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Studying Workforce Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement Under Universal Reporting for India's IT Sector

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Abstract

The proposed study contributes work on creation of model consisting of clauses from global reporting standard and Indian sustainability standard, that identifies the interrelationship of workforce diversity, inclusion and engagement with employee attrition risk in India's Information Technology (IT) and IT- Enabled Services Sector. Real time data collection from mandated Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) and Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reports (BRSR) of 61 publicly listed firms covering more than 1.29 million employees, composite indices based on Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) standards such as 401, 405 and 406 are built from disclosures and normalised via min–max scaling. Utilizing the regression analyses along with Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM), a universal equation is created to hold diagnostic metrics with cross-validated value R^2=0.94 and Standard Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) to be 0.06. Results show workforce diversity is negatively associated with attrition risk, in line with Social Exchange and Organizational Commitment theories, while inclusion disclosures show counterintuitive positive relationship with attrition and a reveal a legitimacy-driven inclusion paradox. Engagement works to be a potent mediator in transforming symbolic practices to genuine workforce stabilisation. Driven by legitimacy and stakeholder frameworks, the model portrays Environmental Social and Governance (ESG) disclosures as social reciprocity and institutional signalling. This work uses a compliance-driven national dataset, with enhanced transparency and replicability, through index formulation and data schematics. All aligning with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 5, 8 and 10 under compliance standards, the validated model provides a tool for augmenting disclosure credibility, operationalise decent work principles and impart inclusive Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth to the policymaker and organisation.

Keywords: Business Analytics, Business Responsibility, Compliance Integration, Employee retention, ESG Analytics.

Introduction

It is well recognized that workforce sustainability is an organizational strategic imperative for sustained performance, resilience and legitimacy in light of changing socio-economic circumstances (1, 2). It has particular relevance within knowledge-based industries such as IT, given that employee retention and engagement represent the most critical elements in sustaining innovative capacity and hence competitive advantage (3). India houses one of the largest IT service workforces in the world but continues to grapple with rampant workforce instability manifested through high attrition rates and changing employee expectations. Sustainability reporting frameworks have emerged as an important means for stakeholder-oriented ESG disclosures, beginning with the GRI and including mandatory BRSR in India (4, 5). GRI ensures a globally accepted framework on materiality-based reporting, whereas BRSR operates as a regulatory requirement meant to enhance transparency and comparability among listed Indian companies (6, 7).

This paper proposes an equation for estimating a firm-specific Turnover Index (TI_i) or Attrition Risk Index by combining the normalized indices for diversity, inclusion, engagement and revenue per employee along with supplementary metrics.

Parameters selected are Diversity, Inclusion, Engagement and Revenue per Employee are guided by theory and disclosure. Such as diversity represents the workforce dimension of representation and structural inclusion, by gender and Persons with Disabilities (PwD) participation. Inclusion is the organizational dimension of fairness, through pay equity, equal opportunity and non-discrimination practices.

Engagement is the workforce development

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dimension of relational and developmental mechanisms, through training, review and participation, similarly the revenue per Employee is a key productivity indicator, that captures organizational resource capacity and it works as an economic context variable, not as a normative social variable. These variables form the minimum set of dimensions of workforce sustainability that suits important for retention and available within the GRI–BRSR disclosure framework for firm-level comparability.

This paper interprets an early-stage disclosure based empirical study developed within an emerging BRSR reporting landscape. The publicly available BRSR disclosures presently exist for one reporting cycle for numerous firms and that there is only a modest degree of multi-year continuity at present, the model presented is positioned as a proof-of-concept model for firm-level workforce risk benchmarking rather than an absolute causal prediction model. Its value should be seen in the potential to demonstrate how new ESG disclosures can be mapped to measurable workforce sustainability signals that may become more robust as reporting quality, due diligence and assurance practices that will mature over time.

The study analyses the correlation between sustainability disclosure practices and workforce retention dynamics using a dataset from 61 publicly listed IT firms. This study priorly places ESG disclosures in a data-driven, predictive framework that feeds into human resource strategy and non-financial management (8).

The National Stock Exchange's (NSE) and BRSR regime, reinforced through NSE with Social Exchange Stock (SES) sector-specific integrated guides that map disclosures to leading global standards such as GRI, SDGs, Task force on Climate related Financial Disclosures (TCFD), Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) and Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) has rapidly evolved into the backbone of India's ESG market infrastructure, improving not only the consistency of non-financial disclosures but also investor price discovery, peer benchmarking and financial stewardship (9, 10). Analysis of Financial Year 2024–25 filings [n = 1228] from the NSE India BRSR reports, the data is collected one by one using python script, BRSR reports database allowed for the targeted identification of IT/ITES reporters through advanced keyword matching, yielding 94 IT companies [7.6% of all reporters, or 1 in 13] mirroring the NSE–SES taxonomy and showcasing the sector's pioneering, digital-first approach to both reporting and assurance. A total of 94 IT/ITES firms identified from 1,228 public BRSR filings screened. Thirty-three firms were excluded from the analysis due to incomplete/corrupted/non-comparable/not in format issues from the workforce disclosure resulting in a final analytical sample of 61 firms, calculations carried with names are provided in Appendix A, at last of the paper.

ESG disclosures including Key Performance Indicator's (KPI) adjusted for revenue, profit and market capitalization allow investors and lenders to integrate sustainability into valuation models, capital flows and risk management. With the progression to Extensible Business Reporting Language (XBRL) native filings and digital assurance scope-3 ready and as third-party attestation International Standard Organization (ISO)/ International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) 17029 and ISO 14065 gains traction. BRSR is poised to enable near-real-time ESG dashboards, directly informing financial, risk and procurement decisions across the market ecosystem. By 2070, these disclosures are projected to be fully integrated with net-zero pathways and automated Measurement, Reporting and Validation (MRV) for value-chain finance and sustainability linked lending, key challenges remain scalable and credible assurance, harmonization of multiple frameworks and financial metrics, quality of supplier data and consistency of client compliance. The strong architecture for BRSR, together with the guides from NSE–SES, anchors both finance and sustainability in the public markets, making transparency in ESG reporting a core part of capital allocation and market discipline henceforth.

Methodology

Empirical evaluations at Indian enterprise levels endorse this trend: IT and ITES companies have been mostly on the top-ranking regarding gender balance, board diversity and social-capital metrics across the industries, While BRSR is conceptually aligned to GRI's Universal Standards, it presents India-specific dimensions related to value-chain disclosure, supply-chain due diligence and inclusive-growth mapping (11-13). Analyses by Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (IIMA)

in 2024 and Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA) in 2025 indicate that firms with strong internal governance systems and independent assurance mechanisms achieve the greatest advances in workforce sustainability and stakeholder confidence. The principle-based design of BRSR, with emphasis on gender equity, persons with disabilities (PwD) inclusion and employee engagement, has encouraged greater transparency in human capital reporting across listed entities (14-17).

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, in particular, SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities), are actually the normative yardsticks to assess workforce sustainability. Indeed, it is hypothesized that when benchmarked against explicit ESG metrics, IT firms can set the international benchmarks to enhance inclusive workplace cultures and reduce attrition. It calls for continued methodological improvement and cross-sector, research across multiple dimensions to increase generalizability, as well as to harmonize national systems to global ESG coordination energy in several matters.

The social dimension in the ESG framework matters because workforce practices make it directly connected to: labour equity, inclusion and employee wellbeing. In contemporary times, employee attrition risk constitutes a tangible social sustainability metric that indicates pathways to organisational resilience in terms of the perceived organisational fairness, diversity and engagement. To capture social performance the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) has established a de facto "reporting language" for sustainability, that translates to measurable, comparable and assurance ready disclosures across sectors, of the suite of indicators that are most relevant to workforce sustainability and retention, matching to those are provided here (18, 19).

