DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN A MULTINATIONAL CORPORATION: SENIOR MANAGERS' PERCEPTIONS ACROSS THREE ASIAN REGIONS

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THESIS DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents,

Domingo Salas Ponce and Cravena Peralta Albornoz – Ponce,

who instilled in me the value of education and influenced my intellectual curiosity

to complete my PhD.

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ATTESTATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signed..

Maria Perpetua A. Ponce-Pura

Date ......13 January 2014

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ETHICAL APPROVAL

This research was approved by the Auckland University Ethics Committee

at their meeting on 08 September 2008, reference number 08/203.

ABSTRACT

This two-phase research evaluates diversity and inclusion by examining the perceptions of senior management about diversity and inclusion policies and practices in a US-based multinational corporation (MNC) in Asia. Research was carried out in three regional offices represented by India, Australia and Vietnam. Phase 1 is a preliminary case study in India Region. Phase 2 is a comparative study of senior managers' perceptions and attitudes toward diversity and inclusion policies and practices in the India Region, Australia Region and Vietnam Region.

Data was gathered between 2010 and 2012 using quantitative and qualitative methods. A survey and an interview were conducted in Phase 1 while company survey results were utilized in Phase 2. The results were presented based on percentages of favourable, neutral and unfavourable scores for each question, and were described according to the company criteria as 'strengths', 'opportunities for improvement' and 'areas of concern' respectively. These data were supplemented by secondary information such as company policies and reports.

Findings from Phase 1 revealed a generally favourable perception of diversity and inclusion from predominantly male senior managers in the company's regional office in India. Results indicated that diversity and inclusion were widely understood and accepted as necessary for the business to succeed. Of particular interest was the strong positive attitude of the managers towards initiatives introduced to embed diversity and inclusion such as the Women's Council. Such attitudes suggest a possible sensitivity to a common goal of advancing women's interest in the workplace.

Comparative results in Phase 2 showed that female senior managers generally, perceived diversity and inclusion less favourably than males. The number of diversity and inclusion policies and practices perceived as strengths by the male senior managers were greater than the strengths indicated by their female counterparts. There were mixed results when overall perceptions of senior managers were compared by region, thus indicating the importance of relational context in transferring diversity and inclusion policies and practices from the company global headquarters to the regional offices in Asia. Differing perceptions were also found for male and female responses on some specific human resource policies and practices directed towards diversity and

inclusion, suggesting the company still needs to focus on important issues like gender and discrimination, leadership support on diversity and inclusion, and work-life balance.

Considering the limited organisational level studies on diversity and inclusion within the Asian context, this research contributes to the emerging field of research exploring the relational model in diversity management and linking the macro, meso and micro contexts of the three regional offices of the MNC. This model provided a comprehensive perspective of diversity management within a single organisation with multiple branches of operation. Despite its limitations, the study managed to address the divergence between various diversity management elements through the analysis of senior managers' perceptions, taking into consideration the specific regional contexts within which the multinational organisation operates.

The results support the greater explanatory value that a relational approach to diversity management brings. A relational model of diversity bridges macro, meso and micro levels of analysis, resulting in different perceptions across different regional offices within the same organisation. Although the study was limited to one organisation, the strengths of this research were demonstrated in terms of the following contributions: first, this research serves as a starting point in addressing the scarcity of empirical work on the study of diversity management specifically using the multi-level relational model; it contributes to the small amount of diversity research that has been carried out in Asia; second, it provides critical insights at an organisational level when implementing human resource management policies and practices aimed to address diversity issues; third, it underscores the variable perceptions of gender issues across different regions and highlights the importance of macro-contextual factors in diversity management practice; and lastly, it shares the researcher's valuable experience in overcoming the challenges of an insider-researcher.

CHAPTER 1
RESEARCH OVERVIEW

1.1 Chapter Overview

Increasing globalisation has resulted in rapid economic development in many countries and given rise to a wide spectrum of management practices. During the last decade, increasing competition plus demographic changes caught the attention of many organisations worldwide as they began to recognise the growing heterogeneity of the workforce. Consequently, diversity management became the most recent HR development to address the rapidly changing demographic differences and the need for global organisations to remain competitive in the international markets.

The concept of diversity management which originated in the United States in the 1980s, has gradually become a strategic business issue for many organisations in other countries (D'Netto & Sohal, 1999). Many firms with diversity management programs, such as US MNCs, are extensively involved in the international market, with subsidiaries operating outside of the home country (Egan & Bendick, 2003). Nishii and Ozbilgin (2007) cited that in a survey of Fortune 500 companies and other global companies, diversity management was considered a critical issue. Approximately three quarters of the largest US-based MNCs have some form of diversity management in place, particularly in their global operations (Nishii & Ozbilgin, 2007).

Diversity management has been defined through a variety of concepts that specify the goals and objectives not only to foster inclusion but also to achieve organisational success (Cox, 1991; Mor Barak, 2005; Thomas, 1990). Mor Barak (2005) indicates that "diversity management refers to the voluntary organisational actions that are designed to create greater inclusion of employees from various backgrounds into the formal and informal organisational structures through deliberate policies and programs" (MorBarak, 2005, p. 208). Furthermore, diversity management can be used to create a competitive advantage for the business in such areas as customer relations, marketing, problem solving and resource acquisition (Cox & Blake, 1991). However, diversity management has also been criticised for tending to focus on the business case rationale rather than the fostering importance of equal opportunity and social justice (Noon, 2007; Tatli, 2010).

Some scholars have argued that diversity management remains complex and unclear for many organisations because it has been unable to achieve equal employment outcomes for diverse employees (Syed & Kramar, 2009). Other authors also raised concerns on the rationale of the US-centric approach of diversity management that may not hold true in other countries because of socio-economic condition, culture, history, national legislation and other factors (Jones, Pringle, & Shepherd, 2000; Syed & Ozbilgin, 2009).

Aside from the US approach, empirical studies undertaken in India (Cooke & Saini, 2010), Europe (Egan & Bendick, 2003), Middle East (Lauring, 2013), and Asia (Choy, Lee, & Ramburuth, 2009) revealed several implications of transferring diversity management practices. These studies suggest that a diversity management program and practices developed in the US or UK may not be appropriate for another country. Therefore, the challenge of transferring diversity management practices in multinational companies has focused more on local adaptation than on for global integration.

Workforce diversity management is fast becoming a significant component of human resource management practices (Shen, Chanda, D'Netto, & Monga, 2009). However, the concept is still evolving, with a significant number of organisations focusing their diversity efforts on compliance(Society for Human Resource Management, 2008). Syed and Ozbilgin (2009) argued that "diversity remains an abstract concept and isolated from the multilevel factors responsible for group and individual differences in the workplace" (p.2437). Perhaps this is the reason for the ambiguity of a context specific definition of what actually constitutes diversity management, especially when such practice is transferred from the home office of MNC to its regional offices. In such cases, the MNC is faced with the competing forces of global practice and local responsiveness. Thus, it is possible that in such situations, international diversity management maybe defined differently from domestic or local diversity management.

Recent literature on global diversity suggests a multi-level framework of understanding the primary issues of diversity. (Nishii & Ozbilgin, 2007; Ozbilgin & Tatli, 2008; Syed & Ozbilgin, 2009). At the most general level is the management of diversity at the "macro" level, which underscores how diversity might be differently defined or conceptualized from the historical, social, legal and political experience of each country. Aside from diversity within different countries, the second level is called the "meso" level which involves a variety of human resource management practices designed

towards inclusion within work organisations such as recruitment, training and promotion. The macro and meso levels relate to the organisation's internal relations with its own employees and reflect the "micro" level, that of individuals and groups within the organisation. The multi-level framework suggests that diversity management is shaped by a wide range of various influences that manifest at the national, organisational and individual levels. Ozbilgin and Tatli (2008) argued that it is important to situate and prioritise the multilevel factors according to specific organisations and the diversity management in question.

The multi-level definition is relevant in the interpretation and implementation of diversity management in conjunction with human resource management practices, particularly in MNCs (Florkowski, 1996). For this research, the definition by Hanappi-Egger (2012, p. 10) is adopted to expand the definition at the organisation (meso) level of "diversity management as "a management concept which, acknowledging the value of differences, strategically and systematically strives to promote equity among its workforce in order to create added value".

At the organisational level, diversity management is viewed as a holistic process that is largely dependent on the degree of organisational and individual awareness and understanding of diversity. Mensi-Klarbach and Hanappi-Egger (2012, p. 140) further indicate that, "the long-term goals of diversity management can only be achieved by initiating a transformation of organisational culture." This transformation assumes that every organisation will require its own unique approach to diversity management based on individual and institutional contexts. Thus, diversity management goes beyond addressing individual differences. It is focused on transforming pre-existing practices within the organisation to enhance performance and achieve a culture of inclusion. The definition cited above supports the relevant individual and organisational aspects of diversity management in this research and builds on opportunities for culture change.

A growing number of research studies examine diversity management at both country and organisational levels (Ferner, Almond, & Colling, 2005; Sippola & Smale, 2007). These studies, however, often focus on practices in the United States and Europe. Few studies have examined the extent to which diversity management has been implemented as part of strategic human resource management in less developed areas of Asia which present rich historical, cultural and institutional contexts (Cooke & Saini, 2010; Syed & Ozbilgin, 2010).

Studies about diversity management in many parts of Asia remain under-explored despite the accelerating focus on diversity management among MNCs. For example, Vietnam offers several opportunities for diversity management research in view of its economic transformation and economic growth, but remains an under-researched area. Hence this study aims to contribute to this research gap through an in-depth organisational analysis of diversity and inclusion within a US MNC with regional offices in Asia.

This chapter presents an overview of the research on diversity and inclusion in a MNC in Asia. Section 1.2 highlights the rationale of this research. Section 1.3 explains the research questions and research objectives. Section 1.4 briefly introduces the company under study. Section 1.5 presents the framework for this research. Section 1.6 describes the constraints of this study. Section 1.7 presents the structure of the dissertation and finally. Section 1.8 concludes the research overview chapter.

1.2 Rationale for the Research

Asia is currently leading the world economy following the 2008 global financial crisis. The region has been recognised as the quickest to emerge compared to other parts of the world (Publishing, 2011). It was also reported that Asian economies have had relatively high economic growth rates in recent years (Yoshino, 2012). It is expected that the region will change the shape of the global economy with an annual average growth of 6.5% to 7% from 2012 to 2025 as a result of strong foreign investment and the growth of the middle-income class (Government, 2012). This economic trend attracts many MNCs to invest and establish their operations in Asia.

Asia is a region composed of a diverse group of economies that include the most developed in the world like Japan, South Korea, Australia, New Zealand and Singapore; others are developing economies such as the Philippines, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, and a few large emerging economies like China and India. In this respect, enhancing the institutional capability and implementing consistent policies have become an important strategy for MNCs operating in this region, since they contribute to enhancing human capital through better human resources management, providing increased productivity and creating better working conditions for employees (Giguere & Parisotto, 2011).

As MNCs expand their operations in Asia, there is a huge potential to influence employment practices in their international subsidiaries through robust human resource practices in pay and remuneration, performance appraisal, recruitment and trainings, all of which can support diversity management. Managing diversity has been the most challenging aspect of human resource management particularly in MNCs (Sippola & Smale, 2007; Society for Human Resource Management, 2008). The importance given to workforce diversity has prompted business leaders and human resource practitioners to implement more innovative ideas and approaches to empower employees, expand their market share, and sustain the organisation's performance.

While studies of diversity management have underscored the importance of policies to promote an organisational culture change, one important factor that needs more attention is senior management perceptions on the achievement of diversity goals. Various researchers have shown the link between senior management and diversity management outcomes especially in organisations that are culturally and demographically diverse (Chen & Van Velsor, 1996; DiTomaso & Hoojiberg, 1996; Jonsen, Schneider, & Maznevski, 2011; Kochan et al., 2003; Lewis, French, & Phetmany, 2006; Lin & Shih, 2008). Risberg, Beauregard and Sander (2012) emphasised that the commitment of senior managers provides clear evidence that diversity management has strong support from the leaders. Senior managers, middle managers and human resource departments are essential actors to successfully manage diversity to institutionalise a culture of inclusion. Recognising the importance of MNCs in Asia and the role of senior management as a key influential factor in diversity management, the perceptions and attitudes of senior managers toward diversity and inclusion policies and practices in a US MNC in Asia were examined in this research. A subsidiary aim was to provide contextualised knowledge of how diversity management is perceived at the organisational level by comparatively analysing these perceptions in three different regional offices of the company.

1.3 Research Case

This research is set against the context of a US-based MNC in Asia, a continent characterised by significant institutional, cultural and demographic differences. For purposes of confidentiality, SBC was assigned as the pseudonym of the company. SBC is engaged in the manufacturing and selling of snacks and beverages in more than 200 countries across the globe. A more detailed explanation of the organisational context of

SBC can be found in Chapter 3 while Chapter 4 explains the methodology and rationale for selecting the research cases. Phase 1 is a preliminary study, which was conducted in the company's regional office in India. Phase 2 is a comparative study conducted in the company's regional offices in India, Australia, and Vietnam. The second phase is the main focus of this research, but preliminary results from Phase 1 in the India Region are also presented in Chapter 5 and linked to the analysis of results where relevant and useful.

1.4 Research Framework

The dynamics of workplace diversity spans multiple levels across society, organisation, group and individual levels (Ozbilgin & Tatli, 2008). Given the importance of global integration, the transferability of diversity management through different control mechanisms to MNC subsidiaries has become mandatory rather than discretionary. Kim, Park and Prescott (2003) refer to global integration as the coordination and control of business operations across borders and coordination that involves developing linkages between geographically dispersed units. Commonly used mechanisms include centralisation, formalisation, and people and information-based integration (Ghoshal & Nohria, 1989; Gupta, 1987). However, management practices, which enable MNCs to transfer policies out of the domestic market, may have the same or different outcomes across national borders.

Whereas much of the literature on diversity management has focused on workplace practices, a few scholars have also argued that different approaches to diversity will depend on how well it integrates with the other characteristics of the organisation and its members (Olsen & Martins, 2012) such as culture, organisation structure and senior management attitudes towards diversity (Ely & Thomas, 2001; Kochan et al., 2003; Konrad & Linnehan, 1995). Studies suggest that the frame of reference – the perspectives, through which senior management views diversity management and how it affects them, may influence its outcome (Barrick, Bradley, Kristof-Brown, & Colbert, 2007; Jonsen, Schneider, & Maznevski, 2011; Lin & Shih, 2008). Thomas and Ely (1996) have also linked effective management of diversity to the performance role of senior managers in diversity programs. Hence, the role of senior managers in driving diversity and inclusion (D&I) is considered pivotal to the effective implementation of diversity management strategies.

This research shows diversity and inclusion as a global human resource strategy in SBC. It aims to establish a culture of inclusion to support organisational performance. This strategy is transferred from the corporate office to its regional offices in Asia through various HR policies and practices. Thus, the research framework for Phase 1, which is a preliminary study, explores how senior management perceives diversity and inclusion. Subsequently, the research framework for Phase 2, a comparative study and the main focus of this thesis, presents a more detailed explanation on how senior management perceives diversity and inclusion considering other contextual variables moderating the perceptions of senior management such as gender and country or region. Three variables were considered in Figure 1.1 to examine senior management's perceptions. The independent variables represent the "meso" level, which consists of policies and practices and is categorised into two components, the first being is the overall vision and values about diversity and inclusion, and the second consisting of various human resource policies and practices.
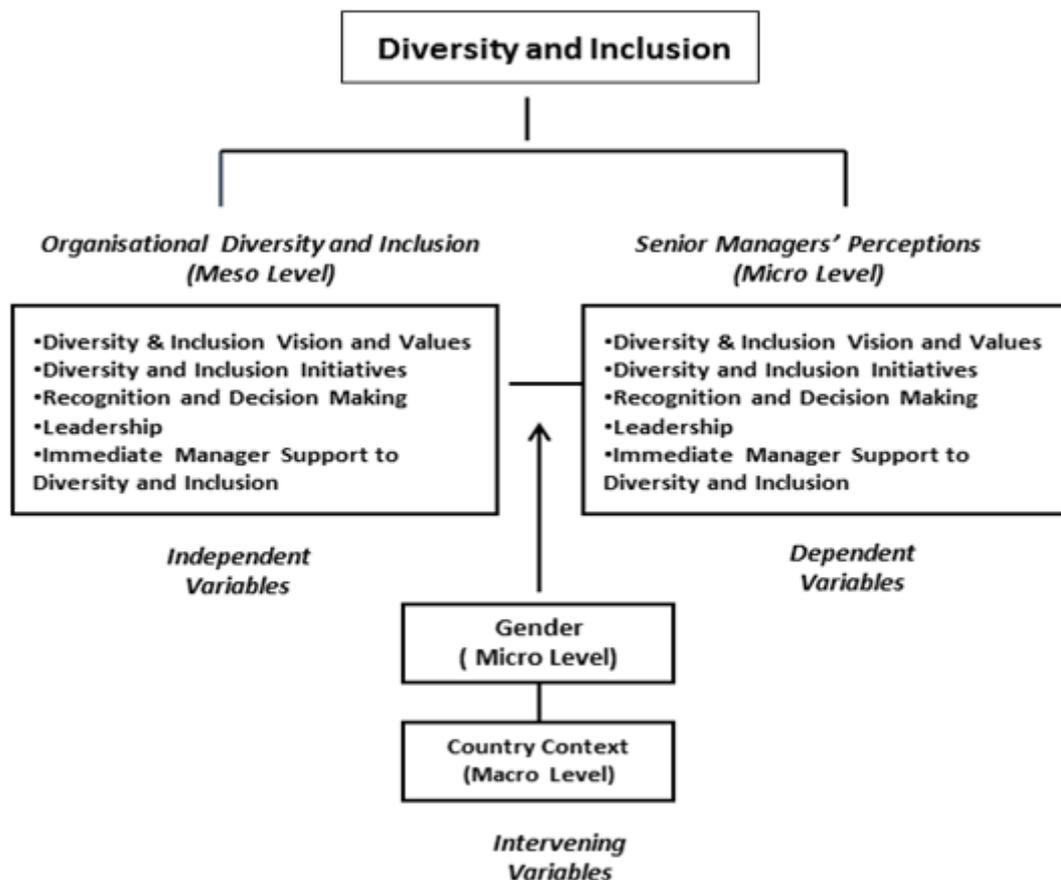
Figure 1.1 Research Framework

The dependent variables represent the perceptions by senior managers of the vision, values, and implementation of the diversity and inclusion initiatives of the company.

Key indicators that would describe these perceptions are: 1) perceptions of diversity vision and values; 2) perceptions of human resource initiatives; 3) perceptions of management and leadership of diversity; 4) individual experience about decision-making and recognition on diversity and inclusion; and 5) perceptions of immediate manager support to work-life balance. These perceptions were measured using Likert scales to describe the responses that extend from very unfavourable to very favourable. The intervening variables pertain to the micro and macro levels. Gender represents the micro level domain, and the country context of societal and structural conditions represent the macro level. The genders of senior managers and the country/regional context were considered modifiers of perceptions about diversity and inclusion.

Prior social sciences research suggests that studying perceptions is reasonable and necessary if those perceptions are pivotal to establish the status of the implementation of diversity management (Harrison & Sin, 2006). As explained in Chapter 2, these perceptions are based on organisational practices (MorBarak, 2005; Pless & Maak, 2004) and personal dimensions that are important in assessing attitudes towards inclusion (Cox, 1994; Mor Barak, Cherin, & Berkman, 1998). In this research, the nature of what is being studied may be regarded as the actual perceptions of senior managers on the organisational policies and practices related to diversity and inclusion.

For the preliminary study, data were collected using a survey and interviews. However, the respondents were almost all male senior managers, which limited the evaluation of results. Consequently, for the comparative study, the data were obtained from the company climate survey regarding diversity and inclusion, and included five supplementary questions from the researcher. The results included responses from male and female senior managers who were located in different regional offices. As such, diversity perceptions based on these components are presented in the results chapters. This research framework therefore leads to different sets of findings based on gender and regional responses.

1.5 Research Questions and Research Objectives

The purpose of this research is to investigate diversity and inclusion in a MNC in Asia. The aim of this research is to highlight the perceptions of senior management and the significant link between the company's diversity and inclusion strategy and human resource management practices.

The overarching question that has guided this research is: *What are the perceptions of senior managers about diversity and inclusion practices in a MNC?* In support of this general question, the following specific questions were developed for Phase 1 and Phase 2:

1. How does a MNC transfer diversity and inclusion policies and practices to its branches in Asia?
2. What are the perceptions of senior managers about diversity and inclusion policies and practices implemented within the company?
3. What are the perceptions of male and female senior managers about diversity and inclusion across the company?
4. What, if any, are the differences between male and female senior managers' perceptions about diversity and inclusion policies and practices within each regional office?
5. Are there any differences in the perceptions of senior managers in the way diversity and inclusion policies and practices are implemented across the company's regional offices in Asia?

The first specific question evaluates the organisation's strategy for integration and transferability of human resource management practices of diversity and inclusion outside of the headquarters operations in the US. The second specific question explores the overall attitudes of senior management toward diversity and inclusion policies and initiatives implemented within the company. It examines the perceptions about diversity and inclusion within the three different regional offices namely: India Region, Australia Region and Vietnam Region. The third specific question aims to assess the differences in perception between female and male senior managers about diversity and inclusion policies and practices within the company. Given that perceptions about diversity may be influenced by a variety of individual differences such as gender, this particular question aims to determine the different perceptions of senior managers and the extent to which they are affected by the company's policies and practices on diversity and inclusion.

The fourth and fifth questions present a comparative analysis of perceptions between male and female senior managers based on their overall response and their response according to gender across the company's regional offices in India, Australia and Vietnam.

1.6 Locating the Researcher

An important aspect of this work is locating the researcher's situation. This research was conducted within my employer (at the time of research) and was driven by my intellectual inquiry discussed in the previous section. Conducting the research within the organisation where I worked was the most appropriate approach considering my situation as a part-time international PhD student based outside of Auckland, New Zealand and working as a full-time Human Resource Manager.

I position myself in this research with a post-positivist mind set. In my view, diversity management resulting in inclusion is crucial for human resource management in any organisation to achieve employee engagement, satisfaction and commitment, among other desired organisational results. There are many factors that may affect employee engagement but in my understanding as a human resource manager and a leader, inclusiveness through appreciation of other persons can significantly build the employee's self-esteem and engagement. Therefore, while the company can demonstrate inclusion through policies and various human resource support processes, a critical factor in reinforcing this inclusion is how the senior managers perceive and demonstrate diversity and inclusion within the organisation. This critical but unknown element in my knowledge and understanding of diversity and inclusion has been the focus of this research.

My quest to undertake this study was driven by my basic knowledge and interest on the topic, as well as familiarity with the company being studied. Prior to conducting this research, several approvals were obtained from the company and the AUT Ethics Committee. The academic requirements including data access and study leaves were fully disclosed and negotiated with senior management. While work-based research proved beneficial, this was accompanied by several challenges, especially the ethical dilemmas that arose in the course of this study. A more detailed discussion of the researcher's experience as an insider-researcher is found in Chapter 4.

1.7 Constraints of the Study

The study covered a single MNC with regional offices in Asia. The first research location approved by the AUT Ethics Committee was the Asia Pacific Region, which comprised six countries, including India. However, the organisational restructuring of the company in 2008 and 2010 resulted in changes in leadership and consequently de-prioritized this research. As a result of the reorganisation, the company spun off India as

a separate business region from Asia Pacific because of the huge size of its business. This led to a shift in research location from Asia Pacific to India whose HR Head at that time supported this research.

Conducting the study in India presented an opportunity to work in a relatively under-researched country context. However, the data obtained were not adequate to address the main research questions. Given the challenge posed by initial data gathered from India, the researcher had to devise an alternate method to address the research questions within the same research paradigm. As a consequence, the research was extended to the Australia and Vietnam regions. The research method used in India used quantitative and qualitative approaches, while the method used in other regions was limited to quantitative survey data. In relation to the research design, while the mixed method of collecting data within this case study may be criticised in terms of consistency, the justifications for using such methods are fully explained in Chapter 4.

1.8 Thesis Structure

This section introduces the structure of my thesis, which is organised in two parts with several chapters under each part.

Part One

Part One introduces the research and provides discussion of relevant literature, an overview of the research methodology, and the organisational context of the study.

Chapter 1 presents the overview of the research. It highlights the rationale for conducting this research, the research objectives and questions, and the research framework. This chapter also briefly describes my position as an insider-researcher and the constraints and dilemmas that this brings to the study.

Chapter 2 is dedicated to the review of related literature on diversity and inclusion and has six major sections. Section 2.1 introduces the chapter. Section 2.2 defines workplace diversity and inclusion and describes the different diversity paradigms. Section 2.3 explains diversity management using the relational model. Section 2.4 discusses the different theoretical perspectives of workplace diversity. Section 2.5 describes the nature of MNCs and diversity management. Section 2.6 highlights the role of senior managers in diversity and inclusion, while Section 2.7 discusses gender diversity with particular focus on women in management.

Chapter 3 reviews the organisational context of SBC and presents the historical and cultural background of the implementation of diversity and inclusion policies and practices in the company. It also explains the diversity initiatives in the company's regional offices in India, Australia and Vietnam.

Chapter 4 outlines the methodology for this study. In particular, this chapter explains the different methods used for Phase 1, which is a preliminary study in India Region and is separate from the methods used for Phase 2, which is a comparative study in India Region, Vietnam Region and Australia Region. Finally, this chapter explains the chronological sequence of data collection from 2009 to 2012.

Part Two

Part Two concentrates on the empirical findings, analysis and discussion of implications. Its three chapters focus on the different themes arising from the results, followed by the discussion and conclusion.

Chapter 5 presents the results of the study in Phase 1 in India Region, using the researcher's own survey instrument and interview guide. Data for this study were gathered from 2009 to 2010.

Chapter 6 focuses on the findings within India Region, Australia Region and Vietnam Region. This chapter presents both the overall response of the senior managers and the responses based on gender.

Chapter 7 presents the comparative findings across India Region, Australia Region and Vietnam Region. This chapter highlights the similarities and differences in the overall response of senior managers, and in the responses of male and female senior managers.

Chapter 8 analyses and discusses the results of Phase 1 in the India Region and Phase 2, which is a comparative study across three different regions namely India Region, Vietnam Region and Australia Region. This chapter includes a discussion of the results based on the research questions.

Chapter 9 includes the summary of the entire research study and underscores the significant contributions and limitations of the study, as well as suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

2.1 Chapter Overview

Diversity management has gained relevance as a business imperative because of rapid changes affecting organisations at both global and local levels. Changes in workforce composition, the internationalization of businesses and increased level of collaborations among business processes have resulted in workplace environments where different people with distinct cultural and economic backgrounds work together. Driven by the need to compete in an increasingly complex market, companies extend their strategic efforts by recognising and including diversity in their business objectives. Yet, despite the popularity of diversity management in the last two decades, there are still companies which show little progress in this area. This may be because of the lack of understanding of or lack of importance given to diversity management. Moreover, organisations face different business needs and they address diversity in ways unique to their workplace, depending on the specific demographic and prevailing socio-political pressure (Ozbilgin & Tatli, 2008).

Several factors drive diversity management, especially in MNCs. The different levels of reporting relationships across functional groups and geographies create a complex web of working relationships and change the very context of work teams (Cox & Blake, 1991). The increasing proportion of women in the workplace impacts on gender representation at the senior management level and on decision-making processes in the workplace (Kyriakidou, 2012). Social and legal compliance requirements mandate equal opportunity and anti-discrimination policies in local branches where MNCs operate (Shen, Chanda, D'Netto, & Monga, 2009). The increasing percentage of maturing workers in industrialised economies drives companies to assess their retirement policies. Lastly, the influence of different generational workgroups and values cause organisations to embrace more flexibility to meet the various needs of their workforce.

While diversity was traditionally defined based on gender, race, ethnicity and age, the current concept of diversity management considers the fundamental differences between historical, economic, cultural and social business environments. In that respect, some authors have argued that diversity initiatives transferred by management from multinational companies outside of their home countries may result in different

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outcomes (Batra, 2007; Bendick, Egan, & Lofhelm, 2001; Choy, Lee, & Ramburuth, 2009; Ozbilgin & Tatli, 2008; Syed & Ozbilgin, 2009).

Among MNCs, adopting a global diversity approach presents several challenges because the diversity concerns of the parent company may not be the same as those in other national contexts. As multinationals continue to expand across national boundaries, they become more concerned with the implications of polices on their local subsidiaries. Thus, studies related to utilizing a global integration approach to diversity management have shown that the choices of mechanisms to transfer diversity practices may yield different outcomes (Brock & Siscovick, 2007; Chung Lai, Gibbons, & Schoch, 1999).

This chapter describes the relevant literature on understanding diversity and the role of MNCs in diversity management. It is divided into five sections, each of which tackles a specific aspect of diversity and discusses the relevant literature fundamental to its research. Section 2.2 defines workplace diversity and inclusion and the diversity management paradigms. Section 2.3 explains the psychological underpinnings of diversity dynamics. Section 2.4 discusses the nature of MNCs and their influence on diversity management. Section 2.5 highlights the role of senior managers in implementing diversity and inclusion programs. Finally, Section 2.6 discusses gender and diversity in management roles.

2.2 Understanding Workplace Diversity and Inclusion

Workplace diversity and inclusion is a complex and multi-faceted construct. Some of the initial definitions were anchored on the experience of the United States as a country of immigrants with this construct mixed racial and ethnically based population. The factor of inclusion or exclusion by contrast, is an indicator of the way employees perceive and experience their position within the organisations (Mor Barak, 2005).

Diversity and inclusion are two distinct but related concepts whose definitions vary depending on the epistemologies of the scholars and use in the mainstream diversity discourse. Scholars and researchers use several definitions and contexts to describe each concept and their theoretical relationship with each other. The definitions that have evolved over the past decades indicate a dynamic and emerging sub-discipline cutting across the study of human resource management in multiple contexts of globalisation, workplace practices, gender and equity. Thus, one challenge has been to generate

meaningful terms and concepts that transcend national boundaries, so that a common understanding between and among academics, researchers and practitioners on the key divide between equal employment opportunity and diversity is achieved. For example, western countries are more likely to have had engagement with equal employment opportunity issues, particularly for women workers. In developing countries however, diversity management has become part of human resource practices without having gone through the discourse of gender equality (Syed & Ozbilgin, 2010).

2.2.1 Defining Workplace Diversity

Workplace diversity is broadly defined as a mixture of differences and similarities among individuals within a given dimension that includes a whole range of individual and organisational components (Thomas & Ely, 1996). For example, employees may vary by age, race, ethnicity, gender, education, sexual orientation, geographic origin or employment tenure. Kossek and Lobel (1996) further expanded the definition of diversity to include differences derived not only from ethnicity and gender, but also differences in function, nationality, language ability, religion, lifestyle and tenure in the organisation. However, these expanded definitions appear to dilute the key concerns of diversity management, such as equality and fairness. For example, Konrad, Prasad & Pringle (2006) recognised that some key aspects of diversity have greater impact than others.

Diversity has both observable (visible) and non-observable (invisible/underlying) characteristics (Cox, 1994; Mor Barak, 2005). Observable or visible characteristics are those that can be readily seen (such as race, ethnicity, physical disability, and age) and are legally protected from discrimination in most western countries. The non-observable or invisible characteristics include a wide array of dimensions such as values, cultural background, cognitive differences, sexual orientation, religion, and some disabilities. Other underlying qualities include education, functional background, region, origin, organisational tenure, socio-economic background and personality traits that influence power among social groups (Thomas & Ely, 1996; Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly, 1992).

From another angle, Mor Barak (2005) defined diversity in terms of narrow category-based definitions, broad category-based definitions, and definitions based on conceptual rule. She explained that the narrow category-based definition is rooted in the US experience of mixed or racial diversity. This is determined by "discrimination legislation, which includes gender, racial and ethnic groups, national origins, disability

and age" (p. 124). Examples of diversity that reflect the narrow category would be the percentages of Asians, Blacks and Hispanics employed in a firm (Hartenian & Gudmunson, 2000) .

The broad category-based definition is an expanded definition of diversity, which includes both visible and non-visible characteristics. According to Mor Barak (2005) invisible refers to "underlying attributes such as religion, education and tenure with the organisation" (p. 128). In addition, there are also definitions of diversity that refer to subjective views about culture, resulting in behavioural differences among cultural groups. This type of definition is categorized by Mor Barak (2005) as definition based on conceptual rule.

A diversity definition based on conceptual rule assumes that members of a particular culture are likely to share a common set of values and norms that defines their behaviours. These shared behaviours and views also determine their sense of belonging among group members with respect to other groups (Larkey, 1996; Mor Barak, 2005). In this definition, "culture" refers to a sense of group identity that fosters the perception of exclusion from or inclusion in other groups. Mor Barak (2005) noted that this definition would be relevant in understanding perceptions toward discrimination and prejudice regardless of whether they represent the minority or majority views.

Although the narrow-based, broad-based and conceptual rule definitions of diversity appear to include all differences under the umbrella of diversity, some researchers find that these definitions dilute the more important consequences of discrimination, prejudice, and power (Linnehan & Konrad, 1999; Nkomo, 1992; Pringle, 2009). These authors advocate focusing on the categories that have serious impact on employment, which are essentially those structured by race, gender, and class.   For instance, Mor Barak, Cherin and Berkman (1998, p. 85) explained that on the one hand, the personal level dimension of diversity refers to "a person's views and prejudices toward people who are different from themselves that can affect attitude and behaviours towards others in the organisation" (1998, p. 85). On the other hand, the organisational level dimension of diversity refers to "management's policies and procedures specifically affecting minorities and women that may in turn affect fairness in organisational treatment of these groups" (1998, p. 85). Some cultural identity groups have greater power, prestige, and status than others, and therefore influence the perceptions and work relations within the group (Cox & Nkomo, 1996; Nkomo, 1992). This influence is likely to be enhanced

in MNCs where ethnic affiliations, gender and other social identity groups become markers of status and group affiliation (Lauring, 2013).

There is no single definition that fully describes the broad range of meaning of diversity (Thomas & Ely, 1996). Nevertheless, the above literature could be summarised into two basic themes in relation to this research. First, diversity includes a broad range of differences in the workforce, which covers individual dimensions such as gender and age and the organisational dimensions such as rank, department, and tenure. Second, diversity management is focused on issues beyond affirmative action and equal employment opportunity. It is an organisational intervention or initiative through relevant policies and programs in response to the increasing diversity in the workforce.

Given the broad criteria that can be used to define diversity, this research limits its definition of diversity to demographic differences within the organisation, particularly gender, nationality and positions. This view acknowledges that diversity is inevitable considering the changing demographic profile of the workforce.

2.2.2 Defining Inclusion

There has been a great deal of research about diversity, while the concept of inclusion has been nascent in the organisational literature for the past decade (Roberson, 2006). Based on existing literature, there are different views with respect to the definition of inclusion. Preceded by an earlier stream of research by Mor Barak, Cherin and Berkman (1998) and Mor Barak (2005) management scholars have only recently focused on this concept.

Hanappi-Egger (2012, p. 15) refers to inclusion as "enabling and valuing the participation of all employees so that they can contribute fully to the organisation". Pelled, Ledford and Morhman (1999, p. 1014) defined inclusion as " the degree to which an employee is accepted and treated as an insider by others in a work system". Pless and Maak (2004, p. 130) described a culture of inclusion as " an organisational environment that allows people with multiple backgrounds, mindsets and ways of thinking to work effectively together and to perform to their highest potential in order to achieve organisational objectives based on sound principles". Similarly, Findler, Wind and Mor Barak (2007) described inclusion as collective judgment or perceptions of 'belonging' as a valued, welcomed and accepted member in organisational units such as the work group, department and overall organisation. Furthermore, Roberson (2006)

argued that "inclusion focuses on the removal of obstacles to the full participation and contribution of employees in organisations." Three general themes are apparent in these definitions that are consistent with this research. First, there is a focus on belongingness. Second is the focus on organisational environment, while the third is the focus on valuing employees.

The inclusion discourse has been expanded by Mor Barak (2005) who proposed the inclusion-exclusion construct as a continuum to describe the degree to which employees feel part of critical organisational processes such as access to information, connectedness to co-workers, and ability to participate in and influence the decision-making process. She further defined her view of an inclusive workplace as one that values and utilises individual and intergroup differences within its workforce, cooperates with, and contributes to its community. Inclusion is not only targeted to the needs of disadvantaged groups or improved opportunities of other groups such as women. The inclusive workplace as defined by Mor Barak (2005) included collaboration with individuals and groups which are outside of the organisation and across national and cultural boundaries. It is interesting to note that this definition of inclusion expands to external linkages beyond organisational concerns. It places a strong value on inclusion through workplace policies and practices and synthesizes a comprehensive framework for understanding inclusion that includes corporate community collaboration, national and state collaboration, and international collaboration.

Building on the above definitions, an exhaustive list of attributes or dimensions can demonstrate inclusion within the organisation. For example, Pelled and her colleagues (1999) examined the relationship between demographic dissimilarities and performance. The results of this study provided support for inclusion in terms of the degree of influence that employees have over decisions that affect them at work, the degree to which employees are informed about the company's strategies and goals, and the likelihood that employees retain their jobs. This indicates that inclusion is an integral part of the quality of interaction of people, as well as the connectedness that individuals feel towards their workgroup and the wider organisation.

Similarly, Mor Barak, Cherin and Berkman (1998) conceptualised inclusion and exclusion as a continuum of the organisational processes where individuals have access to information and resources, connectedness to supervisors and co-workers, and the

ability to participate in and influence decision-making. In this study, the authors argued that gender was directly linked to both decision-making and information networks, with women feeling more excluded than men. In addition, Mor Barak (2005) noted five areas of inclusion covered within the organisation. These areas are: a) management leadership, b) education and training, c) performance and accountability, d) work-life balance, and e) career development and planning. Among these five areas, the most common approaches to inclusion are education and training, work-life balance, and career development and planning, which are key areas in human resource management.

Pless and Maak (2004) explained further that a culture of inclusion depends on the level of mutual recognition that comes in many forms such as emotional recognition, formal recognition and legal recognition. They consider emotional recognition as the most fundamental form of affirmation of a person because it fosters self-esteem as the basis for delivering high performance.

Available studies on diversity management mostly focus on organisational measures of inclusion (Findler, Wind, & Mor Barak, 2007; Roberson, 2006; Rose Mary Wentling & Palma-Rivas, 2000) because inclusion is predicted based on perception of an individual's belongingness, recognition and involvement within an organisation, society or group. However, this research offers a simple definition of inclusion as the force that makes sense and meaning out of diversity and which is largely influenced by organisation values, work processes and policies facilitated through the human resource management function. Inclusion could be defined as the employee's sense of belonging in terms of their perceptions and experiences as being valued for their individuality and the qualities they bring to the organisation. To some extent, the integration of individuals may also depend on the type of organisation and the power balance in relation to membership within the group.

A strong concept linked to diversity and inclusion in MNCs is the context in which diversity management is implemented. Hanappi-Egger (2012) referred to diversity management as a reaction to the different needs and requirements of the employees, and underlined the importance of societal context when designing a diversity management strategy. There are different views about the nature of diversity and the variety of approaches to manage it, yet it is also widely recognised that subsidiaries of multinational companies try to use consistent approaches across subsidiaries. For example Jones et al. (2000) were one of the first to challenge the US-based approach to

diversity management in New Zealand. Egan and Bendick (2003) also noted that diversity management practices in the US differ from the European approach in terms of cultural and legal frameworks. More recently, Cooke and Saini (2010) attributed the varying views on diversity management between Western MNCs and their Indian subsidiaries to the national culture and level of sophistication of HR strategy. These examples demonstrated the limitations of the original concept and measures of diversity developed in a single country and characterised by a monolithic view of workplace culture. Thus, it appears important to view diversity management within different levels of its enactment and the unique context of the society.

2.3 Diversity Management Paradigms

The concept of workplace diversity signifies different meanings to different groups and individuals within an organisation and to the broader society within which it is studied. Each culture or nation is defined by its own unique diversity characteristics. According to Hofstede (1981), work-related attitudes must be understood within their cultural context. For example, in a multinational organisation, employees tend to align themselves, at the very least, with the country where they work thereby producing a sub-culture of how members relate to each other, accomplish work and respond to changes. Some of the behaviours within this sub-culture include patterns of decision-making, treatment of female employees, leadership styles, and work behaviour. Recognising these behaviours provides a powerful impetus for companies to adopt diversity management practices.

In terms of socio-economic and historical background, there are distinct diversity characteristics that may have potentially harmful or beneficial effects on employment outcome. For example, ethnicity issues in Western countries like the US resulted from slavery and migration, while in India, ethnicity may mean differences in region or language. Some authors define diversity as more than the proportional representation of various demographics and social groups, while others view diversity as overcoming cultural prejudice and instilling new values about differences in the organisation (Prasad, Mills, Elmes, & Prasad, 1997).

Cross-border implementation of diversity management in organisations becomes more challenging due to fundamental differences in national cultures, legislation, language, or ethnicity that affect industrial relations and interactions (Kossek & Lobel, 1996). For Islamic states like Pakistan, the western conceptualisation of EEO provides little value.

Syed (2008) observed that women's employment opportunities in Pakistan are not determined by their gender but by other forms of identity such as urban-rural background or ethnic identity.

Amongst the US, British and European perspectives, the salient features of diversity differ in demographic, historical, socio-economic and legal contexts. Historically, the systematic discrimination against blacks and other ethnic minorities resulted in making racial inequality a predominant diversity issue in the US (Shen et al., 2009). The growth of minority ethnic populations in Western Europe has more recent origins, having resulted from widespread immigrations in recent years and therefore, the reasons for these minority groups to be disadvantaged are different from the US context (Danowitz & Hanappi-Egger, 2012). Using the term minority ethnic group is a complex and controversial term in UK and Europe, and includes people who cannot be described as white. In this context, the perspective of "black" is shared by people of African, Asian and Caribbean origins(Kirton & Greene, 2005) . Thus, because of important contextual differences, the policies addressing diversity in the US are not entirely transferable to the British context. Similarly in Asia, societal differences have implications for US multinational companies that intend to adopt a similar approach to diversity management implementation (Cooke & Saini, 2010; Lawler, Chen, Wu, Bae, & Bai, 2011; Zanko, 2003).

Different countries and organisations outside of the US have a variety of diversity management approaches that are not always acknowledged because of the US-centric assumptions of diversity or simply because of the small body of research supporting it. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the notion of diversity management is popular mostly among MNCs and represents a key issue in their human resource management agenda (Sippola & Smale, 2007). It is of rapidly growing interest among MNCs, from whom it has become common to be implementing some form of diversity management on an international scale.

Diversity management is probably not within the realm of local companies, although they may be implementing policies that support diversity. Jones et al. (2000, p. 365) argued that while there is nothing wrong with the US-based perspective, the "historical and cultural specificity" must be recognised. For example, Syed (2008) pointed out that the equal opportunity concept is generally recognised in Western countries, but adapting it to Muslim countries must be customized according to local socio-cultural contexts.

Another example was noted by Lauring (2013) in his study of international diversity management of a European-based MNC in the Middle East. The findings of the study showed that although the MNC had well proven management practices in its headquarters, these practices may not always suit its subsidiaries in Saudi Arabia because of cultural and societal differences (Lauring, 2013). The results also indicated the dominant ways of thinking by managers about cultures and ways of working. Likewise in Japan, which is ethnically homogeneous and traditionally a male-dominated society, setting a race-based and a female-based target respectively proves highly challenging for multinational organisations.

It appears to be a common practice for MNCs to implement diversity programs based on ethnocentric assumptions that domestic practices are appropriate abroad (Nishii & Ozbilgin, 2007). In addition, there are arguments that due to fundamental differences between economic, social and political environments, it may be problematic to transfer diversity initiatives from US or European headquarters to its subsidiaries (Egan & Bendick, 2003; Ozbilgin & Tatli, 2008; Tatli, 2010). Therefore, there appears to be a need for more studies to support the critical review of diversity management outside of the western countries. In that respect, this research examines how a US MNC transfers diversity management practices to its subsidiaries and implements locally congruent initiatives.

The above studies confirmed the variety of concepts and ways in which diversity has been understood. Workforce diversity is associated with greater innovation while other studies showed that diversity increases conflict, reduces social cohesion and increases turnover (Milliken & Martins, 1996; Williams & O'Reilly, 1998). Apparently previous empirical studies that focused on demographic differences of the workforce confirm what employers already know – that diversity could result in positive or negative results in team relationships and the benefits derived from diversity management do not accrue automatically.

The field of diversity management is characterised by waves of perspectives and conceptual framework that influence the way researchers analyse diversity and inclusion. Each of these frameworks has the potential to generate important insights and benefits to the study of diversity.

During the past two decades, researchers have struggled to improve their understanding on the influence of workforce diversity in organizations (Jackson & Joshi, 2004). Syed and Ozbilgin (2009) noted that contextual influences are no longer limited to the legal framework of equal opportunity and social cohesion of diverse group of employees. Mor Barak (2005) explained that the organisation's relationship with the community and international collaboration are important aspects of an inclusive workplace. Mor Barak and Cherin (2008) also revealed that cultural implications are equally important for individual workplace experiences and perspectives (Syed & Ozbilgin, 2009; Mor Barak and Cherin, 2008). In the recent years, the convergence of micro and macroeconomic views in diversity research have highlighted significant roles of organisational, cultural and institutional factors in shaping diversity management research. Three models for diversity management are presented in the following discussions: the business case model, the inclusive workplace model and the relational model of diversity management which guided this research.

2.3.1 Business Case Model: Workplace Diversity and Firm Performance

The surge of international markets, the increase in reliance on diverse workforce to address the emerging diverse market trends, and the growth of investment by companies on diversity initiatives such as training, shows that in operating a business, diversity management has become a critical aspect (Robinson & Dechant, 1997). Business context appeared to be a powerful impetus for managing diversity through opportunities associated with increased market and customer base.

The question organisational leaders ask most often concerning workforce diversity is how its management affects the bottom-line performance (Cox, 1994). More specifically, this question pertains to evidence support for a positive diversity management-performance relationship. In their continuing efforts to understand the complex pattern of linking diversity management to organisation results, some researchers have begun to examine organisational contexts to determine whether diversity is likely to be associated with positive or negative consequences (Kochan et al., 2003; McMahon, 2010; Prieto, Phipps, & Osiri, 2009).

A mixed of variables such as demographic factors, organisational culture, business strategies, human resource policies and practices and group and team processes were considered as moderating factors that might cause an impact on firm performance. While financial performance was used to measure the bottom-line results, some studies

looked beyond financial results to assess the implications of diversity on employee satisfaction, turnover, task and relationship, level of conflict, organisational knowledge and skills (Jackson & Joshi, 2004; Kochan et al., 2003; Richard, 2002; Weigand, 2007). Outcomes associated with these factors infused new meanings and significance in exploring the business results of diversity.

The business case model appears to be a popular field of diversity research over the last decade. Most of the academic research on diversity management from 2000-2009 provided empirical and theoretical values on how workplace diversity might contribute to firm performance, however, studies conducted by McMahon (2010), Kochan et al. (2003), Jayne and Dipboye (2004), Richard (2002) and Jackson and Joshi (2004) found no significant direct effects of diversity on organisational performance. These studies showed mixed results indicating that the effects of diversity are contingent on organisational contexts. The results could be either positive or negative based on how diversity was managed.

While the literature suggests the business case rationale appears relevant in measuring the effects of diversity management, application of this model to my research posed some limitations. The data were collected from a small percentage of the population. The initiatives examined were limited to a few HR policies related to diversity and inclusion. Finally, the factors that could be considered as organisational results such as financial, attrition and other indicators were considered confidential. These limitations also posed an opportunity for this research to expand the examination to other factors that could measure the outcome. Perceptions may not be viewed as the outcomes, but could open a window on indicative outcome that might be helpful for future research.

