in the world, therefore, to drive optimal levels of success, business leaders need engaged, high-performing employees. The need to identify, develop, succession plan, improve recruitment and retention of such individuals is at the heart of the emergence of talent management. Talent management encompasses recruiting, onboarding, performance and goals, compensation, learning, and succession and development. When all those things work in harmony, effective talent management becomes a company's competitive advantage.

Over the past few decades, China's IT sector has expanded, and many of these businesses have been searching for the best employees. But there is more competition in the tech talent pool. Improving personnel management is essential as an increasing number of Chinese tech companies are facing a talent shortage that could provide valuable insights into the industry. Flexible work schedules, frequent use of electronics, and the use of transient messaging apps like WeChat are all important factors for IT companies in China. These include using personal devices or accounts for work-related activities when working from home and printing and discarding printed materials at home or in other locations.

For IT organizations to remain competitive in the talent market and relevant to their clientele, diversity is also crucial. A more diverse workforce has more opportunities for advancement and success in an inclusive work environment. The goal of diversity in technology is to provide new viewpoints to an industry that has historically been exclusive and homogeneous. Diversity in tech should be prioritized for ethical reasons, including more equality. These days, customers have greater expectations for goods and services that cater to their various, unique wants and preferences. Employees, however, are more demanding of their employers; they expect an

environment that values their varied viewpoints, experiences, and skill sets. Having a more diverse workforce means diverse opinions, backgrounds, and perspectives. With a team of diverse employees, you will have access to more creativity and wider skill sets. The tech industry is undeniably dominated by men. Diversity in tech statistics show that year after year, women are even less represented in engineering and IT.

IT companies have strong capabilities to grow given proper management. IT management should implement a good management system, allowing them to better control and protect their network assets and their people to help them implement seamlessly their own business operations. It is therefore the reason why it's important to examine their best practices and explore strategies on how to properly manage IT companies. Considering the current issues among IT companies, the researcher investigated the elements that develop integrated management approaches among IT companies, including talent management, diversity practices and workforce productivity. These are crucial foundational variables that many IT companies should look into to be able to determine better management system of IT firms. The creation of a synergistic framework model for Chinese IT companies would be the research's output.

Objectives of the study - This study aimed to assess the people management practices, diversity practices, and workforce productivity among IT companies in China that will be the basis in developing a strategic IT optimization. Specifically, it determined the people management practices as to talent acquisition, talent development, and talent retention; described the diversity practices in terms of demographic representation, inclusion and belonging and equity and fairness; assessed workforce productivity as to skills and knowledge, collaboration and use of technology; tested the significant relationship between people management practices, diversity practices and workforce productivity and developed a strategic IT optimization..

2. Methods

Research Design - This study utilized a descriptive design as it is the most suitable research design in providing an overview of the variables used in the study and their interactions with IT firms. The descriptive design allowed the proponent to describe and characterize the current state of people management, diversity practices and workforce diversity in IT organizations. The researcher employed a descriptive approach to get insight into the present condition of people management practices, diversity initiatives, and worker productivity in the IT business. This design facilitated the identification of potential correlations between these variables and investigated the role of diversity practices on employee well-being, which in turn can affect productivity (Byrd et al., 2019; Chang et al., 2020).

Participants. - The study used 400 Employees working in five IT companies in Beijing, China. Said companies are located and among global companies in Beijing, China. The employees are the most reliable participants as their viewpoints are necessary in determining how the people management practices, and diversity practices affect the workforce productivity in IT companies. IT employees are directly affected by the implementation of effective people management techniques, diversity efforts, and various elements that influence their own productivity. Their experiences and viewpoints are essential for comprehending the efficacy of these techniques within the IT business. The objective of the study is probably to enhance the efficiency of IT operations; hence it is crucial to obtain input from the workforce directly engaged in these activities. Gaining insight into their encounters with supervisors, group interactions, and utilized resources might illuminate opportunities for enhancement. IT professionals possess specialized knowledge regarding the details and potentialities of managing personnel, promoting diversity, and enhancing efficiency within their industry. Examples of potential areas of study could encompass evaluations of the efficacy of different communication styles, assessments of how team makeup influences project outcomes, or examinations of the use of productivity tools.