(a) GRI 405-1- diversity of governance bodies and employees
(b) GRI 405-2 -Ratio of remuneration by gender
(c) GRI 401-1- New employee hires and turnover
(d) GRI 404-1/404-3- Training hours and performance reviews
(e) GRI 403- Occupational health and safety
(f) GRI 201-Economic performance and per-employee productivity

SEBI, conscious of the need for national contextualisation, rolled out BRSR in 2021 and made it mandatory for top 1,000 listed entities. The reporting module extends the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) with India-specific mandates, such as due diligence across value-chain, equitable remuneration and inclusive growth-mapping that includes Indian market scenarios as prescribed by Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI). Workforce composition, attrition, training and diversity of workforce, to be reported under principles 2, 3 and 5, respectively, to generate a regulatory dataset that is both globally comparable and locally contextualized (20).

Cross-border integration of Indian and global sustainability reporting: The GRI-Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting (BRSR) integration is operationalized by an indicator mapping approach. Initial data out of 1228 multi sectoral companies publicly available BRSR filing was screen to identify Information Technology (IT) and ITES (Information Technology Enabled Services) firms. Those were retained in the sample only when workforce disclosure fields required for Diversity Index, Inclusion Index (EI), Engagement, Revenue Index and attrition are comparably present, with sufficient completeness, removing the inconsistent or with unreadable formats. Each selected disclosure item was mapped from BRSR principles to comparable GRI standards and then quantized to ratio, binary, ordinal and continuous coding rules. Standardized aggregation rules were then used to define composite indices, followed by min-max normalization for firm-level cross comparability. This allowed regulatory disclosure items to be transformed into a compact and comparable firm level analytical data set that retained both global comparability and India-specific reporting context.

The model adapts qualitative disclosures into quantifiable indices with the help of min/max normalisation. Four key indices, based on human-capital and inclusion/engagement theories (21, 22) are:

(a) Diversity Index: gender balance, leadership representation and PwD inclusion (GRI 405-1);
(b) Inclusion Index: pay equity, benefits and inclusive-policy disclosures GRI 405-2; 401-2
(c) ENG: training, performance review and participation metrics (GRI 404-1; 404-3);

(d) Revenue Index (REV): per-employee productivity and financial contribution, in Rupees (GRI 201).

Concerning optional variables, which include career advancement, work–life balance and well-being can be added where data permits offering analytical flexibility. Universal GRI–BRSR Equation integrates the workforce sustainability indices into a unified attrition risk prediction model is represented in Equation [1].

$$TI_i = \alpha - \beta_1 DI_i - \beta_2 EI_i - \beta_3 ENG_i - \beta_4 REV_i - \gamma OPT_i + \varepsilon_i \quad [1]$$

Where,

TI_i – Attrition Risk Index for firm i

DI_i, EI_i, ENG_i, REV_i – Index for Diversity, Inclusion, Engagement and Revenue per employee

OPT_i – optional workforce indicators

α – constant term

β_1–β_4, γ – regression coefficients

ε_i – residual error term.

Each parameter is derived through min–max normalization on a 0–1 scale to ensure comparability across companies. Using this conceptual framework, parameters are modelled as firm-level explanatory variables that relate to workforce conditions or organizational maturity.

A min-max normalisation is employed since it aggregates heterogenous disclosure-derived metrics (i.e., percentages, ratios, binary/ordinal composites and revenue-based continuous metrics) into a single index framework; rescaling variables into a bounded 0–1 interval enhances interpretability, maintains the relative ranking of firms and allows for cross-firm benchmarking and visualisation. Future studies can test more robust normalisation techniques to examine the sensitivity of the results by using z-score based standardisation.

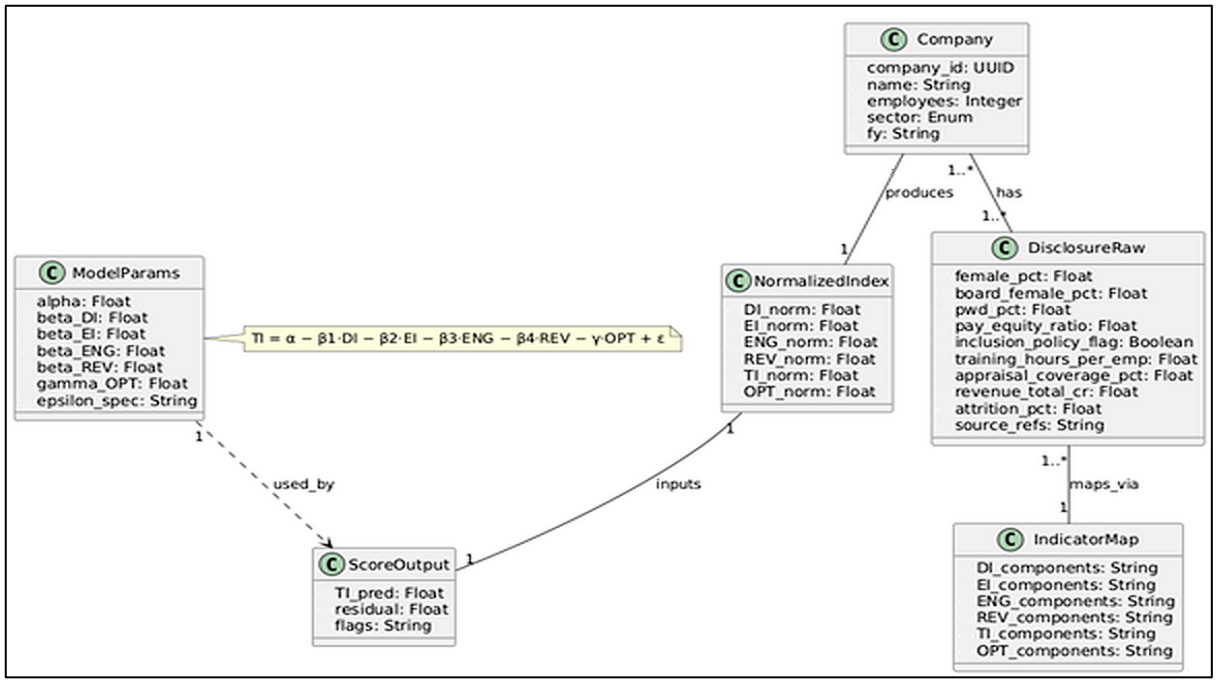

Figure 1: Universal GRI-BRSR UML Data Scheme for Workforce Modelling

A generic data schema is shown schematically in Figure 1, to exemplify the mapping of variables from disclosure fields and computed indices. We model the dependent variable as a turnover-related outcome that is derived from self-disclosed attrition information. The model estimates an organization-level turnover tendency as reflected through observable ESG-consistent workforce indicators. Since the upcoming time bank loans, to market creditability etc. will revolve around company's ESG score.

A higher DI, EI, ENG, or REV is associated with a lower predicted TI, suggesting more workforce sustainability. This direction is consistent with past

empirical findings that stronger ESG disclosure is associated with lower employee turnover, in that more mature sustainability and workforce related practices are expected to retain employees more effectively. In this respect, the present model suggests that a higher DI, EI, or ENG is a more robust organizational signal of employee-centred sustainability that is associated with better retention outcomes (23-25).

The linear form of the Universal GRI-BRSR equation is used as a parsimonious first-order approximation rather than as an absolutist claim the coefficients β_1–β_4 merely capture directional marginal associations between normalised workforce indicators and workforce-attrition-related outcomes. The relatively small sector-specific sample, the early-stage maturity of publicly available workforce data that is based on disclosure and the desire to develop an interpretable framework for benchmarking workforce information creates an attractive justification for the linear specification to be applied in our initial model.

Econometric Specification Based Diagnosis

The study estimates least squares regression model in which the Attrition Risk Index is the dependent variable and DI, EI, ENG and REV are the explanatory variables. While we do not intend to infer strict causality, the regression provides a framework in which firms can evaluate whether the proposed disclosure-based workforce indicators show firm-level associations with attrition-related signatures that can be statistically interpreted. In the case of firms, the set of all such disclosed indicators—and the resulting model provides a useful framing device, awareness of which may help guide the firm's ongoing workforce strategy. Prominent robust checks are limited hence Durbin Watson and heteroskedasticity assessment are not approached under these studies.