The business case perspective of diversity management is useful for the organisation but it remains focused on the business benefits while involving little culture change (Syed & Ozbilgin, 2009). Mor Barak (2005) argues that with the globalised economy driven by multinational corporations, diversity management no longer pertains solely to heterogeneity of the workforce within one organisation and nation, but refers to the workforce composition across nations and relationship of an organisation with external business environment. This concept tends to create limitations of the business case when applied to comparative studies across national boundaries.

Equally important and challenging questions may involve contextual factors in analysing diversity management. For example, what societal or institutional conditions influence diversity management within the organisation? What conditions outside and within the organisation, mitigate or promote potential effects of diversity in the organisation and its employees? How might organisations adopt the institutional, societal and cultural contexts in its diversity management initiatives? Studies of Mor Barak (2005), Ozbilgin and Tatli (2009) and Syed (2009) provided important framework to answer these questions.

2.3.2 Inclusive Workplace Model

Mor Barak (2005) proposed the concept of Inclusive Workplace Model which basically focuses on the organisational level of inclusion in relation to its community and by supporting international collaborations. According to Mor Barak (2005, p 225) "the concept of Inclusive Workplace Model refers to a work organisation that is not only accepting and utilising the diversity of its own workforce but also active in the community, participates in state and federal programs. This model constitutes four (4) hierarchical levels of inclusion that recognize the tensions posed by global business environment and embraces a broader scope of inclusion beyond the organisation.

 At Level I, this framework suggests inclusive human resource policies and practices linked to diversity and strategic plans. These policies covered five principal areas: leadership, training, performance and accountability, flexible work arrangement and career development. These policies aim to overcome employment barriers traditionally experienced by women and minorities.

Level II elaborates the scope of inclusion through the organisation's relationship with the community. Inclusion at this level acknowledges that the organization is part of the surrounding community and the reciprocity embedded in this relationship (Mor Barak, 2000). In multinational companies, this level of inclusion is referred to as corporate social responsibility or initiatives that protect the interest of the community. These initiatives are embedded in the corporate philosophy to promote ethical importance through socially responsible activities.

 Level III is about inclusion through national collaborations focusing on social class. This level underscores the company's involvement with programs aimed at helping

disadvantaged groups such as women, disabled and unemployed to overcome employment barriers.

 And finally Level IV "refers to the organisation's practices related to the fair exchange of economic goods and services and the respectful cultural relationship with individuals and groups in other countries (Mor Barak, 2005, p. 284)." Inclusion is achieved through proactive collaboration across national borders and support to mutual global interest in expanding the organisation's geographic markets. Examples of these initiatives are participating in Fair Trade, eliminating sweat shops, creating jobs in other countries through fair labour practices and implementing values and norms that are appropriate in host countries where organisations operate.

The Inclusive Workplace Model presents not only an ideal vision of an organisation but also a comprehensive framework for diversity management research. Diversity management patterned after this model appears hard to achieve. It is a multilevel approach that spans from micro to macro level of inclusion which suggests an inward looking approach. The focus is on organisational parameters which may limit its usefulness in comparative studies. In my review this approach is still inward looking, available research using this framework is rare. This may be because of the broad range and complexity of data needed or because only a few organisations may have met all four systems levels of inclusion and these practices.

Research interest on diversity management has created different perspectives on the way it is defined and implemented in organisations. Given the various regional offices of a MNC used in this research, the relational model of diversity management emphasizes the context and the variety of factors that may influence the perceptions and priorities of senior management when it comes to diversity and inclusion within the company.

2.3.3 Relational Model of Diversity Management

Ozbilgin and Tatli (2008) offered a relational model that utilizes the multi-level framework in understanding diversity management. The relational framework revolves around three levels of diversity discourse: the national/sectoral, or macro level, the organisational or meso level, and the individual or micro level. The *macro level* involves the historical and social-economic structures and key actors, as well as

stakeholders that shape the policies regulating employment and social relations. This perspective presents the larger social systems, demographic trends, legislation, and public policies in different countries. The *meso level* involves the organisational processes and approaches to diversity, which affects employment opportunities. The *micro level* involves the individual and group aspects, organisational culture, and interpersonal relations in the workplace.

Syed and Ozbilgin (2009, p. 2440) argued that the inclusion of multiple levels of diversity management studies "allows for an examination of diversity and equal opportunity as a negotiated process, which is socially or historically embedded". Additionally, it is important to acknowledge that the multilevel factors dwell within a specific geography and are interdependent and interrelated (Syed & Ozbilgin, 2009). This multi-level model allows diversity analysis and examination of equal opportunity to be situated within a specific social and historical context and provides a constructive way of comparative examination across different cultures. While little empirical research has been conducted using the multi-level factors, the model will be used to organise the multiple literature on diversity argument in this chapter.

The multi-level framework marked a transformation in the evolution of the discourse of diversity management. It points out that studies of diversity should prioritise the interlocking multi-level relationships and specific circumstances of diversity initiatives in question. Moreover, it links the institutional, organisational, and individual contexts of diversity management considering earlier perspectives proposed by Thomas and Ely (1996) that focused mainly on the individual and organisational aspects of diversity management.

Macro Level

The macro level in this research highlights the historical, societal and legislative structures that shape the diversity and inclusion within specific regional offices that are discussed in Chapter 3. Some of these structures include laws pertaining to equity and fairness in employment in each country/region and how these might be different or the same across all regions. An overview of the socio-economic and historical background is given for each specific region.

The approach that each organisation takes to address diversity depends on external pressures such as institutional and socio-cultural contexts, particularly in many Asian

countries. Whilst ethnicity and minority representation are important issues in the United States, in Asia, gender and race discrimination are the most overwhelming concerns of companies, followed by age, religion and social status (Diversity and Inclusion Asia Conference, 2005).

Ethnic and race-based studies within the Asian context are few relative to their importance in more developed countries like the US, Australia or New Zealand. This is probably because of the small migrant population composed mostly of European expatriates working in MNCs. However, unlike Singapore where multinationals have become significant players in the local economy, the other countries in Asia continue to have large populations of local residents in the workforce. Unlike in the US, Europe or Middle East, huge diversity is evident in among Asian countries in the percentage of ageing workers in industrialized countries like Japan, Korea and Singapore as compared to the percentage of youth population in the Philippines population.

Meso Level

The organisation and what it does to implement diversity and equal opportunity is the main entity at the meso level, which refers to the organisational contexts that include the interventions, structures, processes and systems that permeate within the organisation. This level is situated between the macro and micro influences. A much-cited article on diversity management by Thomas and Ely (1996) offered a typology of diversity perspectives that increased the understanding of diversity management at the organisational (meso) level. These are the resistance paradigm, the discrimination and fairness paradigm, the access and legitimacy paradigm, and the learning and effectiveness paradigm.

The resistance paradigm purports that organisations resist change and would rather maintain the status quo to avoid any pressure from adopting diversity management programmes (Dass & Parker, 1999). Organisations would rather reproduce inequality without equal opportunities or diversity policy (Kirton & Greene, 2005) if they had been economically successful and able to meet their objectives even without recognising workforce diversity. The discrimination and fairness paradigm focuses on equal opportunities and fair treatment by compliance to legislation (Thomas & Ely, 1996). The major evidence for the paradigm comes from recruitment as a means to increase the number of individuals belonging to disadvantaged groups. The access-legitimacy paradigm focuses on business benefits by maximizing and leveraging the

individual's potential as a source of competitive advantage. An example of the access-legitimacy paradigm is an organisation's initiative to deliberately increase the demographic diversity of its workforce to understand and respond to the different consumer preferences and consumer segments such as ethnic, female and generational groups.

Finally, the learning and effectiveness paradigm emphasises the linkage of diversity to work and employee perspectives. It promotes the belief that culturally diverse groups of people can work together to achieve a common mission and vision. Inevitable tensions that are experienced at work could be reduced by organisational processes that promote understanding among the work teams (Ely & Thomas, 2001). The resulting egalitarian culture in the learning and effectiveness paradigm is seen to create higher standards of performance in which employees are viewed as valuable resources. An important aspect of this approach is that the organisational culture and processes respond to change rather than pressure or expect people from 'diversity' identity groups to assimilate or fit in to the existing culture.

The challenges of managing workplace diversity have also been studied from an employment relations perspective (Kirton & Greene, 2005). Other studies show that diversity initiatives have moved beyond legal compliance and equality to accepting and valuing the differences that exist among the members of the workforce (Mor Barak et al., 1998). The organisational paradigms of diversity management tend to diminish the emphasis on intergroup inequality as well as the social and historical issues related to stereotyping and prejudice. Mor Barak (2005) underscored that a broader definition of diversity should not overlook the roles of conflict, power, dominance, and the history of how organisations are fundamentally structured by race, gender and class. In considering the implementation of organisation diversity management, Thomas & Ely (1996) supported this argument by asserting that limiting diversity to these dimensions is detrimental to diversity efforts.

Within the organisational context, Olsen and Martins (2012) argued that organisation norms and code of conduct are important in the critical assessment of diversity management. This argument indicates that outcomes of diversity management approach are manifested in the organisational culture and practices. The authors proposed that a "value-type approach" be added to the present understanding of diversity management. According to Olsen and Martins (2012, p. 1171), diversity management approaches

focus on leveraging diversity in achieving business success by considering diversity as an "instrumental value". In contrast, those organisations that view a diverse workforce as an objective, without explicitly considering it a means for achieving business outcomes, tend to regard diversity as a "terminal value."

While the value-driven perspective provides a potential explanation on the mixed results in the literature of diversity management, it can also raise confusion about which approach is applicable to organisations. Although it could be argued that these propositions do not limit the approach to either one value, some organisational level research on diversity management has focused mainly on achieving financial business outcome rather than considering effective management of diversity as an end in itself (Jayne & Dipboye, 2004; Jonsen, Schneider, & Maznevski, 2011; Kochan et al., 2003; Weigand, 2007). In relation to this research, the meso level factors were explained in Chapter 3 and represented by the organisational approaches implemented by the company and by each regional office. These approaches include the values and vision of diversity and inclusion, as well as the human resource policies and practices across the organisation.

Micro Level

The micro level perspectives refer to the individual issues, aspirations and identities and the potential influence of macro and meso dynamics on the individual response to diversity (Syed & Ozbilgin, 2009). The micro level of the relational framework also takes into account the individual influence on equal opportunity and represents the employees' intersecting identities such as gender, race or social class, as well as their experiences and responses to various issues and challenges within society and employment context such as recruitment, promotion and training.

The interaction between macro, meso and micro is dynamic in nature, continuously unfolding in an ongoing process rather than static in nature. For example, the laws enabling women's inclusion in the workplace in India were meant to address the concern on gender difference and discrimination. A study by Kramar (2012) noted that the national employment standards in Australia provide employees the right to request flexible work-arrangement, unpaid parental leave and other personal leaves for both men and women. Similarly in Vietnam, since 2003, gender equality was considered an important aspect in the socio-economic development of Vietnam (Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2007). These examples show that issues of individual

identities such as those related to gender are closely interrelated with the socio-cultural and organisational contexts of diversity management.

The individual workers and managers are significant in shaping the effects of diversity management. Syed and Ozbilgin (2009) argued that an individual becomes vulnerable and may experience disadvantages when subjected to stereotyping that is embedded in societal traditions and organizational culture and practices. Tatli (2010) explained that the relationship between micro and macro is constructed through discourses and practices, and enacted by individual agents or practitioners. The other important components that shape diversity management at the micro level are the strong corporate culture and managers who advocate diversity. Ozbilgin and Tatli (2008) emphasized that lack of support from senior management may be the most significant stumbling block in introducing diversity management programmes.

At the micro level, the field of diversity adopts a broad range of organisational behaviour and social psychological theories that influence how individuals react to situations or associate themselves within a group. The psychological perspectives and work group level analyses were considered as almost the exclusive focus of diversity (Van Knippenberg & Schippers, 2007) until other contextual factors were introduced to the field. Studies tend to link diversity management communication (Mannix & Neale, 2005) and the quality of interactions among work groups (Cho & Mor Barak, 2008; Elmes & Wilemon, 1991; Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999; Kossek & Zonia, 1993). Accordingly, the following discussion is given to show how diversity literature at the micro level presented itself from each of these perspectives.

2.3.4 Summary

Several definitions of diversity and inclusion have emerged in the recent years, but the understanding of its definition within the global diversity management paradigm still remains little-explored area. As a consequence, diversity management has been developed constructively to achieve the business objectives and address the demographic differences of employees. This section presented some of the central issues of defining diversity and inclusion and described a multilevel concept in understanding diversity management practices between different nations. This section also briefly described the concerns of transferring diversity management by multinational companies from head office to subsidiaries outside of home countries, leading to failures in the creation and development of such initiatives. The above

discussion on the relational model becomes the baseline interpretation as diversity management is discussed in different concepts and levels in the following sections of this chapter.

2.4 Psychological Perspectives on Diversity and Inclusion (Micro Level)

The field of diversity has offered a considerable stream of research over the past decade that underscores the importance of social and psychological perspectives that influence intergroup relations. These perspectives explain why individuals associate themselves with certain groups or why people who are different from a particular group are excluded from positions of power and influence. There is no single intergroup theory that brings together a common thread of conceptual and methodological perspectives to understand diversity and intergroup dynamics. Instead, there are a variety of social psychological theories on diversity that provide clarity about the dimensions within which intergroup perspectives are embedded. A few theories are important worth explaining to help understand the everyday dynamics of diversity and inclusion within organisations.

2.4.1 Social Identity and Intergroup Dynamics

The social identity concept asserts that individuals identify and involve themselves with a particular social group based on their need for affiliation with salient group membership including common qualities involving experiences of failures or successes (Aldefer & Smith, 1982). While it is not an all-embracing theory, the fundamental concepts served as building blocks for intergroup relations and expanded into social-categorization theory, which is an important perspective relevant to understanding diversity and inclusion.

The social identity theory formulated by Tajfel and Turner (1979) was developed in an attempt to explain the connections between social structures and individual meanings people attach to their identity. These connections determine their membership in groups based on race, ethnicity and gender. Social identity proposes that people desire to belong to a group and classify themselves according to social comparisons that are meaningful for them. Mor Barak (2005, p. 157) described social identity as a "mega theory" because it serves as an important impetus in the development of additional theoretical perspectives on intergroup relations and examines the connections between group membership and contextual social processes regardless of the specific type of group.

People who associate themselves based on their social identity groups are also likely to have participated in the same historical event and experienced the same social pressures such as unemployment (Aldefer & Smith, 1982). The definition of social identity calls to mind that an individual's organisation is a form of social identification and may be perceived to fulfil the individual's motives and self-esteem (Hogg & Terry, 2000). Within the organisation, an individual's social identity can be further derived from the person's department or workgroup. This is an understandable concept considering the relational and comparative nature of social identities, where the individual identifies with the roles, successes and status of the group (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

2.4.2 Social Categorization and Intergroup Relations

The theory of social categorization or social cognition further expands the social identity concept by recognising that self-conception occurs at multiple levels of inclusiveness. As an offshoot of the social identity theory, social categorization refers to the cognitive process of comparison where individuals classify themselves into groups based on similarities and undertake many forms of social action (Mor Barak, 2005). Moreover, social categorization is a cognitive tool used to segment or classify individuals based on social environment, thus resulting in in-group or out-group biases and motivations (Tajfel, Flament, Billing, & Bundy, 1971). The theory specifies the application of the social categorization process as the cognitive basis of group behaviour (Hogg & Terry, 2000) that elicits a person's demographic similarity or dissimilarity to others (Chatman & Spataro, 2005).

Self-categorization theory specifies how an individual sees himself or herself as a member of a group. This is somewhat similar to social cognition, where individuals see themselves as different or the same within a group membership. While social cognition emphasises the individual characteristics, self-categorization includes the group characteristics to which an individual relates himself or herself. This means that self-categorization exists when people stereotype themselves through self-attribution of attitudes and behaviours they associate themselves within a particular group (Kulik & Bainbridge, 2006). The perceiver is likely to see these characteristics as related to his or her own identity, and therefore uses these characteristics to categorize and relate to others.

Individuals validate their social identity by developing their self-esteem and by showing preference for their own social category or 'in-group" at the expense of "out-groups".

Scheider and Northcraft (1999) argued that demographic characteristics such as age, gender or race, and functional characteristics like profession, position or departments provide salient means for individuals to associate themselves within organisations. Furthermore, identification with a department or function is similar to a person's identification with a reciprocal role e.g., boss-subordinate (Ashforth & Mael, 1989). These characteristics are strongly connected in the discourse of diversity management because it includes dimensions that are linked to association, cohesiveness, or conflict (Scheider & Northcraft, 1999). This perspective may also provide dominant groups in highly diverse organisations with differentiated treatment and source of power.

In social categorization processes, people categorize themselves and others according to their perception of similarities and differences of group membership. Furthermore, Tajfel and Turner (1986) stressed that social categorization theory shows that individuals tend to associate and collaborate mostly with those who are similar to themselves. This in turn helps them to anticipate their behaviour as well as that of others, and determine an appropriate response (Kulik & Bainbridge, 2006). Within a MNC, social categorization is likely to be enhanced because of multiple hierarchies of structures such as the corporate level, regional level and local country level, which are strong markers of social identity. Thus, it highlights competing groups depicting the psychological processes for inclusion and exclusion.

Identification with a social group is formed out of social cognition and has profound implications on the way individuals perceive themselves. Social groups may include common characteristics such as race, gender, hierarchical rank and profession. These types of identification trigger a psychological process, whether one belongs to a particular group or not, and also leads to an insider-outsider group distinction (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

Four factors increase the probability that individuals will experience intergroup failure or success based on their association with another group. First, group identification is more likely to occur when the outside-group characteristics are salient. Second, individuals are likely to relate to their original group when they have distinctive characteristics in relation to the comparable group and these characteristics are visible. Third, individuals are more likely to identify with a group that they perceive as prestigious and successful in the organisation. Lastly, competition between groups

accentuates the differences, clarifies group boundaries and makes group identification greater (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

When individuals have recognised similarities or differences with other groups and individuals, they begin to categorize themselves as a member of that particular group. In the same manner, employees experience inclusion or exclusion not only through their perception of other groups but also on the degree to which they feel part of critical organisational processes. These processes include access to information and resources, relations with supervisors and co-workers, and ability to participate in decision-making (Mor Barak, 2005).

Social identity and self-categorization are therefore complementary theories explaining social identity in the form of its elements and processes (Korte, 2007). Studies from Chatman and Flynn (2001) and Chatman and Spataro (2005) extend understanding into self-categorization based on people's responses to organisational culture and influences of demographic differences on teamwork norms.

Ashforth and Mael (1989) pointed out that identification with a group is similar to identification with a person. These authors argue that social identification is a perception of belonging and leads to activities that are congruent with the perception of that social group. When individuals enter organisations, they carry with them their on-going personal identity based on variables such as ethnicity, gender and age. On that basis, they develop stereotypes and prejudices by differentiating themselves from the others in terms of attitude, behaviour and other attributes they associate with members in a particular group (Tajfel et al., 1971). The individual's knowledge that he or she belongs to a certain social group such as race, ethnicity, or gender excludes others who are perceived to be different from them (Hogg & Terry, 2000; Tajfel et al., 1971). In short, an individual defines himself or herself based on salient group membership (Ashforth & Mael, 1989).

2.4.3 Summary
The need to belong to a social group is a universal basic human need that transcends cultural and national boundaries. Belonging to a group is latent to developing one's individual identity. From the social-psychological perspectives discussed above, individuals in organisations relate to others as members of social groups and categorize

themselves according to how they perceive themselves in relation to their membership in these social groups.

The concepts of social cognition, social categorization and social identity all contribute to explaining the dynamics of intergroup relations and how people form a sense of group belonging. Taken together, these concepts indicate that organisations may benefit from the connection between social structures and individuals through the meaning people attach to their membership in the organisation and identity groups. The relationships formed out of these perceptions create the inclusion-exclusion or "insider-outsider" experience, and make the individual group member judge oneself to be similar with the people who belong to the same social group.

The above reflections on diversity and inclusion highlight the range of perspectives that could be taken to understand diversity management and provide the foundation for understanding workplace diversity and inclusion. This chapter now turns to the review of MNCs to shed light on managing diversity practices related to this research.

2.5 Multinational Corporations (MNC) and Workforce Diversity

The Asia Pacific region has been leading global economic growth in spite of the financial crisis of 2008 (APEC 2010, Economic Ministerial Meeting). The changes in the business environment and cultural convergence may be due to the impact of globalisation, as countries in Asia embrace economic development. It is expected that Asia will continue to increase its importance as a growth centre of the world economy and continue to attract MNCs (*APEC Economic Agenda for a More Resilient Asia-Pacific*, 2013; Zhang & Shen, 2012).

The expansion to Asia has allowed MNC to have wider and greater access to diverse consumer markets as well as coordinated business transactions beyond their home countries (Choy et al., 2009). MNCs benefit from large economies of scale not only in China and India, two of the world's fastest-growing nations, but also in the rapidly emerging Asian economies of Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan (Chang, 2011; Choy et al., 2009; Thite, Wilkinson, & Shah, 2012) and Vietnam.

MNCs serve as important channels for the global diffusion of international businesses and human resource practices to the region. Whilst local subsidiaries benefit from strategic opportunities of foreign investments, MNCs also benefit from the existing wealth of available knowledge, experiences, and cultural and institutional environments

offered by the host country (Clark, 2012; Kostova & Roth, 2002; Lawler et al., 2011). Research by Markey and Ravenswood (2010) on the impact of multinational enterprises and foreign direct investment (FDI) confirmed that multinational companies will significantly impact many areas of industrial relations and human resource management as they continue to become important players in the world economy.

Among the most recent and important components of human resource management of most MNCs is diversity management. However, some studies showed that the transfer and implementation of human resource management practices has become a challenge in view of institutional, historical, and cultural differences between the host and home countries (Choy, 2007; Choy et al., 2009; Egan & Bendick, 2003; Ferner, Almond, Colling, Edwards, & Carmen-Muller, 2004; Sippola & Smale, 2007). Empirical studies concerning how MNCs have approached diversity management, particularly in Asia are limited, thus providing an opportunity for this study.

This section focuses on MNCs, particularly their nature, impact, and challenges in managing human resources across different boundaries. Such focus is of particular importance to this research because of the nature of the company under study. A few researchers have indicated the institutional environment of the host country of MNCs as one of the key elements in understanding the implementation and management of workforce diversity within corporate organisations (Batra, 2007; Cooke & Saini, 2010; Jones et al., 2000).

2.5.1 Defining Multinational Corporations

A multinational corporation (MNC) is an inter-organisational network, composed of a group of geographically dispersed and goal-oriented organisations that include its headquarters and the different national subsidiaries (Ghoshal & Bartlett, 1990). MNCs are characterised by "increasing diversity of national origin and industry by sector of operations and also by considerable concentration in the host country of operations and in financial assets" (Markey & Ravenswood, 2010, p. 29). Three factors differentiate an MNC from a domestic local organisation. First, MNCs are geographically dispersed and represent different economic, social, and cultural backgrounds and challenges. Second, MNCs are internally differentiated and respond in complex ways to both environmental and organisational differences in various business and geographical locations. Third, MNCs possess internal linkages and coordinated mechanisms which respond to

different levels of dependency and interdependency among different business units (Ghoshal & Nohria, 1989).

Large international corporations are typically MNCs or global companies. They normally have their headquarters in one country and operate one or more branches outside of said country. The challenges of these corporations are focused on transferring and adapting the knowledge and expertise of the parent company to foreign markets while retaining considerable influence and control (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1987).

In MNCs, the head office has the dominant decision-making power but each national or regional operation has limited autonomy in business decisions, strategies and policies (Mor Barak, 2005). The main strategy involves developing strategic capabilities that allow subsidiary companies to be sensitive and responsive to the differences in national environments. Global companies are located in a specific geographic region with a team composed of managers across the globe jointly making major business decisions. It is driven by the need for global efficiency and typically treats the world market as an integrated whole (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1989).

Multinational companies provide a powerful vehicle by which global human resource practices are transferred and promoted across different countries (Morley & Collings, 2004). By the sheer size of their operations, MNCs can implement standardized employment practices while taking into account the institutional complexities and limitations of host countries. At the heart of the MNCs' complex operations is the degree of balance between centralized controlled operations and local autonomy (Liu, 2004; McGraw, 2004; Miozzo & Yamin, 2012; Morley & Collings, 2004).

The transfer and integration of human resource practices in MNCs are largely determined by different national origins and types of subsidiary autonomy. Jain, Lawler, and Morishima (1998) pointed to the varying degrees to which localized HRM practices by MNCs impact on organisational effectiveness. Typically, the headquarters sets the influencing policies on human resources, and the extent to which centralized or decentralized forms of control are adapted depends on the structure and strategy of the MNC. Whatever forms of control are exercised are the result of process interpretation between the MNC and the host country operating under different national and social realities (Almond, 2011). Nonetheless, MNCs have "the tendency to apply standard

formal systems across their global operating units" (Ferner et al., 2004, p. 366) to facilitate a uniform process of dissemination.

2.5.2 Integration Strategies of Multinational Corporations

MNCs need to engage in human resources activities, in addition to operational and market functions, when operating in an international environment. In this respect, the transfer by multinational companies of policies and practices to the different business systems in which they operate is one of the key issues in the practice of international business (Ferner et al., 2004). Martinez and Jarillo (1991) argued that one of the key objectives of MNCs is to implement some level of consistency in their HRM practices across different countries in their global operations. MNCs are focused on transferring and adapting the parent company's knowledge or expertise to foreign markets (Egan & Bendick, 2003) to retain considerable influence and control (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1987; Kim, Park, & Prescott, 2003a). In the face of this dilemma, MNCs adopt strategies for managing the workforce and integrating polices in the host country which are different from the strategies that they may use in their home country.

The case study company adopts different control mechanisms based on the following contingencies: first, the institutional conditions that govern employment relations; second, the competitive business environment and ways to achieve business goals; third, the processes for monitoring and evaluating performance; and lastly, the communication and development of the same set of values, behaviour and standards in the home office and across different branches overseas (Welch & Welch, 1997). Therefore, a MNC's control and integration system may be regarded as essentially based on the rational application of appropriate forms of control (Ouchi, 1977). However, subsequent empirical findings have explained a variety of mechanisms for cross-transfer across MNCs of human resource management practices, including diversity management (Ferner, Almond, & Colling, 2005; Ferner et al., 2004; Lawler et al., 2011). These mechanism strategies are: ethnocentric strategy, polycentric strategy, and geocentric strategy.

An ethnocentric strategy emphasises uniformity and integration, in which the host country transfers its best practices to overseas subsidiaries. There is little local responsiveness, thus allowing the headquarters to maximize control (Ngo, Turban, Lau, & Lui, 1998). Ghoshal and Nohria (1989) described this strategy as centralized integration where the decision process is hierarchical and the headquarters takes

precedence in decisions regarding human resources policies and practices. This strategy relies on standard policies and rules to maintain control and greater consistency among subsidiaries worldwide. The approach is believed to improve company performance and have universal application (Ghoshal & Bartlett, 1990). Studies have shown that MNCs exhibit distinctive patterns of control and subsidiary autonomy in the management of human resources, industrial relations policies, and practices in general. The major findings are that US MNCs are more centralized than those of other nationalities (Ferner et al., 2004).

The opposite of an ethnocentric strategy is a polycentric one, in which MNCs totally adapt to local situations such as human resources practices and fully support processes used by local firms (Ngo et al., 1998). In this strategy, each subsidiary is considered as a separate entity and is managed by local nationals. It also considers similar contextual factors between the local subsidiary and headquarters such as the economic, political and social factors (Jain et al., 1998).

Lastly, the geocentric strategy for global integration balances the local adaptation and practices of the corporate headquarters, and at the same time influences local practices (Ngo et al., 1998). In the typology of control mechanisms, this is also referred to as multi-domestic strategies, thus implying that each subsidiary is relatively independent and can be managed separately (Brock & Siscovick, 2007). This strategy lies in the middle of the polycentric and ethnocentric strategies, offering the local subsidiary and MNC a common meeting ground for stability. An independent approach reduces the amount of control from headquarters and allows the subsidiaries to make their local-specific decisions (Ngo et al., 1998). The participation of the local subsidiary in this approach is crucial in order to achieve not only the demands of headquarters, but also the intrinsic requirements of the local subsidiary (Jain et al., 1998; Martinez & Jarillo, 1991). Usually, the process of transfer and acceptance of practices stresses the idea of competitive pressures to share and adopt best practices across international operations.

The global transfer of human resource management, particularly diversity management, is mandatory rather than discretionary for MNCs. Many global firms recognise the need for adapting policies in various subsidiaries but retain a contingency plan for managing people across different boundaries (Morley & Collings, 2004). In some cases, MNCs use a combination of the above approaches to manage the workforce. Applying the congruence of HRM policies between the host country and subsidiary on the one hand,

and cultural fit on the other hand is needed to achieve a balance between HR practices and company performance (Ngo et al., 1998).

2.5.3 Managing Diversity in Multinational Corporations

Workforce diversity is an important initiative to understanding how human resource management practices are transferred internationally, especially among US MNCs (Ferner et al., 2004). As MNCs continue to diversify outside of their home country, the fundamental concerns include the firms' capacity to effectively manage opportunities and constraints across various markets. With these opportunities and threats come the challenge of managing strategy, organisation and operations that are more complex, diverse, and uncertain (Ghoshal & Bartlett, 1990). One of these fundamental challenges is the management of a diverse workforce. As organisations change from multinational to global corporations, workforce diversity increases correspondingly and the fundamental organisational HR development processes are challenged (Morley & Collings, 2004).

Numerous organisations have recognised and attempted to respond to workforce diversity through a variety of initiatives to achieve positive changes both for the individual and organisational performance (Williams & O'Reilly, 1998). However, some research studies have shown that the outcome of diversity management is contingent on the underlying historical, cultural and societal background of the subsidiary. For example, Jones, Pringle and Shepherd (2000) showed that the diversity discourse, as well as the language and words used to describe diversity perceptions in New Zealand, was different from the discourse manifested by diversity management in the US because of the culture in which the language is used.

The study by Ozbilgin et al. (2012) underscored the transfer of gender equality in Turkey and Pakistan as laden with difficulties and inconsistencies because of the local cultural and historical conditions. It pointed out the issue of political will to institute gender equalities in both countries. Another example was shown in the study of Cooke and Saini (2010, p. 495) which revealed that diversity management developed in another country may not be relevant in the Indian context. They argued that organisations cannot simply adopt a diversity management approach without considering the "demographic nature of the workforce, historical background of the firm and leadership preferences". These examples suggest that contextualizing diversity management is crucial because it requires one to specify the organisational and team

factors, as well as the salient dynamics in the economic, cultural, historical environment that shape the diversity effects.

While MNCs are advised to leverage their globally diverse workforces, their attempts to do so have been little examined (Sippola & Smale, 2007). In addition, despite the importance of diversity management, there is limited research particularly on the diversity management practices of multinational firms in Asia, particularly in India, Vietnam and Australia. Thus, findings from this study may be able to contribute to this research gap.

A study of 259 multinational subsidiaries (Brock & Siscovick, 2007) in the Asia-Pacific suggested that integrating mechanisms such as control and standardization used by MNCs when implementing their global strategies seldom contribute to the effectiveness of their subsidiaries. These strategies include human resource systems such as broad banding of salary structure and sharing of financial information that may be considered as organizational practices (meso level) linked to diversity management. The authors argued that it is necessary to recognise the local differences and norms in each country, and to provide some autonomy and flexibility to balance the different integrating factors at the subsidiary levels (Brock & Siscovick, 2007).

Although this suggestion may appear ideal, other authors argue that the efforts by MNCs to expand beyond a domestic market do not always fit with the strategy of creating subsidiaries across national borders (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1987; Brock & Siscovick, 2007; Ngo, Turban, Lau, and Lui, 1998). For example, India presents an incredibly complex and unique challenge for MNCs. The complexities in religion, caste, language, gender, race, and regional perspectives and values need to be honoured, and not merely tolerated (Ratnam & Chandra, 1996). According to Patrickson and O'Brien (2001), it is difficult to generalise regarding the MNCs in India because of the diversity of their operations and the sheer diversity of India itself. These authors added that diversity is not considered an issue that concerns India, but more of an issue originating from US-based firms.

Another study by Batra (2007) provided examples of how diversity is implemented in three multinational firms that have a strong presence in India. He evaluated the effectiveness of diversity management and found that some practices are parallel in many respects. The MNCs engage in diversity programs since most of them want to be

known as employers of choice in order to attract and retain the best employees and develop their public image. The inclusion of people who in the past were excluded and underutilized because of caste or religion is another similarity facilitated by the extension of diversity initiatives outside of the US. The lack of administrative structure to carry out initiatives and integration of diversity in the broader context of Indian culture was not evident from the analysis of selected MNCs. Batra (2007) concluded that MNCs cannot simply replicate the US diversity efforts. A high level of understanding about India's cultural environment and workforce is essential. In addition, customized solutions and policies need to be formulated to appropriately address the requirements of India's diverse workforce.

It appears to be a faulty strategy that multinational companies tend to create a standard by transferring a set of corporate values originating in the home country to the host country office (Gertsen & Zolner, 2012). Two related studies highlighted the aspect of corporate culture and values as critical diversity issues among the MNCs in Singapore (Choi & Rainey, 2010; Choy et al., 2009). These studies confirmed that MNCs engaged in interdependent operations across borders must consider the need for greater cultural sensitivity of the local ideological and social structure of the workplace when transferring organisational practices from their respective countries.

Research on diversity management of MNCs in Europe suggested that changes in the individual attitudes and behaviours are considered to be prerequisites for the successful implementation of diversity interventions. A case study of TRANSCO illustrates some of the challenges faced by a big European MNC in implementing diversity management in its subsidiary in Finland. The results of the study support the argument that HRM practices are subject to cultural and institutional influences and adaptation of global policies and philosophies (Sippola & Smale, 2007). There were no identifiable cases where TRANSCO's global integration efforts encountered regulatory obstacles. However, significant challenges were found in the awareness of the concepts and practices of diversity and inclusion. Since the company initially focused building inclusive behaviours and attitudes, the challenge was in converting the perception and interpretation beyond the surface-level evidence of diversity as discussed in the earlier section.

The transfer of diversity policy by the US multinational firms to subsidiaries in even a similar culture such as the UK has been complicated and incomplete. International

diversity initiatives by the US MNCs have made assumptions about the general application of their transfer abroad and overlooked the presence of domestically driven policies (Ferner et al., 2004). The study by Egan and Bendick (2003) also revealed how both global and multinational domestic approaches have been effectively applied in managing workforce diversity in the European context. These authors discussed how the "off-the shelf" approach common to early US diversity training and administrative procedures would not work outside of the US.

Research focusing on MNCs and the transfer of human resources practices highlights activities that could be referred to the macro level of diversity management and the organisational fit of the macro context between the home countries and the host countries. Diversity management studies at this level are still limited, thus this research could help provide some insights. This chapter now turns to the organisational level initiatives to manage diversity.

2.5.4 Human Resource Management Initiatives to Manage Diversity

"Human Resource Management (HRM) is set of distinctive activities, functions and processes that are aimed at attracting, directing and maintaining an organization's human resources" (Shen et al., 2009, p. 239). HRM is a broad term that pertains to activities associated with managing employees, including people who are engaged as contractors (Kramar, 2013). HRM, which is one of the most popular management concepts since the 1990s (Kirton & Greene, 2005), has expanded substantially and now covers the whole range of people management processes such as recruitment, training and development, reward and compensation and performance appraisal (D'Netto, Shen, Chelliah, & Monga, 2013; Shen et al., 2009).

HRM has been traditionally built around the business case that aims to help the organisation succeed through effective management of employees. Lately, however, there have been substantial debates on the extent to which HRM plays a role in diversity management (D'Netto et al., 2013; Shen et al., 2009). As argued by Kirton and Greene (2005), diversity management and HRM share many similarities. First, compliance with legal requirements such as Equal Employment Opportunity and Anti-Discrimination is achieved through effective human resource policies. Second, the objective of HRM to enhance the individual's involvement and commitment resonates with diversity approaches to equality and valuing the individual in the workplace. Third, the HRM function is involved in activities such as recruitment and selection, training and

performance management, which are considered key initiatives to manage diversity. Diversity management therefore is closely linked to HRM practices and policies given the same focus towards the achievement of business goals and valuing the growth of employees.

The key to effective diversity management hinges on strategic people-centred policies. The HRM department functions as a custodian of people management processes that can facilitate the implementation of diversity initiatives through different approaches called the "soft and hard" forms of HRM (Kirton & Greene, 2005). In "soft" HRM, human resources policies are directed towards skill development and high levels of adaptability and competence. Soft HRM is concerned with developing a feeling of commitment to the organisation in each individual employee and premised on the assumption that employee satisfaction will result in organisation success. "Hard" HRM regards the human resource system as a business expense, thus policies resulting from this approach are mainly focused towards meeting organisational objectives rather than employee development. It is the "soft" form of HRM that seems to offer the most potential for creating equality and inclusion (Kirton & Greene, 2005). In line with the soft and hard elements of HRM, D'Netto, & Sohal (1999) supported the notion that in managing diversity, human resource practices must also focus on building skills, creating policies and initiating activities to bring out the best from every employee, which is the essence of diversity management.

Managing diversity encourages the development of more innovative HR policies and practices that offer greater reciprocity in the employment relationship to support the individual needs (Ferris, Frink, & Galang, 1993). Several authors have drawn considerable attention to the wide range of human resource functions and activities that support diversity management, which include human resource planning, recruitment and selection, training and development, performance management, promotion, and rewards (D'Netto & Sohal, 1999; Dickie & Soldan, 2008; Jabbour, Gordono, De Oliviera, Martinez, & Battiselle, 2011; Shen et al., 2009). Therefore, it makes sense for the HRM function to lead diversity management in alignment with the strategic direction of the firm (Risberg, Beauregard, & Sander, 2012).

Despite the recognition that the HRM function is critical in managing workplace diversity, many organisations still consider diversity management mainly an issue of compliance (D'Netto & Amrik, 1999; Shen et al., 2009; Thomas & Ely, 1996). The

2008 survey conducted by the Society of Human Resource Management (SHRM) in 500 companies across the US, Europe, and Asia showed universal interest in inclusion as an approach to manage diversity. Sixty percent of the companies surveyed shows that increasingly, workforce diversity has become a top management initiative. Forty-two percent cited the head of human resources (HR) as the main diversity champion. While diversity was often considered a general concept among these companies, diversity and inclusion initiatives were mainly directed only to women and women's concerns (Society for Human Resource Management, 2009).

The SHRM survey also cited that organisations in different countries often take divergent paths to enforce the same diversity goals to the extent allowed by their corporate or regional offices. Exceptions to this, however, are US companies that tended to have more centralized approaches. Thus, regional differences in subsidiary companies present a delicate problem for MNCs as they implement diversity and inclusion because of specific issues that are closely linked to each country's history and culture. In that respect, such differences in culture and history have a decisive impact on the types and shapes of diversity initiatives within the organisation.

Aside from different approaches to diversity management, the company culture is also a relevant issue and is considered to be a barrier to diversity and inclusion, particularly when changes in HR-related policies and practices are made to encourage diversity and create a culture of inclusion. Participants in the SHRM (2008) survey further indicated that diversity programs must focus primarily on changing the company's own culture to make employees receptive to different backgrounds and views. Another challenge to diversity management is in middle management where department or team projects are carried out. Although diversity is commonly a top-level initiative, lack of top-level commitment and a general attitude of indifference among managers are barriers to diversity and inclusion. Interestingly, another obstacle is the fact that the management is insufficiently diverse in itself to be able to empathise with the issue.

The emergence of global diversity management using the multilevel concept has brought a series of changes and challenges in the HRM function. HR at the functional level cannot be isolated from its relationship with diversity management. HRM, in terms of both strategic and operational roles in factors such as vision, values and culture, has led to the inclusion of a much broader range of responsibilities under global diversity management. The power of centralisation is changing as the HRM function

moves from implementing the same approach to more globalized contexts. While a wide range of options is available for HRM, there are also important challenges that need to be addressed.

2.5.5 Challenges of Diversity Management in MNCs

Many studies confirm that organisations have developed and implemented impressive diversity initiatives since 1995 because they believed that such initiatives could increase productivity, help them respond better to diverse markets and enhance the organisation's ability to compete (Dass & Parker, 1999; Kochan et al., 2003; Wentling & Palma-Rivas, 1998; Wentling & Palma-Rivas, 2000). Despite these initiatives, so far there has been no conclusive and consistent evidence that links diversity management and performance (Kochan et al., 2003). In some cases, diversity management may improve performance while diversity may result in unfavourable effect on performance in others.

Previous research indicated a range of outcomes of diversity and diversity management among individual and intergroup relationships (Mannix & Neale, 2005; Miliken & Martins, 1996; Pelled, 1996), career outcomes (Broadbridge, 2008), and organisational effectiveness (Kochan et al., 2003; Weigand, 2007). In addition, Kochan et al. (2003, p. 7) suggested that "the relationship between diversity and performance may depend on the organisational context in which the work takes place." Considering the inherent challenges in workplace diversity, it is therefore prudent to say that the challenges of diversity management depend on the design, content and contextualized implementation outside of the home country of a MNC. Some of the challenges related to multinational companies are discussed in the following areas:

a) Standard practice and local response

MNCs continue to face competing forces of local responsiveness and global integration of proven management practices including diversity management (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1989). Local responsiveness refers to the attempt by subsidiaries to respond within a variety of different locations, political environments, and market conditions in which the MNCs operate (Yu, Cannella Jr, & Albert, 2009). In that respect, diversity management practices developed at the headquarters may become incompatible with local subsidiaries because of different circumstances as well as differences in cultural, institutional, and demographic contexts (Lauring, 2013; Sippola & Smale, 2007). These

inconsistencies between global integration and local practices are known to pose several challenges to multinational companies (Ghoshal & Bartlett, 1990).

While diversity management may be culturally specific, its transfer could be difficult but not impossible if the goal is to replicate only those attributes that add value in the local context (Sippola & Smale, 2007).

 b) Measurement of diversity initiatives

The lack of a unifying guidance on how to measure the impact of diversity initiatives is considered another barrier to implementing diversity programs. Most companies that participated in the survey by the SHRM (2009) had difficulty making a quantitative business case for diversity – that is, measuring the link between diversity and the bottom line regardless of their location. This illustrates that only a few companies are equipped to measure diversity management impact on the company performance. A study conducted by Kochan et al. (2003) in four large firms under the consortium called Diversity Research Networks showed that diversity management initiatives produced mixed results. The study was done to test the business case for diversity and focused on the relationship between race and gender diversity and business performance. The study found no consistent evidence between business performance and racial and gender diversity. The study also found that gender had either positive effects or no effects on customer preference and team processes. The authors suggested the importance of comprehensive diversity management initiatives focused on managerial strategies, human resource policies and organisational culture that inculcate mutual learning and cooperation.

The implication of diversity on the performance of the firm is no longer considered linear or definitive, and is measured primarily by financial performance. McMahon (2010) reviewed 24 academic articles published between 2000 and 2009 that highlighted the implications of race and gender, top management teams and external/internal context on firm performance. Context in this sense refers to the proportion of the top management team's functional diversity and similarity of office locations. McMahon (2010) found that diversity effects were no longer considered simply in terms of demographics. Task-related diversity effects such as functional background, organisational tenure, experience and attitude towards others and acceptance of differences are important criteria to assess workplace diversity and explain its influence on business performance.

Even when demographic factors were considered important, the moderating effects of macro and micro perspectives (Joshi & Roh, 2009), top management functional background and span of control (Boone & Hendriks, 2009; Cannella Jr., Park, & Lee, 2008), were also relevant to measure in terms of diversity influence on performance outcomes. While the concepts of workplace diversity and company performance infused a contemporary and multi-dimensional approach to measure diversity outcome, the lack of a unifying model makes it difficult to come up with a common measure on how to benchmark diversity results among different organisations. Even companies that insisted on quantitative measures of success for their diversity programs tended to turn away from discussing their objectives because of confusion and unclear goals regarding the implementation of diversity.

 c) Leadership Ownership and Acceptance

Substantial obstacles to diversity management were found in senior management's proportional ownership and acceptance of its critical role in diversity management. These obstacles apply not only to MNCs but also to other organisations implementing diversity management. Studies by Barrick et al. (2007), DiTomaso & Hoojiberg (1996), Cannella et al. (2008), Thomas (1990), Jonsen et al. (2011) and Lewis, et al. (2006) support this perception and show the challenge of winning the hearts and minds of the leaders to support diversity. Although diversity is a top-level initiative, lack of top-level commitment and a general attitude of indifference by leaders are among the barriers to diversity and inclusion. The results of the 2008 SHRM survey on diversity and inclusion shows that the main three barriers to increasing diversity in the organisation's senior management included: lack of top management commitment, a sense that managers themselves were not sufficiently diverse, and a general attitude of indifference to be able to empathise with the issue. A more recent survey done by Berhard Hodes Group (2012), among HR practitioners in Europe, revealed that senior leadership was seen as a key driving force for pushing diversity and inclusion agendas. However, only a few respondents indicated that they frequently discussed diversity issues with senior leaders since the initiatives are likely to be driven by HR.

Overall, the challenges to implementing diversity and inclusion in subsidiaries of multinational companies cover a broad spectrum of internal and external issues. The challenges described above are among the commonly researched problems. MNCs vary in terms of their specific diversity goals, which require a delicate approach with respect to local cultures and tradition. The way multinational companies resolve these

challenges tends to follow regional lines and depends on the integrating mechanisms adopted by the parent company to their local subsidiary.

It is difficult to generalise the challenges facing multinational companies in Asia-Pacific, given the limited research in this area. Each MNC having its own unique characteristics and challenges of operating in a particular country compounds the situation. However, recent studies by Cooke & Saini, (2012; 2010) and Lauring (2013) in different companies in India and the Middle East, respectively showed that there is no single best way to manage workforce diversity in MNCs. The organisation's approach to diversity management depends on the degree of pressure to implement diversity and the type of programs initiated.

2.5.6 Summary

Managing diversity in MNCs provides an ideal situation to transfer international human resource practices and maximize the opportunities both for the home country and subsidiaries. However, "the greater the difference between the institutional environments of the MNC's home and host countries, the greater the difficulties in transferring organisational practices" (Clark & Lengnick-Hall, 2012, p. 3814). It appears that managing diversity has been perceived as a globalized vocabulary of differences, but the appropriateness of applying a US-based model has been soundly critiqued (Jones et al., 2000). However, this critique may not apply across all MNCs originating from the US. There is much to be learned about managing diversity aside from pervasive forms of control. Human resource initiatives could play a critical role in linking the institutional environments of the host and the home country to achieve a relevant and flexible approach to managing workplace diversity.

Diversity management holds the key to competitive advantage for MNCs that seek to establish and succeed in international markets. A MNC's ability to master this challenge is a significant component of the business strategy and must be supported by relevant human resource practices. There is no universal answer to the question whether a local or a global approach is preferable for each company. The "Glocal" approach (combination of "global" and "local") is likely to be that which balances the degree of integration and decentralization that applies and other applicable and relevant aspects of the corporate and local operations.

2.6 Senior Managers and Diversity Management

There is a great deal of debate about the qualities senior managers need for successful diversity management (Childs Jr., 2005). Organisations today are operating in an increasingly global world and are dealing with diversity on a much broader scale beyond their host country context. Workforce diversity is a global management issue that affects all levels of the organisation - from top to bottom. In particular, leaders of organisations are responding to diversity with new attitudes for a number of reasons aside from simply reacting to employee demographics or complying with existing rules (Cox, 1993; Pless & Maak, 2004).

Two decades ago, Thomas (1990) challenged organisational leaders to view diversity as a comprehensive process to develop a work environment where all employees are given equal opportunities in the workplace. This early work has been followed by research that has focused on diversity as an important strategic priority (DiTomaso & Hoojiberg, 1996; Jonsen et al., 2011; Lewis, French, & Phetmany, 2006) in which senior management has been the crucial diversity management factor. They are involved in determining the results of diversity management through influencing, recommending, developing policies, supporting and mentoring others, and providing examples of behaviour in communication and conflict management (Lewis et al., 2006; Thomas & Ely, 1996).