Instrument - The study used the survey questionnaire as the data gathering tool in assessing the three main variables in the study namely people management practices, diversity practices and workforce productivity. The

questionnaire is self-constructed based on literature and published papers related to the variables of the study. The instrument is tailored to address the objectives of the study. The indicators for each variable were carefully prepared to address the specific needs of the target respondents. The first part of the questionnaire assessed the people management practices as to talent acquisition, talent development and talent retention. The second part contains indicators to describe the diversity practices as to demographic representation, inclusion and equity. The third part focused on the indicators to measure the workforce productivity in terms of skills and knowledge, collaboration and use of technology.

The questionnaire was subjected to pilot testing among small group of individuals who have the same characteristics of the actual respondents. Based on results, the People Management, Diversity Practices and Workforce Productivity Instrument has an Excellent consistency as exhibited by the Cronbach's Alpha value of (.975). This was validated by the Excellent remark from People Management Practices (.925); it was confirmed by the Good results from Talent Acquisition (.870), and Talent Development (.830), and Acceptable result from Talent Retention (.777). Also, it was validated by the Excellent remark from Diversity Practices (.961); it was confirmed by the Excellent results from Demographic Representation (.908), and Inclusion ang Belonging (.914), and Good result from Equity and Fairnes (.887). It was further validated by the Excellent result from Worforce Productivity (.954); it was confirmed by the Good results from Skills and Knowledge (.869), and Excellent results from Collaboration (.914), and Good result from Use of Technology (.922); which shows that the instrument at hand passed the reliability index test.

Data Gathering Procedure - The questionnaire was subjected to content validation done by experts in the field. Content validation helps ensure that questions accurately reflect the intended constructs and capture the relevant information. Experts can identify questions that might be ambiguous, confusing, or prone to misinterpretation by respondents. This helps to ensure that everyone interprets the questions in the same way that will lead to more reliable data. Pilot testing was done from small group of employees to help create a more reliable instrument that collects more consistent data. The questionnaires were administered to 400 employees working in selected IT companies in Beijing, China. The responses were gathered using online platform. The researcher then asked permission to the owners of the IT companies for the questionnaire to be sent and distributed online to the targeted respondents. Respondents were assured that all information gathered will remain under full confidentiality and will solely be used for this research.

Data Analysis - Weighted mean and rank were used to determine the people management practices as to talent acquisition, talent development, and talent retention; describe the diversity practices in terms of demographic representation, inclusion and belonging, equity and fairness; assess the factors influencing workforce productivity as to skills and knowledge, collaboration and use of technology. The result of Shapiro-Wilk Test showed that p-values of all variables were less than 0.05 which means that the data set was not normally distributed. Therefore, Spearman rho was used as part of the non-parametric tests to determine the significant relationship. All analyses were performed using SPSS version 28.

Ethical Considerations - Ethics review is conducted to ensure that the study complies with ethical norms that protect the welfare, privacy, and confidentiality of IT employee participants. This encompasses the process of securing clear agreement from participants, reducing potential dangers related with their involvement, and guaranteeing the preservation of data confidentiality as previously pledged. An ethics review enhances the recognition and protection of participants' independence and self-determination. Individuals should have the autonomy to decide whether to take part and possess the entitlement to quit at any point without facing any negative consequences. The evaluation procedure guarantees that the study adheres to appropriate data collection, storage, and disposal protocols to safeguard the sensitive information of participants. This entails the process of de-identifying data whenever feasible and adopting suitable security protocols.

Ethics review committees evaluate any biases in the study's design or data analysis. They guarantee that the research is carried out with impartiality and objectivity, correctly reflecting the experiences of all participants.

Although the primary concern of ethical review is the well-being of participants, it also serves to enhance scientific rigor. The review procedure serves to detect any weaknesses in the study design and propose enhancements that bolster the quality and trustworthiness of the research. The process of conducting ethics review plays a crucial role in establishing and strengthening public confidence in scientific research. Transparency and strict adherence to ethical norms are essential for authenticating the study's findings and guaranteeing their responsible utilization for strategic IT optimization. Through the process of undergoing an ethics assessment, the study showcases its dedication to conducting research in a responsible manner and safeguarding the rights and well-being of the IT employee participants. This ultimately enhances the research's credibility and its capacity to optimize IT operations.

