

# Uncertain Supply Chain Management

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## The impact of brand's effectiveness on navigating issues related to diversity equity and inclusion

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### ABSTRACT

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Diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) are crucial for commercial success, fostering innovation, fresh ideas, and mutual respect. Prioritizing DEI is vital for businesses to connect with a broader customer base. A study examined how effective diversity management influences a brand's diverse customer base and DEI policies. It explored the impact of DEI culture, workforce, evaluation practices, product issue resolution, and diversity partnerships on customers. Multinational entities surveyed, with 176 online HR and marketing experts participating. Likert scales, gauged responses, and structured equation modeling analyzed data. The study found that embedding DEI into company culture, maintaining diverse personnel, monitoring DEI performance, addressing DEI challenges with products, and engaging diverse partners positively affect a varied customer base. The research emphasizes that multicultural team leaders must prioritize diversity management for successful implementation, providing a theoretical and statistical framework for effective DEI policies across diverse clienteles.

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### 1. Introduction

Diversity, equity, and inclusion foster an organization's creativity, acceptance, and innovation. Diversity, equity, and inclusion increase a company's client base and service. The question is whether DEI difficulties affect creativity, efficiency, and brand impact. To please varied customers, brands must understand as much as possible about them to develop DEI policies that directly affect them (Al Adwan, 2020; Lehnert et al., 2021). They need customer feedback to do this. A brand's customers are usually diverse at different stages of their customer journeys with different service quality expectations. When an organization's personnel match its customers, a firm can better connect, empathize, and learn from them. Al Adwan (2020) posits that the more diverse the leadership team is, the more likely the company's target audience will identify with its products and services.

A thorough study needed to determine the effects of boosting DEI and the extent to which diversity management contributes to acquiring and maintaining customers from various backgrounds. Whether or not fostering DEI throughout the organization improves the company's ability to anticipate and respond to client needs, innovate new offerings, and grow as a whole remains to be seen. In addition, regular DEI assessments are a key area of focus in this context. These evaluations are important because they allow a company to address the vulnerabilities of its varied client base, which could otherwise undermine the effectiveness of the programs and initiatives. In addition, research is required to determine how DEI factors affect the product and whether or not increasing diversity, inclusion, and customer base is achieved by collaboration with partners from various backgrounds inside or beyond industries.

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## 2. Literature review and hypotheses development

### 2.1 *Embedded DEI in company culture*

The term "diversity" describes the various types of people that may be found in any given society, regardless of their race, religion, socioeconomic status, physical or mental abilities, or sexual orientation. Equality means that everyone is treated fairly and justly, regardless of identity. Inclusivity encourages participation from every member of a particular group or population. Making workers feel appreciated, accepted, and respected is essential for retaining the team. A strong dedication to diversity, equity, and inclusion is one strategy for achieving this (Shinners, 2021). An inclusive workplace boosts morale and productivity. Creating a safe area for employees to voice issues is a DE&I strategy. No matter who or what they do for the company, every employee should feel welcome and appreciated in a diverse and inclusive workplace (Pandey et al., 2021). The studies imply that by integrating cultural intelligence (Ruth & Netzer, 2020), diversity and inclusion guidelines (de Souza & Gama, 2020), and sustainability and diversity as fundamental marketing strategies, corporate policies can be more receptive to the requirements of a wide range of consumers (Ma, 2020). A study contends that a company that operates only locally forfeits the advantages MNCs enjoy. The authors affirm that today's globalized and expanding economy requires contacting various markets and customers (Rüth & Netzer, 2020). Customer engagement, management of human resources techniques, an influential corporate culture and understanding the customer's needs are all drivers of enhanced client service performance. Beyond bolstering talent acquisition and team performance, an organization has further advantages if it develops diversity, equity, and inclusion. Businesses, therefore, need to be diversified, and versed in their working cultures (Rüth & Netzer, 2020). The study, however, lacks the impact of ingraining DEI culture in a varied client base because it is concentrated on creating cultural understanding at the leadership level. Another study finds that a more diverse and inclusive environment is created by prioritizing DE&I business, attracting top talent from a more comprehensive range of backgrounds. With the right approach to diversity, equity, and inclusion, a business can gain a competitive advantage and boost its bottom line (Post et al., 2021). Corporate culture can also affect how well clients are treated (Metz et al., 2020). Nevertheless, the research emphasizes the difficulties in changing business culture and overcoming employee dissatisfaction to enact diversity and inclusion initiatives (de Souza & Gama, 2020). A company's chances of attracting and retaining top people improve by fostering a culture that values diversity, inclusion, and equality. Another study that emphasized the importance of embedding DEI culture in an organization also observed contradicting findings in previous research on a diverse workforce and advised a future study for better understanding diversity's challenges and benefits by assessing different factors (Yadav & Lenka, 2020).