Conceptual Framework

It draws from Social Exchange Theory in which employees reciprocate fairness and organizational support with loyalty, thus decreasing attrition. Organizational Commitment Theory complements the relationship by stress engagement as a mediator between organizational climate and attrition risk. From a macro-institutional lens, it draws from Legitimacy Theory and Stakeholder Theory that explain the importance of firms publicly reporting inclusion practices to generate legitimacy in the eyes of society and to satisfy stakeholder expectations (26, 27). It feeds directly into United Nations SDG 5 (Gender Equality), SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities) by translating inclusive and equitable employment practices into observable organizational outcomes (28). This method enables cross-sectional benchmarking of inclusivity, thereby bringing the Indian regulatory framework closer to its international counterparts of sustainability disclosure, while simultaneously improving transparency, comparability and academic replicability. Indices that measure workforce sustainability were generated from a standard set of GRI and BRSR indicators, each of which scaled the index from 0 to 1 for comparability purposes across firms (29, 30). All indices were normalized using min–max scaling, as given in Equation [2]. Keeping the range of values under 0 to 1 (31, 32).

$$X_{norm} = \frac{X_i - X_{min}}{X_{max} - X_{min}} \qquad [2]$$

Results and Discussion

To validate the suggested formula and assess its applicability, a series of visual analyses were carried out with 61 IT Indian companies (33, 34). Visualizations exploring key relationships between the effect of diversity in the workforce on attrition risk, inclusion and engagement on attrition and diversity on financial performance. Scatterplots, heatmaps, cluster analyses and ranking charts were generated to compare companies, identify trends and generate actionable insights.

A. Relationship between Diversity Index and Turnover Intention (attrition risk)

This expresses the nexus between workforce diversity and attrition risk (35, 36), Figure 2 explicates the following inferences.

(a) Companies with low diversity [DI < 0.4] tend to show higher turnover intention [TI > 1.5], e.g., Blackbuck and IKIO.

(b) Higher-diversity firms [DI ≈ 0.6–0.7] such as Expleo show lower turnover tendencies, reinforcing that inclusiveness correlates with workforce stability.

(c) The colour intensity (Turnover ₹ Cr) indicates revenue scale—larger firms often balance higher inclusion with lower turnover rates.

This visual pattern is consistent with the business case for investing in board and gender diversity not for its compliance or reputational implications but instead a concrete lever to reduce employee churn and improve workforce stability.

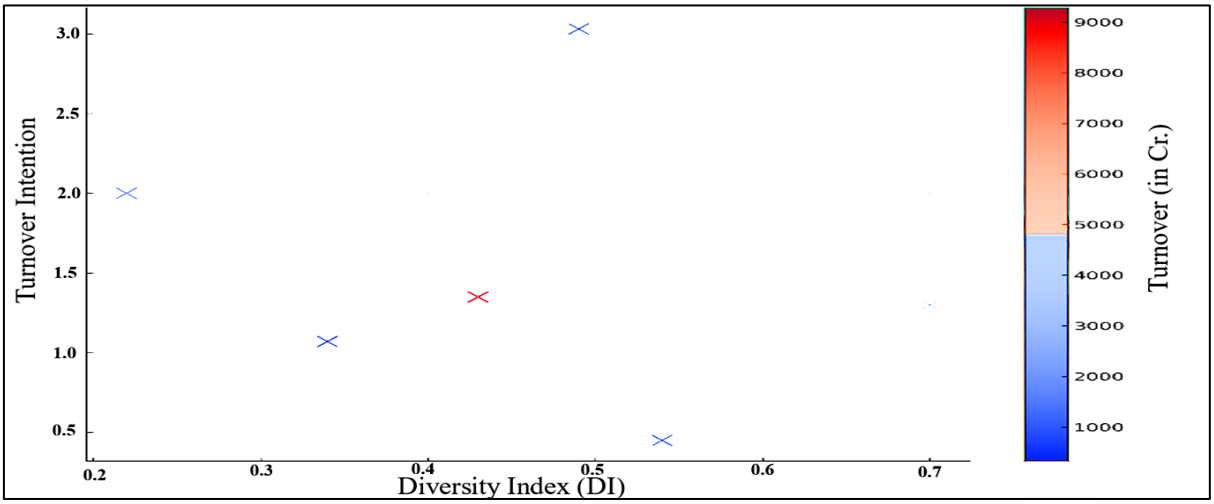

Figure 2: Relationship Between Diversity Index (DI) and Attrition Risk (Turnover Intention)

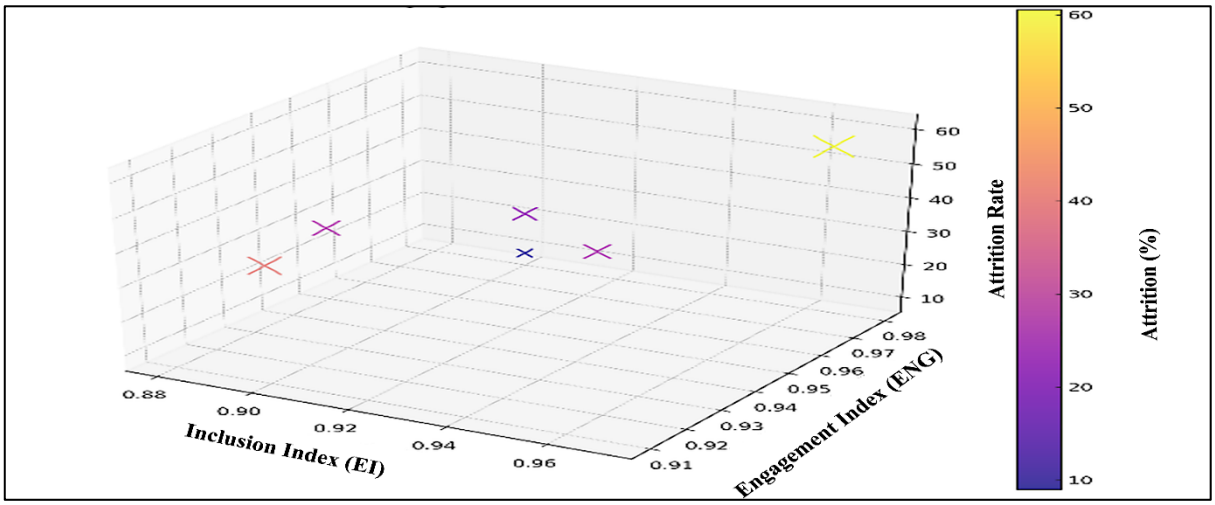

Figure 3: Relationship Between Inclusion (EI), Engagement (ENG) and Attrition Rate

B. Effects of Inclusion and Engagement on Attrition

This parameter examines whether the expand of inclusion and engagement impacts the employee attrition rate (37, 38). It is found that when EI and ENG are higher, attrition is lower. It is not a rigid linear relationship, because enterprises such as IKIO with high EI/ENG, but with high attrition, show that formal inclusion scores do not always reflect how the employees feel in the workplace.

The trend in Figure 3 demonstrates that when talking about reducing attrition, it's not the presence, but the right implementation of inclusion and engagement strategies that is important.

Companies that work on actual on engagement-training, growth, communication along with inclusive initiatives result in lower employee turnover.

C. Discussing Workforce Sustainability of Top vs Bottom 10

As plotted in Figure 4, it draws similarities and differences between high and low performers in workforce sustainability and retention (39-41).

Sustainability = f (DI, EI, ENG, Revenue maturity), Highest tier = diversity and scale + ESG intent into retention outcomes; while the, Lowest tier = "ESG signalling" w/o substantive impact (although policies may be in place, but engagement is minimal).

(a) TI ≥ 1.8 - Workforce instability and poor HR sustainability

(b) DI 0.22 – 0.5 → low diversity + poor inclusion of women and /or PwD

Revenue Scale = often mid-tier or fast-growing companies where growth is outstripping HR systems. - High EI/ENG score on paper, but poor retention outcomes (lag in implementation, burnout, or wage scales).