3. Results & discussion

Table 1

Summary Table on People Management Practices

Key Result Areas	Composite Mean	VI	Rank
Talent Acquisition	2.98	Agree	3
Talent Development	3.13	Agree	1
Talent Retention	3.09	Agree	2
Grand Composite Mean	3.07	Agree	

Legend:3.50-4.00=Strongly Agree;2.50-3.49=Agree;1.50-.2.49=Disagree;1.00-1.49=Strongly Disagree

Table 1 summarized the people management practices with a grand composite mean of 3.07 where the respondents showed agreement on the dimensions of talent acquisition, talent development and talent retention. A focus on people management practices across talent acquisition, development and retention reflects holistic approach to talent management, leading to a more engaged, skilled, and loyal workforce. This contributes to a significant competitive advantage in today's dynamic business environment. Kuva et al. (2020) revealed that effective practices on people management contribute to the achievement of business goals to ensure that organizations have the right talent, right skills and right roles. Similarly Allen et al. (2017) asserted that since people are the most valuable assets in an organization, investing in their well-being and development demonstrate their commitment to their workforce that leads to more productive talent pool and more engaged employees.

Among the dimensions of people management practices, talent development got the highest score (3.13) which implies that talent development has perceived long-term benefits that will align with employee needs and has a potential for measurable impact. However, successful implementation requires careful planning, resource allocation, and a strategic focus on aligning development efforts with organizational goals. It is important to consider that investing in employee development demonstrates an organization's commitment to its workforce and caters to the growing desire for continuous learning and skill growth which can lead to higher employee engagement and motivation (Burke & Long, 2020).

Table 2

Summary Table on Diversity Practices

Key Result Areas	Composite Mean	VI	Rank
Demographic Representation	2.91	Agree	3
Inclusion and Belonging	3.07	Agree	2
Equity and Fairness	3.17	Agree	1
Grand Composite Mean	3.05	Agree	

Legend:3.50-4.00=Strongly Agree;2.50-3.49=Agree;1.50-.2.49=Disagree;1.00-1.49=Strongly Disagree

Table 2 presents the summary of diversity practices as to demographic representation, inclusion and belonging and equity and fairness. With a grand composite mean of 3.05, the respondents generally agreed on the dimensions of diversity practices. Among the dimensions, equity and fairness topped the list which demonstrates that IT employees feel that everyone has a fair chance to succeed regardless of their background. Additionally, these results also emphasize that equity and fairness in diversity and inclusion practices highlight

the importance of creating a level where everyone has the opportunity to thrive based on their merit and abilities. It is worth noting that fairness is generally viewed as desirable concept across cultures and background and employees likely value to feel fairly treated if there are equal opportunities for their career advancements. According to Milligan et al. (2020), programs and activities are valuable, however, true inclusion requires a framework of fairness and equity. To ensure fair treatment is important for the employees sense of belonging and psychological safety.

Table 3

Summary Table on Factors Influencing Workforce Productivity

Key Result Areas	Composite Mean	VI	Rank
Skills and Knowledge	3.54	Strongly Agree	1
Collaboration	3.45	Agree	2
Use of Technology	3.41	Agree	3
Grand Composite Mean	3.47	Agree	

Legend:3.50-4.00=Strongly Agree;2.50-3.49=Agree;1.50-.2.49=Disagree;1.00-1.49=Strongly Disagree

Table 3 summarizes the factors influencing workforce productivity. Having a grand composite mean of 3.47, it indicates that the IT respondents generally agreed on the factors influencing workforce productivity. Among the dimensions, the respondents strongly agreed on the skills and knowledge which influence the workforce productivity of the IT employees. The use of technology is important for IT employees in improving their productivity, however, it is coupled with a strong foundation of the skills and knowledge which is essential for IT professionals in maximizing the benefits of technology to achieve higher workforce productivity.

Recent findings of Brynjolfsson et al., (2018) revealed that even the most advanced technology requires human expertise to operate effectively. Employees need the skills and knowledge to understand, configure, and use the technology to its full potential. Moreover, Davenport, et al., (2020) confirmed that IT field is constantly changing, and strong skills and knowledge will allow employees to adapt to the needed new technology, troubleshoot problems, and find creative solutions using the modern technology. At present, modern technologies produce significant amounts of data. Strong skills in data analysis and interpretation are crucial for providing valuable insights and using technology for data-driven decision making.