**H<sub>1</sub>:** *Putting Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) into practice in an organizational culture significantly influences a diverse customer base.*

### 2.2 *Diverse workforce*

Diverse, egalitarian, and inclusive teams will improve business relationships. Employees of all ethnicities, abilities, sexes, faiths, sexual orientations and ages can feel more welcome in the workplace if DE&I policies are implemented (Fernandez et al., 2022). Workforce diversity is positively connected with organizational effectiveness (Rafaqat et al., 2022) and staff skills and connections (Metz et al., 2020). In addition, a more diversified staff means a broader range of candidates to choose from in the form of referrals. Diversity changes the workforce and general demographics. As the US becomes increasingly diverse, more customers identify as minorities (Indarti et al., 2021). Diversity in customer service improves brand engagement with a diverse audience. The study found that employees' discriminatory actions had real-world consequences, so firms must be cognizant of how they treat customers of different races. It emphasizes that firms must earn customers' trust and respect by learning about racism and protecting customers of different races (Lim & Im, 2023). People's opinions can be heard in a welcoming and diverse community. To understand their needs, a brand must reflect its consumers' interests and values (Leslie & Flynn, 2022). Employing a more culturally and racially diverse workforce in sales and marketing helps the company better understand and cater to the needs of its diverse clientele. DE&I programs can also improve an organization's employer brand and build a more robust pool of competent applicants (S. Harris, 2022). Brands that show they embrace diversity, according to Keller's research, tend to have a more positive reputation. Because of this, customers may view inclusive brands as more innovative and in tune with their needs. Brands promoting diversity must be more active and in touch with potential customers.

A promotion's total effectiveness mainly depends on how valuable it is in the eyes of the target demographic (Azemi et al., 2022). Furthermore, businesses with decision-making teams at the front lines representing a diverse and inclusive culture achieve tremendous success. Results showed that diverse and inclusive teams had a 50% higher average performance than teams with fewer forms of diversity and inclusion (Jansen & Searle, 2021). Diverse teams are better positioned to uncover unrealized opportunities and propel the company forward because they have access to more information and perspectives. Businesses can gain a distinct edge through the DE&I strategy (Michalička et al., 2023). The studies have yet to examine how a diverse workforce affects diverse clientele. However, some studies show that better managing diverse customers can help brands financially outperform their competitors (Hsu et al., 2019). A study also found that migrant workers and women identify corporate opportunities and use intellectual potential to create ventures (Guerrero, 2020). Many buyers and workers in today's interconnected global economy do business with companies that share their morals. More and more businesses are thinking about developing policies that make diverse customers feel appreciated and how they may improve their own industries (Adwan & Aladwan, 2022).

**H<sub>2</sub>:** *A productive, diverse staff has a significant effect on a diverse customer base.*

### 2.3 Regular assessment

Enhancing diversity, equity, and inclusion within an organization is crucial for brand improvement, as found by the studies (Liu-Lastres et al., 2022). Organizations can learn where to make changes and take strides towards creating an inclusive workplace by assessing diversity, equity, and inclusion (Liu-Lastres et al., 2022). A good diversity, equality, and inclusion audit evaluates how well an organization performs regarding various DEI indicators. Recruiting methods, workplace rules, training programmers, reporting pathways, and investigative procedures should all be reviewed as part of the DEI assessment to ensure they are up to par with the organization's stated commitment to creating a respectful work environment (Foy, 2021). The diversity, equality, and inclusion analysis should prioritize problem solving. After creating an action plan, the organization must report its progress. Explain to workers why they are making these commitments and keep them (Fernandez et al., 2022; Ferraro et al., 2022). Studies discovered no DEI evaluation outcome. DEI assessments regularly uncover program and project weaknesses before they become significant difficulties. Today's workers are choosier than ever, looking for socially conscious firms (Feitosa et al., 2022). New perspectives improve products and services. Staff are more invested in their work. In addition, own its results that boosts output and excitement. Research is needed to determine how earlier studies' better employee performance affects the business's broad market base. Businesses must demonstrate their commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion as hiring and retaining top people gets more challenging. Previous DEI assessments have focused on employee surveys. However, they can provide valuable insights for organizations that act on the information they provide and promote DEI activities that create a more accepting work environment, which enhances morale, creativity, and productivity (Feitosa et al., 2022). However, its impact on customer management and brand DEI policies need further study; regular DEI assessments can help brands through innovation.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** *A good DEI assessment that can help the company prioritize its efforts and monitor program health over time significantly influences the diverse customers' management.*