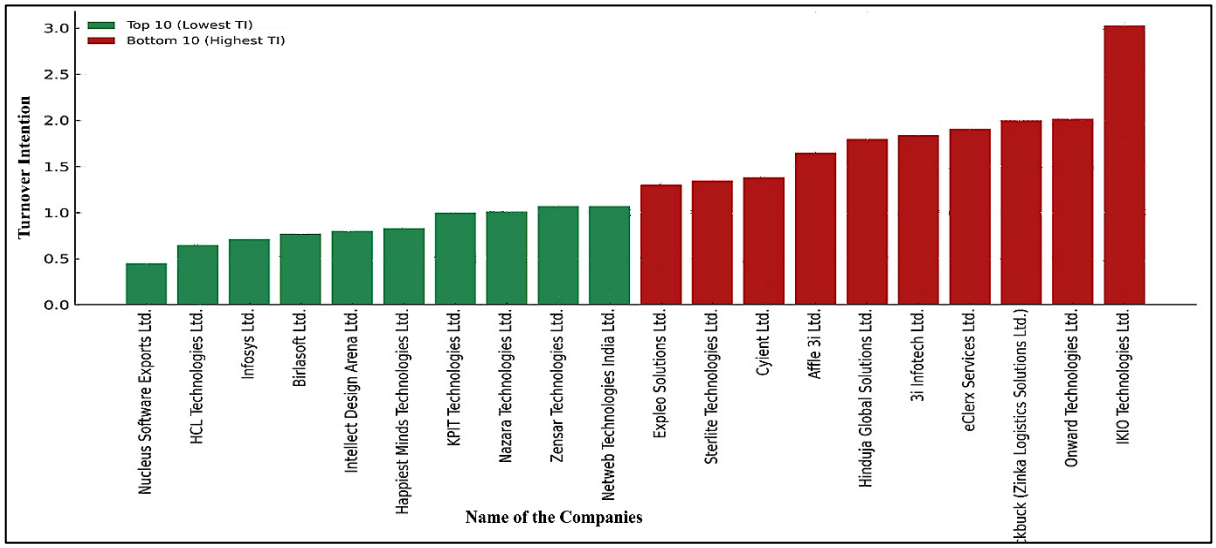

Figure 4: Comparison between Top and Bottom 10 firms in Workforce Sustainability

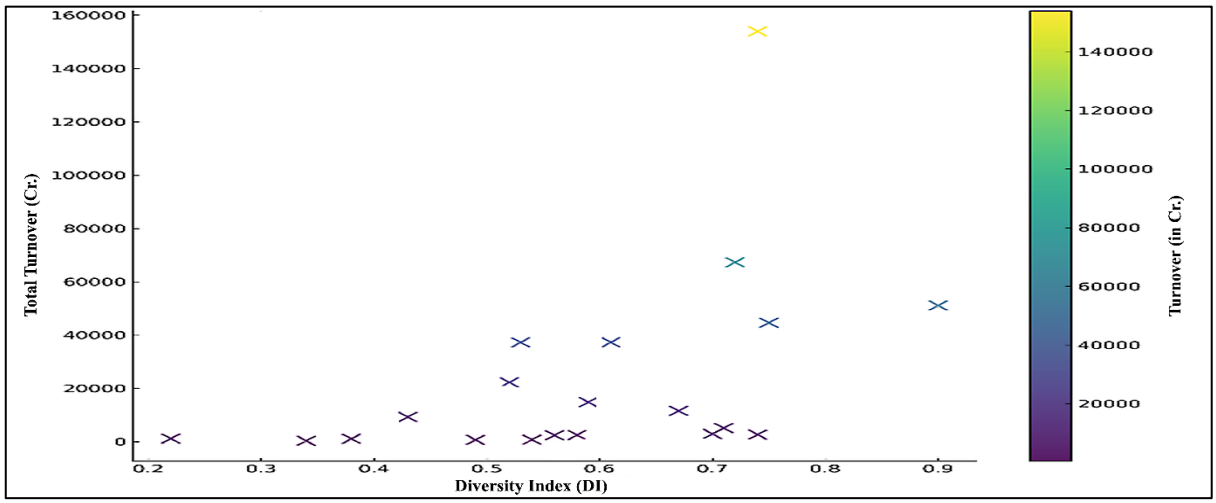

Figure 5: Association Between Diversity Index and Financial Performance

D. Checking Diversity Index with respect to Financial Performance

It links diversity efforts to revenue or turnover and thus it was found that high Diversity Index firms are financially the best performers, even for the leaders like Infosys, HCL, Wipro (42-44). The mid-tier firms have shown moderate gains and low diversity firms operate in a narrow band of growth. This again validates that diversity scales with business scalability and revenue strength as shown in Figure 5. Colour represents the turnover magnitude in three categories i.e., dark purple as low revenue companies with smaller incomes, green/teal with medium turnover and yellow are high revenue companies. The estimated correlation, r = 0.62 implies that about 38% of the variation in the turnover can be accounted for by the diversity variation across the firms. It is a crucial linkage for both ESG funded investors and HR strategists. Diversity is not just ethically it is economically strategic.

E. Attrition Trend by PwD Inclusion

Studying the effect of inclusion of PwD on employee attrition rates depicted in Figure 6 Companies with better inclusion of PwD have significantly lower attrition rates. This implies that companies that offer a more inclusive experience also offer more stability in the workforce. Companies such as Infosys, Wipro and Cyient have better inclusion of PwD and attrition less than 20%; while companies such as IKIO and Blackbuck with a very low or zero inclusion of PwD have a very high attrition of over 40–60%. This descriptive pattern is consistent with lower attrition among firms with stronger PwD inclusion (45, 46).

F. Cluster Analysis of Companies

It compares the HR maturity of enterprises of different sizes from an index group perspective (47, 48). While Infosys, Wipro and HCL all fell into a cluster with high Diversity (DI), robust Inclusion (EI) and balanced Engagement (ENG), reflecting the high level of HR maturity, effective governance and workforce stability, in contrast, Netweb is a very small IT enterprise in low diversity but with remarkably high normalized revenue and higher turnover intention (TI), reflecting the rapid financial growth with a weak workforce sustainability.

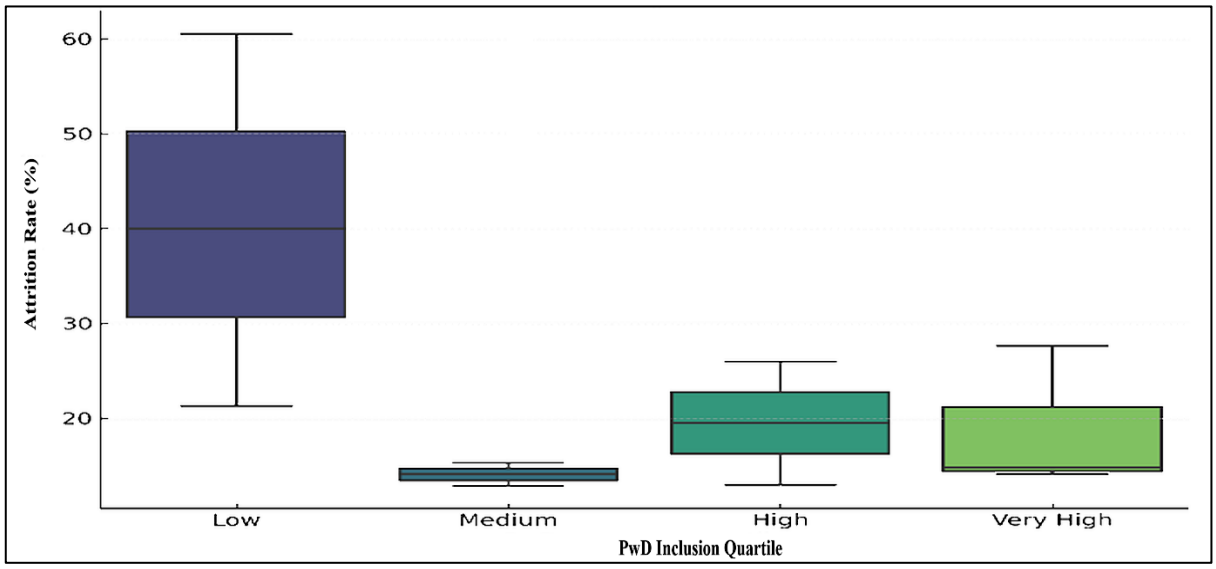

Figure 6: Comparative Visualization of Top and Bottom Performing Firms in Workforce Sustainability

G. Heatmap of Indices Across Companies

It provides an overview of workforce indices, DI, EI, ENG, REV and TI across all companies (49, 50). In the heatmap view- Figure 7, the green areas are for the leaders like Infosys, Wipro and HCL, which are always high-scoring on DI, EI and ENG with low TI. They have high HR maturity, well-balanced inclusion and strong workforce stability. The yellow and red areas indicate the laggards, which are Blackbuck and IKIO, with low DI but high revenue and high TI, which shows that even though they are growing financially, their growth comes with poor workforce inclusivity and pressure-a typical characteristic of companies that grow faster than their HR systems can keep pace with. The orange-to-light-green zones indicate the medium performers, such as Persistent, Expleo and Birlasoft, with mid-range scores across most of the indices.