Recent leadership studies have also mentioned important implications of inclusion. Using the leader-member exchange model, (LMX) Nishii and Mayer (2009, p. 1270), argued that high quality relations with subordinates demonstrates inclusive leadership and as such, contributes to lower turnover in the work group. This further supports the important role of managers in cultivating an inclusive work environment. The argument is consistent with the view of Hooper and Martin (2008) that a leader's differentiated attitude towards each member, or situational leadership approach, can influence the employees' self-concept and perception of equality within the workgroup. Finally, recent research by Ayman and Korabik (2010) demonstrated that leadership behaviour is not necessarily universal and gender-neutral. Different leadership styles influence the inclusive experience among diverse people within a group which may also present barriers for women as they attempt to progress in their careers. Altogether, these studies have shown that inclusion is a function of a leader's inclusive behaviour and appreciation of one's contribution to the team. It is important to note this aspect of

inclusion in view of the research questions related to senior managers' perception on how their immediate managers practice inclusion in the organisation.

2.6.1 Leadership and Diversity Management

The link between leadership and diversity management is inescapable, especially if the organisation is culturally and demographically diverse (Chen & Van Velsor, 1996). While the field of leadership has well-established theoretical groundings, research that links diversity management and leadership is fragmented and is still a work-in-progress (Hoojiberg & DiTomaso, 1996; Lin & Shih, 2008; Tatli & Ozbilgin, 2009). This gap compels diversity scholars to examine leadership and workplace diversity at a pragmatic level and to develop a theoretical framework that links the two concepts (Foster & Harris, 2005; Tatli & Ozbilgin, 2009).

Leadership has been defined in terms of individual traits, leader behaviour, interaction patterns, role relationships, follower perceptions, influence over followers, influence on task goals and influence on organisational culture (Yukl, 1989). Contemporary researchers define leadership according to their individual perspectives, phenomena or contexts (Cannella Jr. et al., 2008; DeChurch, Hiller, Murase, Doty, & Salas, 2010; Gardner, Kevin, Moss, Mahoney, & Cogliser, 2010; Hogg, Knippenberg, & Rast, 2012). Symbolic leadership, transformational leadership, learning-centred leadership, emotional leadership, ethical leadership, entrepreneurial leadership and sustainable leadership are some of the more contemporary concepts that describe different leadership styles (Davies & Davies, 2010). According to Gardner, Kevin, Moss, Mahoney and Cogliser (2010), leadership can generally be described as a dynamic, multi-level and socially constructed process.

After a comprehensive review of leadership literature, Jackson and Parry (2011, p. 12) highlighted Stogdill's 1948 conclusion that "there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept". Scholars and practitioners have not been able to define leadership with precision, accuracy, and conciseness that researchers studying leadership can generally apply. Davies and Davies (2010) argued that defining leadership presents a considerable challenge based on the enormous amount of literature in the field from which it is drawn. Stogdill's 1948 robust definition (in Jackson & Parry, 2011, p. 12) endures. According to him, leadership is "the process of influencing the activities of an organised group in its efforts towards goal setting, and goal achievement". Stogdill's perspective of leadership

is useful to this research because senior managers are positioned to influence objectives, strategies and policies as well as build inclusive relationships among members of the organisation.

2.6.2 Senior Management Perceptions

A critical aspect of diversity management is the degree to which senior management perceive the implementation of diversity initiatives as a priority (Barrick et al., 2007). However, Tatli and Ozbilgin (2009) argued that relatively little attention has been given to this topic, particularly regarding the nature of senior management perceptions, opinions and awareness about diversity. The review of literature showed limited research linking leadership to diversity change initiatives (DiTomaso & Hoojiberg, 1996; Hogg et al., 2012; Hoojiberg & DiTomaso, 1996; Yang & Konrad, 2011). Some studies view leadership as a key target of influence and agent of change (Chen & Van Velsor, 1996; Chrobot-Mason & Ruderman, 2003; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Scandura & Lankau, 1996). Other studies showed leaders as sponsors and drivers of change because of their influence on the organisation's strategic decision process (Cannella Jr. et al., 2008; DeChurch et al., 2010; Hambrick & Mason, 1984; Lewis et al., 2006). Providing empirical data to address the research gap in diversity management and leadership perceptions is the intended focus of this research.

Essentially, strategic decisions of organisations and their subsequent outcomes are reflections of the characteristics of its top management (Lin & Shih, 2008). Important characteristics of the top management team include being supportive, democratic and able to facilitate interaction among employees. An organisational level investigation on diversity by Herdman and Mcmillan-Capeheart (2010) showed how the resulting diversity climate was moderated by the relationship between the employees and the management teams. In contrast, a separate study by Jonsen, Schieder and Mazveski (2011) raised interesting issues when they looked at diversity and senior leadership perceptions. Their study described the barriers and reasons why diversity did not succeed as a priority in a male-dominated engineering company. Top management did not see any compelling business case since the company enjoyed good financial performance. Top management also believed they could build their company's success based on past performance and there was no need to change the culture. In this case, senior management thought that the rationale for diversity management did not apply to their organisation (Jonsen et al., 2011). These studies present an important area of inquiry because it has been argued that managerial values and perceptions serve as

necessary reinforcement of policy decisions regarding the implementation of human resource initiatives such as diversity.

2.6.3 Leadership of Diversity Change Initiatives

The field of diversity management constitutes policies and strategies on diversity, as well as integration of diversity practices in different functions and levels of the organisation (Mor Barak, 2005; Ozbilgin & Tatli, 2008). Within this context, senior management plays an important role in determining whether a diverse workforce represents a competitive advantage, an organisational cost, or both. As the focal point of the coordinated diversity management process, management shares this role with stakeholders and key decision makers (Pless & Maak, 2004).

The first step to build an inclusive culture is to raise the awareness and understanding among leaders of the external and internal realities and challenges of a diverse workforce (Gilbert & Ivancevich, 2000). Pless and Maak (2004) called this first step of creating awareness as an "on-going discursive learning process," which triggers the understanding of fundamental principles which then provide the basis for creating a culture of inclusion. Developing a clear defined vision is the second essential step to implement diversity management initiatives. Such vision is particularly important in a situation where previous assumptions and belief systems must be changed (Kotter, 1996). Kotter (1996) further explained that once the vision is created, communication throughout the organisation is needed in order to ensure buy-in and commitment, and to hasten actions. The ability of leaders, therefore, to communicate a shared vision becomes even more critical (Chrobot-Mason & Ruderman, 2003), especially if the organisation is made up of culturally diverse individuals.

Once awareness and vision have been created, leaders can further demonstrate their support to them by implementing critical human resource management systems and processes (Pless & Maak, 2004). Empirical evidence suggests that organisations implement diversity management through people-centred policies and management processes, which include recruitment and selection, training and development, performance evaluation, reward and recognition, and pay (Danowitz & Hanappi-Egger, 2012; G. Kirton & Greene, 2005; Shen, Chanda, D'Netto, & Monga, 2009).

Apart from creating the vision and establishing the supporting HR policies, how can senior managers demonstrate their support for diversity management? One way is for

them to fully participate in diversity training programs (Risberg et al., 2012). Senior managers should not be exempted from developing certain competencies that will enable them to effectively respond to challenges and opportunities in a diverse and inclusionary work environment (Pless & Maak, 2004). These competencies can translate into observable and measurable behaviours such as being able to develop others, encouraging open communication, enhancing teamwork (Chrobot-Mason & Ruderman, 2003), fostering a learning culture, mobilizing social support (Cheng, 2002), and finally developing leader-member relationships of trust and reciprocity (Scandura, 1999; Scandura & Graen, 1984).

Ultimately, the commitment of senior management is crucial to ensure that the organisation is continually open to new and different ways of working with a diverse workforce while maintaining a focus on the common purpose and goals. This attitude is necessary to cultivate the fundamental groundwork for change and continuous development of corporate norms, values and systems supporting diversity.

2.6.4 Summary

This section brought diversity management and leadership literature together by discussing leadership issues that should be considered and the role of leaders in diversity management change initiatives. Leadership roles in diversity literature are still very much relevant and necessary in building an inclusive culture. But in some literature cited in this section, leaders have been considered more as targets of change rather than agents of change. The foregoing discussion showed that leaders in the context of diversity management are likely to have more challenges, including that of demonstrating their commitment and offering their support. The challenges have an important implication on managerial commitment and their ability to implement diversity initiatives. Even more importantly, leaders are faced with the emerging increase of women in the workforce, which is a critical diversity issue in multinational companies. We now turn to the next section which discusses gender diversity with a specific focus on women.

2.7 Gender and Diversity

This section is focused on women as one aspect of diversity for several reasons: firstly, women have been the driving force behind gender equality policies within and outside of the workplace. Gender diversity policies developed to pave the way for equality at the workplace and to end discrimination, to support family-friendly workplaces and to

provide opportunities for the advancement of women in the organisation and society. While early research focused on women, recently, masculinity and men have become part of the gender equality agenda (Hearn, 2009; Hearn & Collinson, 2009; Kimmel, 2009). Secondly, the perceptions of both male and female senior managers are the central axis of this research. Thirdly, within the global context of MNCs, the concept of diversity is gender-centric and focuses on female representation in management.

Metcalfe and Rees (2010, p. 7) defined gender as "part of the organisation fabric of social economy based on perceived differences in accordance with one's sex and on identity and power derived from unequal values attributed to that perception of differences". These authors further explained, "Gender is not women per se but on power relations between men and women, their access to resources and decision-making power". Broadbridge and Simpson (2011) asserted more generally that gender refers to the social role associations with being male and female. Although understanding masculinity has expanded in recent gender research, men's position in gender diversity is less clear since perspectives on women's rights reshape the gender social order in a fundamental way (Hearn, 2009). The differences between genders have become more visible over the last two decades as women advanced their roles in organisations as a result of changes in the economic and social conditions brought by globalisation.

Global trends of women in management

Women in management are featured more widely than ever before. The recent Global Summit for Women in Malaysia (Global Summit for Women 2013) underscored the belief that women are changing the global market place by creating a new enterprise model that emphasizes the role of women in building organisations and the surrounding communities. To some extent this trend confirms prior research that opportunities for women to become managers and leaders are wider than before (Adler, 1993; Benson & Yukondoni, 2005; Izraeli, Banai, & Zeira, 1980; Jogulu & Wood, 2006; Yukongdi & Benson, 2005). An increasing number of women also continue to occupy positions in politics in many parts of the world. For instance, Myanmar and South Korea recently elected their first female presidents. Female political representation has become increasingly important in India to ensure that women's needs are better represented (Clots-Figueras, 2011).

According to the Grant Thornton International Business Report (2013), women comprise 35 percent of the average global workforce. Regionally, Asia leads with 29

percent of senior management positions held by women, compared to 25 percent in the European Union, 23 percent in Latin America and 21 percent in North America. China leads other countries with 51 percent of senior management positions held by women. In addition, women hold 24 percent of senior management roles globally, a three point increase compared to 2012. Specifically for regions included in this research, Vietnam was reported to have 33 percent female representation in management and is among the top 10 countries while India is one of the countries in bottom 10 with 19 percent women representation. The report indicated 22 percent female representation in Australia. The promising picture is that the number of women in leadership roles in politics, business and the corporate world has increased significantly over the past year. It is expected to grow further as more companies take gender diversity seriously at the senior management levels.

Overall, the transformation of the Asian economies over the past five years has a profound impact on women's career opportunities in management and their progress in management roles (Benson & Yukondoni, 2005; Jogulu & Wood, 2006). More than twenty years ago (Adler, 1993; Izraeli et al., 1980) had noted the benefits of having more women in organisations. Today, the statistical trends indicate that the participation of women is in fact increasing.

Factors contributing to women participation in the workplace

Globally, many factors contribute to the increase of women's participation in the labour market, particularly in management. Aside from the impact of the region's growing economy, other key factors are education, marital or class social status, business ownership and organisation processes that recognise and promote the interest and rights of women at the workplace.

Women of today are better educated and are able to hold more jobs worldwide (Gupta, Koshal, & Koshal, 1998). Obtaining higher education has enabled women to progress in the workplace. Most companies require someone who has a post-graduate degree for their senior management. Women who continuously study and develop their skills and competence have better chances of being promoted to senior management positions than others (Ng & Chakrabarty, 2005). According to Adler (1993), fluency in foreign language is also a key skill needed to increase global competitiveness of women.

The family environment plays a big role in women's ability to achieve a successful career and domestic life. Some organisations implement flexible work options for employees, especially for high potential women with families and children, in order to keep them in the talent pool. However, flexible working conditions do not always lead to retention of women in higher positions (Grant Thornton International Business, 2013). Aside from flexible work options the Grant Thornton Report also showed that women female executives interviewed said that "strong family support and networks enabled them to climb the corporate ladder even with strong cultural biases working against them".

Marital status is also considered important in the changing status of women in the workplace. Single women tend to be more economically active than men (Ng & Chakrabarty, 2005). Having a family may derail or at least slow the process of women obtaining managerial position since their time, outlook and aspirations in life may be affected. Moreover, women may be reluctant to take management roles because they are torn between their home and work obligations (Gupta et al., 1998; Izraeli et al., 1980; Kulkarni, 2002). Although a supportive family environment contributes to women's participation in the workplace, in some Asian countries like Vietnam and India, family and cultural expectations around appropriate societal roles for women are crucial (Ozbilgin & Syed, 2010).

Promoting women in the workplace is a key diversity indicator in many MNCs. In fact, gender diversity in the board of directors elevates a company's position in the eyes of stakeholders and investors. According to Grant Thornton-Forbes Insight Report (2013), having a certain number of women in the board supports good corporate governance. As a result, many global companies have increased the proportion of women in middle management to 25 percent in order to shape the succession for senior leadership roles. Recruitment policies ensure the inclusion of women candidates at thing process especially for middle management and senior management levels.

In spite of the evidence of women's managerial involvement and increasing visibility in management positions, a consistent theme of research that has also emerged are barriers to becoming managers and to achieving higher organisational positions, especially in Asia (Yukongdi & Benson, 2005). These barriers are driven by role expectations, organisational practices and gender stereotypes, in the broader culture and societal landscape.

Barriers to women's success in management positions

Historically, women's challenges to achieving higher managerial/work or political positions, especially in Asia, have been influenced by various religious and cultural traditions. Asian culture is generally collective and focused on the family (Adler, 1993). Other factors that contribute to low management representation and an unfavourable gender balance are gender stereotyping, a segmented labour market, the socio-legal environment and work organisational perspectives (Adler, 1987; Benson & Yukondoni, 2005).

Traditional gender stereotypes have also spilled over to leadership roles in organisations. One of the longstanding debates in this area is over a gender-specific style (Dezso & Ross, 2007), which has been considered as a barrier to women's effort to succeed in management positions. According to a study by Gupta, Koshal, and Koshal (1998) women are less ambitious and rational, and perceived to be more emotional, dependent, conforming, and passive than men. These perceptions make women appear that they lack the personal qualifications required for managing others. Women are more likely to adopt the relational-oriented approach that is effective in the contemporary style of transformational leadership, while aggressive, competitive and task-oriented styles are closely associated with men (Jogulu & Wood, 2006).

Gender role stereotyping and occupation labelling are also considered reasons for those resisting to engagement of women in managerial positions. These types of gender stereotyping are more evident since these attitudes are passed through generations and related to the cultural and institutional context. It is expected that women take care of the family and take orders from men (Izraeli et al., 1980). The traditional and cultural inhibitions that women acquired from childhood which are reinforced by society were as main reasons why many women hold back the urge to attain executive or leadership positions (Kulkarni, 2002). Gupta et al.(1998) mentioned that motherhood also affects women's careers. Women become reluctant to travel, transfer and live away from their families. For instance, while women show the passion and dedication to work extra hours – both of which appear to be necessary for advancement in senior positions, they often leave their companies to start families or focus their time on their families.

Indian women were not considered equal to men despite their status as goddesses during the ancient times. Women are expected to be confined at home doing household chores and taking care of the children (Natarajan, 2001). Females are deprived of education

since they were brought up with the presumption that their duties and responsibilities are different from those of the males (Bandyopadhay, 2000). Since India's independence in 1947, the proportion of women in the workforce has increased steadily (Datt & Sundharam, 1999). The liberalized economy created a large number of employment opportunities for women as though these are offered only to educated women residing in urban areas (Das, 2003). There was also a change in the attitude towards females. Parents became keen in taking their daughters to school. Moreover, women belonging to the middle class gained a new status in society by being called "white bloused" workers (Vaz, 1988). Women in India were approximately 31 percent of the workforce – both in rural and urban areas (United Nations, 2000).

In gender-labelled occupations, female managers are typically limited to certain roles within the organisation. For instance in India, women are stereotyped to work predominantly in HR, PR and the administration of subordinate or junior levels, and in fields like fashion, clothing and beauty products. Female leaders were not given challenging and risk-taking tasks. Also, they were not properly acknowledged for their work, thus making it hard for them to enter the "male club" (Khandewal, 2002). Likewise, men are not expected to take orders from women and they are more often the ones recommended to take the managerial positions.

Women expect to be given challenging assignments, and to be more involved in policy and decision making. They also desire to be given consideration in order to balance their domestic and professional life (Bhatnagar & Nair, 1988). This desire discourages some women from taking managerial roles. For instance, women from Vietnam were somehow similar to the ancient Indian women. Their life was lived in accordance with Confucian philosophy and they were assigned the values of hard work, chastity and proper behaviour, and were expected to carry out their roles as daughters, mothers and wives (Vo & Stratchan, 2010). However, when Socialist Vietnam was established, there were changes with the role of women in that even though the Confucian model was still emphasised, women's equality with men in both public and private institutions was recognised. Considering the aforementioned barriers, many companies adopt special policies to protect women and their interests in the workplace.

Organisational Support for Women in the Workplace

With all the tensions faced by women managers, the society and organisations have helped to promote gender equality and protect the interests of women in the workplace.

Legislative reforms constitute an important element to shift attitudes towards equality in employment. Equal opportunity laws in many countries such as India, Australia, Korea, Philippines, Japan and Hong Kong set standards for establishing acceptable treatment for both men and women (Mor Barak, 2005). In Vietnam, the Law on Gender Equality provides equal access for men and women to education and training, information and public health and sports (Vo & Stratchan, 2010). As explained by Yuasa (2005), although these laws cannot guarantee nor provide a quick remedy as in the case of Japan, the enactment of legislation encourages employers to implement human resource policies to protect women against employment discrimination. Despite significant legislative reforms, it remains difficult to determine to what extent these laws have benefited women managers (Benson & Yukondoni, 2005; Budhwar, Saini, & Bhatnagar, 2005).

There are also community standards that illustrate acceptable behaviour and qualifications for advancement of women (Benson & Yukondoni, 2005). Unlike India and Vietnam, Australia has an individualistic and low power distance society (Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005). Their early colonisation history had a strong impact on the formation of their societal culture that influenced the values, beliefs and attitudes of modern day Australians and New Zealanders post-colonisation. Hence, women are most likely independent and authoritative. At present, women in Australia seek higher education. The increasing growth in labour participation is attributable to the continuous learning of women, and the distribution of unemployment has also changed through the years. Women in Australia are getting more jobs than men (Teicher & Spearitt, 1996), partly as the service sector expands and manufacturing declines. The Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999 (EOWW Act) was implemented to address workplace disparity between men and women, and contains provisions on women's equal opportunity in terms of employment. It is also concerned with eliminating discrimination in the workplace (French & Stratchan, 2007). In addition to EEO in the workplace, increasing market on childcare and domestic work also helps women balance their home and work life. Outside assistance may be costly but it lessens the time being consumed by female managers in doing house-related work (Benson & Yukondoni, 2005).

This section briefly explained the factors contributing to the increasing number of women management roles and underscored the barriers and prospects related to this status. The concepts shared in this section highlighted that economic development is a

major driver of changes in the business environment and the social status of women in the society. Their success is reportedly hindered by a variety of reasons, primarily their domestic role and family responsibilities, and perceptions of their leadership capabilities. Notwithstanding the barriers to of women assuming a more critical role in organisations and society, the statistics on women in senior management positions are definitely setting the stage for a brighter prospect in the future.

In general, women managers have come a long way and simultaneously contribute to the economy and society (Birtwistle, 2013; Budhwar & Varma, 2011). Gradually, women's emerging superiority in organisations is changing old perceptions on their traditional roles in society and at home. Once again, the dynamics of gender and women in the workplace that emanate from societal, organisational and individual contexts shows the interaction between the relational model of macro, meso and micro levels.

2.7 Summary

This chapter introduced the concepts of diversity and inclusion, and explained the different fundamental perspectives to help understand diversity management. Section 2.2 provided a rich starting point to help understand diversity and inclusion and the relational model of global diversity management. This chapter also defined the scope of what this research constitutes in terms of its contextual factors using the relational model of diversity management involving the macro, meso and micro level factors. Discussion on psychological perspectives and theories of diversity, gender and senior management represented the micro context. Discussion on multinational companies and human resource management initiatives represented the macro and meso level contexts.

CHAPTER 3

ORGANISATIONAL CONTEXT

3.1 Chapter Overview

The case company, SBC (Asia) is a MNC with its headquarters in the US and subsidiaries in more than 200 countries around the world. Manufacture, marketing and distribution of foods and beverages are the core of its business. Three regional offices of SBC Asia in India, Australia and Vietnam were considered for this research. Australia represents one regional cluster including a branch office in New Zealand. Vietnam Region is another regional cluster covering the company's operations in Vietnam, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar. India represents the beverage and foods operating businesses in the entire Indian subcontinent. As explained in Chapter 1, different levels of economic growth and geo-political contexts of these regions create significant comparisons within this research.

This chapter is divided into six sections that explain the nature of SBC, its organisation, and its diversity and inclusion strategies. The following section describes the company's business operations and history of diversity and inclusion: Section 3.2 provides a description of the company; Section 3.3 describes the diversity and inclusion initiatives within Asia; Section 3.4 provides the context of diversity and inclusion implementation in the company's regional offices in India, Australia and Vietnam; Section 3.5 highlights the challenges of implementing diversity and inclusion in Asia; and Section 3.6 summarises the whole chapter.

3.2 Description of the Company

SBC (herein referred to as the "parent company") was established in 1965 through a merger of two large beverage and snack companies. In 1998, the company acquired a juice company to add to its diversified brands. In 2001, the company made another bold step in acquiring a cereal company, which included a sports drink brand. Notwithstanding the company being relatively young, several brand names under the SBC umbrella have been in existence for more than 100 years.

The company's three major food groups of beverage, foods, and restaurants operate internationally, and the multiple brands of foods and snacks are typically found in grocery stores, gas stations, big and small supermarkets, vending machines and several

other distribution channels. The company sells its brands within the United States and in more than 200 international territories including Asia. Diversified product categories are necessary within the company brands and are developed for each geographical market. The company has also established strategic partnerships with other companies to manufacture and sell ready-to-drink tea.

Altogether, the company employs over 250,000 employees across different continents. Of this number, Asia contributes 15% to the total workforce. The nature of the organisation, its products and locations, make this company a valuable case study for diversity management because of its huge and diverse operations across the world, particularly in Asia. Along with the tough market competition and an increasing health conscious consumer movement, the company is challenged to match the demands for high standard of performance, while meeting the needs of a globally diverse workforce and the various communities where it operates.

Diversity and inclusion initiatives started as early as the 1950s when the company addressed American racial attitudes. It implemented several initiatives, such as having the first female board member and first African sales force in the 1960s. Diversity initiatives originated in the US and later moved to international businesses as they became part of the total business objectives. After 2000, D&I initiatives and best practice sharing were applied globally to different countries, including those in Asia Division, which is the main focus of this research. The company has established common in-house metrics and practices around the world with varying flexibility depending on the location, culture, laws and regulations of the countries where it operates. For example, gender representation is one of the common metrics across the company that is closely monitored and reported. This is one of the reasons why gender was considered an essential moderating variable in this research.

SBC Asia operates in highly developed countries such as Australia, developing countries like India and emerging economies like Vietnam. With the exception of the India operation, a majority of the beverage business of SBC in Asia is conducted through franchise operations or joint ventures with bottling companies who have exclusive agreements to produce the products in specific countries. For the foods business, the company's operation is contracted through contract manufacturers or international joint ventures. Through its business alliances and partners, the company

exhibits uncompromising dedication to quality of products to make sure all products meet the local taste and preferences.

Each region –India, Australia or Vietnam- is decentralized with its own revenue and profit responsibilities. It is also tasked to identify domestic and international business opportunities that are strongly aligned with the overall objectives of Asia Division headquarters and the rest of the organisation. Substantial differences may be present in many ways in as far as culture, product and respective geographical operations are concerned, but corporate values and philosophies are essentially the same.

As a corporate value, the company defines "Diversity and Inclusion" (D&I) as an "organisation where diversity and inclusion is woven into the fabric of the culture that drives sustainable competitive advantage" (D&I Report November 2012). Diversity is an integral part of the company's culture and a fundamental principle of Talent Sustainability, one of the pillars in the company's vision. Talent Sustainability means having the right talent at the right time and place, and diversity is an integral part of the right talent equation and commitment. Furthermore, diversity is a critical objective of the whole organisation in making sure the company represents its consumers and customers in the best way, in order to develop and retain its employees and drive innovation and growth.

In Asia, the company aimed to align and embed in the organisational culture its D&I programs and practices within five years after they were introduced in 2007. As a consequence, senior leaders would be seen as role models demonstrating inclusive and collaborative behaviours. In addition, all employees would be able to understand, accept, and believe that diversity is integral to SBC's growth and success, with each individual taking responsibility for demonstrating inclusive behaviour. This vision also integrates D&I in employee development and recruitment processes to cultivate the right competencies needed for diversity to flourish.

The core value of diversity and inclusion is a global philosophy that is translated without local modifications, except where certain constraints apply, such as limitations in translation to the local language. In Asia, D&I is considered a journey to cultural transformation and not just a program. The company promotes the concept that D&I is about employing and engaging with employees as well as optimising diverse perspectives and experiences to generate the best ideas, to gain locally relevant market

insights, and to enable productive collaboration. The commitment as explicitly communicated globally is "Win with diversity ways of thinking. Our diversity brings perspectives into the workplace and encourages innovation, as well as the ability to identify new market opportunities." Posters related to values and core commitments to diversity and inclusiveness are communicated in visible locations within the office premises and published in the company's intranet.

The company also believes that success can only be achieved when each employee is treated with respect. Respecting the diversity of talents, abilities and experiences, valuing the input of others, and fostering an atmosphere of trust and openness demonstrate this belief. Furthermore, respect in the workplace is implemented in recruitment and promotion. Decisions regarding employees and applicants are based on merit, qualifications and job-related performance without regard to non-job characteristics such as race, colour, ethnicity or national origin, gender and sexual orientation (Interview insights from the Vice President of HR, India Region, 2010). Given what appears to be a strong policy on D&I, the next section presents the initiatives taken by SBC to promote diversity and inclusion in its Asia Division.

3.3 Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives in SBC Asia

At the senior leadership level, the President of SBC – Asia leads and sponsors the company's diversity and inclusion thrust for the whole Asia Division. This thrust is implemented by the Vice President for Human Resources who reports to the President of Asia Division and in turn leads the Diversity and Inclusion Center of Excellence (COE). In every regional office, a committee composed of senior executives from human resources and other functions--such as marketing, sales, and finance --drives and coordinates the D&I agenda. The D&I Leader assumes full responsibility for the coordination and integration of diversity and inclusion into other regions, and is actively involved in meeting with members of the D&I committee from each region to discuss ideas and develop locally relevant benchmarks and approaches.

Diversity and inclusion is integrated into business and people objectives, and driven by HR through a top-down approach of global policies from the US headquarters. Annual targets for women's representation, manager quality performance index and 360 degree feedback indicate that gender and quality of inclusive behaviour of managers are among the multiple diversity goals. Other D&I initiatives are described below using the integration modes proposed by Kim et al. (2003). These are people-based integration,

information-based integration, formalisation-based integration and centralization-based integration. Each of these factors is described as follows:

People-based Integration. This refers to measures such as transfer of managers, meetings and training that are said to be most effective in situations where information and knowledge are best conveyed face to face. In SBC Asia, the Human Resource function perceives its role as that of leading, shaping and supporting D&I and more generally, that of facilitating an appropriate culture change process. This is true in most companies driven by a dominant US culture where the integration and transfer of human resource management practices such as recruitment and promotion are seen more as targets for diversity integration.

Information-based Integration. This is believed to be the most effective communication system when there is a need to provide information quickly or when large volumes of information can be easily accessed and interpreted without extensive face-to-face interaction" (Kim et al., 2003a, p. 330). Top leadership communication related to values is the most utilized mechanism to increase awareness and understanding of diversity and inclusion across the different regions in Asia. Together with the D&I Task Force, the D&I Leader communicates the global diversity and inclusion values through posters, newsletters, training and the orientation of new employees.

Formalization based integration. This approach of integration, according to Kim et al. (2003a), involves the standardisation of work procedures, rules, policies, and manuals which are reference standards in implementing HR initiatives such as performance evaluation, salary increases and promotion. In addition to the HR policies of SBC in Asia, D&I is a fundamental aspect in the company's code of conduct, guiding principles and vision. Diversity and inclusion performance criteria are formally integrated into a scorecard such as the organisational climate survey and the individual manager's surveys like 360 degree Feedback and the Manager Quality Performance Index.

Centralization-based integration. This mode of integration is considered relevant in integrating geographically dispersed units to achieve the benefits of global scale, scope, and learning (Kim et al., 2003a). The Diversity and Inclusion Center of Excellence Committee sets the targets and designs the implementation of D&I initiatives. For example, the gender diversity target of 33% is a collective goal in Asia and is reported

according to region. Aside from gender targets, each region is given the opportunity to contribute to D&I through its own regional initiatives. For example, Vietnam and India had established a Women's Council, while the Australia region actively promotes women leadership by sending female managers to a Women Leadership Symposium. Although each region has the flexibility to implement D&I initiatives, much of the implementation and most measures are influenced by the corporate and division directives. The specific initiatives per region are briefly discussed in the next section.

3.4 Regional Implementation of D&I

Diversity and inclusion has become an important issue in the different regional offices of SBC Asia. For a better understanding of each region, this section discusses briefly the historical and legislative context as well as the organisational implementation of various diversity and inclusion initiatives in the India, Vietnam and Australia regions.

3.4.1 India Region

Globalisation has opened the doors of India to economic development. The liberalisation of foreign investment in the 1990s including privatization of state-owned enterprises facilitated the remarkable growth of the Indian economy over the last two decades and changed its heavily protected economy at an unprecedented rate. Compared to other countries in Asia, India experienced the fastest economic growth and bounced back after its independence from Great Britain in 1947 to become one of the world's most powerful emerging economies (Bhattarai & Kulkarni, 2012). India seeks to modernize and transform without sacrificing its commitment to socio-cultural heterogeneity and traditional values (Batra, 2007).

India is one of the most populous countries in the world with an estimated population of 1.2 billion in 2010 (World Bank Report, 2010). It is one of the world's largest democracies and an influential emerging economy seeking to modernize its institutions to support its economic progress (Batra, 2007). The economic system has been described as a mixed economy with the largest middle class in any country in the world (Patrickson & O'Brien, 2001). More than 25 percent of the population lives in the urban areas while over one- third of the population is estimated to be below the poverty line (World Bank Report, 2010).

India is particularly more complex compared to other countries in terms of size and political, racial, religious and other cultural differences. It has 25 states and seven union

territories. Hindi is the official language, but English is used in official communications, and there are other languages spoken throughout India. To illustrate, there are more than 2,000 daily newspapers published in 92 different languages (Patrickson & O'Brien, 2001).

India is known as a country with a rich culture, huge and expanding market size, and highly diverse population. Proficiency in the English language contributes towards making India attractive to multinational companies. Moreover, effective customer service delivery systems, software application developments and information technology consulting have made India a preferred investment destination and a major player in the United States information industry sector (Ratnam, 1998). All of the above competitive market developments have created greater challenges for organisations in India and influenced human resource strategies at the institutional and organisational levels.

Within the underlying homogeneity of the Indian population is a magnitude of differences in their society, largely influenced by centuries of customs and practices from colonial heritage. Sources of diversity include socio-economic levels, gender, age, education, cultural aspects and language (Ratnam & Chandra, 1996). Traditions co-exist with modern practices acquired through modernization and corporate integrations. Thus, workforce diversity is an issue that concerns many multinational companies in India. It also poses a major challenge to understanding the social, cultural and legal peculiarities in India and their resilience to develop non-discriminatory employment relations policies (Amba-Rao, Petrick, Gupta, & Von Der Embse, 2000; Florkowski, 1996; Ratnam, 1998; Ratnam & Chandra, 1996). \Thus, this study of an MNC in India offers a rich ground for studying diversity management.

Brief Context of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action in India
India has one of the most stratified societies in the world (Haq and Ohja 2010). Inequality has been a dominant feature of the Indian society in the past (Dhesi, 1998) which continues until the present times (Haq & Ojha, 2010).The inequalities are generally related to unequal distribution of wealth, knowledge, status, skills and power across different individuals and social categories (Dhesi, 1998). The sources of inequality can be attributed to the country's caste system and hierarchy prevalent in land rights, health care, housing, employment and education (Dhesi, 1998).

The caste system is considered the source of economic injustice and discrimination in Indian society (Batra, 2007; Haq & Ojha, 2010; Patrickson & O'Brien, 2001). Caste can be described as a social class within a homogeneous group in which occupational grouping and membership are dependent on birth or heredity (Ratnam & Chandra, 1996). Aside from birth, caste is based on perception associated with family profession which is identified through family name and remains unaltered over generations (Haq, 2012). The caste is composed of four main groups: the Brahmins or priests, the Kshatriyas or warriors, the Vaishyas or traders and the Sudras or peasants (Patrickson & O'Brien, 2001). Those who face intense discrimination associated with the caste system are the sub-groups known as the Scheduled Caste (SC), or "Dalits", Scheduled Tribes (ST) and Other Backward Classes (OBC) (Batra 2007). Batra (2007) cited that women, religious minorities and disabled individuals also suffer inequalities in employment opportunities.

Women are known to be a disadvantaged sector of Indian society (Haq & Ojha, 2010).There is a long history of women being oppressed by men, and delegated to playing subordinate roles within the family, community and larger economic and political arena (Deepika, 2000; Ghosh & Roy, 1997). The women in India were perceived as homemakers under two traditional dominant roles of wife and mother (Deepika, 2000). Females were also perceived as a weaker gender than the males, thus giving them a lower social status (Batra, 2007) and fewer opportunities to participate in mainstream economic activity (Haq & Ojha, 2010). They are underrepresented in the society and higher levels of public service because of traditional norms which do not accord women equality (Patrickson & O'Brien, 2001).

Most Indians recognise the rigid and traditional discrimination faced by the disadvantaged groups including women (Haq, 2012). The Constitution of India (1950) prohibited discrimination against any religion, race, caste or place of birth. It aimed to promote equality of opportunity in public employment and to protect the weaker sections of the society from social injustice and all forms of exploitation (Haq, 2012). The government also enforced equal opportunity and affirmative action to eliminate inequalities and discrimination faced by members of certain castes and classes, women, religious minorities and the disabled (Ratnam & Chandra, 1996). The Equal Remuneration Act of 1976 is an example of an equal employment opportunity law to provide for the payment of equal remuneration to men and women workers and to prevent discrimination. The judicial system also played a major role in abolishing

gender-based discrimination especially in promoting equal remuneration and ensuring equal employment opportunities (Ratnam & Chandra, 1996).

Although equal opportunity laws are in place, discrimination remains a pervasive issue characterised by limited attention to equality within organisations and outdated social and political agenda (Batra, 2007). Affirmative action policy in India is a system of quotas and reservations for each of the disadvantaged groups that have limited access to gainful employment and education (Boston & Nair-Reichert, 2003). Batra (2007 p 22) explained that "quotas and reservations are designed to remove imbalance, offer opportunities and reduce the effects of a historically depressed groups". Examples of these quotas are job reservation in government and public sector and reservation for seats in higher education (Haq & Ojha, 2010). Affirmative action is also referred to as compensatory discrimination with a primary goal of compensating socially and economically marginalized and disadvantaged groups (Haq & Ojha, 2010). It is also an attempt to remedy the effects of a rigid hierarchal caste system of power, privilege and socio-economic status, to provide equal opportunity, and to recognize past and present injustices that impact the social and economic well-being of Indians (Boston & Nair-Reichert, 2003).

The awareness and progress of laws on equal opportunity and affirmative action are reflected in the management of workplace diversity in India. However, these laws are not uniformly implemented in the public sector, private sector and in large organisations, according to a recent comparative study undertaken by Haq (2012) on the diversity mind-sets of four MNCs and two public sector organisations in India. The results of the study showed that the public sector considered the quotas or reservations and focused on compliance, especially during the recruitment process, and reported these quotas to the government. The MNCs were more concerned with increasing the number of women in their organisation for business reasons and as a requirement of their parent company. The study indicated that MNCs are contented with their efforts towards accommodating women, assisting them in balancing work and family responsibilities, and ensuring their safety in the workplace. This initiative has increased the opportunities for women and provided them relief from the restrictions of their traditional roles. If available or applicable, MNCs extend their accommodation to persons with disabilities (Haq, 2012).

The complex nature of the Indian context and the different legislative actions taken by the government to address inequalities played a major role in influencing diversity management practices in India (Gupta, Koshal, & Koshal, 1998; Haq, 2012; Ratnam & Chandra, 1996). The affirmative action policies make the public organisations in India legally bound to protect and promote workplace equality. Large private organisations including MNCs demonstrate their active contribution to affirmative action by uplifting the quality of life of women through more employment opportunities. Efforts from both the public and private sectors show conscious interventions to bring about reform and social change in India. This leads to the next discussion on initiatives of MNCs in India in implementing D&I within the company.

Diversity Initiatives in SBC India

SBC India Region started to implement diversity and inclusion in 2007 by focusing on the values and growth along four dimensions: a) employees; b) leadership; c) systems, policies and procedures; and d) marketplace. Senior leaders communicated these values to the employees. D&I serve as the platform for the company to harness the creativity of its employees and to generate a form of collaboration that will stimulate and promote innovation to drive performance and growth.

"Win with Diversity and Inclusion" is a corporate value and one of the most important guiding principles within the company. This value means having a work environment that embraces people with different ways of thinking towards providing an environment for innovation and the ability to identify new market opportunities. An inclusive environment is the essential foundation to strengthen the benefits of its diverse employees (Company Diversity Policy, 2010). For example, female representation acts as a catalyst for potential change and provides a barometer on progress, but having a greater number of women in senior management is not the end of the D&I journey. Since 2007, SBC India Region has implemented a number of diversity and inclusion initiatives and these are described in the following section:

Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) Training: Employees participate in diversity and inclusion seminars to learn the skills and tools they need to operate effectively and to create an inclusive environment. The training programs include topics on inclusion, appreciating differences, and building inclusive behaviours among its managers. First to be trained in 2007 were the leadership team members to make them visible and credible champions of inclusion. Since 2008, the program has become mandatory for all

employees. Through the training programs, the company reinforced its commitment to enhance the employee's skills to demonstrate inclusive behaviours in the workplace. Training on D&I continues to be an integral part of the training within the company, especially for new hires.

Women's Council. The Women's Council was initiated by an active group of passionate female employees from all ranks and backgrounds in collaboration with the Human Resources Department. Council members represent the voice of women across the organisation that come together to champion the female agenda in the company. They support women by understanding and resolving workplace issues, facilitating growth opportunities, and promoting policies to enhance work-life balance. The Council is actively working on the following key areas: 1) safety; 2) sensitization of managers and their communication of policies and procedures; and 3) coping with pressure and conflicting needs.

Work Life Quality: Work Life Quality delivers a range of policies designed to support the employee's work-life balance while maintaining a strong level of performance. It aims to provide an individual with flexibility both professionally and personally. Some of these policies include sabbaticals, flexible location and hours, and reduced working hours. The policy is applicable to all regular employees except those on fixed time shifts and those engaged in contractual process/operations.

HIV AIDS Policy: In addition to Work Life Quality, the company has implemented an HIV AIDS Policy across the organisation. The purpose of this policy is to provide a workplace free of discrimination and to foster a work environment where all employees affected by HIV Aids and other serious illness and disabilities feel comfortable and respected. The policy is built on the company's guiding principles which consist of six key elements, namely non-discrimination, confidentiality, factual information, voluntary counselling and testing, care and treatment, and monitoring and evaluation.

Hiring of "Specially Abled" Individuals: The company's diversity and inclusion program promotes a culture where everyone feels he/she has an equal opportunity to contribute and succeed. The company also hires "specially-abled" individuals to inspire them to take up the challenge in being gainfully employed. In recognition of these efforts, the company has received the NCPEDP Shell Helen Keller Award for

employing people with disability and varied backgrounds for two consecutive years in 2007 and 2008.

Human Resource Recruitment Policies: SBC India Region does not only endeavour to produce and deliver products that reflect the company's diverse global reach, but also strives to create equal opportunity based on merit and performance. The company is committed to ensuring that the best qualified candidate is placed in a role based on an accurate assessment of qualifications, competence and potential to succeed on the job. The company also seeks to promote from within, provided the internal applicant has the most appropriate skills, knowledge, and behaviour to meet the job requirements and the current and future needs of the business.

Given all of these programmes and practices, there are multiple D&I initiatives in SBC India Region that helped achieve its short-term and long-term goals. The region continues to implement initiatives aligned with division office directions and aims to progress with more relevant initiatives in the future.

3.4.2 Vietnam Region

"Vietnamese society has been recognised as an emerging economy market for foreign direct investments in the last five years, attracting both domestic market seeking and export oriented foreign direct investment (FDI)" (Delaunay & Torrisi, 2012, p. 4). After decades of isolation, conflict and economic stagnation, the Vietnamese society and economy have undergone major changes since 1986 from a centralized economy to a market-oriented economy. This rapid economic transformation has been widely attributed to a comprehensive reform program known as *Doi Moi* (renovation) which aimed to liberalize and transform Vietnam into a globally integrated market economy. As an outcome of *Doi Moi*, the country allowed FDIs in late 1970s on the basis of respect for sovereignty and mutual benefit. Favourable domestic, economic, financial and legal reforms followed and Vietnam became a member of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1995. From 1986 to 2006, Vietnam's gross domestic product (GPD) growth averaged 6.8%, raising its position into the "ASEAN Tiger Cub" in the past decade (Delaunay & Torrisi, 2012; Ngoc Vo & Rowley, 2010; Paswan & Tran, 2012).

The phenomenal growth of private enterprises in Vietnam has helped normalize diplomatic relations with western countries, particularly the United States (Paswan &

Tran, 2012). As the changes in the economy attracted a significant amount of attention worldwide, multinational companies also started to play an active role in shaping the institutional environments through different forms of engagement at various levels (Cooke & Lin, 2012). These transformations have resulted in noticeable changes in employee relations, particularly in the advancement of women in the workplace in the country (Vo & Stratchan, 2010).

Historically, women have enjoyed greater freedom in Vietnamese society than in other Asian countries because of their active patriotic participation outside of the household sphere during the French Revolution (1946 – 1954) and the American War (1964-1975). Moreover, in view of the country's rapid economic transformation, some forms of diversity management in terms of race, culture, age, religion and disability have also become increasingly important (Vo & Stratchan, 2010). Given the attention to gender equality, the unique political history, and recent economic transformation, Vietnam Region has become an important case for studying diversity management strategies and practices in a MNC.

Brief Context of Gender Equality Law in Vietnam

This section is limited to a number of research and reports. It aims to provide a short description of equality laws in Vietnam, which are mostly focused on gender. Gender equality is one of the legacies of the socialist revolution and communist ideology in Vietnam and has been equated with women after the French Revolution and American War (Vo & Stratchan, 2010). The first Constitution of Vietnam in 1946 stated a commitment to women's equal rights, and the constitutions of 1959, 1980 and 1992, and other legislations accorded equal rights to women (Vo & Stratchan, 2010). Vietnam labour laws strictly prohibit gender-based discrimination in employment and gender considerations have become obligatory for public and private enterprises. A Gender Equality Law passed by the National Assembly of Vietnam in 2006 was an important step to building equality in the political, economic and social context. The law emphasised the need to improve gender equality and to change societal attitudes that discriminate against women. It includes important provisions in relation to equality between women and men in establishing and managing enterprises as well as in other business activities (Vietnam Chamber of Commerce and Industry, 2007).

Research about women's rights and basic needs have received a lot of attention since the early 21th century in view of the economic development in Vietnam and the

changing role of Vietnamese women. Scott and Chuyen (2007) evaluated the trends of research in Vietnam and identified the challenges on gender that reflect the economic, family, cultural and socio-political spheres. The streams of research showed three aspects of participation of women in Vietnam: the first is the participation of women in the formal and informal sectors; second are the conditions around marriage and family life which are influenced by Confucianism; the third is women's rights to education and empowerment (Scott & Chuyen, 2007).

Vietnam has made remarkable progress on gender equity, but a recent report of the World Bank (2011) showed that the aspects of gender differences remain. For example, while major improvement was observed in the number of educated women, segregation and gender stereotypes in occupation and industry employment still exist. Implementation of gender equality is seen as unsatisfactory due to lack of appropriate knowledge of these laws and lack of implementing capacity (MacGillivray, Beecher, & Golden, 2008; The World Bank, 2011). MacGillivray, Beecher, and Golden (2008) reported that efforts to eliminate sex discrimination will require actions beyond legislation. Women occupy only one-third of management and leadership positions and face difficulties accessing education. They generally do not hold decision-making roles and continue to experience challenges at work because of the culture and traditions of society (Vo & Stratchan, 2010). Furthermore, they are also subjected to the "bamboo ceiling" that exists in many Vietnamese companies (Broadbridge & Hearn, 2008; Vo & Stratchan, 2010).

Given its unique political history, Vietnam presents a case for diversity management study particularly in the area of women employment. At the macro context, the laws in Vietnam demonstrate a move towards equality in both public and private organisations. Despite these initiatives by the government, women still face considerable barriers in employment and career. This situation likewise indicates a challenge for organisations striving to introduce western practices of diversity management into an organizational context that is predominantly traditional in orientation (Cooke & Saini, 2010; Ken, 2001).

Diversity Initiatives in SBC Vietnam

The Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) journey for the Vietnam Region started in 2007 when senior leaders gathered together to chart the D&I business case for Vietnam and established the local policy related to diversity. The Vietnam Region defines Diversity

and Inclusion as an organisational process to help create a climate and culture that welcomes and embraces the strengths of differences, encourages involvement, and provides equal access to opportunities and information.

Since 2007, the Vietnam Region's Human Resource team has been actively involved in implementing several initiatives to support the D&I journey. Diversity and inclusion is viewed as a competitive advantage for achieving the full potential of its workforce. Policies in recruitment and promotion are implemented across the organisation with the intent of eliminating discrimination. Managers are also expected to ensure a working environment that is free from all forms of discrimination and harassment.

One Simple Thing. The Vietnam Region's commitment and accomplishments in diversity and inclusion comes from a broad spectrum of human resource activities. The region's approach to D&I goes beyond key gender indicators and emphasises leadership behaviour such as respect for the individual and acceptance of one's differences to drive innovation. For example, the Vietnam region pays a lot of attention to work-life balance to demonstrate inclusion in the workplace. The "One Simple Thing" (OST) objective acknowledges and addresses the unique work-life quality needs of the individual. Each employee is encouraged to work with his or her manager to identify and implement one self-initiated change that would help him/her improve work-life quality.

In 2010, the "One Simple Thing" objective became mandatory in the employee's performance objectives to reinforce flexibility in work arrangements. Examples of OST objectives are flexible time, summer hours, days in lieu of weekend or holiday travels and a flexible workplace. Senior management in Vietnam emphasises that the company provides the impetus to support employees but the individuals are the ones responsible for work-life balance. This philosophy is driving some form of empowerment among employees to take charge of their own work-life balance priorities.

Female Talent. Another key business agenda for D&I in the Vietnam Region is Female Talent. To enhance the D&I work culture, women employees are encouraged to develop themselves to achieve their career aspirations. This is one of the key priorities of the female talent agenda. To some extent, the region has met these goals through a mentoring program and soft skills training related to coaching and effective management skills. Efforts towards achieving employer branding of "Best Employer of

Choice for Women" is done through constant benchmarking on female-male ratio with other related industries.