### 2.4 Product address DEI issues

Brands need diversity to innovate. In today's ever-evolving market, businesses must quickly respond to emerging trends and difficulties. Diversity helps decision-making and problem solving. Inclusive product design involves changing the design process to include diversity and inclusion (Patrick & Hollenbeck, 2021). Customers need customized products and services. Managing resources and customer needs efficiently allows businesses to satisfy all customers. A more diverse workforce may boost profits, innovation, and game-changing technology. The ability to spot possibilities and develop novel solutions enhanced in a workforce that reflects the diversity of society (Margherita & Heikkilä, 2021). DE&I allow the company to draw from an enormous well of ideas and solutions by encouraging and rewarding diverse viewpoints and backgrounds among its staff (Chaudhry et al., 2021). Employees from a variety of backgrounds and experiences have unique perspectives on a variety of issues. According to the study's findings, a diverse workplace is more likely to foster creativity by encouraging the expression of novel ideas. Diverse companies are also more likely to enter a new market (Jain, 2021). Most MNCs have converted from a multi-local strategy to a global marketing campaign to maintain brand recognition in a globalized market. Client ethnocentrism must be understood while creating a global positioning and branding strategy (Hong et al., 2023). Studies have shown that diversity in informational content is the key to understanding the good benefits of diversity and that when people work together to solve problems; they offer their unique knowledge, experiences, and opinions (Hong et al., 2023). However, these creative ideas and solutions' effects on diverse market bases must be assessed.

Whether brands are in the discovery or continuous development phase, they must keep the product's results and various customers' responses in mind. Building products that appeal to everyone is difficult (Park & Zhang, 2022). The product difficulty paradox, or the difference between the perceived complexity of designing and manufacturing the core product and the upgraded version product, is why buyers dislike brand expansions, according to research (Liao & Carbonell, 2022). The first consumer, pulse oximeter example further elaborates, as it is not designed for varied skin tones. The FDA asserted that the device's accuracy lowers dramatically for darker skin tones. In today's interconnected world, a more diverse staff may help organizations in the short and long terms (de Ruyter et al., 2021). Assuming consumers are different is the only way to create an effective marketing plan for diverse customer bases. Businesses should use generic concepts rather than well-known structures (Arditto et al., 2020). Previous works examined how diversity affects product design. This raises the question of whether products that solve specific problems satisfy varied consumers equally. This study examines how product designs solve varied client problems.

**H<sub>4</sub>:** *Through more market awareness, DEI significantly influences product design for the diverse customer base.*

### 2.5 Collaboration

DEI issues require industry collaboration (Liu-Lastres et al., 2022). A study showed that organizations should diversify their partners and personnel (Charakorn et al., 2020). Diversified collaboration networks lead to product breakthroughs and benefit small firms (Stephens & Rivera, 2020). The study also discussed supplier diversity. In addition, firms encourage suppliers to

designate how much money will allocate to businesses run by persons of colour and other underrepresented groups when bidding for future projects. Coordination increases variety. Collaborations and partnerships can give brands new ideas and chances. This aspect needs incredible research because it affects diverse customers. Research also shows that organizations use clients, vendors, and opponents to address knowledge gaps, making these interactions vital (Ashraf et al., 2021). A study supports the idea of collaboration for DEI because no one has the knowledge, resources, networks, and skills to transform the world. Building inclusive, diverse, and equitable communities and organizations requires teamwork (Tejeira et al., 2022). Diversity, equality, and inclusion (DEI) require transdisciplinary skills to impact communities and broader systems. Multi-level collaboration needed to build credibility, commitment, and impact (Du & Chu, 2022). Diversity in decision-making, upskilling of the workforce and collective efforts towards a shared mission were the most important motivations to collaborate on equity and inclusion (Rosenkranz et al., 2021). This strategy combines varied perspectives and experiences, resulting in better service delivery and more targeted policy/programmatic responses to complex DEI issues. It advances teamwork-driven results by improving prior efforts in many disciplines. When parties have never worked together or used sector- or industry-specific tactics, it yields better results. This optimizes employees, assets, and facilities. The topic gains attention and support.

Moreover, having DEI tables in the office can help organizations enhance their skills and gain insight from others (Mullin et al., 2021). While building partnerships, it is essential to draw a diagram showing the strengths where an organization can use the strengths of others. Consistently disseminating successful strategies and materials to collaborators and the wider community strengthens support for collaborative initiatives and allows others to expand upon the work that is already done. Maintaining progress on diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) concerns constant public acknowledgement and celebration of the contributions of collaborations and partnerships.

Prior research on consumer intensity and firm-level results has primarily focused on economic and operational aspects, so the impact of a centered customer base still needs to be discovered. Employer-employee relations dominate DEI research. Only some studies have studied how a company's diversified core market affects DEI. According to the research, a supplier's motives to conduct good deeds (CSR), such as emphasizing DEI issues and policies, may be enhanced by a tight relationship with its clients (Zhu et al., 2021). An organization's ability to satisfy customer requests affects how customers are handled (Buell et al., 2018). The study found that organizations with more diverse consumer bases perform worse. However, poor performance must be investigated. The study investigates a company's DEI policy and its diversified clientele. It thinks these two things are directly related. A study found that organizations with diverse consumer feedback could better understand and respond to changing demand conditions (Hsu et al., 2019). Leung adds that legislative uncertainty causes enterprises to diversify their customer base, enhancing performance. The study found that organizations benefit by blending client expectations to provide relevant feedback. These findings suggest that organizations with diverse client bases can better track and adjust their strategies to market changes (Leung & Sun, 2020).