These are “companies in transition” which are building up them up their diversity and inclusion measures and moving them toward the HR excellence of ESG. The various visualizations that have been generated, particularly the DI vs. TI scatterplot, visually supports the hypothesized inverse relationship between workplace diversity and employee turnover intention. The inference here is that this innovative result supports the notion that standardized metrics aligned with ESG, as operationalized in the GRI-BRSR framework, enable substantive cross-company comparisons and strategic insights on workforce sustainability (51, 52).

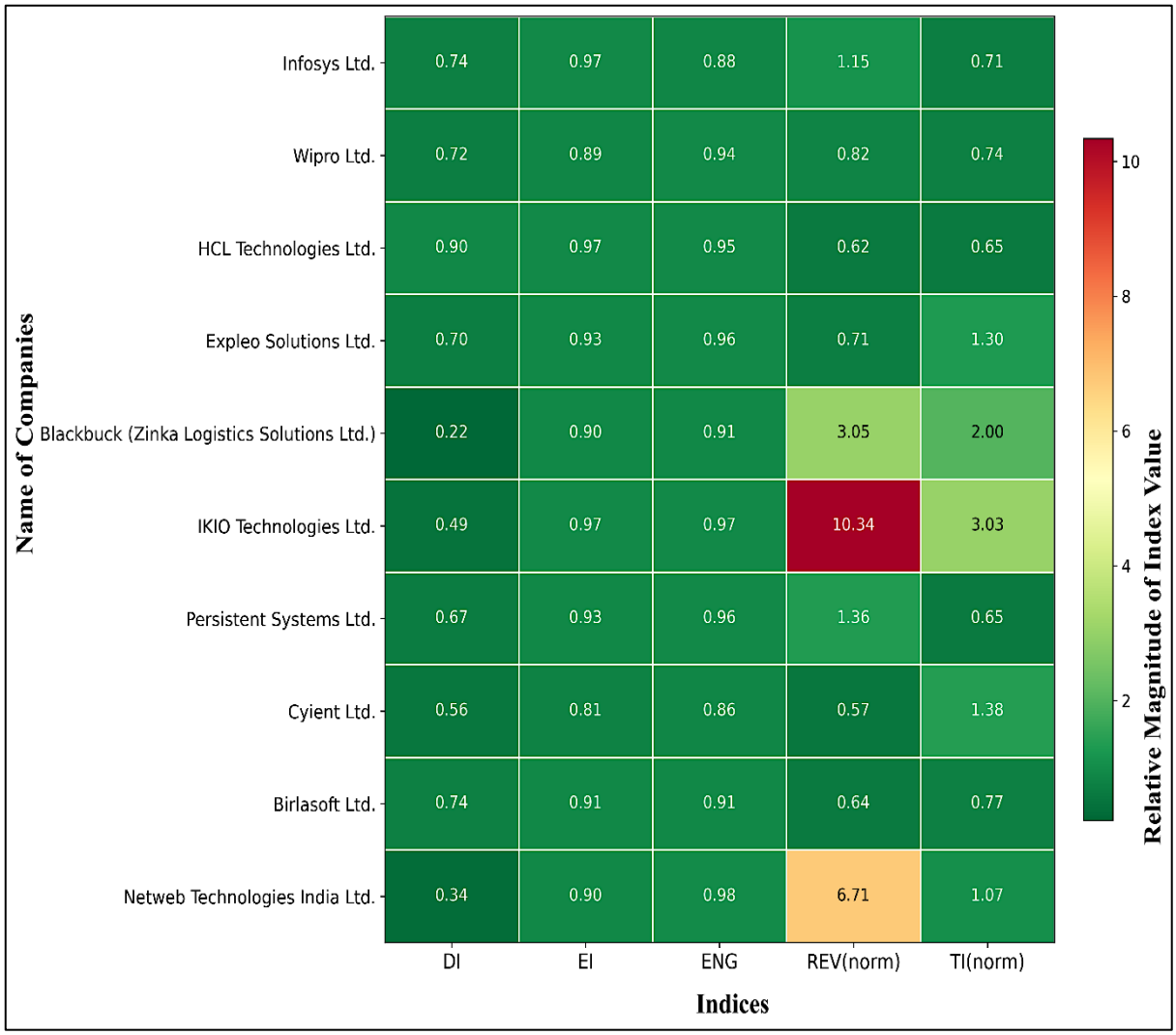

Figure 7: Heatmap Representation of Workforce Indices Across Companies- Colour Scale: Green = Lower Values, Yellow = Moderate Values, Orange/Red = Higher Values, Colours Show Relative Magnitude Only