International Women's Day. The celebration of International Women's Day is among the major D&I events held each year, with diversified activities for women. The company celebrates International Women's Day every March 8 as a way to recognise the contributions of female associates. Various activities are organised across Vietnam Region's main office and branches. Film showing, sharing with successful women speakers on beauty and fashion, and having a sweets party make the day special for recognising and thanking the women in Vietnam.

Female Representation. Despite all the activities and focus on women, achieving the key indicators for women remains a challenge for the Vietnam team. Although the overall female representation from middle manager level and above has increased from 21.3% to 23.8% from 2007 to July 2011, this is still below the target of 33%. By function, female representatives consist of 24% in Operations, 11% in Sales, 73% in Marketing, 63% in Finance and 60% in Human Resources. Female employee turnover rate increased from 2.3% to 3.5% in 2011 due to marriage, family concerns, and better opportunities outside of the organisation.

Diversity Training. To nurture an inclusive workplace, the Vietnam Region has continuously implemented diversity training programmes since 2007. The Region's Executive Committee, composed of the General Manager and department heads, attended the first Diversity and Inclusion Workshop which subsequently resulted in the business case for diversity. The organisation's training includes workshops for all employees on diversity. Also, new hires are offered an Appreciating Differences Program in their company orientation program. For managers, the Vietnam Region provides training programs on fostering inclusive leadership behaviour such as Inclusion Core Tools to try and cultivate inclusive attitudes into daily management behaviour. An Inclusive Leadership Workshop is also regularly held to help senior leaders transform the organisation into an inclusive culture.

Vietnam has in place an equal employment opportunity recruitment strategy that balances internal movements and external hiring through job posting and a management training program. For senior management, (Job Level 10 & Job Level 11) internal movements increased by 29% for senior management and 14% for middle managers

(L8/L9). The executive level (Job Level 10 and above) has 30% female in 2012 compared to 13% in 2011. The goal is to reach 60% female representation in the executive level in 2013.

Diversity and inclusion ranks high among the organisation's priorities as shown by the various initiatives implemented by the Region since 2007. However, with the anticipated changes in the organisation's structure, diversity and inclusion programs may take a back seat and activities may be minimized accordingly. The challenge for those in the Vietnam region, therefore, is not about what needs to be achieved but how to continue to improve, to do more, and to be more effective and innovative in their approach to diversity and inclusion.

3.4.3 Australia Region

Australia has become an internationally competitive, advanced market economy due to economic reforms adopted since the early 1990s. It is considered one of the fastest growing regions of the world. McDonnell, Stanton and Burgess (2011) pointed out that the Australian business environment is very dynamic compared to other developed economies especially after the global financial crisis in 1998. They contended that Australia is among the top ten locations for foreign direct investments because of its strong economy. The stable business environment and geographic positioning in Asia have received a lot of attention for MNCs to establish their operations in Australia (De Cieri & Olekalns, 2001; McDonnell et al., 2011).

Brief Description of Legislative Context of Diversity Management in Australia

Australia has become one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world due to the migration from different cultural and demographic backgrounds (Patrickson & O'Brien, 2001). Cultural diversity and gender are significant diversity features in Australia. Education and training are also important considerations of diversity and the ageing of the Australian workforce represents an increasing major aspect of diversity (Patrickson & O'Brien, 2001).

At the macro-level, a broad range of diversity factors are recognised in Australia and protected by legislation that prohibits discrimination based on race, colour, ethnic origin, social origin, religion, sexual preference, gender and physical and mental disability (Syed & Kramar, 2010). Australian state and Territory governments operate to prevent discrimination and comply with workplace diversity issues (Chapman, 1999). There are several commonwealth laws related to managing a culturally diverse

workforce. The legal framework that addresses the issues of exclusion and ethnic discrimination includes Anti-discrimination legislation, Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Legislation, and Diversity Management (Syed & Kramar, 2010). The overall purpose of these laws is to enforce the view that "all people in a society should have equal opportunities to enjoy the benefits of that society, including employment" (De Cieri & Olekalns, 2001, p. 28). While the government emphasises legal compliance regarding diversity, there are other factors that influence the compliance to diversity management.

Organisational initiatives taken independently of the legal requirements may influence the principles of EEO, affirmative action and diversity management. The presence of MNCs in Australia created an area of institutional changes in employment relations particularly in managing a culturally diverse workforce (McDonnell et al., 2011; Purcell, Nicholas, Merrett, & Whitwell, 1999; Syed & Kramar, 2010). According to Kramar (2012, p. 252), "diversity management in Australia needs to be understood in terms of the national context factors such as legislation, government policy, the demographic characteristics of the population and the workforce". Given the range of diversity factors, it is inevitable that organisations are faced with the enormous task of fully recognising the benefits of a diverse workforce. The following discussion describes how SBC Australia Region manages D&I.

Diversity Initiatives in SBC Australia Region
While EOWW is primarily driven by legislation, the context of diversity and inclusion in SBC Australia is driven by the business rationale. Gender is the unifying theme of D&I for SBC within Australia Region and crucial to their innovation and growth strategies. The company believes that women make up more than 50% of the consumer purchasing decisions in Australia, and thus, a critical mass of women among the employees is essential to business sustainability.

Female representation level is tracked and reported to the Asia Headquarters (HQ) every month. Currently, women from all ranks in the organisation represent more than 55% of the total number of employees. Over the past three years, female employment has increased from 29% to 33%. In the last five years, the proportion of women in the senior management role has increased by more than 10%. One major initiative taken by the company is sponsoring women employees to attend the Annual National Women Leadership Symposium, where participation includes women employees from different

ranks within the organisation. The symposium provides women managers networking opportunities with women leaders outside of SBC and within the Australian community. The SBC women managers are also exposed to lessons and insights on innovative leadership thinking.

SBC Australia invests heavily in building a culture to address diversity at all levels. This includes regular training in core inclusion skills and a range of initiatives, including paid parental leave. Aside from the "Stay in Touch" program which provides a supportive transition during and after a maternity leave, it has a work-life balance program called "One Simple Thing" that is similar to Vietnam's OST project, promotes discussions between managers and their direct reports supporting personal efforts to balance work and personal life priorities. Other flexible work practices include wellness days and birthday leave.

Aside from women, the ageing workforce is also an increasingly significant aspect of diversity in this region. The company attends to issues related to older workers and the need for flexible human resource strategies that address the diverse needs of this ageing workforce. Approximately more than 5% of the company's population is expected be in the "older workforce" category within the next 3 to 5 years. These statistics reflect the broader diversity of the Australian workforce and the current trend across the labour market in general where around 23% will be aged 65 and over by 2050 (Sheen, 2013). Thus, training is starting to be undertaken to prepare the older workers for their future financial concerns and provide innovative approaches to create flexible and inclusive management initiatives.

In summary, the direction for D&I in SBC Australia recognises a wide range of forms of diversity and is compliant with legislative requirements covering direct and indirect discrimination in employment. The business case appears to be essentially gender-focused because this focus is a common metric established by the parent company and regional offices are required to report to. Other possible diversity issues such as ethnicity and cultural diversity are not priorities at this stage of the company's D&I journey. The company acknowledges diversity as an increasing area of commitment and development, and inclusion practices have been widely recognised, implemented, and have added value to the workplace.

3.5 Broad Challenges of D&I in the Asia Division

Diversity and inclusion has been described based on the extent to which SBC has translated D&I into the business strategy for which it created a clear roadmap for implementation across Asia. However, despite the proactive attempts to integrate D&I using different mechanisms, mainly through human resource management practices, SBC faces a number of broad challenges to embed and sustain a coordinated and connected infrastructure for D&I. At the organisational level, progressing through the stages of the diversity journey requires a strong foundation in values and culture and sustained measurements to indicate success gaps and opportunities in implementation. For example, the 2011 year-end female executive scorecard indicated a 33% representation against the 30% target. However, the 360 Degree Feedback and Manager Quality Index indicated that inclusive behaviour is not seen as the signature strength of leaders. Feedback of D&I from senior leaders indicated that D&I needs consistency and more visibility within the entire organisation (D&I Strategy Report, November 2011).

At the individual level, there are differences in the domains of values and norms, including interpretations and frames of thoughts about diversity and inclusion. For example, one key challenge is that D&I is only partly understood and accepted by a few because of the various meanings and perceptions employees attach to D&I. Formulating a more relevant definition and interpretation connected to local practice is among the main actions being undertaken by the diversity change management group to address pockets of resistance to buy-in. From a historical perspective, the company started laying the foundation of D&I in 2007, but the program has been given less priority due to changes in organisation structures, leadership and directions over the past five years.

Almost five years after the program was launched in 2007, D&I is still generally regarded as a plethora of programs, which lack clarity of roles among D&I leaders. Although integrating mechanisms have been introduced to the business and the people, the strategies were perceived as a competing agenda. Therefore, efforts are focused towards integration through aligned strategy and business partnerships to drive the results.

The company has dedicated a considerable amount of time and human resource efforts to integrate diversity and inclusion into the culture and norms. Given the challenges, the company continues to embrace D&I as a journey towards cultural transformation that

will facilitate change while engaging everyone within the organisation, especially the senior management team.

3.6 Summary

This chapter described diversity and inclusion at SBC. Initially it gave a broad description of the company and the philosophy and values espoused about diversity and inclusion. This was followed by a short discussion of the organisational context of D&I in each business region covered by this research.

According to the relational model discussed in Chapter 2 as applied to the three regional offices included in this research, diversity management needs to be understood in terms of national context factors such as legislation, the cultural and historical contexts, organisational practices and the values of multiple interdependent identities such as gender, race and social class (Kramar, 2012; Ozbilgin & Tatli, 2008). The need to manage diversity in Australia, India and Vietnam was greatly influenced by the changes in institutional contexts attributed to globalisation and the economies in each location, as well as the changing demographics of the workforce within the company. It was also noted that as the company transfers diversity and inclusion practices to its regional offices, common metrics were used to measure the D&I performance of each region and different challenges were inevitable. Finally, the emphasis and direction of diversity and inclusion in Asia appears to be in building a corporate culture that recognises gender diversity and encourages flexibility in implementation.

CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHOD

4.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter introduces the methodology used in this research and also presents my journey as an insider-researcher. It also explains the circumstances that occurred during data collection from 2009 to 2012 that resulted in the two phases of study for this research. Phase 1 was the initial research in India where I conducted a survey and an interview. Phase 2 focused on three regions in Asia, including India, where I used the company survey data plus five supplementary questions from my own survey. The research protocol and relevant approaches adopted to complete this research are explained in the following sections.

Section 4.2 reviews the research questions. Section 4.3 explains the rationale for using a case study. Section 4.4 describes the mixed methods that guided the data collection. Section 4.5 presents the data collection process in Phase 1, whereas Section 4.6 presents the data collection process in Phase 2. Section 4.7 provides a summary of the changes that occurred during data collection from 2008 to 2012. Section 4.8 explains the data analysis. Section 4.9 describes the ethical considerations of the research and Section 4.10 relates the challenges I experienced as an insider-researcher. Section 4.11 summarizes the whole chapter.

4.2 Review of Research Questions

Within diversity management, little is known how MNCs are responding to workforce diversity, particularly in Asia (Syed & Ozbilgin, 2010). This study aims to examine diversity and inclusion within the context of three regional offices of a MNC operating in Asia. More specifically, it aims to investigate senior management perceptions on D&I. Consequently, the overarching research question to be addressed is:

What are the perceptions of senior managers about diversity and inclusion practices in a MNC?

As explained in earlier chapters, this research aims to assess the meso or organisational level and the micro or individual level effect of diversity and inclusion

policies and practices as perceived by senior managers. The specific research questions to be addressed in this study are:

1. *How does a MNC transfer diversity and inclusion policies and practices to its regional offices outside of the US?*
2. *What are the perceptions of senior managers about diversity and inclusion policies and practices implemented by the company?*
3. *What, if any, are the differences in perceptions between male and female senior managers about diversity and inclusion?*
4. *Are there differences in perceptions of senior managers in the way diversity and inclusion are implemented across the company's regional branches in India, Australia and Vietnam?*

Through these research questions, this study contributes to this under-researched area of diversity and inclusion at the organisational level using a case study of three regional offices of a US multinational food and beverage company, which has been implementing diversity and inclusion policies in its Asian counterparts since 2006. The results of the study served to highlight the demographic, cultural, organisational and institutional challenges of implementing diversity and inclusion when transferred into a non-US based context. A case study methodology provided valuable means to collect and analyse the data for this research.

4.3 Rationale for Case Study

A case study is a research strategy commonly used in psychology, sociology and political science research. Yin (2003) refers to a case study inquiry as a research strategy that may concentrate on individuals, groups, community or organisation and related phenomena. A case study is an "empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and, in which multiple sources of evidence are used" (Yin, 1989, p. 23).

Yin, (2003) describes a case study as an evaluation tool that intends to assess and explain the results of projects or programmes which operate in different life settings or projects. According to Yin (1994), projects may be large or small and may involve organisations or individuals, or both; and may call for activities at multiple sites. In addition, a case study is useful for evaluation research when the objective is to describe the outcome of the intervention and context in which it occurred. Data collection can be

done with explicitly developed protocols as well as other tools to explain the causal link between intervention and outcome (Yin, 1992).

A case study takes into account a variety of elements present within the context of the study. It involves "either a single or multiple cases and numerous levels of analysis" (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 534). Moreover, a case study is a comprehensive research strategy that may use a comparison of cases or sub-cases aimed at describing and explaining complex group attributes and patterns (Verschuren, 2003). Finally, a case study is intended to be a comprehensive research strategy to accomplish various objectives using exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory studies.

A case study has a number of strengths and weaknesses. One of its strengths is its compatibility to new research areas where existing theory seems inadequate and pertinent discussion propositions can be further developed (Eisenhardt, 1989). It is ideally suited in understanding organisational programs and processes, evaluating the success or failure of a certain program or project, and determining the effects of a change process (Mercado, 2006). It allows for a holistic view of real life events such as organisational behaviours, changes, or culture (Yin, 1994).

One disadvantage of the case study method is it requires cooperation from the organisation for easy access to the information and the data gathering process and it can also be time consuming (Yin, 1992). Another disadvantage is that a researcher who is inexperienced and biased can influence the direction of findings and conclusions drawn. This is more likely to happen in cases where the study was conducted within the same organisation where the researcher works (Yin, 1989). However, this is not true for all case studies as will be explained in the later section of this chapter.

Many research investigators criticize the case study as a less desirable form of inquiry compared to experiments and surveys. Among the reasons cited is that case studies provide little basis for scientific generalisation. However, Yin (2009) argues that case studies, like experiments, can be generalised into theoretical propositions but not to population or universe. Yin (2009) added that case studies may be valued as adjuncts to experiments rather than as alternative to them. Despite the weaknesses mentioned above, a distinctive characteristic of a case study from other research strategies is the flexibility in collecting data. Case studies do not strictly imply the use of a particular data collection method, but can be based on either quantitative or qualitative evidence or

a mix of both. Evidence may come from surveys, direct field observations, interviews, analyses of archival records, verbal reports, or any combination (Yin, 1981).

For this research, a case study approach was adopted as a suitable strategy to describe and understand the concept of D&I and its environmental context, and to focus on the implementation complexities relevant to organisations. Three important factors were considered for the use of case study: first, this research is exploratory where limited studies and theories are available; second, it is useful in evaluating organisational interventions implemented to promote D&I; and third, it utilizes a survey method to assess the perceptions of senior managers about D&I.

The use of quantitative research or qualitative methods is not exclusively based on the type of evidence, but also on philosophical perspectives (Giddings & Grant, 2006; Yin, 1981). Discussions on the variation of the quantitative and qualitative methods are the focus of the next section of this chapter.

4.4 Qualitative and Quantitative (Mixed) Methods

This section explains the rationale for using quantitative and qualitative methods in the research. Perceptions of senior managers about D&I programs were analysed and compared using multiple sources of evidence such as questionnaires, interviews and company data such as human resources policies on recruitment and promotion, and results of company survey.

As noted in the previous section, case studies can be carried out with either quantitative or qualitative approaches or both (Yin, 1981). Combining quantitative and qualitative methods of research is becoming increasingly popular and has been recognised as the new wave in social science research (Morgan, 2007; Giddings & Grant, 2006; Dellinger & Leech, 2007; Johnson, et al. 2007).

From a methodological perspective, the use of mixed methods is a new research paradigm that evolved in response to the persistent antipathy between quantitative and qualitative approaches. This integrates both approaches in collecting data underpinned by 'post positivist' assumptions (Giddings & Grant, 2006). According to Giddings and Grant (2006), a researcher's paradigm that reflects his or her beliefs about what the reality is (ontology), what counts as knowledge (epistemology), how one gains knowledge (methodology), and the values one holds (axiology) underpin decisions about the research.

A mixed method is a practical synthesis based on qualitative and quantitative research. It is called the "third" methodological or research paradigm, along with quantitative and qualitative research, that supports the philosophy of pragmatism. Mixed method research has been defined in several ways by leading mixed methods research methodologists, but two of the most applicable definitions for this research came from Creswell (2003). Moreover, "mixed methods research is a research design (or methodology) that enables the researcher to collect, analyse, and mix both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or a multiple program or inquiry" (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007, p. 119).

The mixed method has specific features that I found useful in this research. First, mixed methods can be used sequentially and provide basic information to help avoid biases (Sieber, 1973). Second, the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods enables the researcher to provide a richer description of data and initiates new modes of thinking within any possible paradoxes arising from two data sources (Rossman & Wilson, 1985). In addition, mixed methods allow the researcher to elaborate, enhance, or clarify the results from another method and discover different concepts that could lead to reframing of the research questions and expanding the range and breadth of inquiry (Greene, Gracelli, & Graham, 1989). Mixed methods can also compensate for any shortcoming of one method. Third and most importantly, mixed methods allow the researcher the potential to triangulate in data gathering and analysis.

Mixed methods can use multilevel designs to inform and supplement different methods not only to address the different aspects of the case study, but also to address different levels of data from multiple cases. Giddings and Grant (2006) derived a typology of mixed methods research design to describe the sequential and concurrent designs using quantitative and qualitative data.

There are two mixed methods designs. The first design is called Sequential, in which the researcher uses one method followed by the other method. For example, quantitative data gathering could be done first then qualitative, or vice-versa. The other design is Concurrent, where both methods are used simultaneously. In both designs quantitative and qualitative data can be given of equal importance, or one set of data may be used to complement the other (Giddings & Grant, 2006). Giddings and Grant also noted that "sometimes these methods are used in separate sub-studies and the data is analysed separately and then compared together" (Giddings & Grant, 2006).

The data collection used in this research is a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods relevant for each phase of the study. Moreover, the sequence of using the mixed method design provided the flexibility in data collection in view of the changes that occurred during the data collection period. It is important to provide this explanation to understand the need for a broader set of responses in addition to India data and the limitations in having the same set of data across all regions in Phase 2.

4.5 Phase 1 India Region Data Collection Process (2009 to 2010)

The company restructuring in 2009 which resulted in the regrouping of branches and changes in leadership structure shifted the original location of the research from SBC's Asia Region to its India Region. The change in location subsequently required an approval from the AUT Ethics Committee which was obtained in 2009. Data collection in India was conducted from 2009 to 2010 through survey, interview and review of secondary data.

4.5.1 Survey Questionnaire

The first method of data collection in India was a survey questionnaire with the questions coming from several sources. My practical knowledge about D&I policies and existing organisational practices provided baseline information with regard to the initial draft of the questionnaire. I then referred to the Inclusion and Exclusion Model developed by Mor Barak (2005) in developing the questions. The outcome of this process was 40 questions about D&I, which were divided into three parts. Part 1 covered the demographic profile of the participants such as gender (male/ female), age, nationality, tenure in the company, years in the current role, department, job title, job level, market unit and marital status. Part 2 measured the general perceptions about D&I policies and HR practices related to diversity. Part 3 measured the perceptions about inter-group relations such as communication and conflict. The questionnaire is attached in Appendix A.

Items on the questionnaire were measured on a 7-point Likert scale where 1 stands for "strongly disagree" and 7 stands for "strongly agree" to avoid the tendencies of neutral response. The higher score represents a greater degree of perceived inclusion. The midpoints of the Likert Scale, 3, 4 and 5, stand for "slightly disagree", "neither disagree nor agree" and "slightly agree" respectively.

Following the initial development of the questions, the questionnaire was pre-tested with a group of eight male and female senior managers in the company's branch in Malaysia in May 2009. Since the senior management team in Malaysia was composed of Filipinos, Chinese, Malays and Indians, it aptly represented the diverse demographic backgrounds and viewpoints on the company's diversity and inclusion program. Some questions were reworded based on the responses received from the Malaysian team. The final version of the research questionnaire was completed in July 2009.

4.5.2 Survey Respondents and Distribution

Eighty senior managers, 15% of the entire population of managers in India region, were invited to participate in the survey. Forty-four responded to the survey out of which 38 were males and 6 were females. The senior management was invited to participate in the study to avoid the potential issue of language translation as all of them were highly proficient in the English language. Although only 44 responded to the survey, the sample was sufficient enough for this exploratory case study on diversity and inclusion.

These managers are responsible for handling various functional units either as department head, division head, or group head with the ranks of Senior Manager, Director, or Vice-President.

As shown in the review of related literature, senior management influences decisions made in the organisation and drive the implementation of organisational interventions such as D&I. In addition, senior managers were recruited for this research based on the following criteria: a) participation in D&I Training; b) employment with the company for at least six months at the time of data gathering; and c) at least a Senior Manager rank.

Quality Consultants International, a third party research group, was contracted for the survey administration in the India Region. Outsourcing the survey administration was necessary to maintain the anonymity of the respondents and to prevent any adverse reaction or bias arising from being an employee of the company. A confidentiality agreement was signed between the third party research group and the researcher. The reasons for hiring an external party to conduct the survey administration are more fully explained in Section 4.5. A liaison person from the Human Resources Department from the India Region provided the list of senior management respondents for the survey to

Quality Consultants International. The coordination related to the survey was limited to the India Region liaison person and Quality Consultants.

The HR coordinator from India gave the list of participants to the third party research group which then sent the questionnaire to the senior managers along with my letter requesting them to be respondents of the survey. The letter clearly stated the there was no advantage or disadvantage for participating or not in the survey and that the participants had the right to withdraw their response any time before data consolidation started. The letter also explicitly stated that there was no management intervention in the survey process. To prevent any adverse reaction and bias in the results, neither the researcher nor the HR Director of the India Region had any access to this process.

Quality Consultants sent the survey to 80 senior managers through email in late November 2009, and the response deadline was set for December. By January 2010, not a single questionnaire had been returned. Recognising that this outcome might be because of the Christmas Holidays, the HR Director of India and I agreed to send the survey for the second time in February. By the end of March, only four questionnaires returned. It was later found out that the questionnaire attached through email was deemed very inconvenient by many participants as they had to download, answer, save and send back. After two attempts and poor responses, an online survey was used for the ease and convenience of the participants in submitting the survey. Forty questionnaires returned within three weeks. The survey was completed in May 2010. After completing the initial tabulation of the survey, I proceeded with the interviews.

4.5.3 Interview

The second method of data collection in India was through interviews. A semi-structured questionnaire consisting of 15 questions was used to gather in-depth information from senior management about their perceptions on and attitudes towards D&I. The interview aimed to provide additional information to validate responses from the survey and to address the main focus of this research. A semi-structured interview guide focused on the points of interests and would be used to determine the understanding of the key information and concepts being studied (Kuter & Yilmaz, 2001). It also allowed the researcher to gather additional valuable data related to the participants' experience about D&I that may not have been obtained from the questionnaire and organisational documents.

Fifteen questions were prepared for the interview. The first two questions were meant to establish rapport by asking the interviewees' position and job responsibilities in the company. The middle section of the questions dealt with the actual implementation process and their participation and experience with diversity and inclusion. The last few questions focused on the interviewees' thoughts about the company's D&I philosophy and initiatives. Some of the interview questions were:

1. What is your understanding of diversity?
2. What is your understanding of inclusion?
3. What does the corporate value "Win with Diversity" mean to you?
4. Have you observed any changes as a result of diversity and inclusion?
5. In a scale of 1-7 how successful do you think is the company in implementing diversity and inclusion?

The (44) respondents were invited to participate in the interview to validate the results of the survey. The interview request stated the purpose and the process, which included among others, taking and recording the interview proceedings. With the help of the HR coordinator, 14 managers agreed to be interviewed and one-on-one meetings were scheduled at the interviewee's convenient time. I personally conducted the interviews at the company's office in New Delhi, India in July 2010.

The interview involved a face-to face meeting with some managers while a few were placed in a video conference meeting because they were in an off-site location at the time of the interview. Changes in the specific time of the interview were accommodated to avoid disrupting the interviewees' work schedules and to allow them to focus on the interview. For each interview, I first thanked the manager for participating and explained the purpose of the research and the interview. I introduced my work and my studies, and explained the reason for the interview. Then I requested the participant to share a short background about himself/herself and his/her role in the company. I assured the interviewees of the confidentiality of their responses and asked for their approval to record the interview using the approved ethical protocol. This introduction process set the tone for the conversation and helped establish trust and rapport with the interviewees. Some interviewees were initially cautious and uncertain but they eventually became comfortable with the interview process after the first two questions.

Although a semi-structured interview questionnaire was prepared for the meeting, it became appropriate to change the sequence and re-structure the questions after completing the first two interviews. I observed that the interviewees were highly knowledgeable about workplace D&I, such that their responses to the first two questions often covered the next questions in the interview plan. The researcher also became comfortable with the type and flow of questions appropriate for this level of management after listening to the answers of the interviewees to the first two questions. The list of planned interview questions is attached in Appendix B.

The interviewees were asked questions about their perception of D&I initiatives and how they were involved in their implementation. They were also asked about their impression of the importance of D&I and their reaction to the company's commitment to policies and programmes on this. Interviewees freely shared their knowledge about diversity and inclusion.

At the end of the interview, I asked the participants to share their questions regarding the interview or the research topic. The duration of the interview was between 45 minutes to one hour.

4.5.4 Company Data

The third method of data collection in India was gathering and analysing secondary data. Documents related to the company's D&I program were provided by the HR Director in India to supplement the survey and interview. These documents included the committee reports, annual reports, company policies, memoranda, newsletters, training modules and internal company surveys.

4.5.5 Limitations with Case Study 1 in India

The data collection process in India was undertaken from November 2009 to July 2010. After the tabulation and analysis of the survey and interview were completed, I found out the results were not sufficient to establish confidence in the data. Four major issues were found in the India data, which are as follows:

1. The respondents in India were 98% male which meant the absence of the diversity component among the respondents from a gender perspective.
2. The available demographic diversity factors were weak and would not support a strong argument on the subject if the focus was only in India.

3. The response came from senior managers and did not include perceptions of employees - only one level of the organisational hierarchy was sampled. Perceptions about diversity implementation from both the senior management and employees were needed to balance the viewpoints on D&I implementation.

4. The respondents were all of Indian nationality and other important diversity factors like caste, language and regional differences were not included in the demographic questions since such information was not available from the company database.

The issues identified above indicated the need to have a broader set of responses beyond India. This then led me to the second phase of my research in other regions in Asia. This also meant another set of approvals from the AUT Ethics Committee to expand the research from India to Asia, which was obtained in 2010.

4.6 Phase 2: Asia (2011 to 2012)

As noted earlier, the need to expand the India data to a broader set of respondents was necessary to address the issues found in the preliminary results and to further validate the research findings. I approached the new Chief of Human Resources for Asia to request the Asia Region to participate in my research. Although the approval to participate was obtained, some limitations were identified in the data collection process. First, the population and diverse locations of Asia-Pacific offices would require enormous time and resources and therefore, a similar survey and interview as that of the India Region would not be practical. Second, the timing of my research survey coincided with the company's climate survey, and the online Values and Code of Conduct Training program for all employees. As a result, a poor response rate was anticipated because of employees' survey fatigue. An alternative approach was to expand the data collection to other regions which included the following: India, Australia, Vietnam and South-North Asia.

The Head of HR for Asia granted permission to access the results of the 2011 survey for analysis and allowed me to include five supplementary questions to the original items in the company climate survey in 2011. The company distributed the supplementary to all regions in Asia except in India. These items were:

1. *The company is committed to diversity and inclusion.*
2. *The company makes special effort to promote both female and male employees.*

3. *The company makes special effort to recruit and promote employees with different backgrounds and experiences.*

4. *Different talents and perspectives are valued in the organisation.*

5. *The company has strong policies against discrimination.*

The survey was conducted in June 2011 and the results were released in November 2011. Since the data I needed required reformatting the company standard report, I waited until the company was ready to provide the results to me based on the following demographics: 1) response of Job Level 10 and above managers; 2) total response by region and; 3) total response by gender. I received the complete set of results from the company in June 2012.

The results of the company survey were tabulated to find out the extent of comparable data. Based on the table of respondents, India, Australia and Vietnam had sufficient number of respondents to generate a report for senior managers, as well as complete answers to the core questions in the survey. These regions were also of similar operating business models. From a macro perspective, these regions also represented different levels of economic growth. India is an emerging economy, Australia a developed economy and Vietnam a developing country. The results of the company survey from these three regions became the basis for interpretation and analysis in Phase 2.

4.7 Summary of Changes

This section discussed how the research was carried out in India and Asia. Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2 summarise the series of changes in research location and flexibility adopted in data collection in response to these changes. Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2 show the available data used for analysis which will be discussed in the next section.

Table 4.1 Chronology of Data Collection Process

Year	Research Location	Events	Action Taken
Year: 2008-2009			
August 2008 to May 2009	Asia Pacific	Asia Pacific agreed to participate in the research. Company restructuring changed leadership. Data collection postponed indefinitely.	Shifted research to another region
October 2	India	Need to shift research location	Obtained consent from India Region to participate in the research
November	India	Conducted the survey	Survey Administrator sent the questionnaires via Email
Year: 2010			
January	India	Poor response from email survey	Survey was conducted online
February	India	Received online survey response	Phase 1 Data Tabulation
March-April	India	Phase 1 Data Available	
May	India	Preparation for Interview	India HR Manager coordinated the schedule with Senior Managers
July	India	Interview	Conducted the Interview in India
Year: 2011			
January		Preliminary results from survey and interview in India were tabulated and analysed. Conference paper on Phase 1 Study was presented at the AIRAANZ and EDI Conference. Data collection expanded to other regions in Asia.	
January	India	Change in leadership in India Region	
March	Asia	Asia agreed to participate in the research. Research coincided with internal company climate survey. Company agreed to include five supplementary questions in company survey. Company agreed to share the climate survey for research.	Requested permission to use company survey results.
June	Asia	Company climate survey was implemented across Asia. Supplementary questions were not distributed in India.	
Year: 2012			
February	Asia	Received the results of company climate survey for India and Asia Pacific	Tabulated Results Analysed Findings

Table 4.2 Summary of Data for Interpretation and Analysis

Location	Research Survey	Research Interview	Company Documents/ Survey Data	
Phase 1 - India Region	2010 Survey	2010 Interview	Policies Reports Training Program Newsletter	2011Company Survey Results
Phase 2- Asia (India, Australia and Vietnam)	Not Available	Not Available	Policies; Programs	2011 Company Survey Results

4.8 Data Analysis

Consistent with the case study strategy, different sets of data were used to conduct a more thorough examination of D&I in the India and Asia Regions. Survey questionnaire, interview and organisational documentation provided valuable information on the D&I program in Phase 1. The company survey data which includes five supplementary questions that was used in Phase 2 provided a basis for comparison among three different regions. Analysis of data from survey, interview and company survey is presented in the following discussion.

4.8.1 Survey (Phase 1: Preliminary Study in 1-India Region)

Data gathered from the survey were analysed using descriptive statistics. The process included tabulating the frequency of participants' responses to each category and calculating the mean score per item in the questionnaire. After the data had been tabulated, a data matrix was produced which constituted the basis for all subsequent statistical tabulation and description of results. Excel software tabulation of frequency distributions allowed the researcher to determine the trend of responses based on mean scores. Histograms were generated to facilitate the analysis and comparison of mean scores and subsequent analysis.

4.8.2 Interview (Phase 1: Preliminary Study in India Region)

Content analysis using interview codes were used to interpret the results of the interview. A set of codes developed from the list of questions and themes of the interview was used as basis for analysis. However, in view of the changes made during the interview, the pre-assigned theme became less relevant in the analysis and was replaced by new themes and sub-themes.

Sixteen interview results were analysed and compared using Excel and guided by the codes developed for the interview responses. The narrative texts, consisting of verbatim records of an interviewee's remarks, were sorted and tabulated according to related questions. Interview responses were manually organised and sorted into groups to develop the thematic interpretation of meaning and insights from recurring patterns within and across the 16 interviews. In view of the changes in the final data to be used for this research, results of the interview were used to describe and expand the results of the company climate survey.

4.8.3 Company Survey Data (Phase 2: India Region, Plus Australia Region and Vietnam Region)

With respect to internal company documents, data gathered from the review of company policies, code of conduct, newsletters and training modules were used to describe the organisational context. Some points in discussion of results likewise referred to the key contexts relevant to each case study location.

Collated data from the 2011 company climate survey for the India Region and Asia-Pacific Region were obtained from the Division Office in Dubai. Twenty-one out of 90 questions in the climate survey were related to D&I. Five of the 21 questions were the supplementary questions, which were presented in Section 4.6.

Two sets of company climate survey data were obtained for both case studies. The first set was the overall response for senior managers and the second set had the gender results for senior management. The scope of data was collated according to the geographical area- India Region, Australia Region or Vietnam Region. Results were grouped according to each region for analysis based on the number of male and female respondents sufficient for comparative analysis. Table 6.1 shows the number of senior manager respondents in the climate survey.

Scores obtained from the survey were presented based on percentage scores of favourable, neutral and unfavourable responses received for each question, and these were described according to the following standards used by the company for interpreting the scores: survey items with a favourable response of 75 % were considered a "strength", those with a favourable percentage of 54-74% are an "opportunity for improvement" (OFI), and items which had favourable percentages of 54% and below indicated a weakness in the policy process or were an "area of concern"

(AOC). Radar chart analysis was also used to provide an overall picture of comparative responses of the mean score per question to enhance the analysis of multiple comparisons. The detailed findings and analyses are explained in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

This section discussed the approaches used to describe the findings and analyse the different sets of data from the two case studies. Although statistical measures were not utilised in this research, the flexibility of using different approaches supported an empirical inquiry on the organisational context of diversity and inclusion and helped describe the outcome of diversity management implementation.

Ethical considerations cannot be underestimated particularly during data collection and analysis. Before presenting the findings and analysis of this research, it is important to present the ethical considerations that supported this research. The next section presents the challenges as an insider-researcher and the steps taken to overcome the issues and limitations related to this position.

4.9 Ethical Considerations

It is important for researchers to acknowledge the political and ethical stance they take in the conduct of research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). During the course of this study, I was working full time as a senior manager in the company where this research was conducted while simultaneously studying as a part-time international student based outside of Auckland, New Zealand.

4.10 Challenges as Insider-Research

Insider-research means research done by members of the organisational system and communities in their own organisations (Brannick & Coghlan, 2007); Workman, 2007; Costley et al. 2010). It is becoming popular among individuals who are on full-time employment and enrolled in an academic programme. Individuals undertake this arrangement on the assumption that they are familiar with the site and have ready access to data. Based on my experience, this is one of the advantages of insider-research. However, it should be noted that there are several challenges related to researching on-site and gaining access to data.

One main concern was how to separate myself from the company for the research. My views on diversity and inclusion within the organisation stem from my knowledge of "what is espoused and what is real," which may differ from the perceptions of other

members of the organisation. Another major challenge was the methodological aspect due to the changes that occurred within the organisation during the execution of this research.

Changes in the company's organisational structure and leadership re-directed the research approach and location from my original research plan. As a result of these changes, my persistence to collect the relevant data without causing inconvenience to the company led to a broader area of research and deliberate choices of regions with the same extent of data comparability. The details of these challenges are explained as follows.

A. Dual Roles: Organisational and Researcher Roles

Balancing my role as Human Resource Manager and researching about the HR strategy and program required much reflection and prioritization. Being in this dual role awakened my intellectual curiosity and developed in me a subject specialist perspective as a researcher. The challenge I faced as an insider-researcher lies in my ability to address the dual role of being open about my situation with my managers, maintaining honesty in the survey and interview, and pursuing my intention to contribute, first of all, to the academic understanding of D&I and secondly, to the organisation where I belong.

B. Access to Data

My position as HR manager has given me clear access to data, particularly to available policies and training documents about D&I. I consciously observed the following protocols from the university and the company to maintain the credibility of the study: sought permission and transparency at all times on the purpose of data requested, respected the extent of data to be shared, requested consent from participants, honoured the confidentiality of participants' responses and personal information, and outsourced the survey administration via third party to maintain the anonymity of survey respondents and to reduce the response bias of participants.

C. Pre-Understanding of the Subject of Research

An insider-researcher is privileged to possess knowledge, insights and experience before engaging in the actual research. On the other hand, prior knowledge and insights could also lead to contain biases not only regarding his or her subject matter regarding the policies but also the organisation dynamics. In response to this dilemma, I followed two strategies. Firstly, I resolved to keep an open mind on opinions and findings that

were different from my fundamental and practical understanding of the subject. Secondly, I constantly sought confirmation from my research advisors to caution against statements in favour of the company's practice without solid research objectives and questions with empirical data and more information.

D. Managing Organisational Politics and Organisational Changes

I attend to the demands that both roles –my organisational role and my researcher role - imposed on me. Maintaining high credibility both at the company and at the university was the most challenging experience. In response, I always tried to consider the impact of organisational politics on the process of inquiry, who the major players were, and how they could be engaged in the process. I sought approval from and informed my superiors in all stages, especially during data collection. I learned that the key to managing organisational politics and maintaining credibility of stature lies in the humility of positioning myself within the bounds of professional and academic activities, understanding the power and interests relevant to stakeholders, knowing how to work within the changes happening in the organisation, and always seeking cooperation and support from superiors and colleagues.

In closing, I would like to share that an insider-researcher thesis is a process of reflexivity. The various challenges required proactive and conscious efforts to maintain the credibility of the researcher and integrity of the research.

4.11 Summary

This chapter has introduced the importance of the case study as a relevant methodology for this research. In an attempt to answer the research questions, it has recognized the value of mixed methods as the most appropriate way of collecting the data. The chapter has also attempted to distinguish mixed methods from alternative research methods in social science, indicating their usefulness in doing a case study. Furthermore, this chapter has discussed the procedure for executing the research in the light of the changes that occurred within the organization and identified the process by which data will be analyzed, the coding of interviews and comparative analysis of company survey results. Finally, this chapter explained the researcher's position as an "insider-researcher," offering insights on challenges and personal experiences in conducting this research.

CHAPTER 5

PHASE 1 PRELIMINARY RESULTS IN INDIA REGION

5.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents the findings of Phase 1 which is a case study conducted in the India Region. As explained in Chapter 4, this study was conducted between 2010 and 2011 using survey and interview methods. The objective of Phase 1 was to find out the perceptions and experiences of senior managers about diversity and inclusion particularly in terms of the company's commitment to diversity, human resource policies and intergroup relations. The HR policies included: a) recruitment and promotion of women in the company; b) recruitment and promotion of employees from different ethnic backgrounds; c) policies on discrimination; and d) policies about training and rewards. Intergroup relations referred to perceptions about communication, information sharing, participation in the decision-making process, and perceptions about conflict as measures of diversity and inclusion.

Participants in this case study were senior managers from various functions in India Region such as finance, marketing, sales, supply chain and human resources who have been with the company for at least six months at the time of the survey and interviews. Eighty senior managers were invited to participate in the survey, with 44 answering the survey after two attempts. Out of the 44 respondents, 86% were male and 14% were female. These demographic aspects of survey respondents limited the generalisation of the study, which made it necessary to extend the study to other regions.

This chapter is divided into three sections. Section 5.2 presents the results of the survey. Section 5.3 discusses the results of the interview, and Section 5.4 presents a summary of this chapter.

5.2 Results of Survey: Preliminary Study in India Region

This section presents the survey results of the case study in the India Region. As discussed in Chapter 4, a survey questionnaire was developed to examine the perceptions of senior managers regarding diversity and inclusion policies and practices. The questions were divided as stated above. Each question was rated using a 7-point Likert scale to avoid the response of central tendency or a neutral response. A score of 1 is interpreted as Strongly Disagree and 7 as Strongly Agree. Thus, a score range of

5-7 was considered "favourable," a score of 4 stood for "neither favourable nor unfavourable," and scores ranging from 3-1 were "unfavourable". Results were analysed through weighted mean scores which were presented in numerical tables for all questions under each group.

There were 44 questions in the survey, which were divided into four groups based on the topic related to each question. The list of questions can be found in the Appendix. The groups of questions were as follows:

Group 1: Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace, which refers to perceptions on the company's commitment to D&I as well as the knowledge of policies that support it.

Group 2: Diversity and Inclusion in Human Resource Policies, which refers to perceptions about human resource policies such as recruitment and promotion of women, promotion of employees from different ethnic backgrounds, knowledge of policies on discrimination and policies about training and rewards.

Group 3: Diversity and Inclusion in Intergroup Relations, which refers to perceptions of senior managers about intergroup relations in terms of communication, information sharing within the company, decision-making processes and conflict.

Group 4: Information Sharing, which refers to perceptions of senior managers about adequacy of information they received regarding the company's financial status and goals and priorities of the organisation. This group also refers to information received by the senior managers from their immediate managers and job-related information shared with or received from other departments.

The overall findings showed that D&I is highly understood and recognised by the senior managers as important to consider in crafting business strategies in the organisation. Senior managers have a deep understanding of D&I and how these are implemented in the organisation. The findings also showed that gender is an important aspect of diversity and inclusion considering the small percentage of women senior managers in the company. The overall perception about the company's commitment to diversity and inclusion policies and practices appear to be very positive. However, findings on perceptions regarding the company's endeavours and results are less favourable. The following tables present the details of these findings.

Table 5.1 Perceptions about Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace

Question	Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace	Weighted Mean Score
1	Company believes in diversity and inclusion.	6.27
2	Company is genuinely committed to diversity and inclusion.	6.00
3	Comprehensive program on diversity and inclusion.	5.75
4	Employees are aware of diversity and inclusion.	5.89
5	I understand the concept of diversity and inclusion.	5.84
6	Different talents are valued in this organization.	5.34

Table 5.1 shows a generally favourable response to D&I in the workplace. Almost all respondents favourably perceived the company's commitment to diversity and inclusion and understood the concept of D&I. Respondents also agreed that there was a comprehensive program on diversity, but the weighted mean score on response on the company's effort to value different talents (employees) in the organisation showed a slightly lower score (5.34) compared to other statements under this group.

On perceptions about human resource policies supporting D&I, four important findings are shown in Table 5.2. First, there was a high weighted mean score, indicating a favourable perception of the company's policy to recruit women in the company. Second, the company's effort to hire employees from different ethnic backgrounds received a lower weighted average score compared to policies on recruiting women. This may be because the India Region population is generally ethnically homogeneous and as such, survey respondents were all Indian nationalities. In addition, the company's recruitment policy is based on meritorious qualifications (India Region Hiring Policy). Third, the company's policies regarding minimising biases, prejudices and discrimination were favourably perceived by the respondents. Lastly, a majority of senior managers favourably perceived that training and development was available to all employees regardless of rank. The items that received the lowest weighted mean score for HR policies were the company's policy about work-life balance and recruitment of employees from different ethnic backgrounds.

Table 5.2 Perceptions about HR Policies

Question	Diversity and Inclusion in HR Policies	Weighted Mean Score
7	Recruitment of women	6.09
9	Promotion of qualified women	5.52
8	Recruitment of members of different ethnic background	4.61
10	Promotion of qualified employees regardless of their ethnic background	5.80
14	Recognition of the individual work-life balance	4.73
11	Training and development to its employees regardless of position and rank	6.07
13	Rewards its employees based on performance	5.66

Findings show in Table 5.3 shows a favourable perception about the company's policy against discrimination. To some extent, this perception was influenced by the company's global code of conduct which is strictly implemented across the organisation. This does not mean the complete absence of employee grievances related to discrimination. However, details as such grievances were deemed highly confidential and were not shared with the researcher.

Table 5.3 Perceptions about Policies against Discrimination (N-44)

Question	Perceptions About Discrimination	Weighted Mean Score
15	The company provides policies that address biases, prejudice and discriminatory issues.	5.72
12	Policies against gender discrimination	6.09
16	I have not experienced discrimination or being discriminated against because of my gender.	5.95
11	I have not experienced discrimination or being discriminated against because of my rank.	6.16
17	I have not experienced discrimination or being discriminated against because of my age.	6.16

Aside from company policies, D&I were also examined at the level of interpersonal relations. Perceptions about communication regarding organisational changes, financial performance, as well as goals and priorities received higher weighted mean scores compared to perceptions about inter-group coordination and participation in decision-making. The detailed findings are described in the following tables:

Table 5.4 Perceptions Regarding Information Sharing

Question	Perception about Information Sharing	Weighted Mean Score
20	I frequently receive communication about organisational changes from management higher than my immediate supervisor.	6.05
21	My manager communicates goals and priorities of the organisation.	5.36
23	Information about company financial performance is often shared with employees.	4.95
25	I am always invited to informal social activities and company social events.	5.55
26	My co-workers openly share work-related information with me.	5.52
22	I am often the last to know on the important changes in the organisation.	2.80
24	My supervisor does not share information with me.	2.57
27	I find it difficult to ask for work-related information from my co-workers.	2.55

Table 5.4 shows a consistent favourable perception about information sharing within the company, particularly information about organisational changes and financial performance. Higher management, which in this case might be Head of the Region or other senior leaders, communicate organisational changes directly to senior managers as they occur within the company. The score also show a favourable perception of the way senior managers are informed about their goals and priorities and financial performance of the company. Perceptions about sharing of or asking for work-related information among co-workers were also positive (Q 22, 24 and 27). It should be noted that these are reverse questions designed to minimise biases. The low score indicated high level of disagreement with the items. In contrast, work conflicts tended to elicit different levels of perceptions compared to decision-making and communication.

Table 5.5 Perceptions about Intergroup Conflicts

Question	Perceptions about Intergroup Conflicts	Weighted Mean Score
24	I find it easy to delegate tasks outside my work unit.	3.70
28	The people I work with talk to each other to get the job done	5.52
43	I am willing to work with others even if it is not formally demanded.	5.73
44	Inter-department coordination is easy and smooth.	4.41
37	Personality conflicts often interfere with task performance.	3.64
38	My co-workers frequently disagree about ways to complete the tasks.	3.41
39	I find it difficult to engage my co-workers to get the job done.	2.57
40	I am often frustrated with the time and resource demands of functionally diverse teams.	3.23

The range of impartial to negative scores in Table 5.5 shows the perceptions of the respondents about intergroup conflict. Senior managers perceive that personality conflicts affect task performance. Specifically, frequent disagreements affect the completion of tasks between and among co-workers.

Table 5.6 Perceptions about Participation in Decision Making

Question	Perceptions regarding Decision Making	Weighted Mean Score
29	Influence in decision making	5.45
30	Participate in decision making that affect my job	5.30
31	Employees have authority to make work-related decisions.	5.41
32	My supervisor often asks my opinion before making important decisions.	5.14
33	I am often invited to contribute my opinion in meetings with management other than my immediate supervisor.	4.50
34	I am often asked to contribute in planning social activities not directly related to my function.	3.91
35	I often have to consult my supervisor regarding decisions about how to go about my work. (R)	3.95
36	Employees are often consulted in problem solving and decision making in matters that involve their jobs and working conditions.	4.82

With regard to decision-making, Table 5.6 shows a positive score regarding senior managers' involvement in important decisions. They appeared to have flexibility in making decisions and they also acknowledged that employees could make decisions directly related to their work. There was also positive responses regarding the

employees' involvement in problem solving and decision-making on matters that affected their jobs and working conditions.