**H5:** *External partner collaboration to build customer-focused products significantly influences a diverse customer base.*

## 2.6 Diverse customer base impact DEI

A diversified customer base is one in which revenue generated not just from two or three clients or customers but also from many, and ideally from a wide variety of services outside the core offering. Building a clientele from various sources can reduce vulnerability and boost long-term financial stability (Fuentes et al., 2023). That opens opportunities for the company to collaborate with various people on various projects. According to research, companies rely on third parties, including clients, vendors, and opponents, to fill in knowledge gaps, making these connections crucial (Cambra-Fierro et al., 2021). By implementing DEI programmes, businesses can better understand their diversified clientele (Post et al., 2021). Because of this, organizations can provide a higher level of individualized care to each of our customers. Customers want to feel that their voices are heard (Billore & Anisimova, 2021), and a varied staff can help (Leslie & Flynn, 2022). Businesses need a diverse workforce to provide a vast clientele (Nweiser & Dajnoki, 2022). A more diverse staff helps firms connect with and serve customers. A corporation should hire customers' demographics to provide the best customer service (Kalogiannidis, 2021). A company's success depends on consumer management and connection. Businesses must understand clients' history, habits, and tastes to please them all. No of their size, companies must balance their diverse customer base (Kalogiannidis, 2021). Diversified clientele influences DE&I and mediates workplace progress. Social and political circles have been discussing equality lately (Brummer & Strine, 2022). Pay data legislation, public opinion, and campaigning have highlighted the working wage inequality (Foley & Piper, 2021). This shows how demographic diversity might affect a company's DEI practices. Hidden wages said to discriminate and hide basic inequities. New studies examine whether firms implement DEI efforts and how they affect DEI-friendly environments. Successful companies have surmounted several DEI barriers. Their successes demonstrate leadership focus and a willingness to adapt to different clients (Nora, 2021). Estimates of the channels of causation for the indirect and direct effects shown in Figure 1 of the mediation model's path diagram. There was statistical significance between the two estimated routes of the indirect effect. Research suggests that implementing a diverse staff has a negligible direct influence on the brand's DEI impact, which means that a diverse consumer base fully mediates the effect of DEI on the brand, which achieved by a diverse staff. The model fit the data reasonably well, as evidenced by several standard SEM fit statistics and indices ( $p < 0.001$ , RMSEA = 0.042, Fit index = 0.947, Tucker-Lewis index = 0.933). It generally accepted that a model accurately represents the data when the RMSEA, FI, and Tucker-Lewis index are all lower than 0.05, 0.95, and 0.95, respectively.

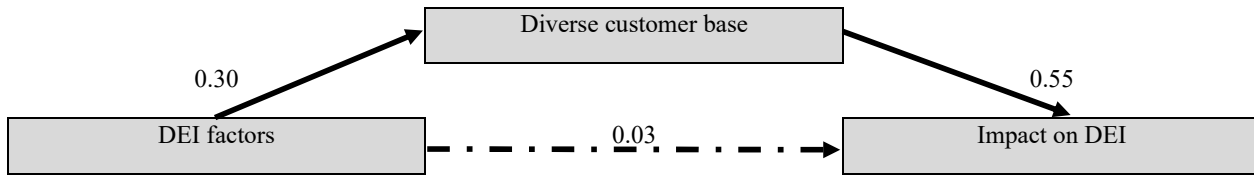


Fig. 1. Mediation process

Evidence from studies demonstrated that crucial brand metrics would significantly rise if companies got DE&I right (M14 - Corporate Culture; Diversity; Social Responsibility). Brands need to be incentivized to make DE&I a priority in their marketing and human resources processes; thus, this issue must be discussed. This is a call to arms for companies because of the positive societal and moral effects of raising their standards. Diversity and inclusion measures require changing organizational culture and reducing employee unhappiness (de Souza & Gama, 2020). Diversified companies are more likely to enter new markets. Multiethnic workers can reach more target customers. Diverse teams solve problems. Some studies show that more than a diverse workforce is needed to boost productivity. A company's diverse personnel effects on its clients need additional study. Brands might discover new opportunities by collaborating with others. Policies, which determine the company's external risk. Purpose of the study most research has concentrated on cultural understanding among top-level management. Thus, a study must assess the impact of varied clients on DEI culture. However, evaluating how diversity-related issues are addressed and how they affected varied clients is crucial. This affects many, so it needs more research. Diversity management and DEI, compelling issues management, are major concerns in the study. The study examines how DEI improves customer satisfaction, product development, and success in the organizational culture. Besides, the study explores how diverse teams identify and capitalize on emerging market possibilities and if regular DEI assessments preserve program health and allow an organization to address risks that may threaten its performance. The study also investigates DEI's effects on the product and if diverse industry partners increase diversity, inclusion, and consumer base.