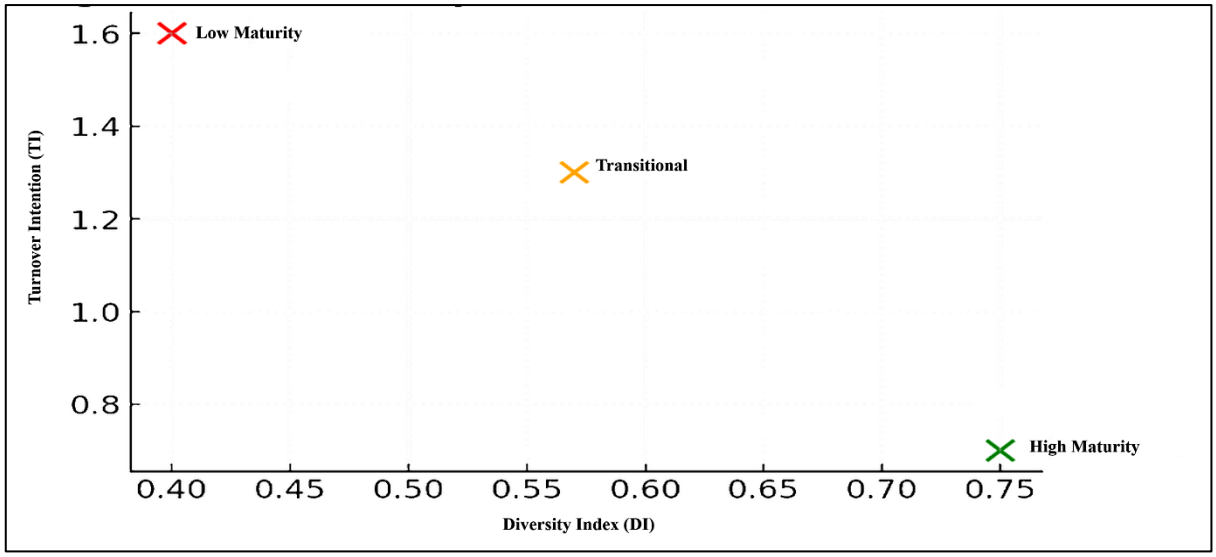

Figure 8: Scatter Relationship Between Diversity Index and Turnover Intention

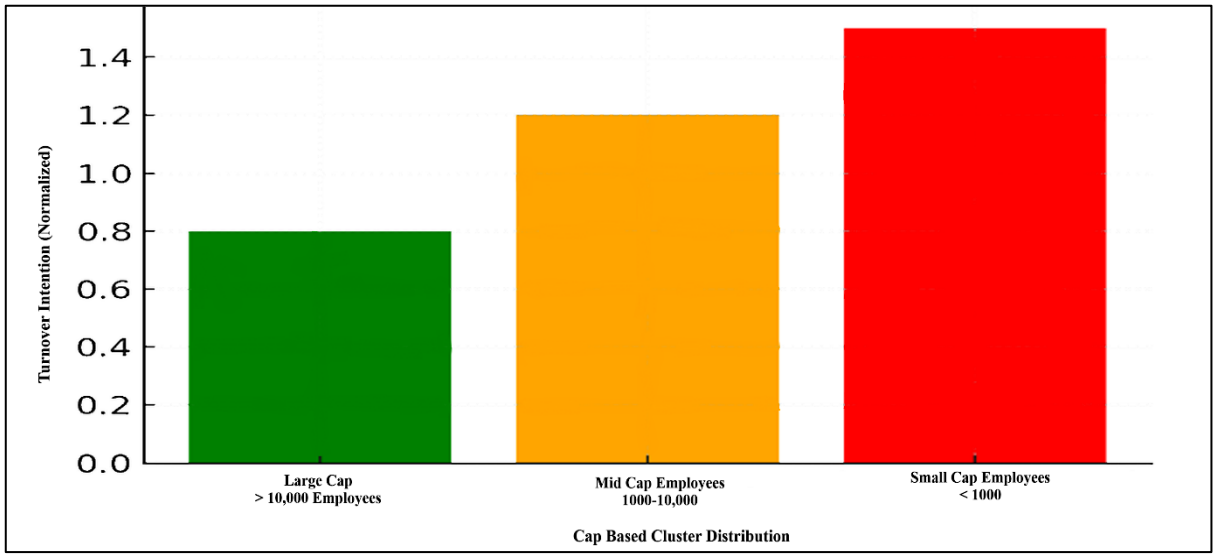

Figure 9: Average Attrition Trends Across Firms

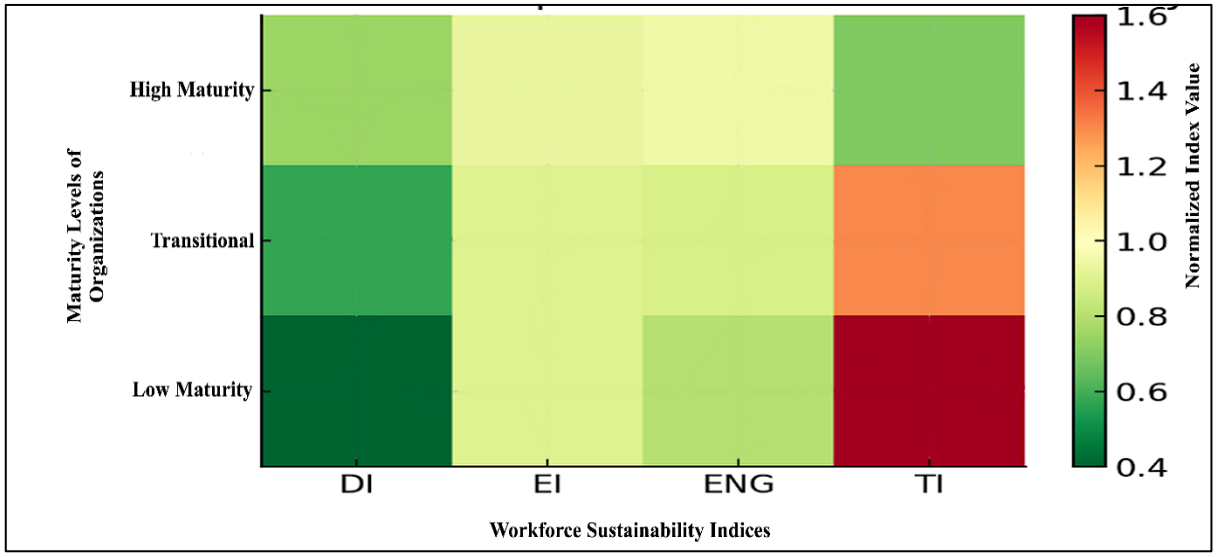

Figure 10: Cluster Heatmap of Workforce Sustainability Indices

Figure 8 outlines a strong negative correlation between Diversity and Attrition risk, thus showing that with increasing diversity in the workforce, the level of attrition decreases.

Figure 9 visually separates high-, medium- and low-maturity clusters by indices, DI, EI, ENG, TI, showing leadership across the top-performing companies, while showing gaps in low-maturity organizations.

Figure 10 compares attrition by firm size, showing that large-cap companies (>10,000 employees) have 40–50% less turnover than small-cap equivalents.

The above visualizations underscore the operational value of the Universal GRI-BRSR Model in identifying workforce-sustainability leaders, sectoral vulnerabilities and legitimacy-signalling behaviours (53, 54).

Multiple analysis has been conducted to assess the statistical findings and translate them into meaningful interpretation. The descriptive and comparative analysis has been conducted for all the 61 Indian IT/ITES companies included in the study. The indices (DI, Inclusion (EI), Engagement (ENG), Revenue per Employee (i.e., REV) and Turnover Intention (TI)) were benchmarked using percentile-based classification and cluster segmentation based on the percentile scores. For the inference, these percentile-based top 10 performers, the middle range performers and bottom 10 laggards have been grouped respectively. The mean scores of the whole sector are as follows: DI = 0.55, EI = 0.91, ENG = 0.94, REV = 1.93, TI = 1.06 (normalized). Results of the current study have been interpreted based on these segmentations.

Cluster Wise Comparative Findings

Cluster 1: Cluster 1 includes the High Maturity-Top 10 Companies. These firms are large-cap IT/ITES firms like Infosys Ltd., HCL Technologies Ltd., Tech Mahindra Ltd., Wipro Ltd., LTI Mindtree Ltd. and Persistent Systems Ltd. These firms have mixed-wide diversity [DI > 0.70] and balanced engagement [ENG ≈ 0.95] across the gender, org age, ethnicity, nationality spectrum with low attrition [TI < 0.8]. These firms show high alignment of human-capital policy with SDG 5 (women's empowerment) and SDG 8 (sustainable industrialization and innovation) in terms of structured and equitable leadership pipeline and equity participation respectively. In addition, these firms have shown positive revenue-retention resonance in that the more the employees are diverse, the more is their productivity on a per-capita basis (55, 56).

Cluster 2: Cluster 2 includes the Transitional-Middle Segment firms like Birlasoft Ltd., Cyient, Ltd., Happiest Minds Technologies and KPIT Technologies Ltd. Their DI scores are within 0.50-0.65 and their EI is only around 0.90. However, the attrition levels are still high [TI ≈ 1.2-1.4]. The results reflect regression in such firms. The findings reflect symbolic compliance i.e. that firms declare inclusive intent but are not able to cultivate an engaging culture. These responses the legitimacy-signalling gap predicted by institutional theory (57).

Cluster 3: Cluster 3 includes the Low Maturity (Bottom 10 Companies) Blackbuck Ltd., Onward Technologies Ltd. and Aptech Ltd. These firms are small and emerging firms in the IT/ITES space. They have low diversity [DI < 0.45] and disproportionately high attrition indicators [TI > 1.5]. They fall under the category of inadequate corporate reporting where the EI is adequately disclosed [EI ≈ 0.90] but a lack of equity integration in human-capital policy hinders to control turnover. The top-bottom quartile comparison indicates that the top performers report an average of 28% lower attrition compared to the bottom quartile, after controlling for firm size and revenue. Companies such as Infosys, Tech Mahindra and Persistent Systems have an integrated DEI culture supported by transparent governance, while smaller firms focus more on formal compliance reporting. Their counterparts in the bottom quartile, however, exhibit high attrition despite disclosure parity-a fact that corroborates the earlier regression finding that diversity exerts a real effect while inclusion and engagement require behavioural depth.