In summary, the overall survey results showed a generally positive perception about D&I practices among 44 predominantly male senior manager respondents. Although the perceptions of senior management about the company's commitment to D&I were highly favourable, perceptions related to intergroup relations-particularly in communication, decision-making and conflict-were not at the same level. Scores related to these dimensions showed some opportunities for improvement.

The overall result was limited to general interpretations of perception because of the small number of respondents. Comparative findings based on gender were not included in this section because only a few female senior managers participated in this survey and their responses did not significantly change the scores. This is one of the main reasons why it was necessary to extend the study to other regions without changing the underlying purpose of the research. In addition to the survey, an interview was conducted among 16 respondents who agreed to be interviewed. The next section presents the findings from the interview and discusses the responses from the male and female participants.

5.3 Interview Results: India Region

This section presents the results of the interview conducted in the India Region in July 2010. Sixteen out of the 44 survey respondents agreed to participate in the interview. Some of the comments during the interview were included in the following sections. The gender of the interviewees was not identified where their comments may be identified to protect their privacy. Generally, the respondents recognised the company's efforts to encourage D&I policies and practices. Interview results indicated that the company was focused on D&I implementation in a way that suits the culture of the organisation and the business needs.

5.3.1 Participants' Understanding of Diversity and Inclusion

Most of the senior managers interviewed explained that diversity within the company came from the hugely diverse population of India: a country with 25 States, diverse food habits, language, clothing, culture and religion. The participants believed that respect for individual diversity is ingrained in each of the employees in the India region office, including the senior management team. For most of the participants, diversity

has to do with understanding the demographic and cultural differences within the organisation that make each individual unique. One senior manager simply described his employees as coming from different cultures. "*Some employees come from the East others are from the West, North and South. The East has a different culture from the West, and the North has a different culture from the South. The eating habits are different, the dialects and pronunciation are totally different*" (M9). Another senior manager remarked: *"There is a lot of emphasis on diversity and inclusion across the globe and definitely in India. From a company standpoint, diversity is ingrained in each one of us as we are so diverse in our culture as a country. So when we talk about diversity, it is more than what is visually there like gender or differently able diversity. It is also about differences that are not apparent physically like religion and language. So therefore, inclusion, for me, is about being open minded to diverse viewpoints; being comfortable with diverse ways of working and ways of thinking"* (M13). Another participant stated: *"Diversity and inclusion is about integrating various ways of thinking to run the business"* (M3).

The participants described their understanding of D&I, and these descriptions were classified into three categories:

A. Diversity and Inclusion in Team Relations

It was apparent that senior managers found the rationale for D&I through working with different individuals. According to one participant, *"When working in the organisation, you have a diverse people working around you. It could be the different genders, not the same religion, or different language and working style"* (M10).   Another senior manager shared that *"Diversity is the comfort of working in a set-up where people should be able to work comfortably"* (M5). D&I was also understood as the ability of the managers to accept the differences. For example, one manager remarked: "*Diversity and inclusion is about accepting differences, allowing people to be comfortable to contribute to the discussion or in the whole group in order to achieve the best results"* (M3). Similarly, a few managers observed that inclusion is demonstrated when people are gathered together sharing their thoughts and strategies while ensuring the teammates are collaborating. They believed that diversity is about integrating various differences in a collaborative style of work while ensuring an open mind and being sensitive to other cultures within their organization. The senior managers' understanding of diversity was not just about the differences they saw amongst themselves, but in their ability to work together.

B. Diversity and Inclusion and Senior Manager's Competence

Based on the interview, it is apparent that the D&I initiatives of senior management devolve to the subordinates the softer aspects of leadership qualities. According to one manager, *"Diversity and Inclusion is about taking others along with you. Inclusion means that we get the job done where everybody feels included in the overall agenda" (M2).* In addition to acknowledging their role in driving inclusion, some senior managers also shared that they recognised and respected differences by making each person feel part of the team. A senior manager shared: *"As leaders we make an environment where our employees don't feel discriminated. The decision process includes many people and decisions are inclusive to spread the feeling that we win together" (M1).* Another manager shared, *"There are two ways to get a job done: First define for yourself what is to be done and make the right decision and second, take others along with you which means not just to get something done but to get it done that everybody feels included in the overall agenda" (M2).* Additionally, senior managers understood that their role was to include all members of the team and maximize the benefits of this process instead of considering it as a stumbling block. However, one manager noted that in some critical decisions, making inclusiveness a priority compromises speed of decision-making.

C. Diversity and Inclusion in Human Resource Programs

Ensuring equal representation particularly among genders, is one of the agreed upon by the senior managers. Senior managers also observed that HR had cascaded a lot of programs on D&I that increased the awareness of employees, such as training seminars on Appreciating the Differences and the D&I Newsletter. A senior manager shared that there was a high imbalance in gender representation five years ago, with 95% male employees and 5% female, but this ratio has been increased to 80% male and 20% female. Compared to company standards, this ratio is relatively lower but a significant improvement in gender representation. Aside from gender, senior managers developed a broader understanding of diversity through the organisation's thrust to accept people with physical disability and try to integrate them in the workplace. According to a senior manager, *"There are lots of cascading happening in terms of D&I and what we need to do. Gender diversity would mean more return on equalisation agenda or at the least give equal opportunity to women" (M14).* Another manager remarked, *"Women in SBC India are happy about the effort the company is taking to include more and more women in the business" (M13).*

These views about diversity are not limited to awareness of differences among each other but are based on specific needs of the organisation. For example one participant shared: *"Diversity is about tapping into the strengths of diverse employees that mirror the consumer base. We need new ideas from people who think differently to expand the local product portfolio"* (M13).

5.3.2 Company's Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

As indicated earlier, the company's commitment to D&I is broadly stated as "Win with Diversity and Inclusion". Participants were asked what this statement meant to them and how this commitment was demonstrated in the organisation. One of the participants stated that: *"From a business case perspective, the more the leadership team understands diversity and inclusion the more that it can enable them to realise the potential and power within the employees to identify market trends, go to market in new and efficient ways, and better operate as a 'Power of One' organisation in their sector"* (M8). Additionally, another participant stated that *"diversity and inclusion is a business imperative to compete in a globalised marketplace"* (M1).

As gathered from the interview, D&I policy allows the organisation to create collaboration that ensures effective implementation of ideas and creates an environment that stimulates and promotes innovation to drive sustained growth. For example, leadership commitment was a D&I initiative identified by all participants, who said that senior leaders played a vital role in building a culture of inclusion. The senior leaders communicated the importance of D&I through meetings, memoranda, company newsletters, newspaper reports and policy statements. One participant shared: *"I have seen that senior management is making visible effort to drive this agenda. D&I drive most of our initiatives and because we have now begun to feel the impact of these initiatives we are also feeling the impact of performance support. We know that diversity and inclusion will broad base the company's talents, the company's standards and ability to win the markets. I think this whole idea is very proactive and will help the company remain sustainable in our initiatives and growth"* (M2). Another participant concurred that: *"Senior management is driving diversity and inclusion very strongly I think it's the towering strength for the company and we could still do more like increasing the number of women in the company, not just at the managerial level, but also in rank and file. There is also a potential to increase the number of female employees in sales when the needed infrastructure has been established"* (M9).

5.3.3 Organisational Culture Related to Diversity & Inclusion

Many participants have observed that the company is making visible efforts to drive D&I agenda. For example, one participant stated that the women in the company are happy about the efforts taken by the company to include more and more women in the business. The company not only recognises the needs of women in the workforce but also takes special efforts to ensure women are given strong institutional support within the organisation. A few comments on women's diversity, coming from both female and male senior managers, are as follows:

Female senior managers observed that the company had initiated several programs to increase and keep women managers in the workplace. Among these initiatives were the Women's Council, a highly regarded organisation, which spearheaded the effort to make the company a safer and more inclusive place for women to work in. The company was also contemplating (at the time of this research) the hiring of women in field sales and not just in the administrative functions, provided they have established the proper facilities and tools of the job for women. One manager commented that, "*Aside from making the company a safe place for women, the company realises the need for sensitization of the male members of the workforce to ensure that they contribute in making the workplace comfortable and safe for women*" *(M13)*. Women senior managers interviewed appreciated the presence of senior male leaders in the council meeting. According to a participant, "*It is good to have senior male leaders joining the Women's Council meeting*" *(M13)*.

Male senior managers also acknowledged the changes brought by diversity and inclusion, having observed the improvement in gender representation in top management (the executive committee). A senior manager shared, "*There is a tremendous improvement in bringing gender diversity on the top management roles. Currently 35% of the board is women and five women at the Executive Committee. We did not have this five years ago*" *(M10)*. Male participants also cited the increase in women's representation as necessary for the business in view of the changing customer base. "*It is important to increase the number of women in the organisation. Our portfolio as business goes to the masses of the population is almost 50% women*" *(M11),* according to one of the managers interviewed. Even the males highly respected the Women's Council and its determined action for women. A manager remarked, "*The Women's Council is one of the best initiatives to happen. It is the right step in the right direction*" *(M10)*.

5.4 Summary

This chapter showed the results of the findings in Phase 1, which was a case study in the India Region. Findings in the study showed that D&I is widely owned and understood by the senior management of the company. The company's diversity goals, which were framed based on the challenges and opportunities for the business, helped integrate diversity and inclusion in the mindset and attitudes of people with influence. This supports the theory of integration and learning paradigm of diversity programs as a vehicle in re-thinking the primary tasks in achieving the common mission and goals (Ely & Thomas, 2001). Moreover, previous studies showed that leaders who deeply understand and support the implication of diversity management initiative are the strongest advocates in building an inclusive climate within the organisation (Jayne & Dipboye, 2004; Ozbilgin & Tatli, 2008; Holvino, Ferdman, & Merill-Sands, 2004).

Several policies were implemented to address different levels of change supportive of D&I, namely structural, cultural and behavioural changes. This is in alignment with the view of Holvino, Fredman and Merill-Sands (2004) that the company to promote diversity can leverage each point of that change structure. For example, cultural change defines the organisation's view of its effectiveness and its environment and behavioural change reflect the changes in attitudes, perceptions and behaviour among individuals and within their work groups (Holvino, Fredman, & Merill-Sands, 2004). As shown in the preliminary findings, company initiatives such as the Women's Council were implemented not only to increase the employment of women but also to ensure their safety and welfare within the organisation. Almost all the senior managers interviewed were highly supportive of achieving this goal.

The results from this chapter contain a number of limitations that paved the way for an extended study in other regions as mentioned in Chapter 4. Nevertheless this chapter showed contextualised perspectives of how senior managers perceived diversity and inclusion in relation to their culture and organisation. The next chapter presents more comprehensive view diversity in India and comparative findings between India, Australia and Vietnam about D&I policies and practices.

CHAPTER 6

PHASE 2 RESEARCH FINDINGS OF EACH REGION

6.1 Chapter Overview

Phase 2 of this research is a comparative analysis of senior managers' perceptions about diversity and inclusion policies and practices across the India Region, Australia Region and Vietnam Region. The purpose of Phase 2 study was to provide a broader set of comparative scores in addition to the initial data gathered from Phase 1 which was focused only on the India Region. Before presenting the comparative findings across the three regions, Chapter 6 will first discuss the total response and the response per gender of senior managers within each region.

The respondents were male and female managers at senior management levels across different functional areas such as finance, marketing and sales. A criterion of the company survey was that respondents must have been with the SBC for at least six months. Other data like tenure and department could not be extracted from the survey results. Thus, the comparative response was limited to gender. Table 6.1 presents the total number of respondents which represent the senior manager population of each region.

Table 6.1 Distribution of Survey Respondents by Region and by Gender

Region	Female		Male		Total
India	20	(15%)	111	(85%)	131
Australia	29	(30%)	68	(70%)	97
Vietnam	8	(27%)	22	(73%)	30
Total	57	(22%)	201	(78%)	258

As explained in Chapter 4, the company's 2011 climate survey was used to analyse the perceptions of male and female senior managers in three regional offices of SBC. Out of 94 questions in the climate survey, 17 questions regarding D&I and five supplementary questions were extracted and examined in this research. The supplementary questions were distributed only in Australia and Vietnam. Thus, only 17 questions were examined for D&I perspectives in India Region. Although the questions for India were limited to the 17 questions from the company survey data, some of the questions used in the Phase

1 are similar to the supplementary questions in Phase 2. Examples of these questions could be found in Table 5.1, Table 5.2 and Table 5.3.

Questions related to the dependent variables indicated in the research framework in Chapter 1 were grouped together for interpretation and analysis. The rationale for each group of questions is explained as follows.

Overall D&I vision and values (Group 1 with 5 questions): This group of questions refers to the overall concept of diversity and inclusion, including formal policies that management puts in place to articulate the value of diversity. This is what the company intends to do regarding diversity and inclusion in terms of policies and practice.

D&I Initiatives (Group 2 with 5 questions): This group of questions refers to the systems and processes that support diversity and inclusion. It includes questions related to hiring, promotion and work-life balance.

Individual Satisfaction about D&I (Group 3 with 4 questions): This group of questions refers to senior managers' individual satisfaction about diversity and inclusion. These questions indicate the experience of the individual about diversity in terms of recognition, involvement in decisions, and feeling of being valued as a member of the organisation.

Leadership and Management of D&I (Group 4 with 4 questions): This group of questions refers to the extent of leadership ownership and management of diversity and inclusion and its perceived outcome in the organisation.

Manager Support for D&I (Group 5 with 4 questions): Manager support was considered an important mediating factor in implementing diversity and inclusion. This group of questions refers to support received by senior managers from their immediate managers. It provides the link between what the company intends to do and how senior leadership demonstrates support for diversity and inclusion. Table 6.2 presents the list of questions per group.

Table 6.2 Company Survey and Supplementary Questions (S)

Group 1: Overall D&I Vision And Values

Q90(S)	The Company is genuinely committed to diversity and inclusion.
1H	Please rate your level of agreement that we demonstrate and make decisions based on the company Values: Win with diversity and inclusion.
1I	Please rate your level of agreement that we demonstrate and make decisions based on the SBC Values: Respect others and succeed together.
Q93(S)	Different talents and perspectives are valued in the organisation.
Q94(S)	The Company has strong policies against discrimination.

Group 2: D&I Initiatives

Q91(S)	The company makes special effort to promote both female and male employees.
Q92(S)	The company makes special effort to recruit and promote employees with different backgrounds and experiences.
Q58	Promotions and assignments at my company are based on fair and objective assessment of people's skills and performance.
Q68	There is an equal opportunity for people to have a successful career regardless of their differences or background.
Q29	My company supports my effort to balance my work and personal life.

Group 3: Individual Satisfaction about D&I

Q33	I feel valued as an employee of my company.
Q10	My work group has a climate in which diverse perspectives are valued.
Q77	How satisfied are you with your involvement in decisions that affect your work?
Q78	How satisfied are you with the recognition you receive for doing a good job.

Group 4: Leadership and Management of D&I

Q4	I see diversity reflected in the management of this company.
Q62	The current organisation structure helps different work groups/functions cooperate and work together effectively.
Q65	Senior management (your senior leadership) has taken ownership for the company's diversity and inclusion initiatives.
Q70	The company's D&I is having a positive impact on the company's culture.

Group 5: Manager Support for D&I

Q14	My manager/supervisor treats me with respect.
Q16	My manager/supervisor values and respects differences among employees.
Q74	My manager/supervisor supports and encourages my involvement in diversity and inclusion related activities.
Q28	My immediate manager/supervisor supports my efforts to balance my work and personal life.

The results were described by region using: a) percentage distribution of raw scores plotted as histograms to show the relative distribution of responses; and b) radar charts to provide an overall picture of comparative responses. For the radar chart, the mean

score per question was plotted on a radiating chart such that a spider web configuration formed a pattern or profile to enhance the analysis of multiple comparisons.

The scores obtained from the survey were presented based on percentage scores of favourable, neutral, and unfavourable scores for each question using histograms to show the relative distribution of responses and a radar chart to show the overall picture of comparative responses. These were described according to the following SBC standards for interpreting the scores: a percentage favourable response of 75 percent or more indicates that the item is a "Strength", a percentage favourable score of 55 to 74 percent classifies the items as "Opportunity for Improvement" (OFI), and a percentage favourable score of 54 percent and below indicates a weakness in the process or an "Area of Concern" (AOC). These scores were represented in the histograms as follows: Letter F shows that the item is for Favourable; N for Neutral and UF for Unfavourable.

Section 6.2 compares the total response of senior managers within each region and across India, Vietnam and Australia, and Section 6.3 presents the chapter summary.

6.2 Result by Region

The following charts present the findings by region starting with India followed by Australia and Vietnam. The results are presented based on the total response followed by the comparative response between male and female senior managers within each region.

6.2.1 Response of Senior Managers in the India Region

Response of All Senior Manager Respondents

Findings in Group 1 questions in India indicate a high proportion of favourable response from senior management. Figure 6.1 shows how the company demonstrates its values of "win with diversity" (Q1H) and "respect others and succeed together" (Q1I). This type of response is not unusual considering the annual on-line values and code of conduct certification training required from everyone in the company followed by a strong "tone at the top" as demonstrated by top management in meetings and in this approach of doing business. At the very least, these responses show that D&I core values and policy are highly recognised by senior managers. Unfortunately, some of the questions under Group 1 (Q90, Q93 and Q94) were not available for India Region because these were the supplementary questions that were not distributed in India during the climate survey.

Similarly in Phase 1, India Region senior managers responded favourably to questions about diversity and inclusion in the workplace (Table 5.1) and considered the company to be genuinely committed to diversity and inclusion.

	Q90	Q1H	Q1I	Q93	Q94
F		81	82		
N		14	10		
UF		5	8		
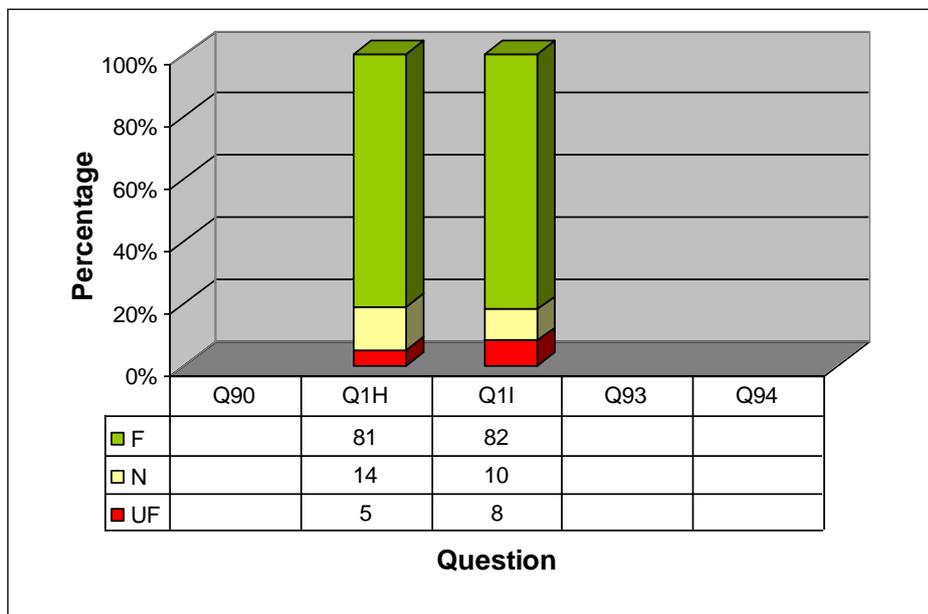
Question

**Figure 6.1 India Senior Managers' Response to Group 1 Questions
D&I Vision and Values**

F- Favourable/N-Neutral/UF-Unfavourable

Figure 6.2 shows that 76 percent of senior managers responded favourably to the question related to equal opportunity to have a successful career within the company (Q68), indicating strength in this item. However, perceptions about promotion and assignments (Q58) and company support for work-life balance (Q29) were perceived as OFIs. Compared to the response to Group 1 questions, the level of perceptions elicited from Group 2 questions seems to indicate that the favourable response about the company's vision and values on diversity do not automatically translate to the same perception when it comes to implementation. Once again, answers to Q91 and Q92 for Group 2 questions in India were by default not available for comparison and analysis.

	Q91	Q92	Q58	Q68	Q29
■ F			62	76	68
□ N			19	11	17
■ UF			19	13	15
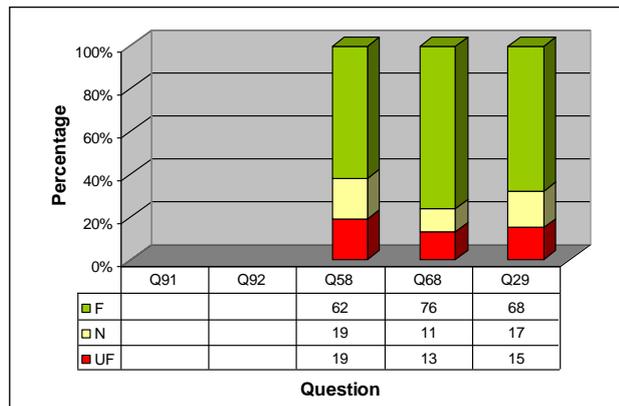
**Figure 6.2 India Senior Managers' Response to Group 2 Questions
D&I Initiatives**

In terms of individual satisfaction related to diversity and inclusion, Figure 6.3 shows a generally favourable response to most of the questions, indicating "strength" for Group 3 questions. The scores also indicate that senior managers perceive a positive climate within the organisation in which diverse perspectives are valued and many of the respondents feel they are involved in decisions that affect their job. However, although the company may be doing a good job in decision-making participation, a 63% favourable score in Q68 about recognition indicated opportunities for improvement in the way the company recognises senior managers. However, this form of recognition was not available in the survey.

	Q33	Q10	Q77	Q78
■ F	79	76	76	63
□ N	10	13	12	18
■ UF	11	11	12	19
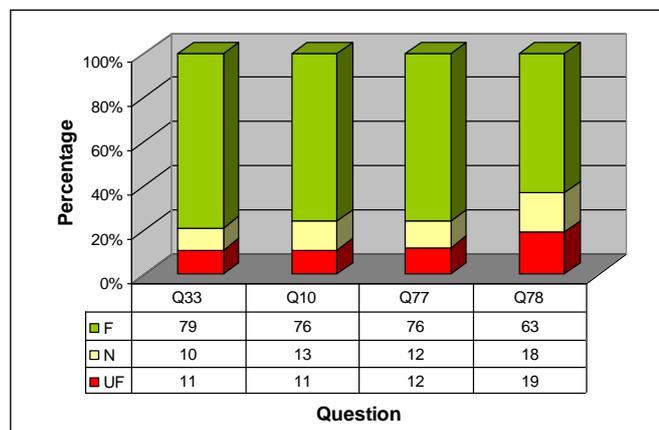
**Figure 6.3 India Senior Managers' Response to Group 3 Questions
Individual Satisfaction Related to D&I**

A high proportion of agreement about the ownership demonstrated by senior management towards D&I is shown in Figure 6.4. Senior managers feel diversity is reflected in the management of the company. Perceptions about the impact of D&I on the company's culture are also positive. This is indicative of "strength" percentage with a favourable score of 75% and above by company standards. However, the current

organisation structure (Q62) is perceived to be an opportunity for improvement in order to support cooperation and foster effective teamwork among the different work groups. There is also a considerable neutral response to this question which could mean that senior managers were ambivalent whether the current structure (at the time of survey) was effective nor not.

	Q4	Q62	Q65	Q70
F	88	55	89	76
N	9	30	7	17
UF	3	15	4	7
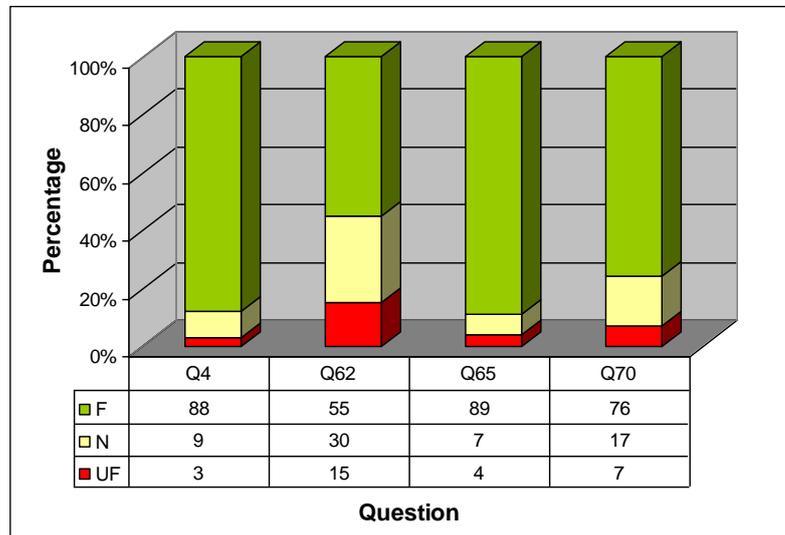
Question

Figure 6.4 India Senior Managers' Response to Group 4 Questions
Leadership and Management of D&I

Figure 6.5 clearly shows that 86% of senior managers feel respected by their immediate managers (Q14) indicating this is a "strength". However, perceptions about the immediate managers' attitude towards encouraging employees' encouragement to participate in D&I activities and supporting for work-life balance (Q74 & Q28) were perceived to be less positive and by company standards, require improvement.

	Q14	Q16	Q74	Q28
F	86	72	72	73
N	12	19	21	17
UF	2	9	7	10
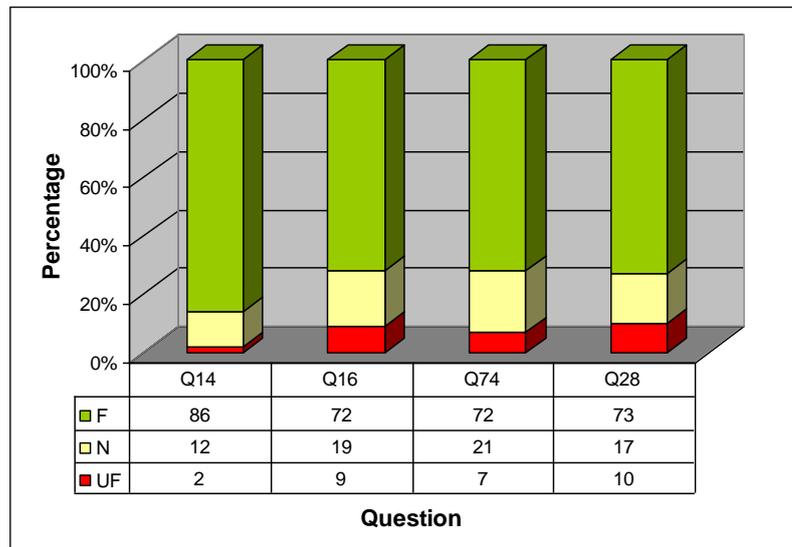
Question

**Figure 6.5 India Senior Managers' Response to Group 5 Questions
Immediate Manager Support for D&I**

Overall, Table 6.3 shows that the number of questions considered as "strengths" by senior managers was greater than those regarded as "opportunities for improvement" with exception of Groups 2 and 5 of the survey items. The senior managers did not indicate any area of concern pertaining to their perceptions of diversity and inclusion. The vision and values were perceived positively by senior managers in India.

**Table 6.3 Summary of Questions for India Classified According to
Level of Company Standards (Group 1 to 5 Questions)**

Questions and Level of Action	D & I Vision &Values	D & I Initiatives	Individual Satisfaction with D &I	Leadership of Diversity	Manager Support for D&I	Total
Strengths (75% and above)	2	1	3	3	1	10
Opportunity for Improvement (55% to 74%)	0	2	1	1	3	7
Area of Concern (54% and below)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	2	3	4	4	4	17

Senior management's ownership of diversity was highly recognised, but the company organisation structure was seen as a barrier against enabling different groups to work. However, there are areas for improvement indicated in Groups 2, 3, 4 and 5 that need closer attention, namely promotion and work-life balance, recognition, organisation structure and immediate managers' attitude toward differences among employees, manager's encouragement in D&I activities and manager's support for work-life

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balance. Support received by the senior managers from their immediate managers clearly indicated an area of concern.

Consistent with the favourable scores, the radar chart below using average scores shows that the overall response from senior managers tends to be positive in many aspects. However, it should be noted that this is the total response in which majority of respondents (85%) are males. A more detailed comparison of gender response in the following charts will show the similarities and differences between female and male senior managers about diversity and inclusion.
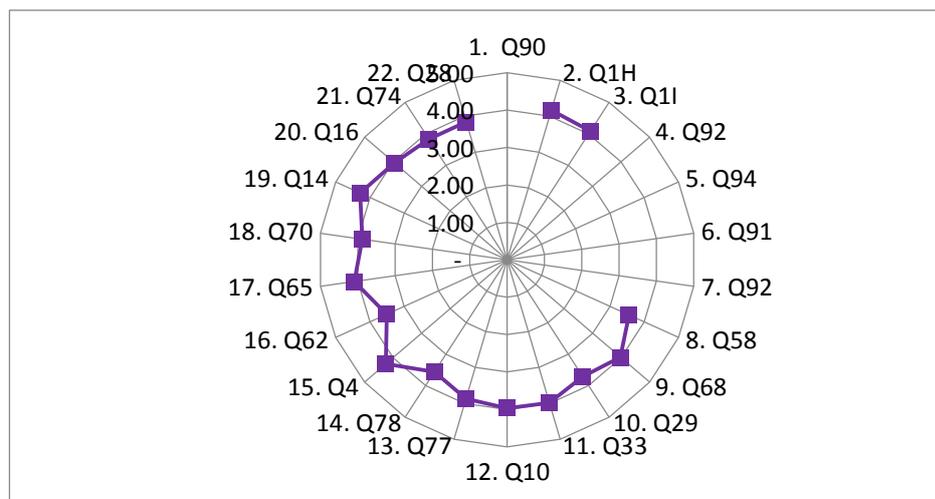
Figure 6.6 Radar Chart of Average Scores of India Senior Managers for Group 1-5 Questions

Response of Senior Managers in India Based on Gender

Figure 6.7 shows there are only two questions for Group 1 where responses from male and female respondents were extracted. There is generally a high proportion of positive responses from male and female senior managers regarding the company's D&I vision and values as shown in Figure 6.1. Female senior managers perceive an opportunity for improvement in the way the company demonstrates its diversity core value of "win with diversity and inclusion" (Q1H).

	Q90 F	Q90 M	Q1H F	Q1H M	Q1I F	Q1I M	Q93 F	Q93 M	Q94 F	Q94 M
■ F			70	83	80	83				
□ N			15	13	10	9				
■ UF			15	4	10	8				
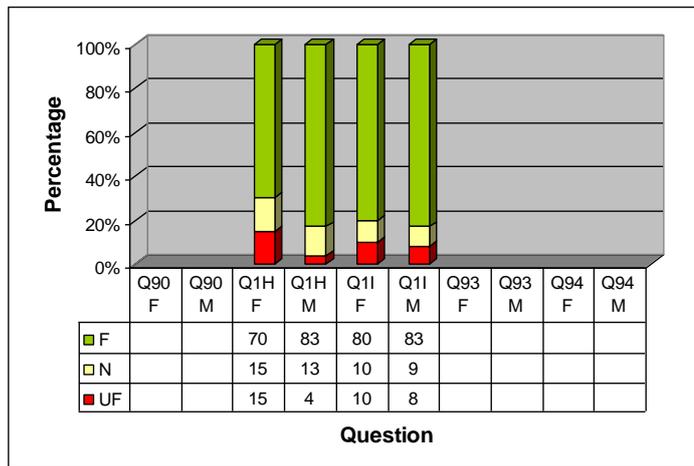
**Figure 6.7 India Senior Managers' Response by Gender to Group 1 Questions
D&I Vision and Values**

Two questions were not included in the India results for Group 2 as shown in Figure 6.8. Nevertheless, the three questions under this group provide the overall perceptions about D&I initiatives. Figure 6.8 shows that among female respondents, the proportions of favourable perceptions about fairness in promotion practices (Q68) and support for work-life balance (Q29) are lower compared to male respondents. Males also perceived the promotion practices as an "opportunity for improvement" as shown by the 62% favourable score on Q58. For Q68, 78% of male senior manager respondents think the company provides equal opportunities for a successful career indicating "strengths", whereas only 65% of female respondents indicated a favourable response, indicating an "opportunity for improvement" (55% to 74% favourable).

	Q91 F	Q91 M	Q92 F	Q92 M	Q58 F	Q58 M	Q68 F	Q68 M	Q29 F	Q29 M
■ F					60	62	65	78	58	70
□ N					20	19	20	9	31	14
■ UF					20	19	15	13	11	16
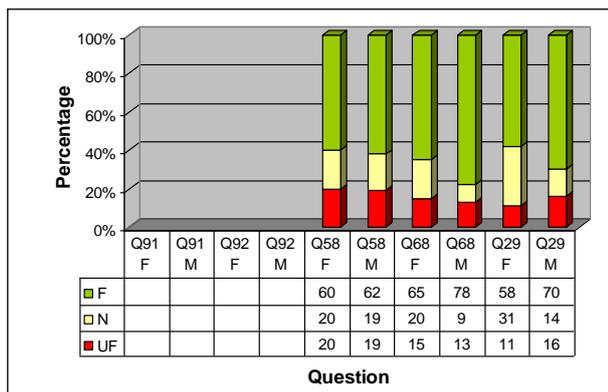
**Figure 6.8 India Senior Managers' Response by Gender to Group 2 Questions
D&I Initiatives**

Support for work-life balance, the focus of Q29 was positively rated by 70% of male respondents but by only 58% of the female respondents. The differences in response between the male and female senior managers regarding opportunities for career advancement is not surprising, considering the challenges faced by many senior women

managers in India. For example, Gupta, Koshal and Koshal (1998), argued that gender becomes an important consideration during promotion decisions in addition to qualifications and accomplishment. They also noted that male stereotyping, exclusion of women from informal networks of communication and women's commitment to family responsibilities are among the major barriers in promotions.

Figure 6.9 shows that majority of male (75%) and female (76%) respondents favourably think their immediate managers respect and value a climate of diverse perspectives (Q10) and thus, this is perceived as a "strength" by both genders. However, in the individual level of feeling about being valued as an employee of the company (Q33), the proportion of positive response from female managers is much lower compared to that of the male. In this regard, the female response indicates an "opportunity for improvement" (55% to 74%), while among the males this is area of "strength" (75% and above).

	Q33 F	Q33 M	Q10 F	Q10 M	Q77 F	Q77 M	Q78 F	Q78 M
F	65	82	75	76	70	77	55	64
N	5	10	10	14	15	11	30	16
UF	30	8	15	10	15	12	15	20
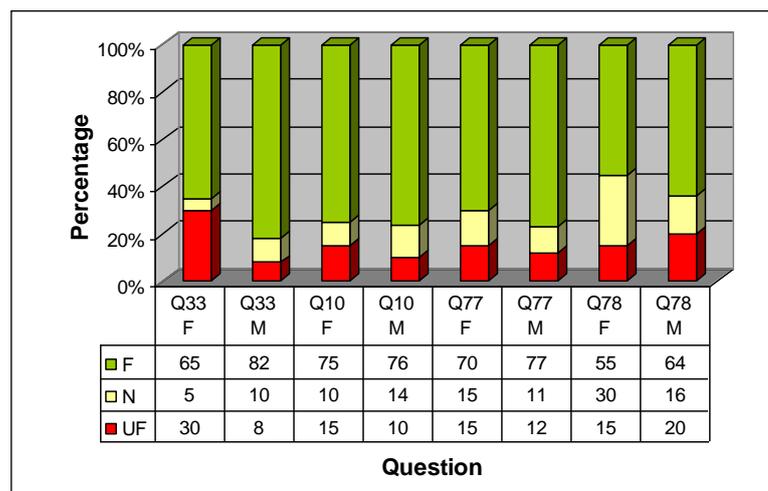
Figure 6.9 India Senior Managers' Response by Gender to Group 3 Questions Individual Satisfaction Related to D&I

Similarly, female senior managers feel they are less involved in decisions that affect their job (Q77) compared with their male counterparts. Recognition for doing a good a job (Q78) indicates lower level of satisfaction for both male (64%) and female (55%). Overall, there is a lower level of satisfaction in female senior managers in relation to these D&I items compared to male senior managers.
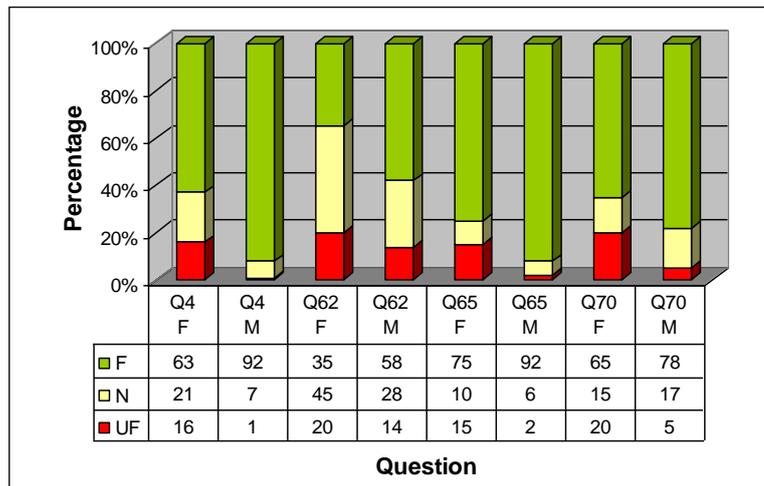
Figure 6.10 India Senior Managers' Response by Gender to Group 4 Questions Leadership and Management of D&I

In relation to leadership and ownership of D&I, the proportion of positive response from female senior managers tended to be lower compared to the response of male senior managers. As Figure 6.10 shows, 92% of male respondents think that diversity is reflected in the management of the company (Q4) but only 63% of female respondents think the same way. Thirty-seven percent of women also considered this question as an area of concern.

Responses to Q62 show that 35% (an AOC) of female respondents think the current organisation structure does not help different groups and functions in terms of cooperating and working effectively thereby making this an area of concern. The male senior managers (58%) view this as an opportunity for improvement (55% to 74% favourable score). Responses to Q65 indicate a high proportion of positive perceptions on the senior management's ownership about D&I thereby making it "strength" (75% and above favourable score) among both male and female respondents. Except for Q62, all male responses pointed to "strength" while the female responses were less favourable. The findings provide a perceptual gap between males and females on leadership, which is a key factor in driving D&I.
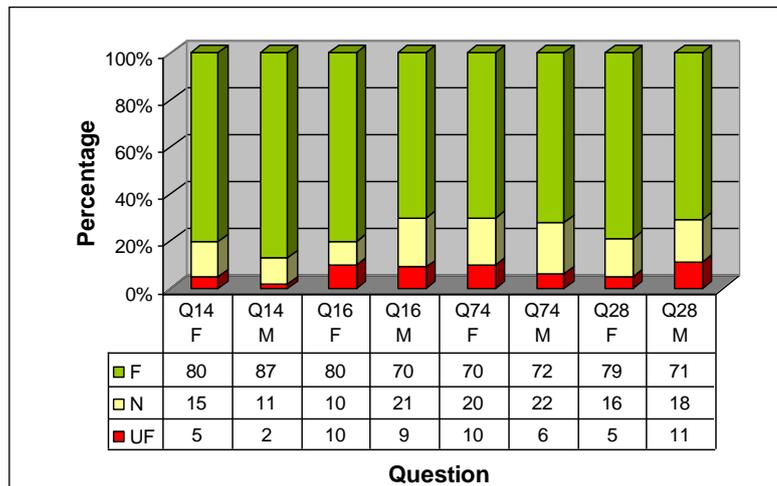
Figure 6.11 India Senior Managers' Responses by Gender to Group 5 Questions Immediate Manager Support for D&I

For Figure 6.11, item Q14 shows a high proportion of female and male senior managers who think their immediate managers treat them with respect. More female respondents perceive as a "strength" (80%) their immediate managers' attitude toward differences among employees (Q16). However, while the immediate manager's support for work-life balance (Q28) was perceived by females as a "strength", the males saw it as an "opportunity for improvement" (OFI). Regarding their involvement in D&I related activities (Q74), both male and indicated another "opportunity for improvement". The overall perceptions on the managerial support for diversity and inclusion showed more similar trends in responses by male and female senior managers compared to previous items.

Overall, Table 6.4 below shows that the number of questions considered as a "strength" by female senior managers is less compared to those considered by male senior managers. The perceptions of male and female respondents are somewhat contradictory especially in Group 5 questions (Manager Support to D&I) where the women perceive more aspects of D&I as a "strength" while the men considered them more as an opportunity for improvement. The opposite can be seen in Group 3 (Satisfaction about D&I) and Group 4 (Leadership & Management of D&I) questions. Men perceive more questions as "strengths" while the women perceive them either as "opportunity for improvement" or as an "area of concern".

Table 6.4 Summary of Perceptions in India by Gender and Level of Standards

			Female Response			
Group /Level of Action	D&I Vision and Values	D &I Initiatives	Individual Satisfaction regarding D&I	Leadership and Ownership about D&I	Senior Manager Support for D&I	Total
Strengths (75% and above)	1	0	1	1	3	6
Opportunity for Improvement (55% to 74%)	1	3	3	2	1	10
Area of Concern (54% and below)	0	0	0	1	0	1
			Male Response			
Group /Level of Action	D&I Vision and Values	D &I Initiatives	Individual Satisfaction regarding D&I	Leadership and Ownership about D&I	Senior Manager Support for D&I	Total
Strengths (75% and above)	2	1	3	3	1	10
Opportunity for Improvement (55% to 74%)	0	2	1	1	3	7
Area of Concern (54% and below)	0	0	0	0	0	0

Furthermore, as shown in Table 6.4, the profile of responses using the average score tended to be within the range of positive perceptions from almost all respondents. However, these responses can be observed from the average scores as tending toward neutral and unfavourable responses by female respondents. These scores indicate that female senior managers are generally not as convinced of the positive impact of the company's D&I as their male counterparts.
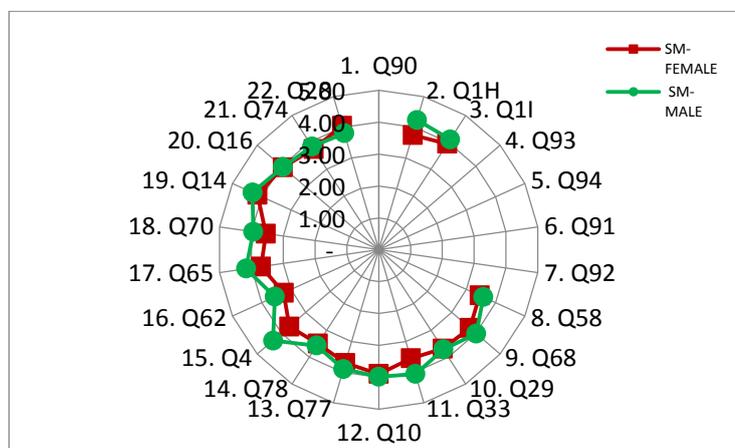
Figure 6.12 Average Scores of India Senior Managers Classified by Gender

Figure 6.12 showed a similar pattern of response between female and male senior managers. Responses from female senior managers represented by the inner line project a slightly lower score than of male responses in terms of their overall perceptions about diversity and inclusion

6.6.2 Australia Region

Diversity management has become an increasingly important factor in Australian organisations as the population and the workforce have become more diverse with respect to ethnicity, gender and age, and other characteristics. Both countries have an accelerating demographic diversification because of immigration. As a consequence, diversity has become more important, particularly in relation to legal and socio-cultural aspects of the country which may present several challenges for management.

Group 1 questions refer to D&I vision and values. The overall score in Figure 6.13 shows a high proportion of favourable response from senior managers. As defined by company standards, senior managers (90%) considered the company's policy against discrimination (Q94) and the company's value of "respect others and succeed together" (Q1i) as strengths. Senior managers also agreed that the company values different employees and perspectives (Q93). The highly favourable score on Q94 reflects the adoption of equal opportunity measures in legislation for both countries and the proactive implementation of affirmative action in Australian organisations.

	Q90	Q1H	Q1I	Q93	Q94
F	72	71	75	75	90
N	21	18	12	13	9
UF	7	11	13	12	1
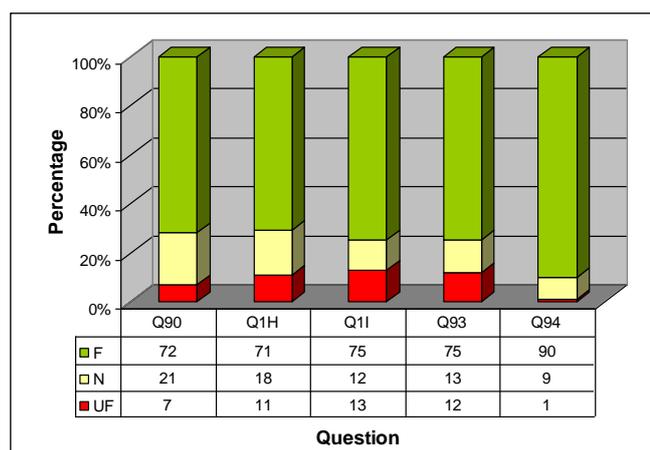
Figure 6.13 Australia Senior Managers' Reponses to Group 1 Questions Overall D&I Vision& Values

Although the Q90 and Q1H tended to show a high proportion of favourable response, these are still considered opportunity for improvement (55% to 74% favourable). The scores clearly show that 30% of senior managers did not agree that the company was

genuinely committed to D&I or demonstrate the value of "win with diversity and inclusion".

Perceptions about D&I initiatives were more unfavourable as revealed in Figure 6.14. Although 81% of the senior managers agreed that employees can have a successful career regardless of differences and background (Q68), the level of response to the other questions were less favourable and indicated an opportunity for improvement. These questions pertain to recruitment (Q91), promotion and assignments based on skills (Q58), and company support for work-life balance (Q29).

	Q91	Q92	Q58	Q68	Q29
F	74	63	73	81	51
N	21	28	12	12	15
UF	5	9	15	7	34
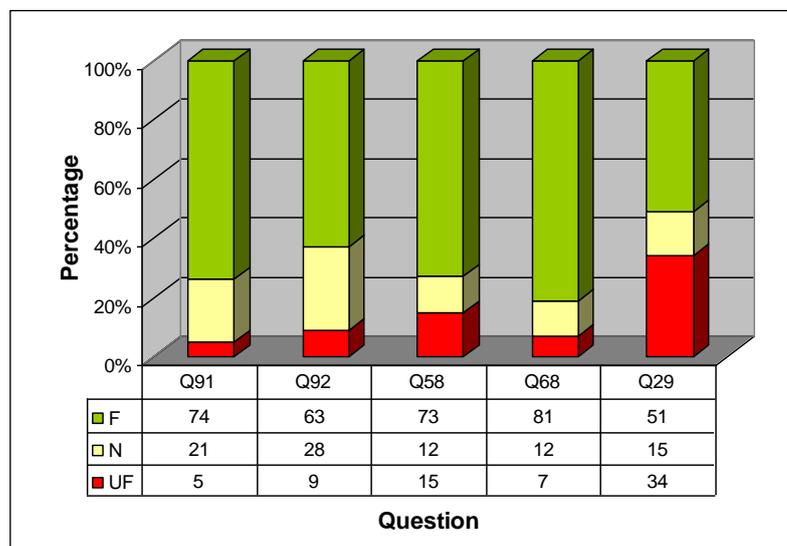
Figure 6.14 Australia Senior Managers' Responses to Group 2 Questions D&I Initiatives

Only 51% of the senior managers agreed that the company supported work-life balance (Q29) and this clearly indicated an area of concern. Although senior managers recognised the equal opportunity provided by the company (Q68), obviously, there was a great opportunity to do better in recruitment, promotion and work-life balance.