Table 4

Relationship Between People Management Practices and Diversity Practices

Variables	rho	p-value	Interpretation
Talent Acquisition			
Demographic Representation	0.034	0.499	Not Significant
Inclusion and Belonging	0.075	0.135	Not Significant
Equity and Fairness	-0.036	0.474	Not Significant
Talent Development			
Demographic Representation	0.046	0.360	Not Significant
Inclusion and Belonging	0.051	0.307	Not Significant
Equity and Fairness	-0.029	0.565	Not Significant
Talent Retention			
Demographic Representation	0.067	0.181	Not Significant
Inclusion and Belonging	0.063	0.208	Not Significant
Equity and Fairness	0.032	0.519	Not Significant

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Table 4 shows the relationship between people management practices and diversity practices. The computed rho-values ranging from 0.034 to 0.075 indicate a very weak direct relationship between talent acquisition and the sub variables of diversity practices namely demographic representation, and inclusion and belonging while the computed rho-value of -0.036 indicates a very weak indirect relationship between talent acquisition and equity and fairness. The computed rho-values ranging from 0.046 to 0.051 indicate a very weak direct relationship between talent development and the sub variables of diversity practices namely demographic representation, and inclusion and belonging while the computed rho-value of -0.029 indicates a very weak indirect relationship

between talent development and equity and fairness.

The computed rho-values ranging from 0.032 to 0.067 indicate a very weak direct relationship between talent development and the sub variables of diversity practices. There was no statistically significant relationship between people management and diversity practices because the obtained p-values were greater than 0.01. A p-value greater than 0.01 indicates that the observed relationship between variables, people management and diversity practices could be due to chance. It means that evidences from this study may not be strong enough to definitely reject the possibility of chance. The relationship between people management and diversity practices might be indirect. For example, good people management practices might lead to a more inclusive work environment, which then fosters diversity. The study might not have captured this indirect effect. The way the study measured people management and diversity practices might not have been accurate or captured the full picture.

Table 5

Relationship Between People Management Practices and Workforce Productivity

Variables	rho	p-value	Interpretation
Talent Acquisition			
Skills and Knowledge	-0.134**	0.007	Significant
Collaboration	-0.054	0.278	Not Significant
Use of Technology	0.050	0.319	Not Significant
Talent Development			
Skills and Knowledge	0.008	0.879	Not Significant
Collaboration	0.005	0.919	Not Significant
Use of Technology	0.035	0.486	Not Significant
Talent Retention			
Skills and Knowledge	-0.033	0.511	Not Significant
Collaboration	0.036	0.476	Not Significant
Use of Technology	0.055	0.272	Not Significant

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Further, there might be other factors like company size, industry among others that influence the relationship between people management and diversity practices. The study might not have accounted for these moderators. Also, people management practices might be a relatively new focus in some IT companies. It might take time for their impact on diversity to be fully realized. The relationship between people management and diversity practices might vary depending on the national culture of the IT companies studied. Some cultures might have a stronger emphasis on diversity and inclusion within their management practices (Souza & Gama, 2020).

Table 5 depicts the relationship between people management practices and workforce productivity. The computed rho-values ranging from -0.054 to -0.134 indicate a very weak indirect relationship between talent acquisition and the sub variables of workforce productivity namely skills and knowledge and collaboration while the computed rho-value of 0.050 indicates a very weak direct relationship between talent acquisition and use of technology. There was a statistically significant relationship between talent acquisition and skills and knowledge because the obtained p-value was less than 0.01. A statistically significant relationship between talent acquisition and skills and knowledge in IT is expected. By focusing on factors during the process of recruitment, it may ensure organizations can bring in qualified IT professionals who can effectively contribute in achieving the organization's objectives to maintain a competitive edge in the business.

Interestingly, according to Brynjolfsson et al., (2018), in the IT industry, strong technical skills and knowledge are essential for successful job performance. Talent acquisition professionals prioritize these skills when in the recruiting and selecting candidates. Further, Smith, et al., (2021) confirmed that IT industry is constantly changing, and talent acquisition strategies need to keep pace. Focusing on skills and knowledge of the candidates ensures how they can adapt easily and learn from new technologies. Likewise, IT projects often have specific skill and knowledge requirements. Talent acquisition plays a crucial role in identifying and attracting candidates who possess the necessary expertise to achieve project goals. Hiring individuals with the right skills and

knowledge helps organizations build high-performing IT teams capable of delivering efficient and innovative solutions.

The computed rho-values ranging from 0.005 to 0.035 indicate a very weak direct relationship between talent development and the sub variables of workforce productivity. There was no statistically significant relationship between talent development and the sub variables of workforce productivity because the obtained p-values were greater than 0.01. The computed rho-value of -0.033 indicates a very weak indirect relationship between talent retention and skills and knowledge while the computed rho-values ranging from 0.036 to 0.055 indicate a very weak direct relationship between talent retention and the sub variables of workforce productivity namely collaboration and use of technology. There was no statistically significant relationship between talent retention and the sub variables of workforce productivity because the obtained p-values were greater than 0.01.