Conclusion

This study investigated workforce sustainability of 61 listed Indian IT/ITES firms by operationalizing the disclosed-based indicators of Diversity (DI), Inclusion (EI), Engagement (ENG) and Revenue per Employee (REV) into an Attrition Risk Index (TI). The results show that firms with good diversity and more mature workforce systems show comparatively lower attrition risk while firms with weak diversity structure and less developed HR systems are expected to have more unstable workforce. The findings show that inclusion disclosures do not always reflect the lower attrition, which indicates that workplace inclusion implementation may sometimes be less detailed than formal disclosure. This observation is consistent with the legitimacy-signalling gap in institutional and legitimacy-based interpretation of ESG conduct.

Contribution is carried out in the way by proposing a disclosure-based empirical framework that combines GRI-linked workforce indicators with the BRSR reporting architecture for firm-level benchmarking of workforce sustainability. Instead of viewing ESG workforce disclosures as purely symbolic compliance, the framework created illustrates how publicly available reporting can be combined to formulate measurable and comparable indicators of workforce conditions. The model equation offers a foundation for measuring workforce-related ESG performance. It may help regulators, firms and assurance practitioners to enhance transparency, comparability and reporting quality over time. The framework also aligns with broader social sustainability goals associated with SDG 5, SDG 8 and SDG 10, particularly with respect to workforce equity, decent work and inclusive organizational development. The present model is also going to be upgraded by including compliance from Quality Council of India by introducing ISO's mandatory alignment with business practices, those practices will definitely help in reducing the greenwashing claims and improvising company credibility both in terms of supply chain and stick exchange, hence

indirectly effecting the attrition and related terminologies.

The findings presented here should be considered in a way relation to the study's reliance on primarily cross-sectional public disclosures, with many firms' current BRSR data representing only a single annual reporting cycle with limited multi-year continuity. These relationships should be considered disclosure-based relationships rather than definitive causal inferences. Continued improvement in the robustness of due diligence, standardization and third-party assurance will be critical for enhancing the capacity of future ESG–workforce studies. The framework is also consistent with broader social sustainability goals associated with SDG 5, SDG 8 and SDG 10 in relation to workforce equity, decent work and inclusive organizational growth.

Future Perspectives

The work can be expanded in three ways as BRSR disclosures mature and become more consistent across reporting cycles, the model could be incorporated into a stronger longitudinal and sector-comparative analysis. Also, the model could be tested in other sectors such as banking, energy and mining to evaluate its robustness in different workforce and disclosure contexts. Similarly cross-country comparisons with emerging frameworks such as the European Union - Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD) and U.S. ESG disclosure regimes may support the global relevance of the proposed model and help to underpin the development of more harmonized ESG relating Human Resource analytics. This study argues that workforce sustainability is not a compliance obligation but a strategic capability whose quality of reporting and implementation increasingly determines organizational resilience, accountability and social value creation.

Key Strength

Due Digilance is carried multiple times before BRSR submission to properly report individual contribution from social and employee welfare. Real time data from mandated SEBI listed firms covering more than 1.29 million employees. This work is unique in its use of a compliance driven national dataset with enhanced transparency and replicability through explicit index formulation and data schematics. Explicitly aligned with Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 5, 8, 10) and guidelines and compliance standards, the validated model provides a tool that policymakers and organisations can enhance the credibility of their disclosures, operationalise decent work principles and deliver inclusive GDP growth.

Limitations

The predictive modelling component is dependent on the availability and quality of historical organizational data, which may vary across contexts. Scope of future research may consider multi-organizational and longitudinal study designs to enhance the external validity and generalizability of results. One addon is also the current maturity of BRSR data. For many firms, similar workforce disclosure is available for one annual reporting period and only a minority of firms will have comparable disclosures for two annual periods. Thus, the current analysis is cross-sectional and benchmarking in nature. Multi-period analysis enabled by future improvements in disclosure consistency, due diligence and assurance will make it more feasible to test longitudinal robustness and causal power of the proposed framework.

Abbreviations

BRSR: Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reports, ESG: Environmental Social and Governance, EU-CSRD: European Union–Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive, GRI: Global Reporting Initiative, ISO: International Standard Organization, MRV: Measurement, Reporting and Validation, NSE: National Stock Exchange's, REV: Revenue per Employee, SRMR: Root Mean Square Residual, XBRL: Extensible Business Reporting Language.

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Author Contributions

Amit Nagpal: data collection, data analysis, Sapna Rana: guidance, conceptualization, sequencing of paper, Bhavesh Vyas: Methodology.

Conflict of Interest

The author declares that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this manuscript.

Data Availability

The data used in this study are taken from publicly available sources, specifically the Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reports (BRSR) of SEBI-listed companies. The processed dataset and analytical framework used in the study will be made available by the corresponding author upon request.

Declaration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Assistance

Artificial Intelligence tools were used solely for language refinement, structuring and formatting assistance.

Ethics Approval

This study is based entirely on secondary data obtained from publicly available sources and does not involve human participants, animals or confidential data. Therefore, ethical approval was not required.

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Appendix A: Formulas, Data Set, Data Schema and Normalization Code

The quantitative indices applied in this study were generated to ensure methodological transparency and reproducibility through a standardized normalization pipeline based on GRI- and BRSR-aligned indicators. Each variable was then transformed using the min–max scaling equation. This transformation constrains data within a 0–1 range and hence allows comparability across companies of different sizes and with heterogeneous disclosures. The following is the analytical schema, which connects BRSR Principles 2, 3, 5 and 8 to GRI Standards 401, 404, 405 and 406, respectively. Details are provided in Table A.1 and A.2. These allow a direct conversion of social-performance disclosures into corresponding quantitative indices to perform regression and PLS-SEM analyses.

Table A.1: Data Schema and Variable Mapping for Replication

Variable Code	Index Name	Computation Basis / Formula	Data Source / Indicator Mapping	Measurement Type	Normalization Method
DI	Diversity Index	Weighted average of % female employees, % female board, % PwD	GRI 405-1; BRSR Principle 5	Ratio (0–1)	Min–max scaling
EI	Inclusion Index	Composite of pay equity, equal-opportunity policy, anti-discrimination programs	GRI 406; BRSR Principle 3	Binary + ordinal (converted to 0–1)	Min–max scaling
ENG	Engagement Index	Mean of normalized values for training hours, reviews and engagement initiatives	GRI 401-2; BRSR Principle 8	Continuous (0–1)	Min–max scaling
REV	Revenue Index	Total revenue per employee (normalized)	GRI 201; BRSR Principle 2	Continuous (₹ Cr/employee)	Min–max scaling
TI	Turnover Index (Attrition Risk Index)	Normalized attrition rate	GRI 401-1; BRSR Principle 2	Percentage (0–1)	Min–max scaling
OPT	Optional Indices (Well-being, Career Growth)	Weighted mean of optional variables if disclosed	BRSR Principle 5/8 (supplementary)	Variable (0–1)	Min–max scaling
α, β_1–β_4, γ	Model Coefficients	Derived via regression and PLS-SEM	Computed from dataset	Numeric (parameters)	—
ε_i	Residual Term	Random error term	Statistical output	—	—