Having a work group in which diverse perspectives are valued (Q10) is considered as a "strength" by senior managers. However, as shown in Figure 6.15, even though such positive perceptions are reflected in Q10, an opportunity for improvement is clearly shown in Q33, Q77 and Q78. Approximately 30% of the senior managers do not feel valued as employees of the company (Q33), are not satisfied with their involvement in decisions (Q77), and do not perceive that they are recognised for doing a good job (Q78).
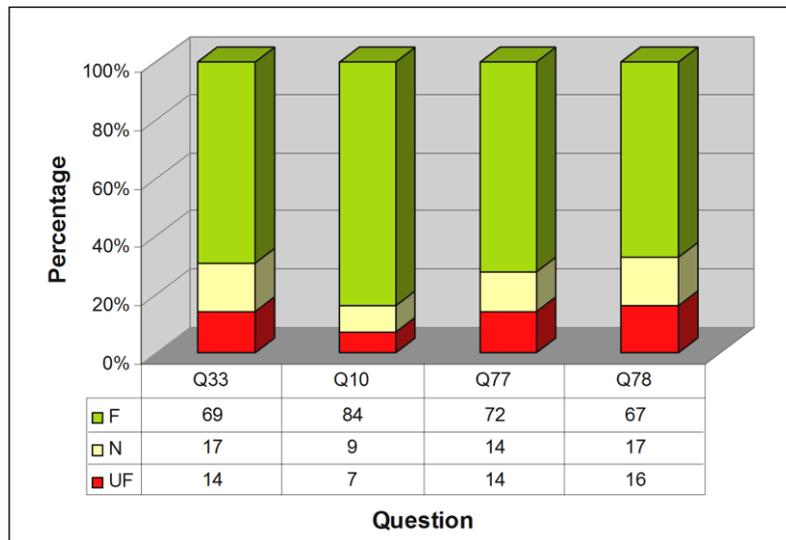
Figure 6.15 Australia Senior Managers' Responses to Group 3 Questions Individual Satisfaction Related to D&I

Responses to items on perceptions of leadership and management of diversity clearly show an opportunity for improvement (55% to 74% favourable) as reflected in Figure 6.16. Furthermore, the percentage of favourable response regarding the senior management's ownership of diversity and inclusion (Q62) was the lowest compared to those on other questions. It appears that the company's D&I (Q70) did not have a clear impact on the company's culture, according to 45% of the senior managers.
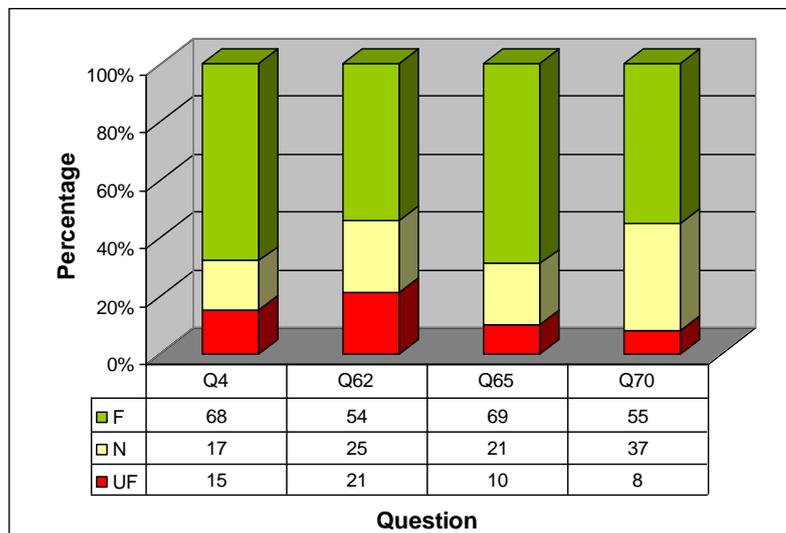
Figure 6.16 Australia Senior Managers' Responses to Group 4 Questions Leadership and Management of D&I

Inclusive manager behaviour is one of D&I measures within the company. Likewise, senior managers' interactions with their immediate managers contribute to perceptions about inclusion at the personal level. Figure 6.17 shows that the attitudes of immediate managers to showing respect for the senior managers (Q14) and for differences among employees (Q16) are considered as "strengths" by company standards. Another

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"strength" is the immediate managers' support for work-life balance (Q28). In contrast, question Q29 about company support for work-life balance was perceived as an opportunity for improvement. These findings suggest that the failure of company initiatives to promote work-life balance appears to be compensated by the immediate managers' interaction and support at the personal level. Encouragement provided by immediate managers to senior managers to be involved in D&I activities (Q74) appears to be the only opportunity for improvement among Group 5 questions.

Question	Q14	Q16	Q74	Q28
F	90	81	68	75
N	7	11	25	14
UF	3	8	7	11
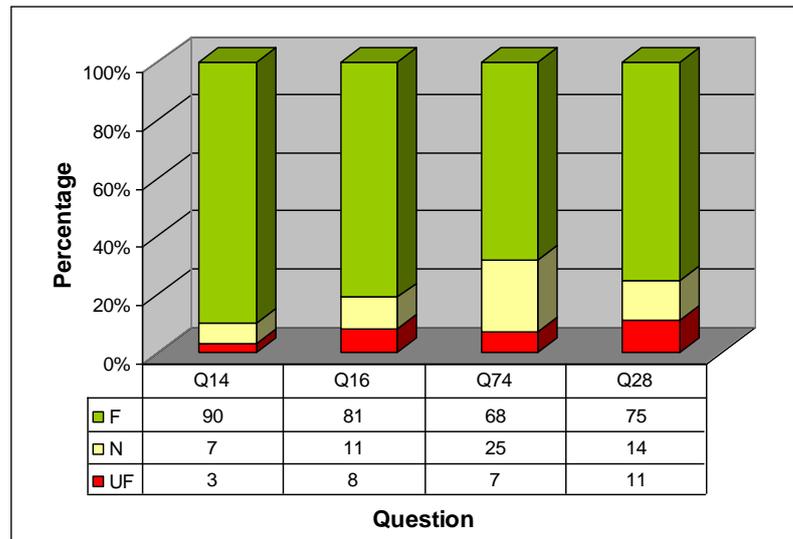
Figure 6.17 Australia Senior Manager's Responses to Group 5 Questions Immediate Manager Support for D&I

In summary, Table 6.5 shows that the total number of questions considered as an "opportunity for improvement" (Q12) was greater than those regarded as the "strengths" (Q8). The senior managers also indicated two areas of concern in their perception of diversity initiatives (Group 2) and leadership of D&I (Group 4). Senior managers in Australia Region tended to expect more from their company's D&I policies and practices. It appears that most senior managers perceive many aspects of diversity initiatives as opportunities for improvement, particularly promotion, work-life balance practices and senior leadership's ownership of D&I.

Table 6.5 Summary of Questions for of Australia Classified According to Level of Company Standards (Group 1-5 Questions)

Group of Questions and Level of Action	D&I Vision and Values	D &I Initiatives	Individual Satisfaction regarding D&I	Leadership and Ownership of D&I	Senior Manager Support for D&I	Total
Strengths (75% and above)	3	1	1	0	3	8
Area of Improvement (55% to 74%)	2	3	3	3	1	12
Area of Concern (54% and below)	0	1	0	1	0	2
Total	5	5	4	4	4	22

Figure 6.18 presents the spider web configuration of all the senior managers' average scores for Group 1-5 questions. The radar chart clearly shows that all connected points are above the score of 3, where 3 and below stands for unfavourable response. This graphically confirms that responses from Australia Region tended toward favourable response but in varying degrees. However, the combined number of perceptions under opportunity for improvement and area of concern is greater than the total number of questions perceived as "strengths".
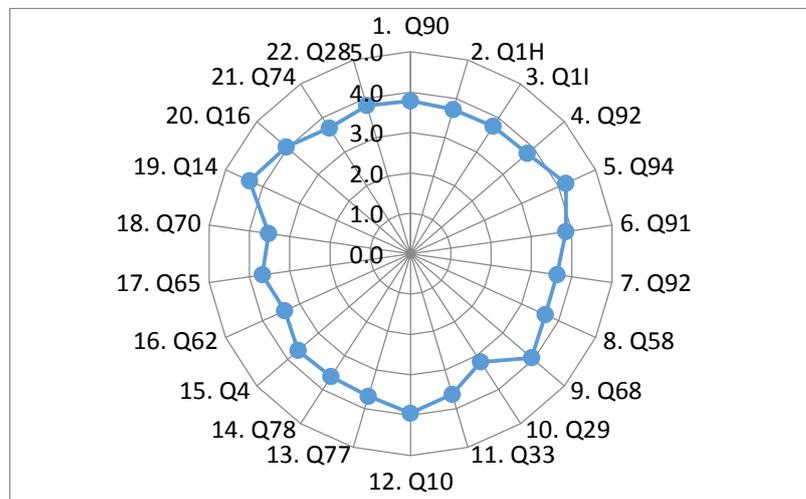
Figure 6.18 Average Scores of Senior Managers from Australia Group 1-5 Sets of Questions

Australia Senior Managers' Response Based on Gender

Gender diversity remains a common and important feature of Australia workforce. Figure 6.19 shows varied responses from male and female senior managers about the company's vision and values for D&I. Female senior managers considered the company's commitment to D&I (Q90) and strong policies against discrimination (Q94)

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as "strengths" by company standards. However, the company's ability to demonstrate the diversity values (Q1H; Q1I) and recognise different talents and perspectives (Q93) are seen as opportunities for improvement among female senior managers. Except for Q90, where what women considered as an opportunity for improvement were seen by men as a "strength". For example, the range of favourable responses from male participants on Q1H, Q1I and Q93 is 75% to 78%, while female responses range from 62% to 69%.
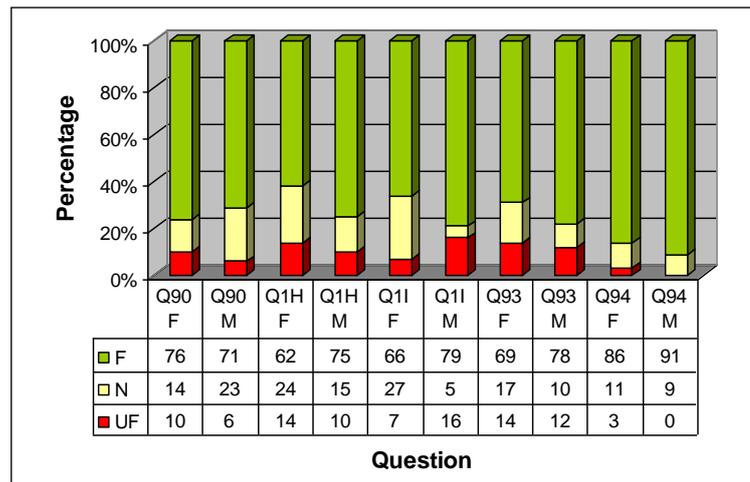
Figure 6.19 Australia Senior Managers' Response by Gender to Group 1 Questions D&I Vision and Values

Figure 6.20 describes the perceptions about D&I initiatives in Australia based on gender. With the exception of Q68, senior managers considered most of the initiatives regarding D&I as opportunities for improvement by company standards. Perceptions on Q68, which refers to equal opportunity for people to have a successful career, could be influenced by the managers' awareness and understanding of the legislative context on equal opportunity for diversity in Australia. However both female and male participants perceived the company's implementation of supportive processes to equal opportunity, such as in the areas of promotion and recruitment as shown in Q58, as an opportunity for improvement.

The results show a mixed response from male and female senior managers in terms of promotion. Female responses in Q91 were considered "strengths" (79%) by company standards while male responses (72%) were considered an OFI. Almost all senior managers considered the company's support to balance work and personal life as an area of concern, with 41% favourable response from female and 55% favourable

response from males. It appears that among the initiatives, work-life balance needs the most attention.
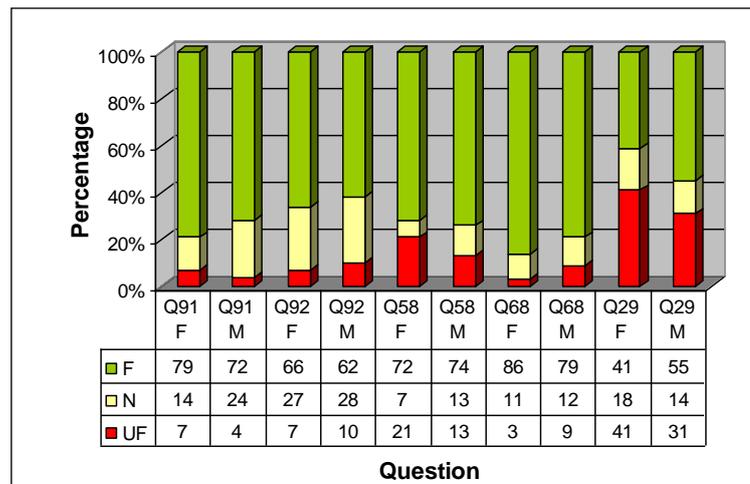
Figure 6.20 Australia Senior Managers' Response by Gender to Group 2 Questions D&I Initiatives

Responses related to individual satisfaction regarding D&I is shown in Figure 6.21. Question 10 shows a high proportion of female (86%) and male (84%) senior managers who think their work group has a climate in which diverse perspectives are valued. However, it may be noted that both male (62%) and female (72%) respondents perceived as an opportunity for improvement the company's ability to value them as employees of the company (Q33). However, both genders disagreed on their perceptions to Q77 which asked the degree of involvement in decisions that affect their job. The females (76%) considered this as a "strength" while the males (71%) perceived it as an OFI.
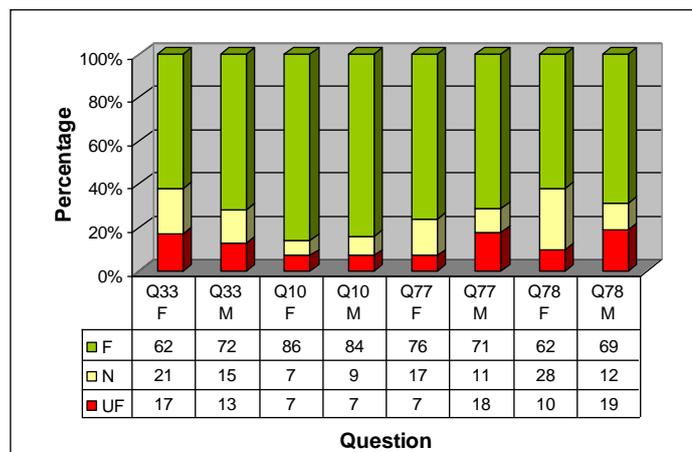
Figure 6.21 Australia Senior Managers' Response by Gender to Group 3 Questions Individual Satisfaction Related to D&I

Senior management support and sponsorship for D&I are vital elements for the success of diversity management strategies. Yet with regard to leadership ownership and support, Figure 6.22 clearly showed perceived opportunities for improvement from both female and male respondents in most of the questions, except for Q4 which is about "diversity as reflected in the management of this company". Responses from male and female in Q4 were extremes. Male senior managers perceived the management of diversity as a "strength" by company standards while females (48%) perceived it as an area of concern.

	Q4 F	Q4 M	Q62 F	Q62 M	Q65 F	Q65 M	Q70 F	Q70 M
F	48	76	55	53	69	69	62	51
N	18	17	28	25	17	22	31	40
UF	34	7	17	22	14	9	7	9
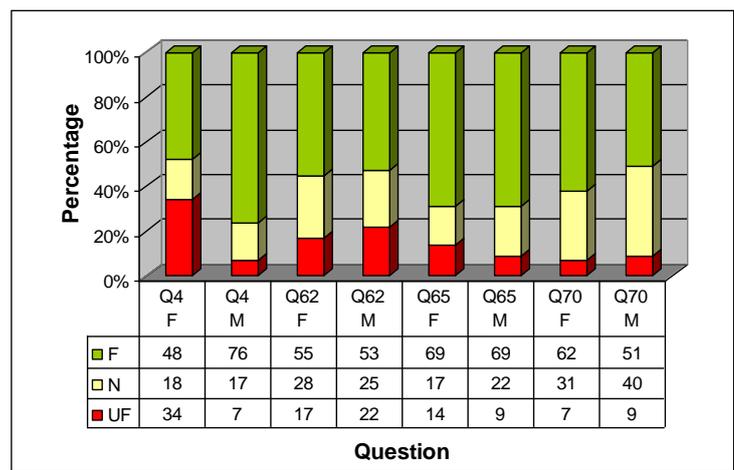
Question

**Figure 6.22 Australia Senior Managers' Response by Gender
to Group 4 Questions Leadership and Management of D&I**

Perceptions of male and female participants about the impact of D&I on the company's culture (Q70) are very similar. Female respondents (62%) consider the impact of diversity and inclusion as an opportunity for improvement and the male respondents (51%) consider this aspect as an area of concern. A similar trend was also shown for Q62 which asked about the organisation structure. Aside from the similarity of favourable responses between male and female, Figure 6.22 also shows a considerable percentage of neutral response in many questions which could indicate a neutral or indifferent attitude to Group 4 questions. For example, responses to Q70 which are about the impact of diversity on the company culture indicated a neutral response of 40% from male respondents and 31% from female respondents. The level of response on leadership support to D&I in Australia is quite surprising considering that both countries were known to have organisations that recognise diversity and had adopted diversity management policies earlier than other organisations in Asia.

At the individual level, the responses generally indicated a positive response from both males and females as shown in Figure 6.23. Question 14 shows a high percentage of

female and male senior managers who think their immediate managers treat them with respect. Slightly more female senior managers (83%) think that their immediate managers value and respect differences among employees (Q16) and consider this as a "strength". However, male respondents perceive that their involvement in D&I related activities (Q74) is considered an opportunity for improvement while more female senior managers (76%) feel positive about this question, perhaps because there are more initiatives focused on women than on men as discussed in Chapter 3. More male than female senior managers consider the support provided by their immediate manager to be a strength. This is an interesting point in a company where "work and family" friendly policies are supposed to assist both male and female employees to balance paid work with home and family duties.

	Q14 F	Q14 M	Q16 F	Q16 M	Q74 F	Q74 M	Q28 F	Q28 M
F	97	87	83	81	76	64	69	78
N	3	9	7	12	21	27	21	10
UF	0	4	10	7	3	9	10	12
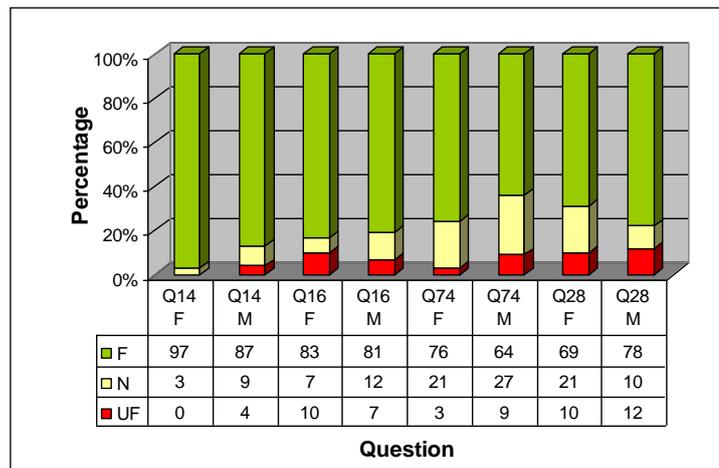
**Figure 6.23 Australia Senior Managers' Responses by Gender
to Group 5 Questions Immediate Manager Support for D&I**

In summary, the overall results tended to show that both genders perceive more opportunities for improvement and areas of concern. While the perceptions are similar as shown in Table 6.6 the number of questions perceived as opportunities for improvement and areas of concern by females is slightly higher compared to those by males.

Table 6.6 Summary of Perceptions in Australia by Gender and Level of Standards

	Female Response					
Group /Level of Action	D&I Vision and Values	D &I Initiatives	Individual Satisfaction regarding D&I	Leadership and Ownership about D&I	Senior Manager Support for D&I	Total
Strengths(75% and above)	2	2	2	0	3	9
Opportunity for Improvement (55% to 74%)	3	2	2	3	1	11
Area of Concern(54% and below)	0	1	0	1	0	2
	Male Response					
Group /Level of Action	D&I Vision and Values	D &I Initiatives	Individual Satisfaction regarding D&I	Leadership and Ownership about D&I	Senior Manager Support for D&I	Total
Strengths(75% and above)	4	1	1	1	3	10
Opportunity for Improvement(55 to 74%)	1	4	3	1	1	10
Area of Concern(54% and below)	0	0	0	2	0	2
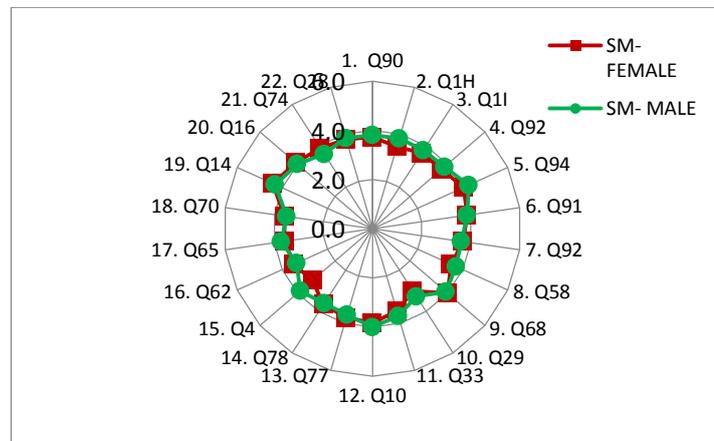
Figure 6.24 Average Scores of Senior Managers from Australia Classified by Gender Group 1-5 Questions

Using the average rating, Figure 6.23 presents a spider-web configuration which shows a very similar profile between male and female. All average scores (above 3) have varying degrees. Only Q4 (spike 15) which is about "diversity reflected in the management of the company" shows a significant difference between perceptions of the male and female respondents.

6.2.3 Vietnam Region

The literature reviewed revealed very little research on diversity in Vietnam. The findings from this study aim to provide a starting point to understand D&I in Vietnam through the perceptions of senior managers in a multinational organisation. The findings are described in the same way as India in Section 7.2.1 and Australia in 7.2.2. Seventeen questions from the company survey and five supplementary questions were available for analysis in Vietnam. The findings were described according to Group 1-5 questions and in the following sequence: the first set of findings described the overall response of senior managers and the second set of findings discussed the results according to gender.

Overall findings from Vietnam indicate a favourable perception about D&I. Figure 6.25 clearly indicates a perceived "strength" by senior managers about the company's diversity vision and values. Favourable responses range from 83% to 97% across all questions under Group 1. Among the responses, the question pertaining to the company's genuine commitment to D&I (Q90) received the lowest percentage of favourable response (83%).

	Q90	Q1H	Q1I	Q93	Q94
F	83	93	97	87	87
N	17	7	3	13	10
UF	0	0	0	0	3
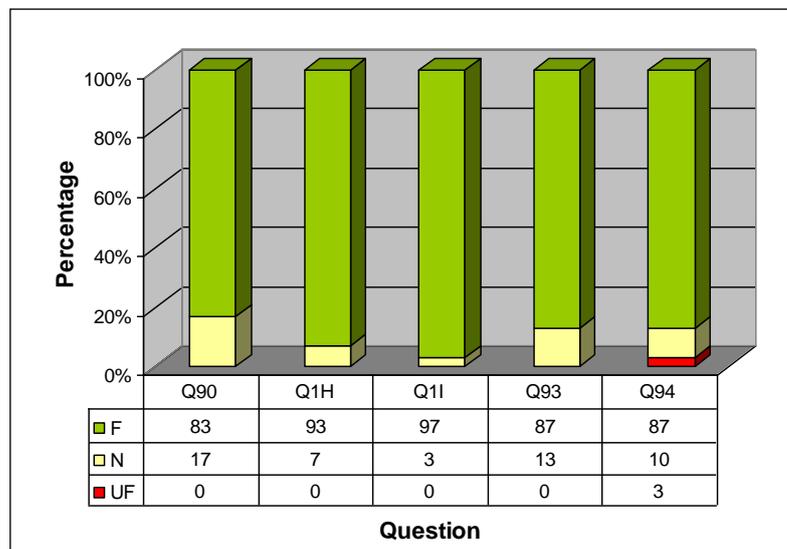
Figure 6.25 Vietnam Senior Managers' Reponses to Group 1 Questions D&I Vision and Values

Figure 6.26 shows the senior managers' responses to Group 2 questions on diversity initiatives. Similar to Group 1, the results again indicate "strength" in the system and processes that support diversity and inclusion, with favourable responses (80% to 93%) for all questions. The company's efforts to promote both female and male employees were perceived as a "strength" by company standards (Q91). However, the proportion

of favourable responses on the company's effort to recruit and promote employees with different backgrounds was lower compared to that of other questions (Q92). The company's support for work-life balance was also perceived as a "strength" unlike the responses to the other regions.
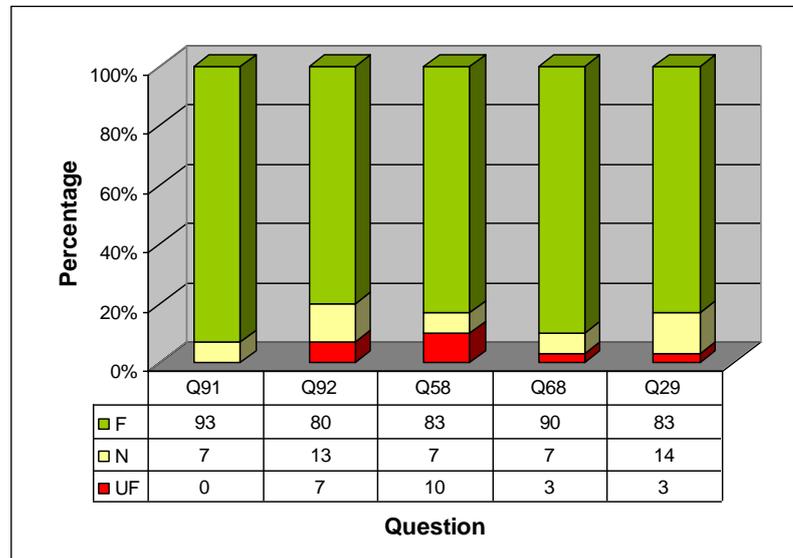
**Figure 6.26 Vietnam Senior Managers' Response
to Group 2 Questions D &I Initiatives**

Responses regarding individual satisfaction related to D&I tended to be favourable as shown in Figure 6.27. Overall scores show "strengths" (75% and above favourable score) in the senior managers' perceptions with the exception of Q78. Q10 which states that, "my work group has a climate in which individual perspectives are valued" obtained the highest proportion of favourable responses (97%). Regarding the feeling of being valued as employees of the company and involvement in decision-making, (Q33 and Q77), 93% of the senior managers rated it favourably thus considering it a "strength". It was only in Q78, pertaining to the satisfaction on recognition for a job well done, where 73% of respondents rated it favourably making it an opportunity for improvement by company standards.
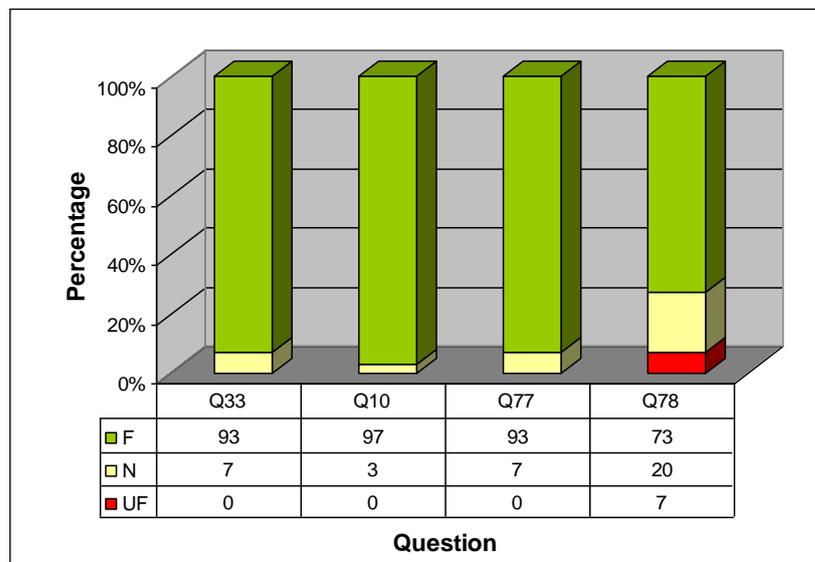
**Figure 6.27 Vietnam Senior Managers' Response
to Group 3 Questions Individual Satisfaction related to D&I**

Figure 6.28 reveals a high proportion of favourable responses (83% to 97%) in three (Q65, Q70, Q4) out of four questions in Group 4. This is indicative of "strengths" by company standards on the management of diversity (Q4), senior leadership ownership of D&I (Q65) and the impact of D&I on the company's culture (Q70). An opportunity for improvement (67%) response for Q62 indicates that the current organisation structure is perceived as not facilitating cooperation and effective teamwork among the different work groups. The response of Vietnam to this question is similar to that the previous two regions.

It is most interesting to note in Figure 6.29 that all the senior managers rated favourably Q14 ("my manager/supervisor treats me with respect") and Q16 ("my manager/supervisor values and respects differences among employees"). Although Q74 only obtained 79% favourable rating which was the lowest in Group 5, it had the same response rating as Q28 with 83% and belonged to the "strength" category.

	Q4	Q62	Q65	Q70
F	97	67	83	83
N	3	23	10	14
UF	0	10	7	3
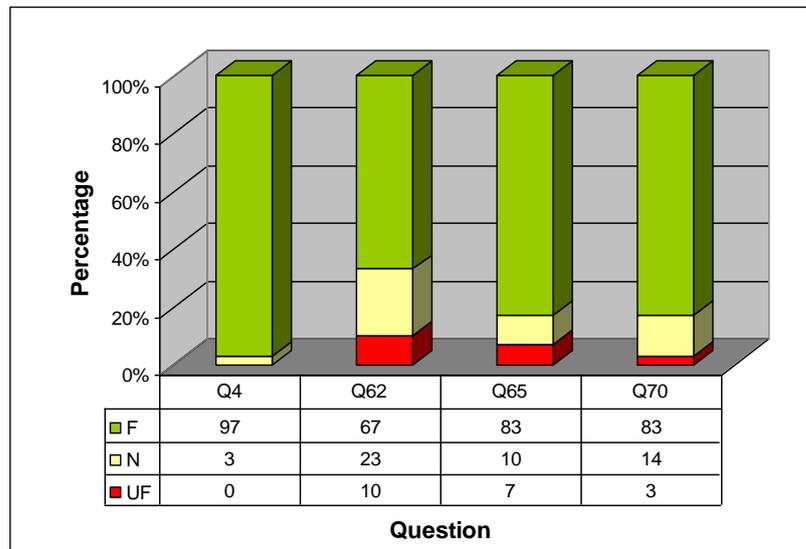
Question

**Figure 6.28 Vietnam Senior Managers' Responses
to Group 4 Questions Leadership and Management of D&I**

	Q14	Q16	Q74	Q28
F	100	100	79	83
N	0	0	21	14
UF	0	0	0	3
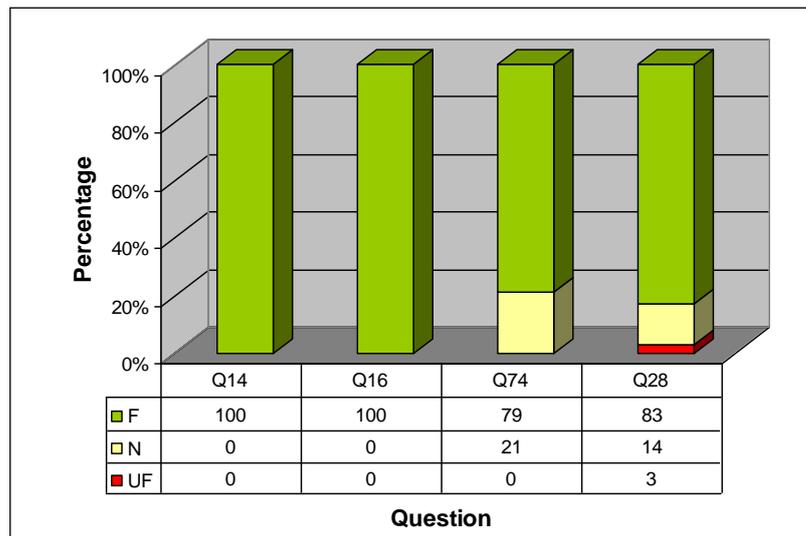
Question

**Figure 6.29 Vietnam Senior Managers' Response to Group 5 Questions
Immediate Manager Support to D&I**

**Table 6.7 Summary of Questions for Vietnam per Group Classified
According to Level of Company Standards**

Group /Level of Action	D&I Vision and Values	D &I Initiatives	Individual Satisfaction regarding D&I	Leadership and Ownership about D&I	Senior Manager Support for D&I	Total
Strengths (75% and above)	5	5	3	3	4	20
Opportunity for Improvement (55% to 74%)	0	0	1	1	0	2
Area of Concern (54% and below)	0	0	0	0	0	0

Overall perceptions of senior managers from Vietnam were very positive. They considered most of the D&I initiatives as strengths and may have actually experienced them. The majority of senior managers perceived all diversity initiatives covered in Group 1, Group 2 and Group 5 as strengths. In the spider web configuration below (Figure 6.30), practically all points in the radar chart have average scores of 4 and above, implying strong agreements among senior managers in Vietnam. This means that they have a very positive attitude towards D&I efforts of the company, and there is uniformity in their perceptions.
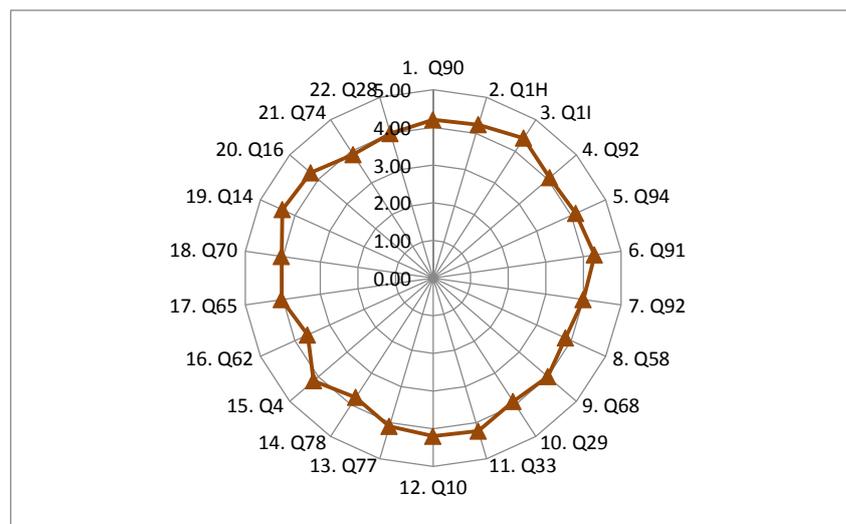
**Figure 6.30 Average Scores by Senior Managers from Vietnam
to Group 1-5 Questions**

As discussed in Chapter 3, Post Socialist Vietnam brought a kind of social liberation and participation in social and political life for women in which women's equal rights with men in public and private enterprises were legally recognised. The results of the company survey discussed below describe the perception of women senior managers in a MNC operating in Vietnam.

Figure 6.31 generally indicates "strength" in the company's vision and values as perceived by senior managers, except for female response in Q94. Fifty percent favourable responses from female participants in Q94 indicated that the company's policy against discrimination is an area of concern. The scores also show a big disparity in proportions between female and male responses, although the percentage remains at the "strength" level by company standards. Except for female responses on Q94, all questions obtained a high proportion of favourable responses.
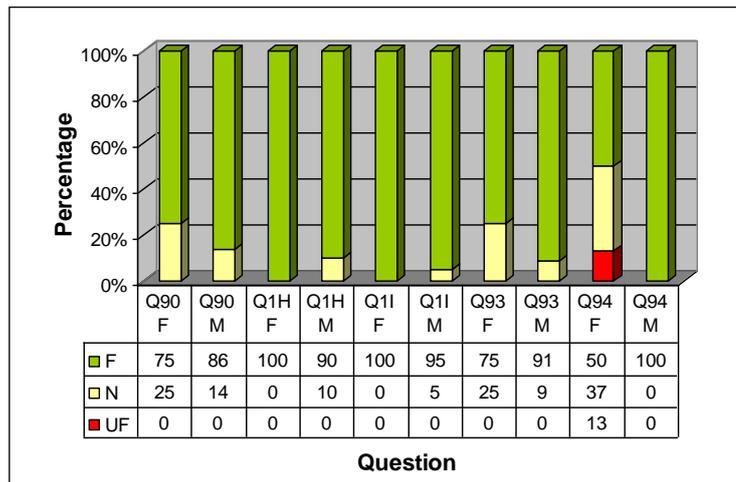
**Figure 6.31 Vietnam Senior Managers' Response by Gender
to Group 1 Questions Overall D&I Vision and Values**

The responses of male respondents to all questions in Group 2 about D&I initiatives indicated they are "strengths" as shown in Figure 6.32. It is very obvious, however, that female respondents had a different perception compared to their male counterparts relative to recruitment and promotion as shown in Q92 and Q68. A 50% favourable score from females on Q92 indicated an area of concern and the 63% favourable response to Q58 was indicative of an opportunity for improvement by the company. Although women's perception about the company's support for work-life balance (Q29) indicated "strength" by company standards, their level of perceptions was lower compared to that of men.
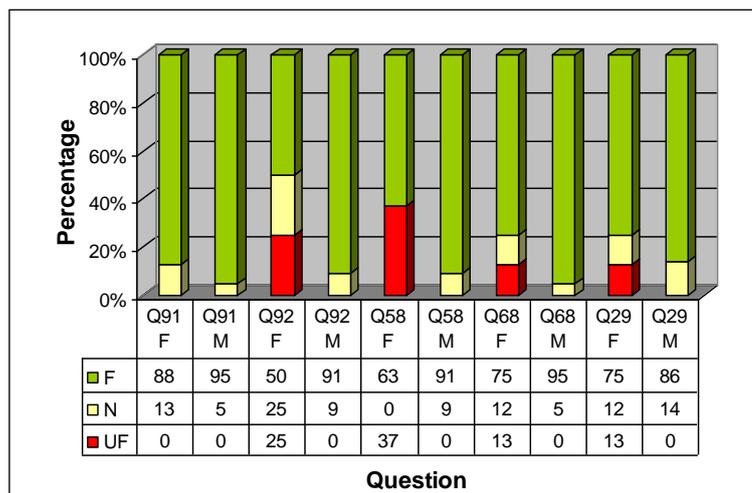
**Figure 6.32 Vietnam Senior Managers' Response by Gender
to Group 2 Questions D&I Initiatives**

Individual satisfaction about diversity and inclusion in Figure 6.33 shows that only 50% of females are satisfied with the recognition received for doing a good job, and this

score clearly indicates an area of concern for Q78. The proportion of favourable responses indicates "strength" by company standards for the other Group 3 questions: Q33, Q10 and Q77. The proportion of favourable response from females is slightly lower compared to that of their male counterparts.

	Q33 F	Q33 M	Q10 F	Q10 M	Q77 F	Q77 M	Q78 F	Q78 M
F	88	95	100	95	88	95	50	82
N	12	5	0	5	12	5	37	13
UF	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	5
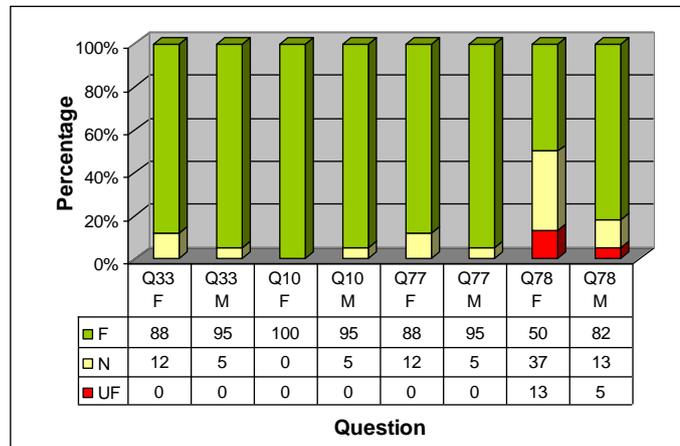
**Figure 6.33 Vietnam Senior Managers' Response by Gender
to Group 3 Questions Satisfaction Related to D&I**

Except for Q62 which is about the organisation structure, Figure 6.34 reveals that female and male senior managers generally perceived the senior leadership ownership and management of diversity as a "strength". An opportunity for improvement indicated in both male and female responses to Q62, which is consistent with the total response of Vietnam senior managers. Item Q65, which asked about senior leadership ownership for the company's diversity and inclusion policies and practices, showed a high proportion of favourable response for both Vietnam male and female senior managers. This score is even higher than the percentage of favourable response by India as shown in Figure 6.9 and Figure 6.10 respectively.
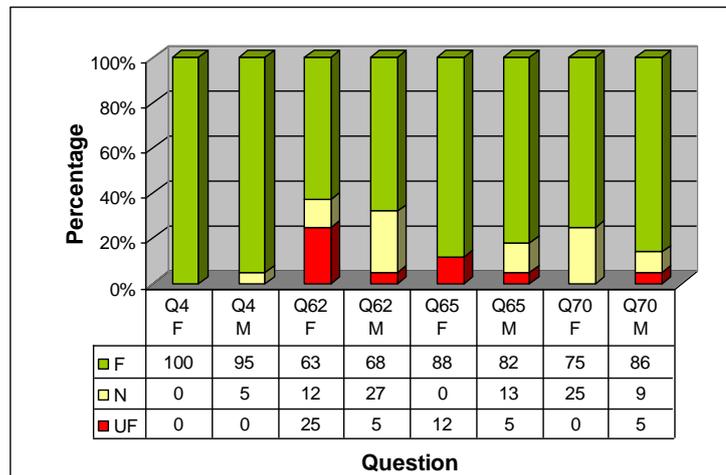
**Figure 6.34 Vietnam Senior Managers' Responses by Gender
to Group 4 Questions Leadership and Management of D&I**

Figure 6.35 shows that the support of immediate managers to diversity and inclusion generally garnered a positive response, except for female response on Q74 which is about involvement in diversity related activities. Female senior managers rated this question as an OFI (63%). The chart shows that both female and male senior managers consider the support they receive from their immediate managers relative to D&I as a "strength".
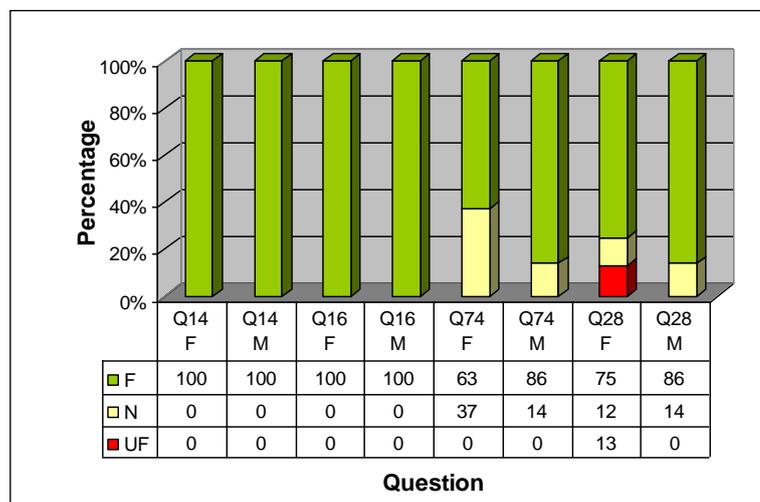
**Figure 6.35 Vietnam Senior Managers' Responses by Gender
to Group 5 Questions Immediate Manager Support for D&I**

Table 6.8 shows that the number of questions considered as "strengths" by male senior managers is greater than those by the female. Overall, female senior managers perceive D&I actions of the company less favourably than their male counterparts. The spider-web configuration shows a considerable difference in profile between males and females as indicated by the lower circle for female. Among many questions, in Figure

6.36 responses on the company policy against discrimination (Q94) showed higher level of dissatisfaction among the female compared to the males and the biggest disparity in the response can be observed (spike # 5).

Table 6.8 Summary of Perceptions in Vietnam by Gender and Level of Standard

Female Response						
Group /Level of Action	D&I Vision and Values	D &I Initiatives	Individual Satisfaction regarding D&I	Leadership and Ownership about D&I	Senior Manager Support for D&I	Total
Strengths(75% and above)	4	3	3	3	3	16
Opportunity for Improvement(55% to 74%)	0	1	0	1	1	3
Area of Concern (54% and below)	1	1	1	0	0	3
Total	5	5	4	4	4	22
Male Response						
Group /Level of Action	D&I Vision and Values	D &I Initiatives	Individual Satisfaction regarding D&I	Leadership and Ownership about D&I	Senior Manager Support for D&I	Total
Strengths(75% and above)	5	5	4	3	4	21
Opportunity for Improvement(55% to 74%)	0	0	0	1	0	1
Area of Concern (54% and below)	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	5	5	4	4	4	22
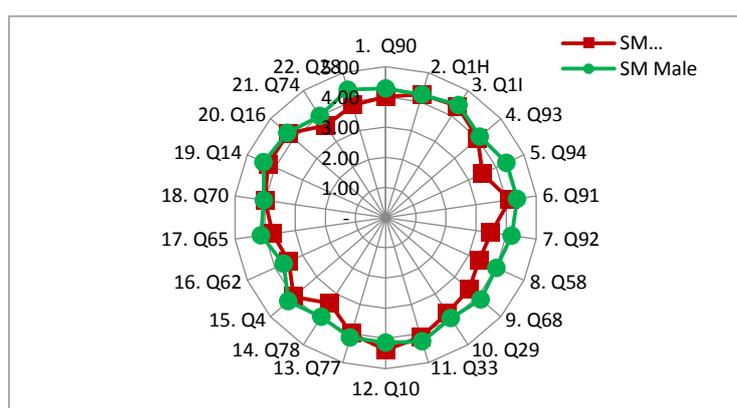
Figure 6.36 Average Scores by Senior Managers from Vietnam by Gender Group 1-5 Questions

6.3 Summary

This chapter presented the main interpretations of the survey results based on the total response of senior managers per region. It also described the responses of senior

managers based on gender. The results were interpreted based on the percentage of favourable, unfavourable and neutral scores as well as standards indicated by these scores. A detailed account of each chart has been provided, including descriptions relating to the scores.

The results showed varying levels of similarities and differences in perceptions across the five groups of questions according to region and gender. A high proportion of favourable response was found mostly within Vietnam Region. Results for the Australia Region indicated more items as "opportunities for improvement" and "areas of concern" than as strengths, indicating higher expectations and levels of dissatisfaction from the company in relation to D&I practices. Results in India Region indicated that male senior managers were more optimistic than their female counterparts in terms of their experience with D&I within the company. With respect to broader macro-level explanations, the results indicated that the different societal contexts may help explain the differences in perceptions about D&I policies and practices in the various regions of one company.

CHAPTER 7

PHASE 2 COMPARATIVE FINDINGS ACROSS THREE REGIONS

7.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents the comparative findings across the three regional offices of SBC namely India Region, Australia Region and Vietnam Region. The number of respondents and group of questions used in Chapter 6 are the same as in Chapter 7. Each chart presents the comparative response of male and female senior managers across all three regions based on Group 1-5 Questions. A radar chart summarises and provides a full picture of the response based on average scores.

There are three sections that follow: Section 7.2 compares the responses of all senior managers regardless of gender across the three regions. Section 7.3 compares the responses according to gender across the three regions. Lastly, Section 7.4 summarises this chapter.

7.2 Comparative Response of All Senior Managers

This section presents the comparative responses of all senior managers from India Region, Australia Region and Vietnam Region. The findings are presented based on the grouping of questions described earlier. As noted in earlier sections, the supplementary questions (Q90 to Q94) were not distributed in India Region therefore, the comparative results for these questions are available only for Australia Region and Vietnam Region.