Table 6

Relationship between Diversity Practices and Workforce Productivity

Variables	rho	p-value	Interpretation
Demographic Representation			
Skills and Knowledge	-0.010	0.835	Not Significant
Collaboration	0.092	0.065	Not Significant
Use of Technology	0.036	0.471	Not Significant
Inclusion and Belonging			
Skills and Knowledge	-0.034	0.502	Not Significant
Collaboration	-0.021	0.676	Not Significant
Use of Technology	-0.019	0.698	Not Significant
Equity and Fairness			
Skills and Knowledge	0.008	0.866	Not Significant
Collaboration	0.030	0.547	Not Significant
Use of Technology	0.044	0.385	Not Significant

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Table 6 shows the relationship between diversity practices and workforce productivity. It reveals that there is no significant relationship between diversity practices and workforce productivity. The computed rho-value of -0.010 indicates a very weak indirect relationship between demographic representation and skills and knowledge while the computed rho-values ranging from 0.036 to 0.092 indicate a very weak direct relationship between demographic representation and the sub variables of workforce productivity namely collaboration and use of technology. The computed rho-values ranging from -0.019 to -0.034 indicate a very weak indirect relationship between inclusion and belonging and the sub variables of workforce productivity. The computed rho-values ranging from 0.008 to 0.044 indicate a very weak direct relationship between equity and fairness and the sub variables of workforce productivity. There was no statistically significant relationship between diversity practices and workforce productivity because the obtained p-values were greater than 0.01.

It is important to remember that a non-significant finding does not necessarily mean that there is no relationship. It just means the evidence from this study is not strong enough to definitively reject the possibility of chance. The impact of diversity practices on productivity might be indirect. Like for example, fostering a diverse and inclusive work environment might lead to increased employee engagement and innovation, which then contributes to productivity. The study might not have captured this indirect effect. Further, measuring both diversity practices and workforce productivity can be complex. The methods used in the present study might not have accurately captured the distinctions of these factors. It might take time for the full benefits of diversity practices to be realized in terms of productivity among IT employees. The study might not have considered the long-term effects. Moreover, a single study with a non-significant finding should not negate the potential benefits of diversity practices (Richard et al., 2020).