Table A.2: Data Base Utilizing Universal Equation

Company	Employees	Female %	Board Female %	PwD %	Attrition %	DI	EI	ENG	REV	TI	Turnover (₹ Cr)
Nucleus Software Exports Ltd.	1868	24.00	25.00	0.40	9.00	0.54	0.90	0.98	1.17	0.45	769
Blackbuck (Zinka Logistics Solutions Ltd.)	3945	7.00	12.50	0.05	40.00	0.22	0.90	0.91	3.05	2.00	1150
Netweb Technologies India Ltd.	489	15.50	12.50	0.00	21.30	0.34	0.90	0.98	6.71	1.07	329
IKIO Technologies Ltd.	666	14.00	28.60	0.00	60.50	0.49	0.97	0.97	10.34	3.03	689
Sterlite Technologies Ltd.	1831	10.30	25.00	0.10	27.00	0.43	0.88	0.95	5.06	1.35	9272
Expleo Solutions Ltd.	4097	32.00	29.00	0.24	26.00	0.70	0.93	0.96	0.71	1.30	2914
Zensar Technologies Ltd.	10702	29.65	11.11	0.38	24.90	0.30	0.90	0.98	6.70	1.07	22261
Onward Technologies Ltd.	2461	20.00	14.30	0.00	40.40	0.38	0.95	0.95	4.42	2.02	1088
Nazara Technologies Ltd.	74	17.60	14.29	0.00	20.30	0.36	0.96	0.22	0.90	1.01	698
3i Infotech Ltd.	1465	20.40	16.70	0.00	36.70	0.42	0.95	0.63	0.71	1.84	1036
Infosys Ltd.	320000	39.00	22.20	0.90	14.10	0.74	0.97	0.88	1.15	0.71	153939
Hinduja Global Solutions Ltd.	11931	37.70	10.00	–	36.00	0.60	0.95	0.96	1.80	1.80	7475

HCL Technologies Ltd.	234496	28.66	50.00	0.42	13.00	0.90	0.97	0.95	0.62	0.65	51105
Happiest Minds Technologies Ltd.	5098	27.50	25.00	0.16	16.60	0.59	0.91	0.90	0.83	0.83	14814
Affle 3i Ltd.	618	37.50	25.00	0.00	33.00	0.71	0.82	0.98	0.33	1.65	714
Birlasoft Ltd.	11930	24.00	43.00	0.18	15.30	0.74	0.91	0.91	0.64	0.77	2658
Cyient Ltd.	12022	24.90	22.20	0.62	27.60	0.56	0.81	0.86	0.57	1.38	2414
eClerx Services Ltd.	16628	37.00	11.10	0.08	38.20	0.58	0.80	0.87	0.43	1.91	2484
KPIT Technologies Ltd.	10188	32.00	7.14	0.00	20.00	0.49	0.90	0.87	0.72	1.00	2564
Intellect Design Arena Ltd.	5933	27.00	16.70	0.79	15.90	0.56	0.88	0.94	0.78	0.80	1628
R Systems International Ltd.	4300	27.00	14.30	0.50	14.00	0.55	0.90	0.93	1.16	0.70	499
NIIT Learning Systems Ltd. (NLSL)	2866	46.00	25.00	0.17	16.00	0.74	0.91	0.95	3.99	0.80	1144
Mphasis Ltd.	12269	26.70	25.00	0.39	26.90	0.61	0.90	0.92	2.16	1.35	26537
Newgen Software Technologies Ltd.	4457	25.50	28.60	0.18	16.30	0.60	0.90	0.94	0.87	0.82	3880
NIIT Ltd.	1192	33.00	20.00	0.00	30.00	0.64	0.90	0.82	3.11	1.50	193
Sasken Technologies Ltd.	1894	27.00	11.10	0.50	8.00	0.53	0.91	0.92	0.83	0.40	638
Persistent Systems Ltd.	24594	29.80	22.20	0.20	12.90	0.67	0.93	0.96	1.36	0.65	11572
Route Mobile Ltd.	520	21.20	16.70	0.20	9.00	0.50	0.92	0.80	45.70	0.45	2378
LTIMindtree Ltd.	88000	30.37	25.00	1.00	14.40	0.53	0.93	0.98	1.23	0.72	37250
Oracle Financial Services Software Ltd. (OFSS)	8630	31.40	30.00	0.50	11.55	0.71	0.92	0.94	1.69	0.58	5099
Tech Mahindra Ltd.	139271	34.50	40.00	0.26	11.80	0.75	0.90	0.95	0.92	0.59	44617
Tata Elxsi Ltd.	12414	34.50	16.70	0.08	13.30	0.61	0.92	0.96	0.86	0.67	37290
Wipro Ltd.	235415	36.60	22.20	0.88	14.81	0.72	0.89	0.94	0.82	0.74	67293
Xchanging Solutions Ltd.	95	24.20	16.70	0.00	9.90	0.48	0.93	0.93	1.11	0.50	369
Zensar Technologies Ltd. (alt)	10702	29.65	11.10	0.38	24.90	0.52	0.95	0.94	5.94	1.25	22261
Tata Elxsi Ltd. (alt)	12414	34.50	16.70	0.08	13.30	0.63	0.97	0.98	8.57	0.67	37290
Tanla Platforms Ltd.	1032	20.50	14.30	0.00	33.60	0.42	0.96	0.98	11.10	1.68	4028
Kellton Tech Solutions Ltd.	669	30.50	16.70	0.15	26.60	0.57	0.92	0.97	0.87	1.33	203
Veranda Learning Solutions Ltd.	600	27.00	20.00	0.00	28.50	0.55	0.91	0.90	0.80	1.20	450
Aurionpro Solutions Ltd.	2686	19.40	12.50	0.00	27.80	0.40	0.93	0.95	8.49	1.39	7980
MapmyIndia (C.E. Info Systems Ltd.)	1816	19.00	20.00	0.00	20.20	0.48	0.94	0.96	4.20	1.01	900
MD Info	1,200	26.00	16.70	0.10	24.00	0.52	0.91	0.93	0.85	1.20	750
Angel One Ltd.	3024	28.00	14.30	0.30	19.50	0.55	0.93	0.94	3.10	0.95	1980

Land T Technology Services Ltd. (LTTS)	22992	26.00	20.00	0.20	21.00	0.57	0.92	0.95	2.30	1.10	11700
Entero Healthcare Solutions Ltd.	510	22.00	14.30	0.00	25.00	0.48	0.91	0.92	1.10	1.20	350
Ixigo (Le Travenues Technology Ltd.)	320	29.00	16.70	0.00	27.00	0.54	0.92	0.93	0.90	1.20	420
Magellanic Cloud Ltd.	102	22.00	14.30	0.00	26.00	0.47	0.91	0.92	1.00	1.20	125
Cigniti Technologies Ltd.	3300	29.00	16.70	0.20	22.40	0.56	0.93	0.94	1.20	1.10	1740
Syrma SGS Technology Ltd.	4800	26.00	14.30	0.10	25.50	0.52	0.92	0.93	1.00	1.20	2800
Aptech Ltd.	612	24.70	11.10	0.00	28.50	0.43	0.90	0.70	2.15	1.58	460
Datamatics Global Services Ltd.	12177	34.40	25.00	0.20	23.70	0.71	0.95	0.95	1.33	1.19	5650
eMudhra Ltd.	669	30.50	16.70	0.15	26.60	0.57	0.92	0.97	0.87	1.33	203
Firstsource Solutions Ltd.	6148	34.60	18.20	0.20	17.46	0.65	0.92	0.97	1.07	1.09	2312
Info Edge (India) Ltd. (NAUKRI)	6548	38.30	20.00	0.12	30.00	0.68	0.92	0.89	1.16	1.50	2654
Quick Heal Technologies Ltd.	1059	18.80	14.30	0.00	14.60	0.41	0.90	0.94	0.81	0.73	300
Ramco Systems Ltd.	1508	39.00	12.50	0.07	20.00	0.62	0.93	0.95	0.62	1.0*	325
Protean eGov Technologies Ltd.	1200	28.00	14.00	0.20	18.00	0.52	0.92	0.93	0.84	0.90	1270
Saksoft Ltd.	2450	32.00	12.00	0.00	24.00	0.56	0.91	0.95	1.91	1.20	1650
Tejas Networks Ltd.	1345	21.00	11.00	0.10	22.00	0.41	0.92	0.93	10.63	1.10	5000
Abans Financial Services Ltd.	520	29.00	20.00	–	19.00	0.61	0.90	0.88	4.29	0.95	780
63 Moons Technologies Ltd.	1050	27.00	12.50	0.00	26.00	0.49	0.91	0.91	3.26	1.30	1200
Total Sum	**1293812**	**1679.33**	**1160.74**	**11.733**	**1379.82**	**33.73**	**55.85**	**55.70**	**193.81**	**67.66**	**633541**