Diversity and Inclusion is regarded as a core value of the company and was propagated to all its branches outside by the corporate office in the United States. The company articulates D&I in its set of values, code of conduct and various human resource policies as described in Chapter 4. Group 1 shows the overall perceptions of senior managers about the company's vision and values related to diversity. Figure 7.1 shows that Vietnam Region senior managers perceived the company's D&I vision and values as "strengths" as indicated by the total percentage of favourable responses to all the questions (83% to 97%). Australia senior managers perceived the company's ability to demonstrate "win with diversity and inclusion" and "respect others and succeed together" as an opportunity for improvement while India Region and Vietnam Regions considered these values as "strengths". There is a considerable disparity in responses between Australia Region and the combined perceptions of India and Vietnam despite having the same company values.

	Q90 IND	Q90 ANZ	Q90 VNM	Q1H IND	Q1H ANZ	Q1H VNM	Q1I IND	Q1I ANZ	Q1I VNM	Q93 IND	Q93 ANZ	Q93 VNM	Q94 IND	Q94 ANZ	Q94 VNM
■ F		72	83	81	71	93	82	75	97		75	87		90	87
□ N		21	17	14	18	7	10	12	3		13	13		9	10
■ UF		7	0	5	11	0	8	13	0		12	0		1	3
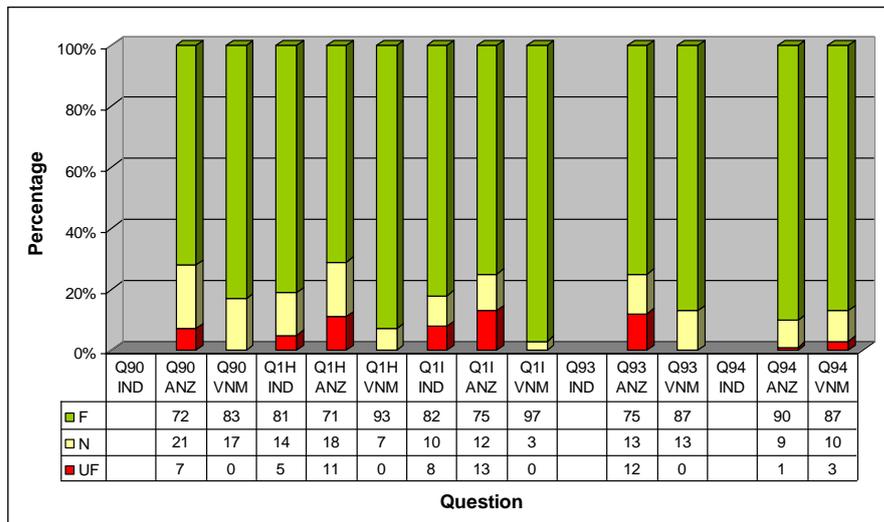
Question

**Figure 7.1 Comparative Response of Senior Managers
to Group 1 Questions D&I Vision and Values**

In addition to perceptions about D&I vision and values, the senior managers shared their feedback regarding D&I initiatives, particularly in recruitment and promotion. Figure 7.2 clearly shows that Vietnam senior managers generally perceive the company's D&I initiatives as "strengths" unlike in the Australia Region. Yet, all senior managers in India, Australia and Vietnam perceive as "strengths" the company's initiative to provide equal opportunity for employees to have a successful career regardless of their differences and background (Q68).

Responses on Q58 from Vietnam senior managers indicate the company's policy to promote D&I as "strengths" based on fair assessment of peoples' skills and performance while responses from Australia and India senior managers indicated this question as an opportunity for improvement. Compared to Vietnam, India senior managers perceive the company's support on work-life balance as an opportunity for improvement (68%) while Australia Region senior managers had the most unfavourable perceptions of company's support for work-life balance (Q29), clearly indicating an area of concern for this question.

	Q91 IND	Q91 ANZ	Q91 VNM	Q92 IND	Q92 ANZ	Q92 VNM	Q58 IND	Q58 ANZ	Q58 VNM	Q68 IND	Q68 ANZ	Q68 VNM	Q29 IND	Q29 ANZ	Q29 VNM
F		74	93		63	80	62	73	83	76	81	90	68	51	83
N		21	7		28	13	19	12	7	11	12	7	17	15	14
UF		5	0		9	7	19	15	10	13	7	3	15	34	3
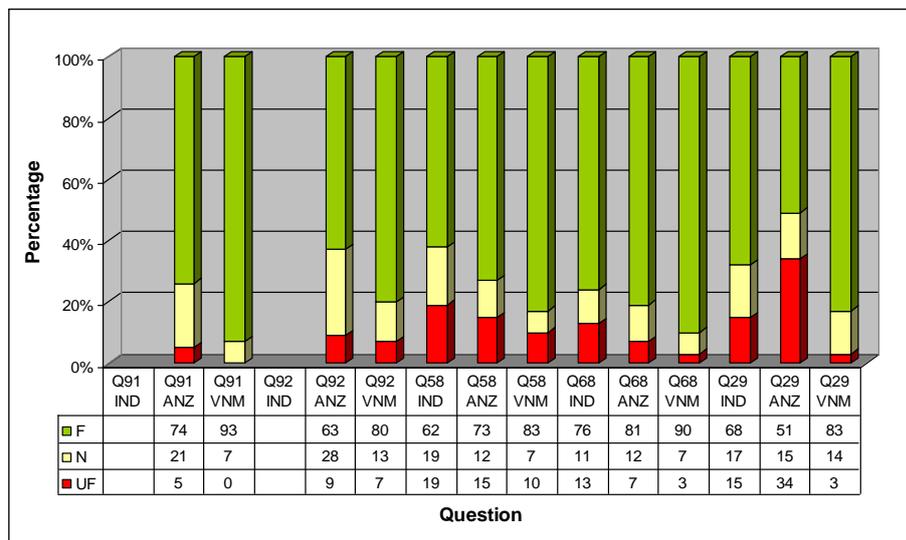
**Figure 7.2 Comparative Response of Senior Managers
to Group 2 Questions D&I Initiatives**

Different perceptions across the three regions can also be observed in Figure 7.3 regarding senior managers' individual satisfaction related to D&I. Group 3 reveals that generally, India, Australia and Vietnam senior managers think their workgroup has a climate that value diverse perspectives (Q10). Vietnam and India senior managers think their company values them as employees, indicating "strengths" for Q3, while Australia Region perceived this question as an opportunity for improvement (69%). These findings suggest the extent to which senior managers feel themselves valuable members of the organisation.

Figure 7.3 also shows different expectations from senior managers in terms of recognition received and their extent of influence in decisions that affect their job. Involvement in decision-making (Q77) was perceived as a "strength" by Vietnam Region and India Region senior managers, but an OFI for Australia Region senior managers. But recognition received for doing a good job (Q78) was perceived as an opportunity for improvement in all three regions. Recognition and appreciation of the senior managers' efforts and accomplishments appears to be an area for improvement for the company.
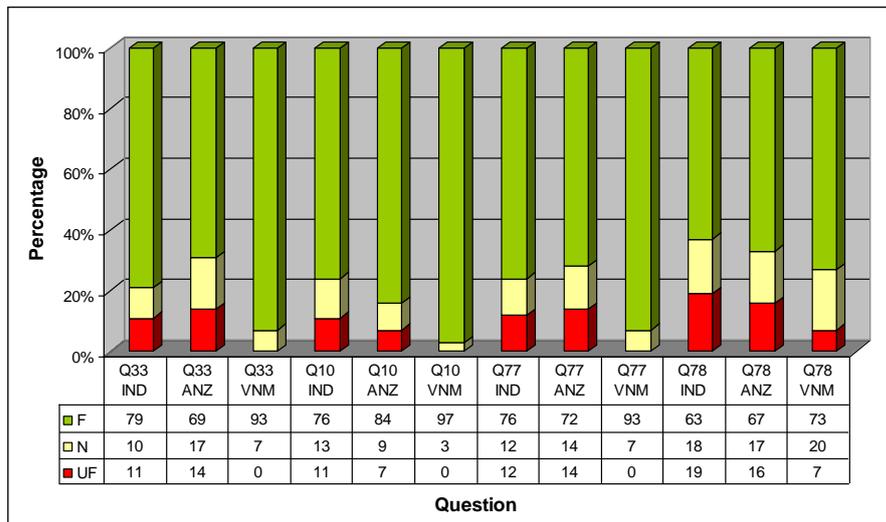
**Figure 7.3 Comparative Response of Senior Managers
to Group 3 Questions Individual Satisfaction Related to D&I**

Senior leadership involvement is a key driving force in the company's D&I agenda. Group 4 examined how this is perceived by senior managers. Figure 7.4 reveals different perceptions among senior managers from India, Australia and Vietnam regarding the leadership and management of diversity. For Q4, which is about "diversity reflected in the management of the company", a high proportion of favourable response was obtained from Vietnam and India senior managers which indicate "strength" by company standards (75% and above). On the other hand, responses to the same question from Australia senior managers indicated an opportunity for improvement (68%). Furthermore, Vietnam and India considered the current organisation structure (Q62) as opportunity for improvement (55% to 74%), while Australia perceived it as an area of concern (54%).
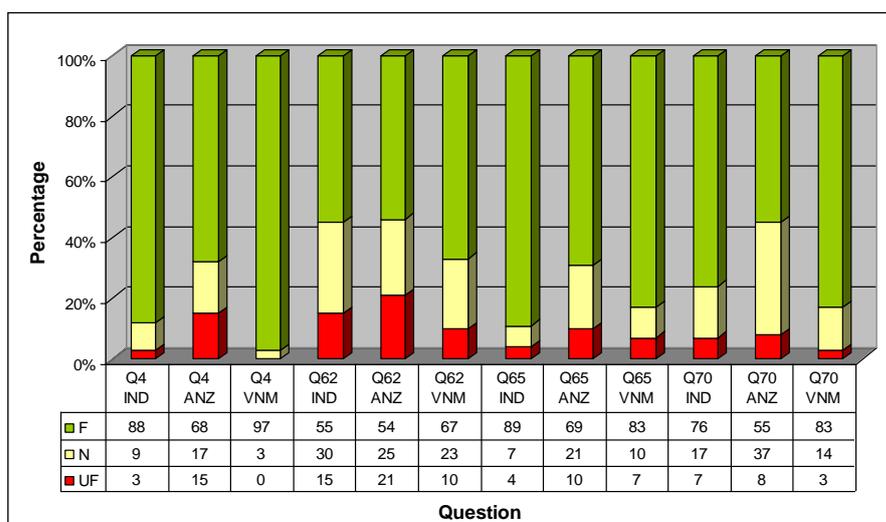
**Figure 7.4 Comparative Response of Senior Managers to Group 4 Questions
Leadership and Management of D&I**

As reflected in Figure 7.4, senior management's ownership of diversity and inclusion (Q65) and impact of diversity and inclusion in the company's culture (Q70) were perceived as a "strength" (above 75% favourable score) by senior management from India Region and Vietnam Region while senior managers from Australia Region perceived these questions as OFI (55% to 74% favourable score).

Figure 7.5 shows that respect to the senior managers (Q14) by the attitude of immediate managers is considered as a "strength" by all respondents from India Region, Australia Region and Vietnam Region. However, the immediate managers' attitude toward differences among employees, were perceived as an opportunity for improvement (55% to 74% favourable score) by senior managers from India, while senior managers from Vietnam and Australia considered this question as a "strength".

Another opportunity for improvement (55% to 74% favourable score) as perceived by senior managers from India Region and Australia Region is the immediate manager's support for senior managers to be involved in the company's D&I initiatives (Q74). Moreover, Figure 7.5 shows the immediate manager's support for work-life balance (Q28) was indicated as an opportunity for improvement based on the percentage of favourable responses of senior managers from India (73%), while senior managers from Australia and Vietnam perceived this question as "strengths" by company standards.

	Q14 IND	Q14 ANZ	Q14 VNM	Q16 IND	Q16 ANZ	Q16 VNM	Q74 IND	Q74 ANZ	Q74 VNM	Q28 IND	Q28 ANZ	Q28 VNM
F	86	90	100	72	81	100	72	68	79	73	75	83
N	12	7	0	19	11	0	21	25	21	17	14	14
UF	2	3	0	9	8	0	7	7	0	10	11	3
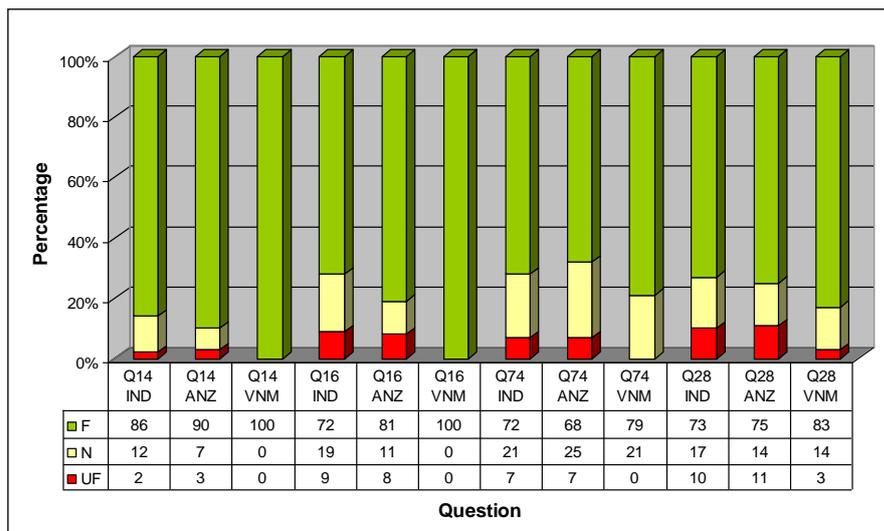
Figure 7.5 Comparative Response of Senior Managers to Group 5 Questions Immediate Manager Support for D&I

In summary, the number of total questions considered "strengths" by senior managers from India, Australia and Vietnam is greater than opportunity for improvement and area of concern as shown in Table 7.1. The highest number of questions perceived as "strengths" was observed in Group 1 questions pertaining to the company's diversity vision and values.

Table 7.1 Summary of Total Response of Senior Manager from India, Australia & Vietnam to Group 1 to 5 Questions

Number of Responses Across Region and Level of Action	D&I Vision and Values			D&I Initiatives			Individual Satisfaction for D&I			Leadership and Management of D&I			Manager Support to D&I		
	India	AUS	VN	India	AUS	VN	India	AUS	VN	India	AUS	VN	India	AUS	VN
Strengths (75% and above)	2	3	5	1	1	5	3	1	3	3	0	3	1	3	4
Opportunity for Improvement (55 to 74%)	0	2	0	2	3	0	1	3	1	1	3	1	3	1	0
Area of Concern(54% and below)	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0

The highest number of opportunity for improvement was indicated in Group 2 questions pertaining to diversity and inclusion initiatives and Group 4 questions pertaining to senior management ownership and leadership of diversity and inclusion. Australia Region senior managers in Group 2 and Group 4 questions indicated questions perceived as area of concern. In terms of the perceptions of D&I actions, more respondents rated the activities as a "strength" in Vietnam than those in to Australia and India. Australia Region was observed to have the most number of opportunities for improvement and areas of concern questions.

Figure 7.6 presents the spider web configuration of all senior managers' average scores for Group 1-5 questions. The figure shows that all connected points are above the average score of 3, where a score of 3 and below stands for unfavourable response. The figure confirms that responses of senior managers from Australia tended to be favourable, but their overall satisfaction was lower when compared to that of India and Vietnam senior managers.
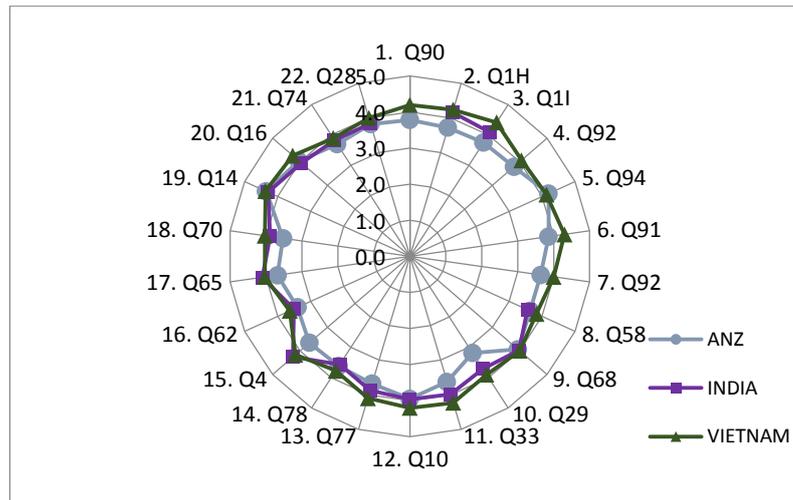
Figure 7.6 Comparative Average Scores of Senior Managers
(Group 1 to 5 Questions)

7.3 Comparative Response by Gender

The previous section presented the comparative gender responses of senior managers from India Region, Australia Region and Vietnam Region. Diversity and Inclusion was generally perceived as favourable based on the overall response from the senior managers where the perceived number of "strengths" was greater than the perceived "opportunities for improvement". However, when the responses were examined according to gender, the results clearly show the different perceptions among male and female senior managers across India, Australia and Vietnam. Male responses were generally more favourable compared to female responses in all regions. The details of these findings are shown in the following charts.

As shown in Figure 7.7 questions perceived as "strengths" by female senior managers from Vietnam were greater than favourable responses from Australia. However, Q94 which is about the company policy regarding discrimination was perceived as an area of concern by female senior managers from Vietnam (50% favourable score) while female senior managers from Australia perceived it as a "strength" based on 86% favourable response. These results suggest a stronger emphasis on workplace discrimination among female senior managers in Australia compared to Vietnam because of legislative a environment in Australia that prohibits discrimination. The results also showed different levels of agreement on how the company demonstrated its diversity and inclusion values. For example, about 30% of females from Australia and India reported a neutral and unfavourable response on questions related to "win with diversity and "inclusion" (Q1H) and "respect and succeed together" (Q1I), which clearly indicate an opportunity

for improvement. In contrast, Vietnam managers conveyed 100% favourable agreement to these questions indicating they were considered "strengths".
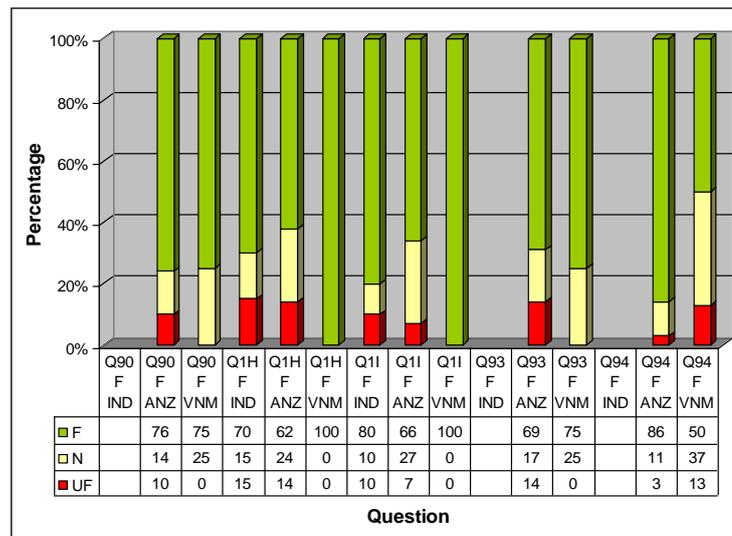
Figure 7.7 Comparative Response of Females to Group 1 Questions

	Q90 F IND	Q90 F ANZ	Q90 F VNM	Q1H F IND	Q1H F ANZ	Q1H F VNM	Q1I F IND	Q1I F ANZ	Q1I F VNM	Q93 F IND	Q93 F ANZ	Q93 F VNM	Q94 F IND	Q94 F ANZ	Q94 F VNM
F		76	75	70	62	100	80	66	100		69	75		86	50
N		14	25	15	24	0	10	27	0		17	25		11	37
UF		10	0	15	14	0	10	7	0		14	0		3	13
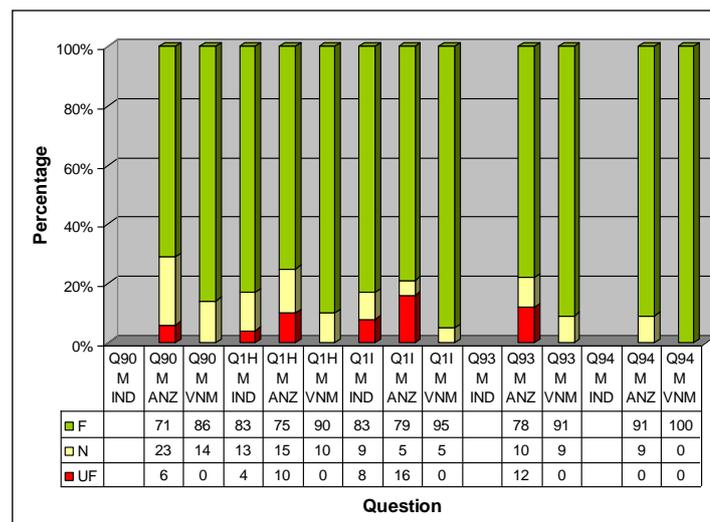
Figure 7.8 Comparative Response of Males to Group 1 Questions

	Q90 M IND	Q90 M ANZ	Q90 M VNM	Q1H M IND	Q1H M ANZ	Q1H M VNM	Q1I M IND	Q1I M ANZ	Q1I M VNM	Q93 M IND	Q93 M ANZ	Q93 M VNM	Q94 M IND	Q94 M ANZ	Q94 M VNM
F		71	86	83	75	90	83	79	95		78	91		91	100
N		23	14	13	15	10	9	5	5		10	9		9	0
UF		6	0	4	10	0	8	16	0		12	0		0	0

Based on the male responses on Figure 7.8, the proportion of favourable responses to Group 1 questions from Vietnam tended to be the highest compared to India and Australia. Male responses from both Australia and Vietnam indicated a favourable perception about the company's policy on discrimination (Q94) unlike their female counterparts. This question was not included in the survey conducted in India Region.

For diversity and inclusion initiatives, Figure 7.9 reveals that female senior managers from Australia Region and Vietnam Region perceived as "strengths" the company's effort to promote both male and female employees (Q91). On the contrary, female senior managers in Australia (66%) and Vietnam (50%) perceived recruitment and

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promotion of employees with different backgrounds and experiences as an opportunity for improvement and an area of concern, respectively.

	Q91 F IND	Q91 F ANZ	Q91 F VNM	Q92 F IND	Q92 F ANZ	Q92 F VNM	Q58 F IND	Q58 F ANZ	Q58 F VNM	Q68 F IND	Q68 F ANZ	Q68 F VNM	Q29 F IND	Q29 F ANZ	Q29 F VNM
F		79	88		66	50	60	72	63	65	86	75	58	41	75
N		14	13		27	25	20	7	0	20	11	12	31	18	12
UF		7	0		7	25	20	21	37	15	3	13	11	41	13
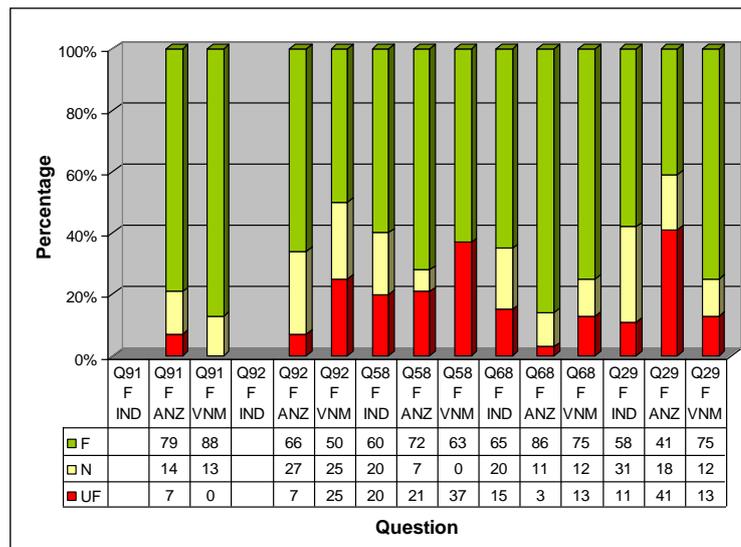
Question

Figure 7.9 Comparative Response of Females to Group 2 Questions

Perceptions about equal opportunity in order to have a successful career regardless of differences in backgrounds (Q68) were perceived as "strengths" by female participants from Australia and Vietnam, and opportunity for improvement by female participants from India. However, it must be noted that responses about promotion in Q58 showed considerable percentages of unfavourable and neutral perceptions from India (40%) and Australia (27%). In Vietnam, 37% of females also responded unfavourably to this question. These results indicate that although the company support equal opportunity, there is a gap in implementation as far as females are concerned. Female senior managers from Vietnam perceived the company's support for work-life balance as "strengths" (75%) in contrast to female participants from India and Australia who perceived this item as opportunity for improvement (58%) and an area of concern area of concern (41%), respectively.
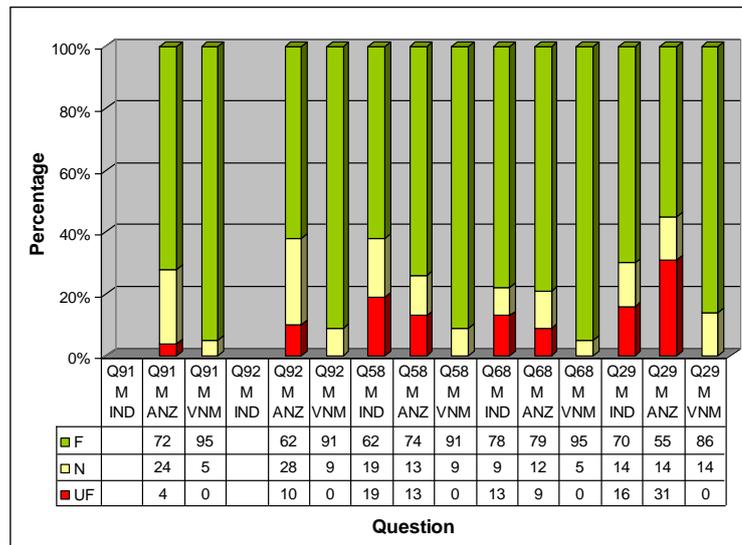
Figure 7.10 Comparative Response of Males to Group 2 Questions

While the female responses tended to show unfavourable responses to Group 2, male responses were more positive. As shown in Figure 7.10, male senior managers from Vietnam generally perceived the company's D&I initiatives as a "strength" based on the range of favourable responses from 86% to 95%. Majority of male respondents from India, Australia and Vietnam perceived that there was an equal opportunity for people to have a successful career in the company (Q68) and the scores indicate this item as a "strength" (75%). India and Australia male participants indicated as an opportunity for improvement the company's policy to promote based on fair and objective assessment of people's skills and performance (Q58), while Vietnam perceived this item as a "strength".

In terms of individual satisfaction about D&I, Figure 7.11 reveals that female senior managers from Vietnam tended to show favourable responses to all questions except Q78.
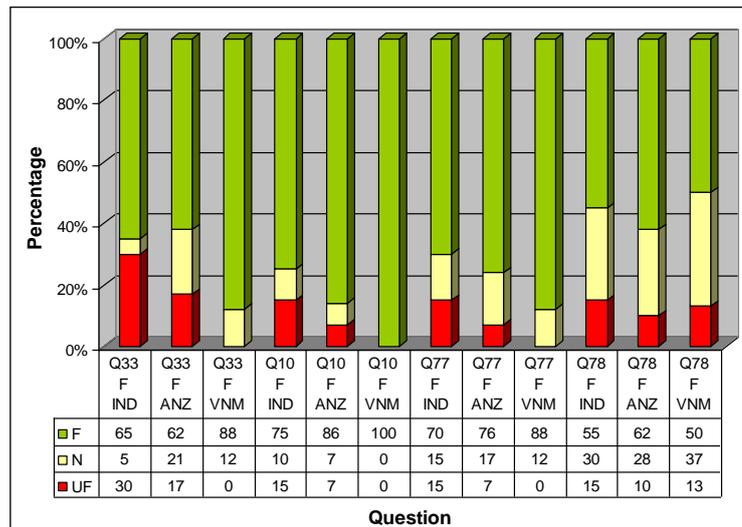
Figure 7.11 Comparative Response of Females to Group 3 Questions

Vietnam female senior managers had the lowest favourable score (50%) on the recognition they received for doing a good job, which clearly indicated an area of concern. Majority of female participants from India, Australia and Vietnam perceived that their workgroup had a positive diversity climate that values diverse perspectives (Q10) as shown by the range of favourable responses (75% to 100%), which is indicative of "strength" by company standards.

Similar to female responses, male senior managers from India, Australia and Vietnam indicated "strength" in response to Q10 as shown by high proportion of favourable response (76% to 95%). As shown in Figure 7.12, Vietnam male participants consistently had the highest proportion of favourable responses to all questions in Group 3, compared to India and Australia.
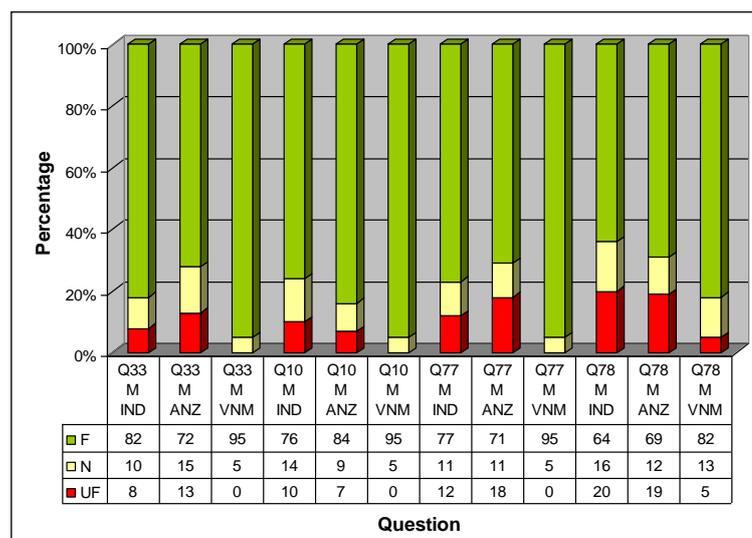
Figure 7.12 Comparative Response of Males for Group 3 Questions

Group 4 questions show that both female and male senior managers have a common concern on the company's organisation structure (Q62). This is probably because of the constant restructuring that occurred within the region during the last three years. As shown in Figure 7.13, female participants from India indicated the lowest proportion of favourable response (35% favourable) to this question, suggesting an area of concern by company standards. Responses from all female participants showed different perceptions about senior management's ownership for the company's D&I initiatives (Q65). Female participants from Vietnam considered senior leadership support as a "strength" while female participants from India and Australia considered this aspect as an opportunity for improvement.

	Q4 F IND	Q4 F ANZ	Q4 F VNM	Q62 F IND	Q62 F ANZ	Q62 F VNM	Q65 F IND	Q65 F ANZ	Q65 F VNM	Q70 F IND	Q70 F ANZ	Q70 F VNM
F	63	48	100	35	55	63	75	69	88	65	62	75
N	21	18	0	45	28	12	10	17	0	15	31	25
UF	16	34	0	20	17	25	15	14	12	20	7	0
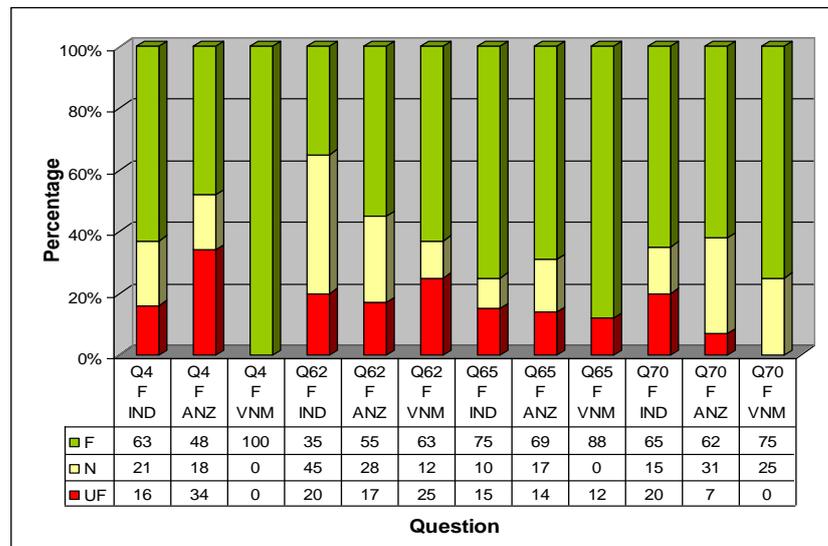
Figure 7.13 Comparative Response of Females to Group 4 Questions

Figure 7.14 revealed that the majority of male participants from India, Australia and Vietnam believed diversity is reflected in the management of the company (Q4) and considered this item a "strength" by company standards (75%). Furthermore, a high proportion of male responses from India and Vietnam considered the impact of diversity on the company's culture (Q70) as a "strength". However, male participants from Australia considered it less favourable (51% favourable score), which indicates an area of concern.

	Q4 M IND	Q4 M ANZ	Q4 M VNM	Q62 M IND	Q62 M ANZ	Q62 M VNM	Q65 M IND	Q65 M ANZ	Q65 M VNM	Q70 M IND	Q70 M ANZ	Q70 M VNM
F	92	76	95	58	53	68	92	69	82	78	51	86
N	7	17	5	28	25	27	6	22	13	17	40	9
UF	1	7	0	14	22	5	2	9	5	5	9	5
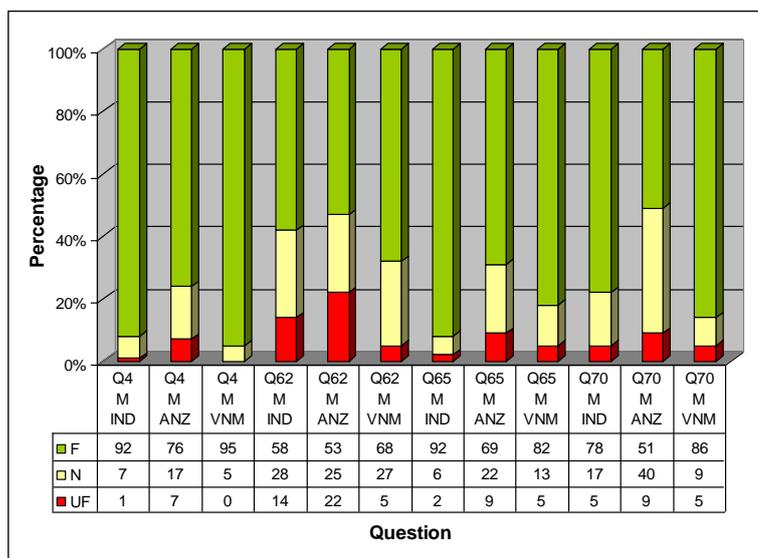
Question

Figure 7.14 Comparative Response of Males Group 4 Question

The immediate manager's behaviour in relation to D&I was examined in Group 5 Questions. Figure 7.15 and 7.16 generally showed that male and female senior managers feel their immediate managers treat them with respect as indicated by the range of favourable responses in Q14 (80% to 100%). In Figure 7.15, female senior managers from India and Australia Regions perceived that their immediate managers value and respect differences among employees (Q16) and considered this aspect as a "strength" (75% and above), while female senior managers from Vietnam perceived Q16 as opportunity for improvement (70% favourable score).

The immediate manager's support for involvement in diversity and inclusion initiatives (Q74) was perceived as a "strength" by female participants from Australia (76%) but only as an opportunity for improvement by female senior managers from Vietnam (63%) and India (74%). On the contrary, support for work-life balance (Q28) was perceived as a "strength" by female participants from India and Vietnam but less favourably by female participants from Australia. Majority of females from India, Australia and Vietnam feel they are respected by their immediate managers (Q14) as shown by the high proportion of favourable responses (80% to 100%).
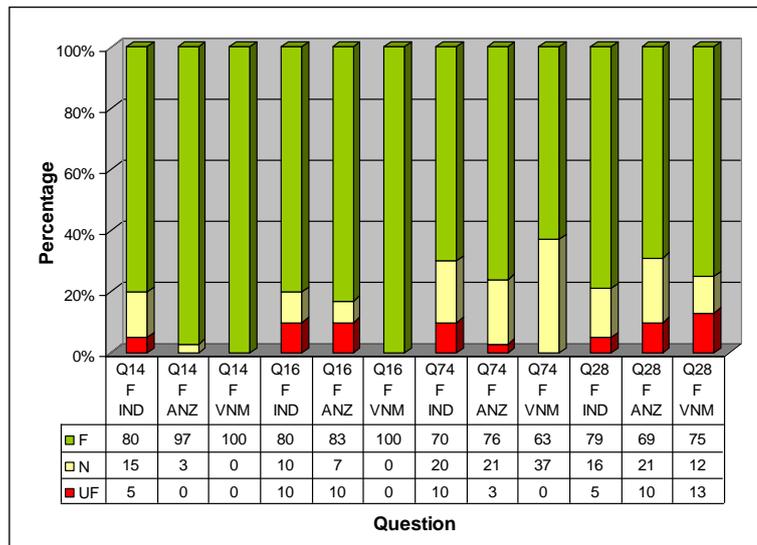
Figure 7.15 Comparative Response of Females to Group 5 Questions

In Figure 7.16, Q74 indicated an area of concern among male senior managers from India and Australia based on the proportion of favourable responses (72% and 64%). Australia and Vietnam senior managers perceived that their immediate managers valued and respected the differences among employees (Q16) and support their efforts for work-life balance (Q28) as indicated by the high proportion of favourable scores (75% and above favourable) to both questions.
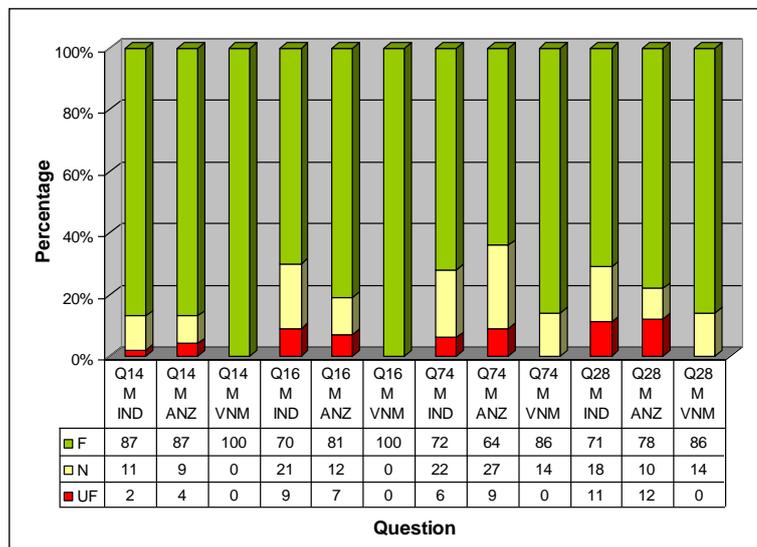
Figure 7.16 Comparative Responses of Males to Group 5 Questions

7.4 Summary

This chapter presented the different perceptions of female and male senior managers about D&I across India Region, Australia Region, and Vietnam Region. Table 7.2 shows the questions compared across the three regions and the level of action required

on diversity and inclusion. It should be noted that India had fewer questions compared to Australia and Vietnam as discussed in earlier chapters. The overall results showed that female senior managers perceived D&I implementation efforts less favourably than males. Similarly, the number of questions perceived by female senior managers as opportunity for improvement and area of concern was greater than those by their male counterparts.

Table 7.2 Summary of Male and Female Responses According to D&I Level of Action

	D& I Level of Action	India	Australia	Vietnam	Total
Male Senior Managers	Strengths	10	10	21	41
	Opportunities for Improvement	7	10	1	18
	Area of Concern	0	2	0	2
	Total Questions	**17**	**22**	**22**	
Female Senior Managers	D& I Level of Action	India	Australia	Vietnam	Total
	Strengths	6	9	16	31
	Opportunities for Improvement	10	11	3	24
	Area of Concern	1	2	3	6

In addition to the comparative responses and level of action shown in Table 7.2, Figure 7.17 presents a spider web configuration of comparative profile based on average responses of male senior managers from India, Australia and Vietnam. Average scores above 3 tend toward the favourable levels in varying degrees. The radar chart clearly shows that senior managers from Vietnam tend to have the most favourable perceptions about the company's D&I policies and practices. It can be observed that on many points, responses from male senior managers from Australia tend to be lower. This is shown by many spikes in the web configuration, compared to those from senior managers in India Region and Vietnam Region.

For the female senior managers, Figure 7.17 presents the spider web configuration based on average scores for Group 1-5 questions. The graph clearly shows almost the same pattern of responses as the male average scores but overall, they tended to have a lower level of satisfaction. The chart graphically confirms that the female Australians' favourable answers to the questions per group tended to be lower compared to those of the India and Vietnam females. Spikes of questions number 29 and 4 clearly show the lowest favourable answers coming from the female senior managers of Australia.
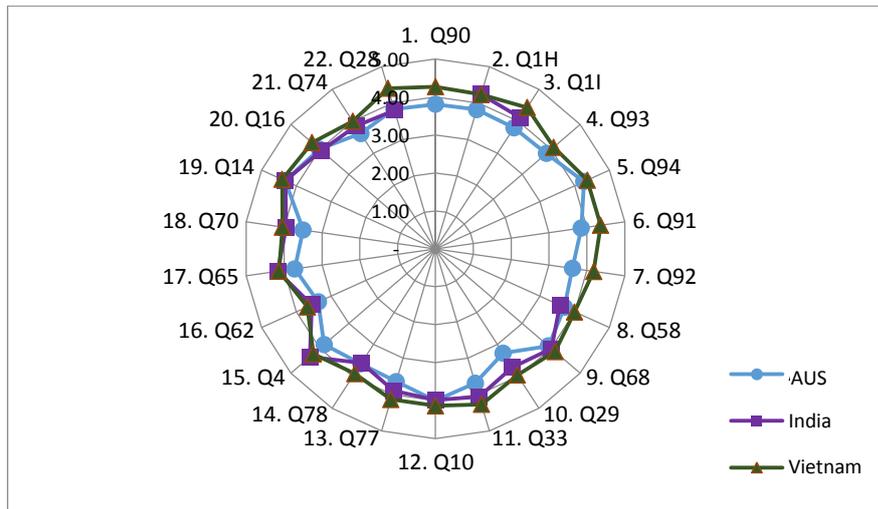
Figure 7.17 Comparative Average Scores in a radar chart of Male Senior Managers From India, Australia and Vietnam
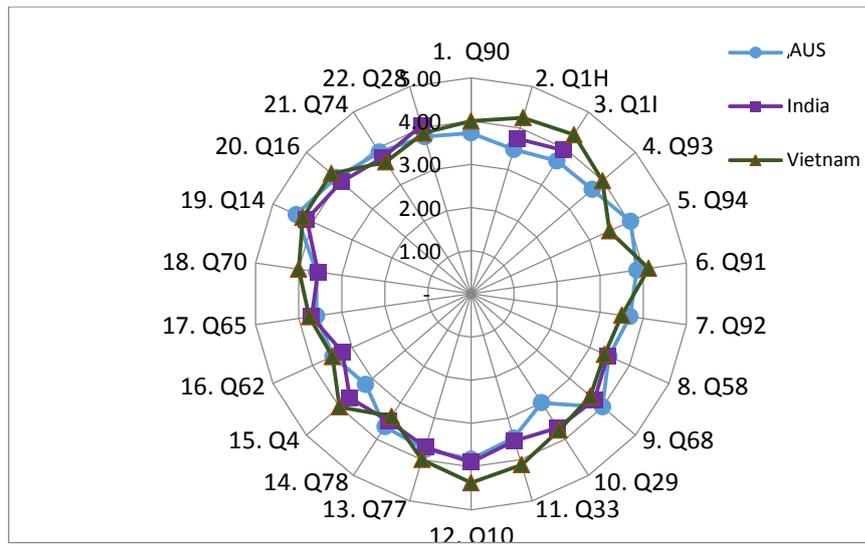
Figure 7.18 Comparative Average Scores in a radar chart of Female Senior Managers From India, Australia and Vietnam
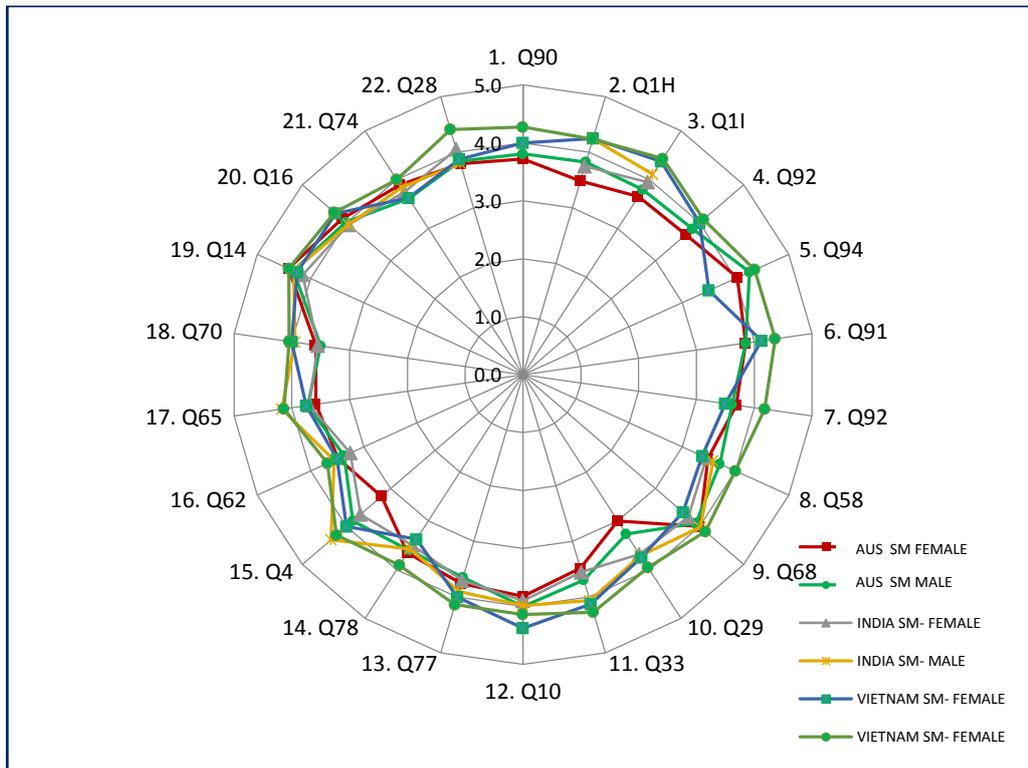
Figure 7.19 Comparative Average Scores of Female and Male Senior Managers From India, Australia and Vietnam Group 1-5 Questions

The overall comparative results are shown in a spider-web configuration in Figure 7.19. The chart shows that the combined average scores of female and male senior managers from India, Australia and Vietnam tended to be within the range of positive perceptions. However, the female senior managers generally gave lower average scores. The pattern on the web figure suggests that Australia female senior managers appear to have the lowest favourable scores as can be seen on spikes 15 and 11.

CHAPTER 8

DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

8.1 Chapter Overview

This research examined the perceptions of senior managers about diversity and inclusion in a multinational company in Asia. In particular, it focused on two aspects of diversity and inclusion implementation within the organisation: the transfer of diversity and inclusion policies and practices from the US headquarters to the regional offices in Asia, and the perceptions of senior managers about diversity and inclusion policies and practices across the three regional offices - India Region, Australia Region and Vietnam Region. Phase 1 was a preliminary study in India and Phase 2 was a comparative study of senior managers' perceptions in the three regional offices.

The findings are relevant to the emerging relational approach in diversity management (Syed & Ozbilgin, 2009) and its organisational implementation within multinational companies. Research shows that multinational companies face competing pressures to undertake global integration of business processes, including diversity management, as they attempt to take advantage of proven successful procedures across international boundaries (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1987; Brock & Siscovick, 2007; Ghoshal & Bartlett, 1990).