**H6:** *The demographics of the company's customer base significantly influence Brand DEI.*

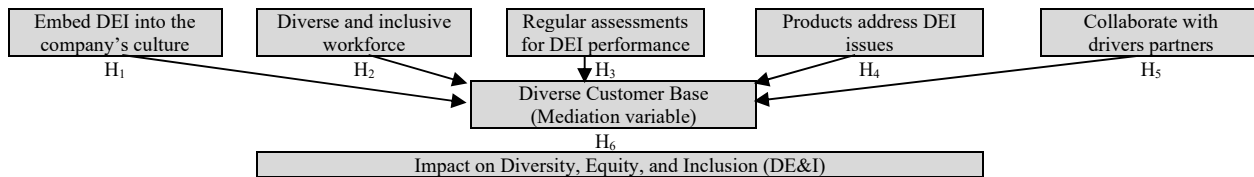


Fig. 1. Proposed model of diverse customer base impact on DEI

**3. Research Method**

This study's primary objective was to develop a framework for analyzing the direct effects of diversity and inclusion (DI) elements on a business's diverse clientele. As a result, many strategies were employed to guarantee that all pertinent data shared across the various stages of model creation for comprehensive discussions. This study analyzed DEI research articles to determine what aspects are most important when implementing a DEI system within a company that serves a broad clientele. A web-based poll used to compile the quantitative data. A list of MNCs researched with multiple branches in different regions. After filtering the extensive list per set criteria, two hundred twenty-seven companies selected for the survey. When choosing companies for the poll, researchers looked for clear evidence of companies' operations in different parts of the world and dealing with diverse cultures. Two hundred fourteen responses received, filtered for incomplete survey answers. Total of 176 managers from the HR, marketing, advertising, and PR departments at MNCs randomly chosen from two hundred and fourteen responses for statistical analysis (Larsson, 2016). DEI policies adopted by the sampled companies evaluated by inviting participants. To choose from several DEI implementation tactics designed to assist them in fostering productive DEI cultures, building a diverse workforce, dealing with a diverse customer base, and directing their overall approach. The questions are organized into categories corresponding to various phases and situations, such as customer acquisition, customer retention, and customer relationship management. Expert opinion and evaluation, essential to the model's success, formed using a combination of indirect observation and online survey. The DEI component in the sample was ensured by the favorable responses of 176 participants from diverse sex, religion, and geographical backgrounds involved in human resources, marketing, advertising, public relations, and managerial decision-making as shown in Table 1.

Multinational corporations were included in the study for the strength of their diversified employee populations and operations in diversified markets. One hundred seventy-six online respondents representing a range of HR and marketing roles used to compile the sample. Human resources and other top-level managers comprised 87 of the 176 people surveyed, while sales, marketing, advertising, and PR professionals comprised the remaining 89. Inclusion in the study was contingent upon the willingness of all those who met the requirements above. The research instrument was a carefully crafted questionnaire. Likert scale items were included in the survey instrument. The instrument's reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha, and the data analyzed using structural equation modelling. Because of its usefulness in addressing issues with latent variables, structural equation modelling opted for. Among the factors that contributed to the company's success in attracting a wide

range of diversified customers was its commitment to DEI policies and its review. Customer diversity is viewed as a response variable directly bearing on diversity, equity, and inclusion practices, and its ultimate effect on designing companies' DEI policies evaluated. The analysis was carried out with the aid of Stata software.