Table 7

Strategic IT Optimization

Key Result	Objectives of the Strategies	Strategies	Expected Outcome

Areas			
Talent Acquisition Competitive salary package and attractive benefits	Incentivize personnel to attain exceptional performance by correlating their remuneration with their personal and/or collective accomplishment Analyze present benefits package to identify areas that can be enhanced in order to increase its competitiveness and appeal to both new and current IT personnel. Encourage a work-life balance for IT employees, to reduce burnout and cultivating a favorable work atmosphere.	Incorporate variable compensation options like bonuses, commissions, or stock options to incentivize performance and attract performers. Conduct an audit of current benefits package to identify gaps and areas for improvement. Consider employee feedback and the benefits which are most attractive in the IT industry Implement benefits that promote work-life balance, such as flexible work arrangements and generous paid time off	Enhanced staff involvement and efficiency. Attracting top performers who are looking for opportunities to increase their earnings based on their individual accomplishments. Enhanced employee contentment and motivation. Diminished employee attrition by providing useful benefits that are of importance to employees. Improved employer brand recognition to recruit high-caliber candidates in the IT job market. Enhanced employee welfare and psychological well-being. Enhanced employee retention by showcasing dedication to their welfare beyond the workplace. Appealing to job seekers who prioritize work-life balance, particularly valuable in the highly competitive IT field.
Recruitment Process utilizing technology and automation	Enhance the structure and searchability of candidate information to optimize candidate administration. Minimize the amount of time dedicated to manually searching for candidates. Enhance productivity for both recruiters and candidates by enabling self-service scheduling.	Develop and deploy an Applicant Tracking System (ATS) to optimize the process of finding, managing, and communicating with candidates. Utilize AI-powered tools to automate candidate sourcing. Implement automated interview scheduling tools that allow candidates to easily choose interview slots based on their availability.	Improved applicant experience by implementing a streamlined and well-structured application process with prompt notifications. High access to a broader selection of highly skilled prospects, which may include individuals who are not actively seeking new employment. Enhanced productivity for both recruiters and candidates by enabling self-service scheduling.
Demographic Representation Promoting multigenerational workforce including people with disability	Broaden the scope of your recruitment endeavors to attract individuals from various age demographics. Promote applications from individuals of all age demographics by refraining from using language or preconceptions that discriminate based on age. Promote a culture that encourages comprehension, admiration, and inclusiveness towards coworkers who have disabilities.	Employ diverse recruitment methods to access applicants across all age groups. Use inclusive language in job advertisements to actively encourage applications from individuals across all age groups. Offer comprehensive disability awareness training to all staff members to foster comprehension, respect and inclusiveness towards coworkers who have disabilities.	Increased access to a broader and more diverse group of highly skilled applicants with unique viewpoints and varied experiences. Enhanced variety in the pool of applicants, resulting in a workforce that better reflects the demographics of the population. Enhanced employee morale and fostered a stronger sense of inclusion among all staff members, including individuals with impairments.
Implementing a non-discrimination policies and benefits	Enhance Employee Awareness and Comprehension of policies Enhance the visibility and reliability of information Minimize Misinterpretations and Conflicts	Ensure the policy is readily available to all employees by offering it in several media, such as online and printed copies in different languages, and presenting it throughout the onboarding process. Encourage the utilization of Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) as a confidential means for employees to obtain guidance or assistance on policy or benefit matters. Regularly review and update the non-discrimination policy to reflect any changes in laws, regulations, or company practices.	Reduced likelihood of encountering legal complications Enhanced knowledge and comprehension of policies and benefits: Enhanced Employee Relations Evidenced dedication to adhering to regulations and standards: Recruiting and retaining highly skilled employees
Use of Technology Adequate training and resources to utilize technology	Identify skill and knowledge gaps to obtain a comprehensive picture of the specific technical skills and knowledge deficiencies. Allocate a sufficient budget for upskilling and reskilling initiatives is to equip your IT team with the most recent	Conduct of skills gap analysis to examine and identify particular technical skills and knowledge gaps within IT workforce. Provide sufficient budget in implementing upskilling and reskilling initiatives to ensure that IT team is up-to-date with the most recent technologies and industry	Improved Training Efficiency Enhanced Workforce Efficiency Enhanced expertise and understanding Enhanced productivity and efficiency Enhanced Employee Engagement and Retention Enhanced efficiency and output Enhanced acquisition and retention of

	technologies and industry trends.	trends.	knowledge and development of skills
	Offer a consolidated and readily available platform to cater to all the learning and development requirements of your IT personnel.	Create an internal technology learning platform that consolidates training materials, tutorials, documentation, and other resources in a user-friendly manner for easy access by employees.	
Tracking employee engagement with technology	Improve the overall adoption and engagement of technology. Enhance Technological Advancements and User Interface	Perform regular surveys to get numerical data on the level of employee involvement with technology.	Enhanced comprehension of the adoption and utilization of technology Improved User Interface and Design Enhanced Technology Adoption and User Experience
Develop Knowledge Base and Frequent Ask Questions FAQs: Gather a wide range of employee opinions and perspectives without any restrictions or biases.	Gather Diverse and Uninhibited Employee Feedback	Provide help desk to identify trends and common issues employees encounter when using technology Establish digital platforms such as online forums or suggestion boxes that enable employees to offer anonymous feedback on technological tools and their overall experience.	

4. Conclusion and recommendations

The respondents showed moderate agreement on the effective people management practices highlighting talent acquisition, talent development, and talent retention. The study revealed agreement on the diversity practices encompassing demographic representation, inclusion and belonging and equity and fairness which signifies a shared understanding of the value diversity and inclusion brings to the IT workplace. Respondents showed moderate agreement on the workforce diversity as to skills and knowledge, collaboration and use of technology. There was a statistically significant relationship between talent acquisition and skills and knowledge. There was no statistically significant relationship between people management and diversity practices. Further, there was no statistically significant relationship between talent retention and the sub variables of workforce productivity. No significant relationship was also found between diversity practices and workforce productivity. A strategic IT optimization was developed for the IT companies.

Human resource department heads may continuously research on the unique needs of IT professionals which may encompass motivations aside from salary, work-life balance struggles, and their preferences for remote work arrangements. Management of IT organizations may consider continuously implementing diversity policies that specifically target cultural elements, work styles, and generational disparities within the Chinese IT workforce. The IT managers may enhance the work environment by implementing optimal technology adoption techniques, collaboration tools, and communication tactics. This will help streamline workflows and promote teamwork. Future researchers could investigate the effects of artificial intelligence on recruiting, training, and communication, as well as the ways in which people management strategies can adjust to remote work and a globally interconnected workforce.

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