This chapter presents the discussion of the analysis in relation to relevant research questions and indicators used to measure perceptions. Section 8.2 discussed how SBC transferred diversity and inclusion to its regional offices. The next sections discuss the different indicators used to measure perceptions about diversity in relation to the research questions. Section 8.3 presents the perceptions about diversity and inclusion vision and value 8.4 discusses the perceptions about diversity and inclusion initiatives; Section 8.5 presents the perceptions about satisfaction about diversity and inclusion; Section 8.6 discusses leadership and management of diversity; Section 8.7 discusses perceptions about manager support for diversity and inclusion. Section 8.8 summarizes this chapter.

8.2 Transfer of Diversity and Inclusion from SBC Headquarters to Regional Offices

In multinational corporations, having a diversity vision and values has become a necessity to raise awareness about key diversity concerns and the rhetoric around leveraging the benefits of a diverse workforce. As explained in Chapter 3, among the reasons for adopting diversity and inclusion programs in SBC is to respond to competition and the changing demographics of employees. Effective diversity and inclusion also supports the company's ability to enter new markets and develop new products through increased variety of skills, experiences and values. The overall diversity and inclusion environment espoused by SBC was conceptualised in its stated guiding principle "Win with Diversity and Inclusion". This principle is defined in the company's core values as "embracing people with diverse background, traits and ways of thinking" (Company Core Values, 2010). Diversity and inclusion is also underscored in the company's code of conduct, and by its commitment to provide equal opportunity within the organisation. A shared vision of diversity and inclusion is a guiding principle as the company continues to grow internationally and becomes more diverse in its products and business operations

Although the goal of diversity management is directed towards helping the business achieve its goals, research on its transferability in multinational companies tends to show ambiguous results (Egan & Bendick, 2003; Lauring, 2013). Problems in transferring diversity management practices in MNCs were associated with the lack of relevance of policies created in one country and exported to another, as well as the subsidiary response to local integration of global diversity management practices (Lauring, 2013; Nishii & Ozbilgin, 2007). To address these issues, Ozbilgin and Tatli (2008) suggested a relational approach to diversity management that bridges the macro, meso and micro levels in order to have a more context-specific implementation of diversity management. In this approach, both researchers and practitioners hope to achieve more cohesive and relevant diversity management that takes into account social, cultural and individual contexts.

It is evident from this research that the case study company generally implements diversity and inclusion in a centralised way, starting with a common vision and policy emanating from the US head office. Their implementation also tends to focus on gender representation as the common measure of diversity and inclusion, which is why gender was used as a moderating variable in this study. It would have been preferable to use a

range of dimensions such as caste, ethnicity, or function as additional variables, but these data were not available.

8.3 Perceptions about Diversity and Inclusion Vision and Values

'Diversity and inclusion' is a focal point in the company's vision and code of conduct. It provides the members of the organisation with a sense of purpose and direction to promote the integration of diversity in all aspects of the organisation (Wang & Rafiq 2008). The vision and values represent the overall concept of diversity and inclusion including formal policies to articulate its importance.

Five items were used to measure perceptions about the company's vision and diversity values: a) company's commitment to diversity; b) value of respecting others and succeeding together; c) guiding principle of "win with diversity and inclusion"; d) the company's commitment to value different employees in the organisation; and e) policies against discrimination. Only items b and c are comparable across all three regions. Questions a, d and e were included in the supplementary questions that were distributed only in Australia and Vietnam.

Overall Perceptions. Combined findings from Phase 1 and Phase 2 studies of India indicated a generally favourable perception about diversity and inclusion policies and practices. Generally, the scores in Phase 1 were positive regarding all aspects of diversity including perceptions about information sharing and decision-making. Likewise in Phase 2, India senior managers indicated more strengths than areas for improvement and areas of concern. Moreover, Phase 1 and Phase 2 findings also indicate that diversity initiatives implemented by India Region between 2007 and 2011 have been successful, at the very least within the senior management level. Findings from the interviews in Phase 1 revealed that although diversity already appears to be a popular lexicon within the vast and diverse Indian society, the initiatives implemented in the company seem to have made a difference in the way diversity and inclusion is understood among senior management. Senior managers perceived diversity and inclusion as a as an important value that enables employees to realise their potentials, drives the company towards sustainable growth and creates a more conducive environment for women. General responses revealed that senior managers value the efforts of the company to promote diversity and inclusion. However, findings based on gender and specific regions revealed more differences than similarities of perceptions about diversity and inclusion policies and practices. We now turn our attention to these

differences through an analysis of regional responses discussed in relation to the diversity literature.

From Phase 2, combined findings from India, Australia and Vietnam indicated a positive perception about diversity vision and values. In particular, the company's commitment to "respect others and succeed together" stood out as the common strength based on perceptions of senior managers across the three regions (Table 7.1). At the very least, this level of perception could be due to two important insights: Firstly, effective communication and understanding of diversity and inclusion is a core value across the organisation. Secondly, employees consider "respect" as a foundation in doing their work and in their collaboration with others.

The findings also revealed common favourable perceptions of senior managers in Vietnam and Australia in terms of the company's attitude of valuing different employees in the organisation and its policy against discrimination. This is partly due to the historical background and legislative thrusts and requirements (as explained in Chapter 4) such as the strong emphasis on Equal Employment Opportunity in Australia and institutionalization of *Doi Moi* in Vietnam. Both policies are critical at the organisational level in implementing of diversity and inclusion as far as equality is concerned.

Perceptions across the regions: Diversity vision and values were perceived differently by gender across the three regions. The number of items perceived as strengths by male senior managers were greater than the perceived strengths of female senior managers. The female senior managers perceived more opportunities for improvement and areas of concern compared to males. These findings are consistent with the findings of Kandu (2004) and Kossek and Zonia (1993). In these studies, females had higher expectations of the company's effort to promote "gender" diversity as compared to males. These perceptions likewise support other studies (Kandu, 2003) which pointed out that women attach more importance to diversity than men. Hence, females are more critical of the diversity policies espoused by the company, because not only are they aware of their rights as individuals, but they are also aware of the more limited opportunities available to them as members of the organisation.

The company's policies about discrimination were perceived unfavourably by majority of female managers in Vietnam. In contrast, a majority of female senior managers in

Australia thought the company has strong policies against discrimination (See Figure 7.7). In Vietnam, female senior managers' perceptions seemed to contradict the firm's objective to increase the number of females in the management committee (Vietnam Region Organisational Context) and initiatives implemented by HR. These perceptions may be a result of the fact that women's career opportunities are available in administrative and support functions such as HR, Marketing and Finance while Sales and Manufacturing Operations are male-dominated functions. There could be other deep-seated reasons or cases that led to such perceptions. However, available company data for this research limits a more detailed analysis.

Available literature indicates that the female Vietnam region responses may also be related to historical and institutional contexts. This finding supports the argument of Vo and Stratchan (2010) that women's success in Vietnam is dependent on the challenges posed by the culture and traditions of the Vietnamese society. Although some women have attained managerial and leadership status, it is likely that they continued to struggle between family commitments and paid work. To some extent this perception may also indicate insufficient understanding of discrimination in relation to the policies implemented by the company. Whether it is the lack of understanding or a reality, the perceived discrimination among Vietnamese senior female managers indicates a need for closer examination of this item.

The results suggested a stronger emphasis on female discrimination in Australia perhaps because gender representation is an important form of diversity in Australia. Legislation in Australia recognises a wide-range of diversity and prohibits discrimination on the grounds of gender or gender preference, among others (Kramar, 2012). Female senior managers in Australia recognized the company's policies against discrimination as shaped by the institutional context.

Comparative findings for this particular aspect of diversity highlight less enthusiastic perceptions from senior managers in the Australia region in terms of the company's commitment to "win with diversity and inclusion". Three possible reasons might explain why these items were perceived differently compared to Vietnam. First, despite the fact that diversity and inclusion have been strongly promoted by the company through various approaches, Australia is very cautious on this matter. While the company appears to focus more closely on gender balance, diversity from the population perspective also refers to cultural differences, ethnic minorities, people with

disabilities and ageing employees (Kramar, 2012; Syed & Kramar, 2010). Such aspects of diversity are not currently measured within the company, at least for this region. As a result, while the company believes it is focused strongly on gender diversity, it could be perceived as falling short of the ideal based on common country norms.

Second, multiculturalism is an important dimension of diversity in western countries including Australia because of the large number of international migrants from diverse cultural backgrounds (D'Netto & Amrik, 1999; Dickie & Soldan, 2008; Shen, Chanda, D'Netto, & Monga, 2009). However, with respect to the current diversity metrics of the company within this region, this aspect of diversity is not assessed. The essential factors in multiculturalism such as culture, race and ethnicity might be nascent in the diversity and inclusion approach and may be perceived as unusual considering the US origin of the company.

Third, the company's attention on women in the diversity metrics was further reinforced by the Australian EEO legislation which focused predominantly on women, with less emphasis on ethnic minorities and disadvantaged groups (Syed & Kramar, 2010). These explanations partially support the argument of Kramar (2012) and Tatli and Ozbilgin (2009) that when local conditions are not taken into account, diversity management faces even greater challenges at the regional level than those espoused by the parent company. Senior managers across the different functions participated, and their responses could support the outcome in terms of perceptions on the company's diversity vision. Findings from Phase 1 (Table 5.1), showed a generally favourable perception about the company's diversity and inclusion vision and values. In addition, the India senior managers also believed that there was a comprehensive program on diversity and inclusion. Results of the interviews among the senior managers were aligned with the survey results for this particular group of questions.

Consistent with Cooke's (2010) argument, these perceptions are greatly influenced by the fact that India is a very diverse country, where senior managers are accustomed to working with people from different backgrounds. Several authors have also pointed out that diversity is part of daily life in India (Cooke & Saini, 2010; Ratnam & Chandra, 1996). As shared by one of India's senior managers during the interview, "diversity is part of the policy, and culture is part of our national footprint, not organisation specific". Therefore, it is possible that the organisation is not deemed responsible for advancing cultural and ethnic inclusion in India.

In summary, the company's vision and values were perceived differently across the three regions of India, Australia and Vietnam. Even though diversity is recognised as a practical reality and formal policies have been implemented and communicated in the different regions across SBC, perceptions about the efficacy of policies are salient for and valued by senior managers with exception of Vietnam female senior managers' perceptions about discrimination. The above discussion presented one aspect of the perceptions of senior managers about the formal policies management established on diversity and inclusion. How senior managers perceive the diversity initiatives in recruitment, promotion and work-life balance is considered in the next section.

8.4 Perceptions about Diversity and Inclusion Initiatives

This research considered a few key HR management practices that support diversity and inclusion management. These initiatives represent what the company actually does to enact equal opportunities and support work-life balance. At the core of these initiatives is compliance with country legislation relevant to equal employment opportunities. Four initiatives were used in relation to HR initiatives: a) equal opportunity for people to have a successful career regardless of background; b) recruitment and promotion of both male and female employees with different backgrounds; c) promotion of employees based on fair and objective assessment; and d) company support for work-life balance.

Overall Perceptions: Diversity and Inclusion initiatives were generally perceived by senior managers as opportunities for improvement. Out of five items, the only common positive response was the company's commitment to provide equal opportunity for employees to have a successful career regardless of background. The rest of the items were perceived differently either as an opportunity for improvement or area of concern. While Vietnam senior managers perceived all items under Group 2 (refer to Figure 7.2) as favourable, Australia and India respondents were less optimistic about the policies and practices regarding diversity and inclusion.

These findings point to a perception of inequality in recruitment and career advancement and support the impression that most multinational companies appear to implement human resource management practices which hinge on compliance (Shen et al., 2009). This result also suggests a pertinent aspect of workplace policy underscored by Kirton and Green (2005), which is the intention of the company to guide the individual's career aspirations. In relation to the findings, the company's intention to develop the individual's careers appears to be more of a symbolic gesture by the

company. With the exception of Vietnam male senior managers, fair and objective assessment of promotion was perceived unfavourably by all female senior managers across the three regions, and male senior managers in India and Australia. As Shen and her colleagues (2009) pointed out that there are some HRM practices concerning diversity issues such as pay inequality, performance appraisal, recruitment and training and development. While a strong emphasis has been put on a management philosophy focused on equal opportunity, there is a broader scope of diversity initiatives that needs to be recognised, particularly in HR practices aimed at overcoming perceptions of unfairness and resistance.

Perceptions across the regions: The findings showed that the company has more to do in order to fulfil its diversity and inclusion initiatives. Among the males, two distinct response patterns emerged: Vietnamese senior managers perceived all items in the diversity initiatives as strengths while Australia and India senior managers perceived four out of five items as opportunities for improvement. For the senior managers in Australia, support for work-life balance appears to be a significant concern. Female senior managers across the three regions perceived the majority of the items in the company's diversity initiatives as opportunities for improvement. It is surprising that even male senior managers from India and Australia had similarly unfavourable perceptions as those of the females, particularly in the areas of work-life balance.

HRM practices have significant impact on the perceptions of intentions behind diversity management; the practices, in turn, affect the outcome of the implementation (Cooke & Saini, 2010).The fact that the study revealed similar unfavourable perceptions about promotion opportunities from a majority of both males and females is somewhat inconsistent with prior studies which showed that normally, females are often more aware of restrictions to their advancement and would perceive promotion more negatively than males (Hicks-Clarke & Iles, 2000; Kossek, Lobel, & Brown, 2006). These findings suggest that gender equity advancement and work-life balance concerns are held by both males and females. It also supports the argument of Charlesworth and Baird (2007) that understanding gender issues as being for women only, silences men's concerns for better career and work-life outcomes.

Perceptions across the three regions generally revealed positive perceptions among senior managers in Vietnam. In contrast, perceptions among senior managers in India and Australia tended to be negative on most items. Senior managers from Australia and

India appear to have higher expectations from the company in terms of having diversity policies consistent with implementation particularly of core human resource systems supporting career advancement, discrimination and individual work-life balance. The importance of context could also contribute to differences in perceptions as India and Australia have more advanced knowledge of diversity and experience at the cultural and social level whereas, senior managers from Vietnam were mostly exposed to homogeneous environment.

Considering the different social and historical environments in which diversity is implemented in India, Australia and Vietnam region, it is difficult to assess the overall success or failure of diversity and inclusion from combined perspectives. While there is an overarching policy among the three regions and a common approach to implementation, perceptions appear to focus on individualistic experiences and regional differences. Consequently this presents a challenge for the company to respond to diversity based on different needs, aspirations, perceptions and experiences.

8.5 Individual Satisfaction Related to Diversity and Inclusion

Individual satisfaction in relation to diversity and inclusion indicates an important outcome for D&I practices. Four items were measured under Group 3: a) perception on how the employee is valued by the company; b) satisfaction about decisions that affect the job; c) satisfaction with recognition received; and d) perceptions about the work-group climate that values different perspectives. These items are often referred to as employee involvement or employee participation concepts. Yet within a relational multi-level model of diversity management, the interaction between the levels are a crucial component (Ozbilgin & Tatli, 2008). These items provide some indication of the understanding of the meso-micro interactions

Overall Perceptions. The findings revealed different perceptions among senior managers regardless of gender or region except for one item. The workgroup where diverse perspectives are valued was generally perceived as being more inclusive, which was indicated as a "strength" of the company. On the contrary, satisfaction in terms of recognition received for doing a good job was perceived as an opportunity for improvement. Satisfaction with decisions that affected their job and satisfaction with being a valued employee indicated different perceptions. The evidence points out that senior managers appreciate the equal opportunity environment the company aims to

cultivate within the organisation. However they perceive a difference between what the policy says and their personal experiences.

Perceptions across the regions: While favourable perceptions of a work-group that values diverse perspectives exist, the majority of female senior managers considered themselves less valued as an employee of the company. Women may base this perception on the barriers that prevent them from being promoted, promotion being a basic form of work and emotional recognition (Pless & Maak, 2004). These perceptions were not limited to females, a majority of male senior managers noted an "opportunity for improvement" in recognition for doing a good job and satisfaction on decisions that affected their work. This finding aligns with the views of Mor Barak, Cherin and Berkman (1998), that men also aspire to inclusiveness and fairness just like females.

Different perceptions about individual satisfaction on diversity and inclusion redefine senior managers' expectations and personal experiences in terms of their involvement decisions and recognition that they receive. For example, India and Vietnam senior managers feel they are valued by the company and they are satisfied with their involvement in decisions that affect their job. In contrast senior managers from Australia perceive these aspects unfavourably. Somehow the differences in response show that diversity and inclusion is not only about presence or absence of human resource policies but also in how senior managers individually feel about organisation practices such as reward and recognition

8.6 Leadership and Management of Diversity

Leadership commitment to diversity was defined as the extent to which leaders demonstrate ownership and management of diversity and inclusion, and its perceived outcomes in the organisation. An influential factor believed to be important in achieving an overall climate of inclusion is the role of senior leaders in promoting and supporting diversity initiatives. Some research has established the essential role of top management philosophy and values regarding diversity and inclusion implementation (Frenkel, Sanders, & Bednall, 2013; Hoojiberg & DiTomaso, 1996; Nishii & Mayer, 2009). Such values can affect the policies and practices in relation to diversity and inclusion such as having the appropriate organisation structure and culture to encourage cooperation, provide recognition, and involve employees in decision-making.

Overall Perceptions: Findings showed a mixed perception about leadership commitment to diversity and inclusion among the senior managers across the three regions. With the exception of the Australia Region, senior managers from Vietnam and India perceived that diversity is reflected in the company and resulted in a positive outcome on the company's culture. However with respect to gender, female senior managers across the three regions perceived leadership commitment as both an area for improvement and an area of concern. Perceptions of male senior managers from Australia are consistent with those of females in relation to senior management's ownership of diversity and inclusion. They also disagreed that D&I had a positive impact on the company's culture.

A key finding from the results, regardless of region and gender, was the unfavourable perceptions about the company's organisation structure. Senior managers felt that the organisation structure (at the time of this research) did not facilitate cooperation among different work groups and functions. It is difficult to ascertain if the local or regional levels of organisation structure the basis of their perception. Perceptions about the structure would pertain to the different layers of workgroups within the company that interact with each other. Each regional office internally coordinated with numerous functional groups. Objectives were achieved through interdependent interaction within the local regional level and through the functional support of the business unit or division. As some authors pointed out, multinational corporations are known to operate in a stratified structure across different locations with different functional working relationships (Egan & Bendick, 2003; Ghoshal & Bartlett, 1990). While the organisation structure in SBC was intended to create teamwork and facilitate the accomplishment of objectives, in this case, it appears to be perceived as a barrier to working effectively and achieving cooperation. It is also possible that while there is a supportive culture for cooperation and teamwork, the organisation structure appears to be preventing it.

These findings are partly congruent with some studies that have found that diverse groups do not automatically result in better performance, but instead can intensify conflict between different employees (Jehn, Northcraft, & Neale, 1999; Mannix & Neale, 2005; Milliken & Martins, 1996; Van Knippenberg, Dawson, West, & Homan, 2011). Although there are global imperatives and directions, multinational companies have functional work groups with different objectives and standards within their own region and even compared to other functional groups with whom they work.

Furthermore, a results-oriented multinational corporation such as SBC emphasizes individual performance and group accomplishments that may lead to a high degree of competition among members of different work groups and prevent them from working effectively (Choi & Rainey, 2010; Tsui, Egan, & O'Reilly, 1992). Thus, cross-functional groups in results-oriented organisations may result in a more competitive than cooperative, culture.

Is it possible that these perceptions were affected by the demographic composition of their workgroups beyond the regional or national level? Some studies on demography and diversity also appear to be supported by these findings (Jehn, Chadwick, & Thatcher, 1997; Mannix & Neale, 2005; Nkomo & Cox, 1996). Williams and O'Reilly (1998) concluded that at the micro level, diversity among group members negatively affects the ability of the group to meet its needs and functions effectively over time. These authors also indicated that while top management offers more creative solutions, the competing effects of demographic differences, plus the complexity of work processes, affect the added value of increased information, communication and problem solving. Given the important link between senior management and organisational results, these findings imply a need for deeper understanding of how the different organisation structures within the company affect group cooperation and performance.

Perceptions across the regions: Female senior managers from Australia and India perceived the way diversity is reflected in the management of the company as an area of concern and area of improvement, respectively. Such critical perspectives are valuable in order to address the overly optimistic viewpoints of male senior managers from all regions. For India region this level of perception raises the issue whether the Women Council is effective considering that this initiative appears to be the main focus of gender diversity in that region. Perceptions of female senior managers from Australia region are surprising since the company has demonstrated policies and practices that support women across the organisation.

The pattern of different perceptions across India, Australia and Vietnam is also reflected in the way senior managers perceived the leadership and management of diversity. This brings the question whether leaders are the targets of diversity or proponents of diversity. It has been frequently illustrated that leaders must be committed to and provide support for diversity (DiTomaso & Hoojiberg, 1996). Large bodies of work have specifically addressed leadership in terms of demonstrating change efforts to make

organisations more inclusive (Cox, 1993). While good management includes good interpersonal skills, leadership support and commitment adds to the important dimensions of inclusive culture.

8.7 Perceptions about Immediate Manager Support for Diversity and Inclusion

Aside from leadership and ownership of diversity, this research also examined the perceptions of senior managers regarding the support they received or experienced from their immediate managers. Such support for diversity and inclusion was defined as the mediating factor between what the company espouses and what senior managers actually experience from their immediate managers.

Four items were used to determine the senior managers' perceptions on their immediate manager's support to diversity and inclusion: a) respect received by senior managers from their immediate managers; b) attitude of immediate managers regarding differences among employees; c) immediate manager's support for participation in D&I activities; and d) immediate manager's support for work-life balance. To a limited extent, these items also relate to the company's intention to cultivate inclusive behaviours among its managers, which are measured through the 360 Degree Feedback.

Overall Perceptions: Total response of senior managers about support provided by immediate manager is positive. The number of items perceived as strengths is higher than the number of areas of improvement and areas of concern. However as shown in Chapter 7, most of the positive responses were driven from senior managers in Vietnam region. Unfavourable responses permeate the viewpoints of senior managers from India and Australia. In the context of varied responses, one could draw that different leadership styles are experienced by senior managers from their immediate superior. This reinforces the impression that diversity and inclusion puts more burden on leaders for setting the conditions through which trust and individual relationships are developed.

Perceptions across the regions: Indian senior managers, particularly the male senior managers, were least satisfied regarding the support they receive from their immediate managers. In contrast, female senior managers in India felt valued and respected by their immediate manager and supported in terms of their work-life balance concerns. Furthermore, female senior managers from Australia felt that their immediate manager least supported them in terms of work-life balance.

These findings are consistent with the diversity concept of Nishii and Mayer (2009) that direct supervisors can strongly impact the experience of employees in a diverse group. They also indicate that the approaches adopted by the immediate manager in dealing with diversity appear to be a case-to-case practice (Cooke & Saini, 2012). For example, although female senior managers felt the company does not provide enough support for work-life balance, this appears to be compensated for by the more generous support of their immediate managers.

Senior managers felt that their immediate manager respected them. This indicated a strong value of respect among employees within the company especially among the senior management level. It is also consistent with the favourable perceptions of the theme "respect others and succeed together" as advocated in the company vision.

8.8 Summary

This chapter identified and discussed the perceptions about diversity and inclusion policies and practices in three regional offices of a multinational corporation in Asia, namely India Region, Australia Region and Vietnam Region. Key findings highlighted how the perceptions might be similar or different within each region based on gender, and comparatively across the three regions. Similarities and differences in perceptions were explained by considering the contextual background within each region, as well as the available relevant literature.

Combined responses across the three regions projected favourable overall perceptions about diversity and inclusion. However, this information is not sufficient to draw the conclusion that in the implementation of D&I policies and practices has been efficacious. As discussed earlier, there were varying perceptions of diversity and inclusion policies and practices in different national and regional contexts, and because of this, many items were perceived differently and as opportunities for improvement rather than strengths. It appears then that while the company is doing an effective job at driving the same policies and values across the organisation, some enablers of diversity and inclusion such as recognition, involvement in decision making, and promotion, especially when they involve female senior managers entail deeper implementation for the senior managers to experience more fully the benefits of inclusion.

CHAPTER 9

CONCLUSION

This research explored diversity and inclusion in SBC, a multinational corporation in Asia. The main objective of this research was to examine the perceptions of senior managers about diversity and inclusion policies and practices, and assess their similarities and differences within each region and across the three regions of SBC in India, Australia and Vietnam. The diversity enquiry focused on how the company transferred diversity and inclusion policies and practices to its regional offices outside of the US and the perceptions and experiences of senior managers based on gender.

Diversity and inclusion (D&I) has been defined as a human resource strategy to recognize workplace diversity and implement policies that enable inclusion to flourish within the organisation. In MNCs, workforce diversity is highly accepted and managed in order to help achieve the objectives of the organisation. However, previous research on diversity management in MNCs has yielded varied and mixed results (Batra, 2007; Egan & Bendick, 2003).

Cross-border implementation of diversity management has become a challenge for many MNCs due to globalisation and expansion beyond their home countries. Though many MNCs have attempted to implement diversity management, it has become evident that organisations cannot simply transfer diversity practices from the headquarters in view of fundamental differences in the socio-economic, historical and legal contexts in the host country. This difficulty adds to the variety of challenges facing MNCs as they manage diversity initiatives (Lauring, 2013; Tatli & Ozbilgin, 2009) within a wide range of human resource management policies and practices. Global integration and local implementation are known to pose challenges in the general management of MNCs (Bartlett & Ghoshal, 1989; Choy, 2007). Economic and socio-cultural trends in Asia create opportunities as well as challenges for MNCs to expand their operations outside of the home countries.

In an influential study of global diversity management practices, Syed and Ozbilgin (2009) called for diversity and equal opportunity research to include multi-level perspectives, namely, macro, meso and micro. The authors argued, "effective diversity

management is likely to be realised when there is multilevel structural and institutional support for the inclusion and participation of all individuals and groups" (2009, p.2436). The narrow business case emphasis of diversity management, drawn mostly from US and European-centric experiences, may not hold well in other national contexts because of differences in legislation, demography, history and socio-economic conditions. Therefore, Syed and Ozbilgin (2009) argued that diversity management studies based on relational framework could potentially address the divergent findings and the incompatibility between global and local implementation. The relational framework has the potential to capture the interplay of institutional and organisational levels of diversity and equality concerns. It can also reflect the issues related to individual motivation, satisfaction and perceptions about diversity. This empirical study utilised the relational framework to understand the perceptions of senior management about diversity and inclusion from different contexts of the regional offices of the MNC.

In relation to the research, the relational framework revolves around three areas. First, it expanded the comparative analysis within a single company and provided meaningful linkages to other contextual factors that might have affected senior managers' perception. For example, instead of simply comparing the responses of male and female senior managers' perceptions regarding the company's policy on discrimination based on gender, these responses were linked to cultural and institutional differences between the three regional offices. In the same way different perceptions about the company's diversity policies were highlighted with the comparative responses among the three regions.

Second, it emphasised the significance of social policies and its impact on the individuals in relation to organisational policies. Varied perceptions among senior managers from India, Australia and Vietnam were somehow influenced by social contexts in which the organisation operates. The framework provided the opportunity to examine diversity perceptions by leveraging many facets of diversity that affect organisations and bridged the isolation of each macro, meso and micro context *within and across* each region to achieve at a more comprehensive and context-specific framing of findings and analysis.

Third, the relational framework as shown in this research reinforced the analysis of international diversity management in relation to local integration (Sipola & Smale, 2007) of global human resource management. Sippola and Smale (2007) argued that

global diversity management falls into culture-specific aspects of human resource management. More specifically, global diversity management represents an essential component of MNC's global human resource management where decisions regarding what to integrate and how to implement diversity practices become key considerations at the local level.

The usefulness of the relational framework remains subject to the effectiveness of diversity management implementation within the organisation. The relational framework seems to dilute the focus on human resource management that has the power to accommodate and assimilate social realities and from which diversity organisational policies and practices emanate. Within multinational corporations, parent companies may be more dedicated to ensure appropriate policies for the company especially if social or cultural differences can be used as an excuse for diversity management approaches. Does the framework provide allowance for incompatibility between social and institutional realities, and organisational practices? The assumptions underlying the relational framework may obscure essential organisational diversity issues such as those that do not support the social contexts but may be relevant to the values espoused by the organisation. Business rationale is an inevitable factor for diversity management and the human resources function has the capacity to modify the rules and design change management programs suitable to achieve the business objectives. However, the need to address the local context means that it is necessarily, a balancing act.

The relational aspects could become ambiguous with numerous employees coming from different cultural backgrounds or when minority expatriate leaders observe cultural norms different from majority of the employees. Can this ambiguity be used by leaders or dominant groups to adopt global and local practices different from existing societal contexts of the host country? There is a high possibility that diversity management may rely more on what is valuable for the leaders to achieve business objectives. This question supports the argument of Pringle (2009) that power is a salient dimension of diversity management.

It can be noted that the relational approach was helpful to validate the effects of similar interventions within the same company but may tend to require extensive qualitative data to establish broad institutional, social and cultural context that adequately contextualise the organisational level of diversity management. Specific research

objectives are critical as the boundaries of diversity management field becomes porous with the extent of relational factors embedded in the multi-level framework.

This research responded to some of the challenges and criticisms of a universal diversity discourse by analysing not only the contextual and organisational factors that influence diversity and inclusion implementation, but also the individual perceptions about diversity and inclusion. Findings from this research contributed to empirical data on the influence of MNCs when implementing international human resource strategies to its subsidiaries in Asia. Furthermore, the results provided empirical data that support the call to include salient aspects of context especially from macro levels to make sense of meso and micro-level perceptions of diversity and inclusion in India, Australia and Vietnam offices. The findings support the relational model of diversity management which showed the interaction between the national and cultural contexts with the organisational policies and individual diversity dimensions.

As demonstrated through this research, the corporate Head Office was able to utilise transfer mechanisms to consistently communicate gender policies, vision and values, as well as measures of diversity and inclusion within the organisation. In 2007, the company launched D&I across Asia Pacific Region through centralised policies and standard training to obtain senior management's buy-in. The initiatives adopted by the different regions after 2007 reflect a continuing preference for centralisation and standardised processes and measures. Because of the centralised approach, the requirements by the US corporate office meant that gender or female representation remained a focal point for inclusion measures. This narrow focus constitutes a deficiency in the SBC conception of diversity and inclusion. Local adaptable practices can create a differentiated approach, encourage creativeness and make the regional offices less susceptible to implement diversity practices out of conformity to head office requirements.

This research also identified some of the key issues in implementing diversity and inclusion in regional offices of SBC. While the organisation's centralised approach was quite effective in creating awareness for D&I vision, values and policies throughout the organisation, different perceptions surfaced when it came to the implementation of these policies. It can be concluded that the understanding of diversity and inclusion in the Indian, Australian and Vietnamese contexts are different from the US approach and that

awareness of the regional offices' institutional contexts and cultural traditions are essential for the intended results or solutions.

Findings have shown varied perceptions of diversity and inclusion implementation from senior management across different regional contexts. For example, findings from Australia showed a more critical view of diversity and inclusion implementation. One possible reason for this is that the gender-centric approach to diversity limits attention to other equally important diversity factors in the regional context such as cultural diversity. Opinions from the interviews conducted in India indicated that diversity and inclusion initiatives reinforced the diversity that is already embedded within the cultural, regional and caste systems that prevail in the Indian society. Findings from Vietnam indicated a uniformly high level of favourable perceptions among senior managers. It can be concluded that diversity and inclusion is bound to be an essential workplace issue especially in the regional offices of Australia and India where the institutional understanding of diversity is quite advanced. Vietnamese senior managers appeared to be more accepting of D&I because of its recent implementation in the company, with the exception of women who perceived discrimination as a major issue.

In terms of gendered responses, it is significant to note that female respondents perceived the existence of greater inequality among women regardless of region and of action taken to address it. Findings consistently showed that females perceived more items as 'needing improvement' and as 'areas of concern' compared to males. It can be concluded that while the company strives to focus its diversity and inclusion initiatives for female employees, the outcome of its initiatives appear to fall short of expectations among women senior managers. It may also be true that the company has to further its understanding on the expectations and needs of women as well as review the impacts of the existing organisational practices.

A lot of diversity research has focused exclusively on gender rather than other broader dimensions (Broadbridge, 2008; Jonsen, Maznevski, & Schneider, 2010; Kossek & Zonia, 1998; Vo & Stratchan, 2010). Similarly, this research focused on gender as the key diversity dimension of perceptions among senior managers across the three regions. The findings showed that other aspects of diversity that might be relevant from the local context were overlooked because of the gender-centric measure of diversity. For instance, the ageing workforce was mentioned in Chapter 3 as a growing concern in the Australia region, yet it was not a company priority. Vietnamese women were concerned

about the limited opportunities for career growth because their roles were limited to functions traditionally associated to women, such as administrative work, HR and marketing. The India region could further increase the slots for additional women in the senior management level, increase female sales managers and continue to provide employment for "specially-abled people".

Findings across the three regions showed that generally, senior managers had favourable perceptions across the regional offices of the company in India, Australia and Vietnam. The strength of diversity and inclusion was found in having a strong company vision, policy and values, particularly on respecting different individuals. The value of respect is also evident at the individual level based on interactions between the senior managers and their immediate managers. In addition to respect in the workplace, having equal opportunity across the organisation was also perceived as strength.

At a more specific level of practices, senior managers perceived diversity and inclusion differently regionally. Although the company has a formal D&I policy that is widely communicated across the company and with the commitment from top management, the perceptions of senior managers on the implementation were different across the three regions and according to gender. For example, the number of items perceived as strengths by senior managers in Vietnam was greater than the items perceived as strengths by senior managers in Australia and India. Moreover, the number of items perceived as opportunities for improvement and areas of concern by Australia senior managers, was greater than those who responded in India and Vietnam.

Comparatively, it can be concluded that Vietnam senior managers are optimistic about diversity and inclusion, whereas India and Australia senior managers are more sceptical. This may be partly because diversity is integral to the societal context of every reality for Indian senior managers. For the Australia region, a major driver for diversity and inclusion was legal compliance to Australian law. The metrics used to measure the outcome continued to be focused on gender rather than other aspects such as ethnicity or ageing workers.

9.1 Limitations of Research

This research has provided organisational-level (meso) results on the implementation of diversity and inclusion in regional branches of a multinational corporation in Asia. It has also sought to gather information at micro level and looked at macro factors to

explain the divergent perceptions. However, this research has its own limitations that may restrict the capacity to generalise the results.

The narrow and limited sample of survey results among senior management raises concerns regarding the generalisability to other members of the organisation such as middle managers and 'rank and file' employees. In addition, the research would have been enhanced by the inclusion of more interviews of the senior managers to deepen their responses on the company survey and provide more information to develop the findings.

This research focused on measuring perceptions to provide some indication on the outcome of diversity and inclusion policies and practices. While perceptions provided indications of satisfaction about diversity management, other organisational measures such as turnover, promotion of female and males and recruitment from within or outside the company, or job satisfaction could be correlated to provide a more in-depth assessment. Future research would also benefit from a broader set of variables considered to measure the outcomes of inclusion, such as employee engagement scores, in addition to the organisational factors mentioned above.

Finally, the changes in the company's organisation structure and leadership during the period of data collection resulted in practical difficulties collecting data from other regions within Asia and in distributing questions to senior managers in India. Hence, this confined the analysis of some questions to Australia and Vietnam and prevented a more robust comparative analysis of results.

9.2 Key Contributions of this Research

The contributions of this research in the field of diversity management will be discussed in this section. First is its contribution to the theory of diversity that is related to the relational framework advocated by Syed and Ozbilgin (2009), which focuses on the macro, meso, and micro context of diversity. Second is its contribution to diversity management research in Asia, which this research offers as a starting point. Lastly is its contribution to research methodology through the experiences as an insider-researcher.

9.2.1 Contribution to Theory

This research shall add to the empirical data that supports the relational framework developed by Syed and Ozbilgin (2009) and called for by Tatli (2011) through which diversity management can be understood from macro, meso, and micro contexts.

Findings analysed a multi-layered practice of diversity management in three regional offices within a single organisation. This could be considered a first step in expanding the use of the relational framework in future organisational diversity research.

The macro level aspects of diversity were analysed through the relevant legal, historical, and socio-cultural structures for India Region, Australia Region, and Vietnam Region. The meso level aspects were examined through the organisational context focused on diversity and inclusion practices implemented by each region and analysed in the finding chapters. The policies and practices represent directives from the company headquarters and transported to the regional offices outside of the US. With this process comes the challenge of having locally relevant approaches to diversity management at the regional level. The micro-level aspects were assessed by analysing the perceptions of senior managers to diversity and inclusion policies and initiatives, and comparatively examined these against the standards set by the company. While the diversity dimension was limited to gender, this study is a good starting point to apply the relational model; providing a significant contribution to a multi-layered theory of diversity and inclusion.

Findings from this study will support the potential benefits offered by the relational model: firstly, it provides perspectives on diversity management that include some analysis of the societal context and organisational practice; and secondly, it offers a perspective from the senior managers whose role is pivotal in leading and driving diversity and inclusion within the organisation.

Finally, this research shall contribute to the field of global diversity management and makes a specific and significant contribution to gendered international human resource management. At the core of this study, the findings reflect the perceptions of senior management and suggest key gender issues affecting women plus regional issues specific to the context of their work environment.

9.2.2 Empirical Contributions to the Field of Diversity Management

This study bridges a gap in the field of diversity research by providing empirical data on the practice of diversity management from the perspectives of senior management within a multinational corporation in Asia. These perspectives were examined based on five categories that enable the organisation to demonstrate diversity and inclusion: 1) diversity vision and values; 2) diversity and inclusion initiatives; 3) satisfaction related to diversity and inclusion; 4) leadership and management of diversity; and 5) immediate

manager support of diversity and inclusion. The assessment criteria for the findings were based on the company categories of strengths and weaknesses.

The literature review revealed a scarcity of empirical research on how organisations in Asia actually practice diversity and inclusion. Diversity management literature has primarily focused on US or European experiences, which may not be entirely applicable in Asia. Significantly this research extends the limited work on diversity and inclusion to non-western countries and underscores the need to better understand how historical and socio-cultural factors influence diversity and inclusion, and to incorporate these macro aspects into corporate policy, allowing for more creative and relevant implementation within MNCs.

9.2.3 Contributions to Research Methodology

This research shall add to the existing scholarly work for "insider- researcher". As defined in Chapter 4, insider research is a research done by members of the organisation within their own community or organisation. Insider-research has received a lot of critical attention (Coghlan, 2007; Costley, Elliott & Gibbs, 2010) in view of the subjectivity of research outcomes. The researcher's main concerns as an insider-researcher were to keep an open mind about what was espoused by the company and what was real, and to have someone in higher management who will support the study. These concerns came with the tension of ensuring the researcher's superiors and colleagues did not perceive the researcher's position as a means to complete the study. Balancing the role as a researcher and maintaining credibility as a Senior HR Officer were extremely important throughout the research. Likewise, obtaining the necessary permissions, adhering to approval protocols and respecting the confidentiality of information were necessary.

The extent of the researcher's role as an insider-researcher may also be viewed as a participant observer. O' Reilly (2009) describes participant observation as a research method used in ethnography that involves taking part as a member of the community while making mental and then written, theoretically informed observations. As a member of the senior management team, the researcher sought to understand the issues about diversity and inclusion by acknowledging that perspectives of other senior managers were not wrong but simply different. Instead of writing the researcher's own observations, the researcher conducted the study through survey, interviews and review

of organisation documents to minimize biases in describing what diversity inclusion meant to senior managers.

The researcher's experience as a participant observer or an insider researcher highlighted that insider-research may be a practical and an ideological decision depending on the role of the researcher within a particular organisation or community. It underscored the responsibility of the researcher to the organisation and participants, and emphasized the strengths of using mixed methods to describe senior managers' perceptions in different contexts within a single organisation.

Future researchers who plan to use a similar approach will learn how flexibility must be applied in the data collection process in order to answer the research questions. As demonstrated in this research, sustaining the researcher's credibility through ethical and collaborative approach with key informants will be an important source of guidance for future researchers. This research showed that trust is not easily achieved. The status earned by insider researcher has to be sustained with continuous building of rapport and humility.

9.3 Implications for Practice

This research highlighted underlying disparities between what the company espouses about diversity and the implementation of diversity and inclusion practices. To some extent the company studied had been successful in communicating its policies and values about diversity, but the detailed results showed that regional and gender differences of perceptions still exist among senior managers. For example, dissatisfaction prevailed regarding promotion, recruitment, personal recognition and involvement in decision-making. These findings suggest the importance of congruence between what the company envisions and the actual implementation of policies and practices. It is hoped that this research is of interest to practitioners as well as researchers. At the very least, senior managers' perceptions at the workplace level provide an important indicator of the company's diversity management. The results also suggest other important perceptions need to be taken into account in development and delivery of D & I policy, such as those of non-managerial employees and other stakeholders. Perceptions about who really benefits from diversity and inclusion programs have important implications for the success or failures of such programs.

Human resource professionals and diversity leaders can readily incorporate diversity and inclusion into existing interventions and practices such as training of new hires, seminars and company activities that can serve as springboards to discuss and explore individual perceptions or reactions to diversity and inclusion. Aside from having customised programs or activities within the company, each region or branch of a multinational company can be encouraged to develop a local diversity policy in support of the corporate policy, thus allowing for more creative and relevant implementation.

9.4 Implications for Future Research

Diversity management research is a highly contextualised issue, yet it has mostly focused on individual attributes and fragmented organisational responses. Currently, the existing literature provides snapshots of disconnected aspects of diversity management in organisations, many of which have come from US-based organisations. Therefore, future studies could focus on a more comprehensive study considering the relational framework of diversity management and linking the broader context to organisational results. The relational framework brings together important factors connecting macro, meso and micro levels that could help analyse and better understand the uniqueness of particular diversity management implementation. Future studies could also investigate perceptions on a wider scale involving management and non-managerial employees. Although there is no single best practice of diversity management, research on organisational practices that focuses on multi-level analysis would provide a benchmark against which possible theories could be developed to guide future implementation.

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Appendix A: **Case Study 1 Questionnaire**

Dear Colleague:

My name is Pita Ponce-Pura HR Manager of "SBC" Philippine Branch. I am currently involved in a doctoral research addressing diversity and inclusion in the workplace. This paper is being done as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for my PhD at AUT University in New Zealand.

This survey was sent to you by an external research group to avoid any conflict of interest with my association with SBC and to keep the anonymity of the participants. Your honest and candid answer to all the questions will be valuable in this research. Please be assured of the confidentiality of your response. Only the aggregate data will be shared with me.

Thank you very much for your support.

Pita Ponce-Pura

Research Title: Perceptions of Senior Managers about Diversity and Inclusion Practices in a MNC

Instructions to the Participants

This questionnaire is divided into three parts: Part 1 – Demographic Profile; Part 2 - Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace and Part 3 – Diversity and Inclusion and Inter group Relations.

Part 1 - Demographic Profile	
1. What is your job title?	
2. What is your department?	
3. What is your market unit?	
4. What is your job level or band level?	
5. How long have you been in the company?	
6. How long have you been in your current job?	
7. What is your nationality?	
8. What is your gender?	
9. What is your marital status?	
10. How old are you?	

The following statements indicate your perception about diversity and inclusion. Kindly indicate your agreement – disagreement using the following scale:

1 - Strongly Disagree

2 - Disagree

3 - Slightly Disagree

4 - Neither Agree nor Disagree

5 - Slightly Agree

6 - Agree

7 - Strongly Agree

Part 2 : Diversity and Inclusion in the Workplace		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	The company believes in diversity and inclusion.							
2	This company is genuinely committed to diversity and inclusion.							
3	This company has a comprehensive program on diversity and inclusion.							
4	The employees are aware of diversity and inclusion.							
5	I understand the concept of diversity and inclusion.							
6	Different talents are valued in this organisation.							
HR Practices								
7	This company makes special effort to recruit women.							
8	This company makes special effort to recruit members of different ethnic background.							
9	The company makes special effort to promote qualified women employees.							
10	The company makes special effort to promote qualified employees regardless of their ethnic background.							
11	The company provides training and development to its employees regardless of position and rank.							
12	The company has strong policies against gender discrimination.							
13	The company rewards its employees based on performance							
14	The company recognises the individual work life balance							
15	The company provides policies that address biases, prejudice and discriminatory issues.							
16	I have experienced discrimination or being discriminated against because of my gender.							

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	I have experienced discrimination or being discriminated against because of my age.							
18	I have experienced discrimination or being discriminated against because of my nationality.							
19	I have experienced discrimination or being discriminated against because of my rank.							

Part 3 – Diversity and Inclusion and Inter-group Relations		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Communication								
20	I frequently receive communication about organisational changes from management higher than my immediate supervisor							
21	My manager communicates the goals and priorities of the organisation.							
22	I am often the last to know important changes in the organisation							
23	Information about company financial performance is often shared with employees.							
24	My supervisor does not share information with me.							
25	I am always invited to informal social activities and company social events.							
26	My co-workers openly share work-related information with me.							
27	I find it difficult to ask for work-related information from my co-workers.							
28	The people I work with talk to each other to get the job done.							
Decision Making								
29	I have influence in decisions taken by my department.							
30	I am able to participate in decisions that affect my work.							

31	Employees have the authority to make decisions at work.							
32	I often have to consult my supervisor regarding decisions about how to go about my work.							
33	Employees are rarely consulted in problem solving and decision making in matters that involve their jobs and working conditions.							
34	My supervisor often asks my opinion before making important decisions in the department.							
35	I am often invited to contribute my opinion in meetings with management other than my immediate supervisor.							
36	I am often asked to contribute in planning social activities not directly related to my function							
Conflicts								
37	Personality conflicts often interfere with task performance.							
38	My co-workers frequently disagree about ways to complete the tasks.							
39	I find it difficult to engage my co-workers to get the job done.							
40	I am often frustrated with the time and resource demands of functionally diverse teams							
41	It is easier to get the job done when working with mangers of the same nationality.							
42	I find it easy to delegate tasks outside my work unit.							
43	I am willing to work with others even if it is not formally demanded.							
44	Inter-department coordination is easy and smooth.							

Appendix B: Case Study 1 Interview

Interview Questions (April 15 2010)

1. Are you aware of diversity and inclusion in the company?
   a. How did you learn about your company's diversity and inclusion strategy?
   b. Aside from yourself do you think employees are aware of diversity and inclusion?

2. Does your company have a diversity and inclusion policy?
   a. What is the company policy on diversity and inclusion?
   b. What procedures (*or processes*) are covered in diversity and inclusion policy?
   c. Does your company policy include discrimination?

3. Is there a particular policy about women in the organisation?
   a. How many women are in your team?
   b. In what ranks are they?
   c. Is there a policy about recruiting and promoting women?

4. Does your company have a diversity and inclusion strategy?
   a. If so, what is the strategy?
   b. Does your company provide diversity and inclusion training program? Can you describe some of these programs?
   c. What diversity and inclusion training program have you attended?
   d. Does your company have any diversity and inclusion activities? Can you give examples of these activities?
   e. What activities have you participated in?

5. What is your understanding of diversity?
    a. What types of diversity have you observed within your company?
    b. What is your experience of diversity? *(note: respondent might be able to share something about cast system, ethnicity or religion.*

6. What is your understanding of inclusion?
    a. In what ways have you observed inclusion being practiced in your company?
    b. What is your experience of inclusion *(note: respondents may be able to answer this if they have a good understanding of inclusion – this question is also probing experience of exclusion)*

7. How is diversity and inclusion demonstrated when it comes to communicating within your company?
    a. How easy do you find it to get information within and outside of your department?
    b. What kinds of information are shared in your company?
    c. Do you think this information is sufficient to get the job done?
    d. Do you think this information is sufficient to make decisions in your job?
    e. From whom do you receive information about organisational changes?

8. How is diversity and inclusion demonstrated in decision making?
    a. What level of decision do you make in the company?
    b. Are you consulted by other departments before they make work-related decisions? If so, can you share some examples?
    c. Are you involved in decisions outside of your department? If so, can you share some examples?

9. How does diversity and inclusion affect everyday interaction within the company?
    a. Describe your interaction with peers
    b. Describe interaction with managers
    c. Describe interaction with direct reports?