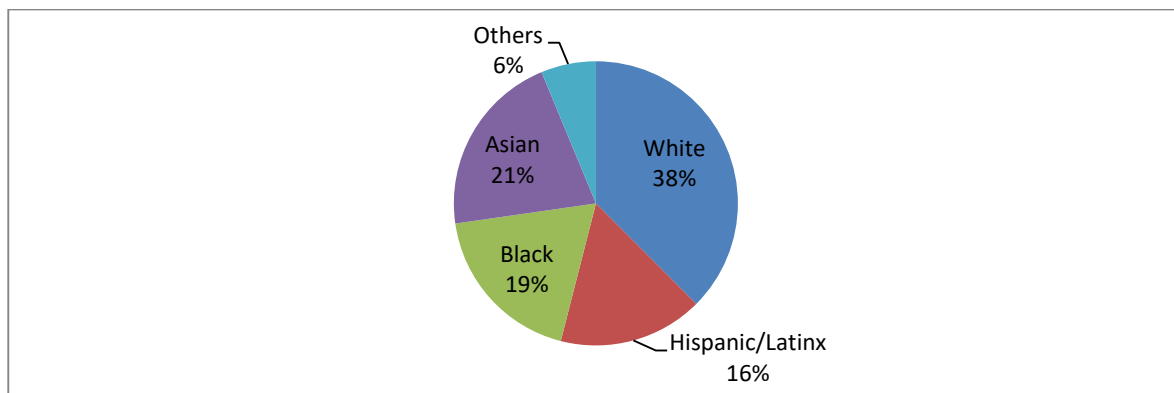
#### 4. Results

Businesses can create a model for developing DEI policies and their improvement based on statistically evaluated independent variables (DEI practices and review procedures) that impact a broad client base (mediation variable). The study directly influences the mediation variable's diversified client base by five elements. Incorporating diversity and inclusion (DEI) into the company's culture, hiring a varied workforce, conducting frequent DEI assessments, efficiently managing DEI to serve multiple consumers, and encouraging collaboration with a wide range of partners is essential. This research aims to determine whether the above factors affect a demographically varied consumer base, influencing the brand's ability to develop effective DEI policies tackling diversity, equity, and inclusion concerns. The survey is the foundation for the research. Human resources managers, those in positions of power, and marketing and product managers all interviewed. A total 176 people were included in the study's sample after researchers determined which responses would be most beneficial.

Extensive use of first-order techniques like percentage, correlation, and structural equation modelling made in this section's analysis of the research data (SEM). The demographic information of the respondents shown in Table 1. According to their profiles, just 34% of respondents were female out of a total 176 people who thoroughly sampled. One-fifth of the sample was under 30 years old. In the sample, 15% were between the ages of 31 and 37, 32% were in the range of 38 to 44, and 39% were 45 and up. HR professionals and others in leadership roles comprised nearly half of the total. About half of the total was associated with the marketing and sales divisions. The racial composition of its participants measured the sample's diversity. Those who surveyed represented a range of racial and ethnic backgrounds, including whites (37%), Hispanics/Latinos (17%), blacks (18%), Asians (21%), and others (6%). Among the professionals in the sample, 7% had less than two years of experience. One in five only had less than three years of experience. Twenty-one per cent of the sample had work experience between eight and twelve years, twenty-five per cent had experience between twelve and sixteen years, and twenty-seven per cent had work experience over seventeen years.

**Table 1**  
Statistical information of the survey respondents

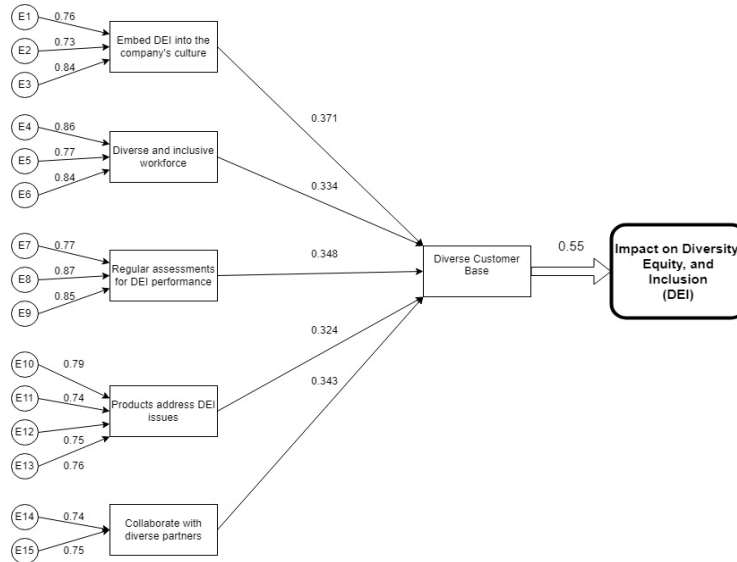
Demographic Indicators	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Sex classification	Male	115	0.6534
	Female	61	0.3466
Age	≥ 24 ≤ 30	22	0.1250
	≥ 31 ≤ 37	28	0.1591
	≥ 38 ≤ 44	57	0.3239
	≥ 45	69	0.3920
Field	HR and Higher management	87	0.4943
	Sales, marketing etc.	89	0.5057
Race	White	66	0.3750
	Hispanic/Latin	29	0.1648
	Black	33	0.1875
	Asian	37	0.2102
	Others	11	0.0625
Work experience	< 2 years	13	0.0739
	≥ 3 ≤ 7	32	0.1818
	≥ 8 ≤ 12	38	0.2159
	≥ 12 ≤ 16	44	0.2500
	≥ 17	49	0.2784



**Fig. 2.** Diversity ratio of the survey respondents

**Table 2**  
Percentage of the respondents in favor of DEI Variables for SEM

Variables for statistical analysis	% of sample in favor for DEI Variables
Embed DEI into the company's culture	0.95
Diverse and inclusive workforce	0.97
Regular assessments for DEI performance	0.74
Products address DEI issues	0.92
Collaborate with diverse partners	0.70



**Fig. 3.** Independent and mediation variable data representation (SEM)

Table 3 displays the values of Cronbach's Alpha. Frequent assessments of DEI performance: 0.785; Products that address DEI issues: 0.844; Integrate DEI into the company's culture: 0.898. Also, 0.82 in Working with a wide range of collaborators. At the same time, consider these values for the Composite Reliability: Incorporate DEI into daily operations (0.887), Promote an inclusive and varied workplace (0.851), Conduct regular evaluations of DEI performance (0.862), Ensure that products answer DEI concerns (0.894), and Work with a range of diverse partners (0.895). (0.853). All used variables can assume reliable due to much-supporting data. As seen from the extreme loading values in Table 3, this indicator appears quite reliable. External loadings of at least 0.708% are required for indicators to consider reliable.

**Table 3**  
Survey data Evaluation summary

Variable	Item	Path Loadings	Avg. Variance Extracted	Composite Reliability	Reliability
Embed DEI into the company's culture	E1	0.76	0.793	0.887	0.898
	E2	0.725			
	E3	0.84			
Diverse and inclusive workforce	E4	0.86	0.766	0.894	0.881
	E5	0.771			
	E6	0.843			
Regular assessments for DEI performance	E7	0.773	0.741	0.862	0.785
	E8	0.876			
	E9	0.852			
Products address DEI issues	E10	0.795	0.743	0.851	0.844
	E11	0.74			
	E12	0.755			
Collaborate with diverse partners	E13	0.76	0.723	0.853	0.827
	E14	0.74			
	E15	0.755			

Table 3 displays the results of the measurement model. As AVE, item reliability, and construct reliability (CR) corroborate the findings, they have convergent validity. The CR, a metric for gauging how accurately constructs indicators represent the underlying construct, was more significant than 0.708, falling within the range of 0.851-0.894. The AVE being more significant than 0.50 justifies the adoption of this framework. The average annual value was between 0.723 and 0.793. Convergent validity has met if the AVE is more significant than 0.5, indicating that the constructs are reliable and valid. The

results support the idea that the measurement model is highly valid in convergent measurement. The structural model is assessed utilizing estimated route loadings and values from Table 3. The value quantifies the structural models' ability to track the independent variables, while the path loadings illustrate the strength of the links between the independent and dependent variables. A multivariate regression analysis shows how much of the variation may be attributed to exogenous factors. As the constructs have a high degree of correlation, they must be more clearly distinguished (above the square roots of their AVE).

## 5. Discussion

Integrating DEI into the company's culture was found to have a direct relationship with a diverse client base (H1) is supported by the findings of this study shown in Table 4 (T value=4.08,  $\beta$ =0.371,  $p$ =0.005). These findings corroborate the association between Embed DEI in the company's culture and the varied clientele seen in other studies. Jansen and Searle (Jansen & Searle, 2021) found that a company's willingness to embrace diversity was a critical factor in its success in breaking into new markets and expanding its clientele. Jain's study (Jain, 2021) also found that companies with a wide range of cultural backgrounds are more likely to succeed in expanding into new markets because their employees gain a more nuanced understanding of their customers' needs. Based on his research, Indarti et al. (2021) concludes that the United States' majority consumer base comprises people of colour. To increase employee involvement and decrease turnover (Pandey et al., 2021), DEI cultures in organizations are vital.

Given the positive effect on the business of a more diverse and inclusive workforce on customers of all backgrounds, this evidence supports the second hypothesis as shown in Table 4 (T value=4.12,  $\beta$ =0.334,  $p$ =0.004). Researchers have found a correlation between a company's ability to cater to its customers' varying needs and the degree to which the company values diversity among its staff (Lim & Im, 2023). The findings of Leslie's research (Leslie & Flynn, 2022) align with the findings of the current study. Leslie and Flynn (2022), discovered that brands require diversity in order to understand their multifaceted clientele. Kalaiganam et al. (2021) argue that teams with a wide range of backgrounds are better equipped to handle consumers with varying backgrounds, affecting the EI policy formation of a company. The finding is also consistent with Hong, who emphasized the consideration of client ethnocentrism during brand management (Hong et al., 2023). Aside from bringing in money, diverse teams are also productive (Garg et al., 2021).

Consistent evaluations of DEI performance benefit a demographically diverse clientele (T value=2.37,  $\beta$ =0.348,  $p$ 0.05) (Table 3), lending credence to the third hypothesis. The findings are consistent with previous studies; regular DEI assessments have improved financial performance (Feitosa et al., 2022). Fuentes added that the DEI assessment helps firms attract a more diversified clientele by reducing their risk of being labeled as discriminatory by clients of different backgrounds (Fuentes et al., 2023).

In support of Hypothesis 4, researchers find that using DEI data to solve concerns in products favors a demographically diverse client base (T value=3.27,  $\beta$ =0.324,  $p$ =0.007) as per the summary of findings in Table 4 below. These findings align with those of Liao and Carbonell (Liao & Carbonell, 2022). According to research by Ruyter (de Ruyter et al., 2021), implementing a DE&I strategy effectively increases flexibility in dealing with novel challenges. The finding also asserts Arditto's derivations of his research that adopting general principles to widely recognized structures in product marketing can attract more customers (Arditto et al., 2020).

In conclusion, Hypothesis 5 states that brands will be exposed to fresh perspectives and possibilities by collaborating with other entities. The study's findings back this conclusion (T Value=1.79,  $b$ =0.343,  $p$ =0.039) (Table 3). This research builds on the findings of Hofstetter (Hofstetter et al., 2021) and Rosenkranz (Rosenkranz et al., 2021).

The sixth hypothesis (Diverse customer base→ DEI) examines whether there is a relationship between the DEI policies and the customer base's diversity as per Table 4. A 0.001 P value obtained from the Cho reality test result for this factor. The T statistic value is 3.4, which shows that the diversity of its client base significantly influences the company's DEI policies. This exhibits agreement with Zhu's findings from 2021, which indicate that a company's interactions with its customers and suppliers give a strong foundation for establishing best practices. The research findings support Hsu's contention that a broad customer base offers feedback to the business that helps it develop policies to meet shifting consumer expectations. Moreover, adopting DEI policies affects the company's economic situation (Nora, 2021). A diverse customer base in an area can create political and social pressure on organizations to embed DEI policies in the workplace (Foley & Piper, 2021). Effective DEI adoption has proved to enhance financial and economic benefits to businesses. Therefore, the study's findings endorse the previous studies of economic, social and political impacts of diverse customer bases over DEI policies. There are some implications in the research as well. Workplace diversity can lead to business disputes due to the challenges of bridging perceptual and communication gaps between personnel from different backgrounds. These challenges could limit diversity's benefits if not addressed. Diversity management addresses employees' perceptions of marginalization and manages cultural differences and conflicts, fostering teamwork and improving organizational efficiency to meet customers' diverse needs and endorsing Tomáš Michalička's research on JEL code M14. This study offers HR manager's ways to incorporate multiple cultures, recruit a more inclusive staff, and eliminate workplace bias. The report also provides a roadmap for PR, sales, and marketing managers to boost creativity and innovation to maximize global impact and revenues. Strategic managers should



appreciate, manage, and benefit from workplace diversity. This study suggests that product management benefits greatly from different perspectives and experiences. When team members share their views and experiences, product creation improves.

**Table 4**  
Summary of Findings

Measured path	T statistics	Original sample	Sample mean	Standard deviation	Sig. p	Effect results
Embed DEI into the company's culture	4.08	0.371	0.358	0.076	0.005	Significant
Diverse and inclusive workforce	4.12	0.334	0.372	0.118	0.004	Significant
Regular assessments for DEI performance	2.37	0.348	0.329	0.126	0.000	Significant
Products address DEI issues	3.27	0.324	0.315	0.122	0.007	Significant
Collaborate with diverse partners	1.79	0.343	0.256	0.087	0.039	Significant
Diverse customer base → DEI	3.4	0.55	0.363	0.112	0.001	Significant

Future research will compare the components revealed here with those discovered in prior studies to determine if any essential diversity management features are missed. This will help understand diversity factors and management how they affect diverse clients. Collecting the model's constructions will allow a more holistic look. Thus, future studies should use this model to determine what factors predict diversity management and how much it indicates DEI issues with brands in different countries.

The limitation of the study is that only multinational enterprises were sampled, reducing the reliability of the results. Given this limit, more research is needed. However, the proposed model illuminates diversity management's effects on an organization's demographically diverse clientele. The model must test in local enterprises in different countries to establish if it is location- and industry-specific. This is vital as all responders work for worldwide firms. It is generalizable if local organizations in other nations can duplicate the study.

## 6. Conclusion

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are necessary for a company to thrive because they promote innovation, fresh viewpoints, and acceptance. The study sought to examine how DEI improves customer satisfaction, product development, and success in the organizational culture. Besides, the study explored how diverse teams identify and capitalize on emerging market possibilities. Businesses should prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion because it expands their potential customer base and improves their ability to service customers. This study adds to the growing body of research showing that increasing a company's level of DEI directly correlates with a more diversified clientele. DEI embedment and consistent DEI audits have been found to boost profits and bring in a more diverse clientele. The study concludes that employing DEI data to address product issues benefits from a more demographically diversified customer base and promotes adaptability to fresh challenges. The recommended diversity management plan will immediately benefit a firm with a diversified consumer base. It provides a thorough theoretical explanation of diversity management predictors, illuminating the most critical factors from the perspective of employees' diverse customer management at selected international corporations, resulting in appropriate DEI policy design. This study illustrates how diversity, equity, and inclusion practices affect diversity management (diverse customer base) and DEI policy creation. Management studies improve significantly. Management theorists, strategic managers, and others are interested because of this. The study took a fresh look at diversity management to expand its scope. It is a large-scale empirical study of diversity management. Previous studies focused on diversity issues and employee performance. This study examines diversity management elements since an organization's DEI policies design affects how successfully it manages its diverse clientele. Collaborating with partners and regularly assessing DEI success are unique methods.

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