Human Resources Management In Context

Lecture Title :-
Diversity and Inclusion in HRM

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Masters in
Human Resources Management

Learning Objectives

- Understand key definitions and the strategic rationale for diversity and inclusion (D&I) in HRM

- Explore legal foundations and their implications for HRM

- Recognize sources of bias and examine ways to mitigate them in HR functions

- Apply theoretical frameworks to assess the effectiveness of D&I interventions

Group discussion

"When you hear the terms *diversity, inclusion, equity,* and *belonging,* what comes to mind?

Definitions

Diversity	The presence of differences among people in an organization
Inclusion	Ensuring individuals feel valued, respected, and integrated into the workplace.
Equity	Fair treatment, access, and advancement for all, while recognizing different needs and barriers.
Belonging	A psychological sense of connection, being accepted and welcomed as your full self.

Diversity

Diversity refers to "the presence of differences that include **race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, nationality, socioeconomic status, language, (dis)ability, age, religious commitment, or political perspective**" within a group or organization (Roberson, 2006, p. 212).

Surface-Level Diversity	Deep-Level Diversity
Observable characteristics	Internal, less visible traits
Examples: race, age, gender	Values, beliefs, attitudes, work style
Easier to measure	Harder to detect; reveals over time
Often the focus of compliance metrics	Essential for meaningful inclusion

Key Dimensions of Diversity

Dimension	Description	Examples
Demographic / Identity	Inherent, legally protected, or socially visible characteristics	Race, gender, age, disability, sexual orientation
Cognitive / Psychological	Differences in thinking, perception, and problem-solving styles	Personality traits, decision-making, learning styles
Experiential	Shaped by life history, socio-economic background, and life experiences	Education, work experience, socioeconomic status
Organizational	Differences based on position, function, or work context within the organization	Department, level of seniority, contract type
Cultural	Shared values, norms, and practices shaped by cultural background	National culture, religion, language, traditions

Group discussion

Why is diversity important in Human Resource Management?

Importance of Diversity in HRM

Compliance & Risk Management: Meets legal obligations under equality and anti-discrimination laws.

Innovation & Creativity: Diverse teams bring more varied perspectives, leading to better problem-solving.

Talent Attraction & Retention: Candidates are drawn to inclusive employers that value different backgrounds.

Customer Alignment: Diverse workforces better reflect and understand diverse markets and customer bases.

Team Dynamics & Performance: When managed well, diversity improves collaboration, empathy, and learning.
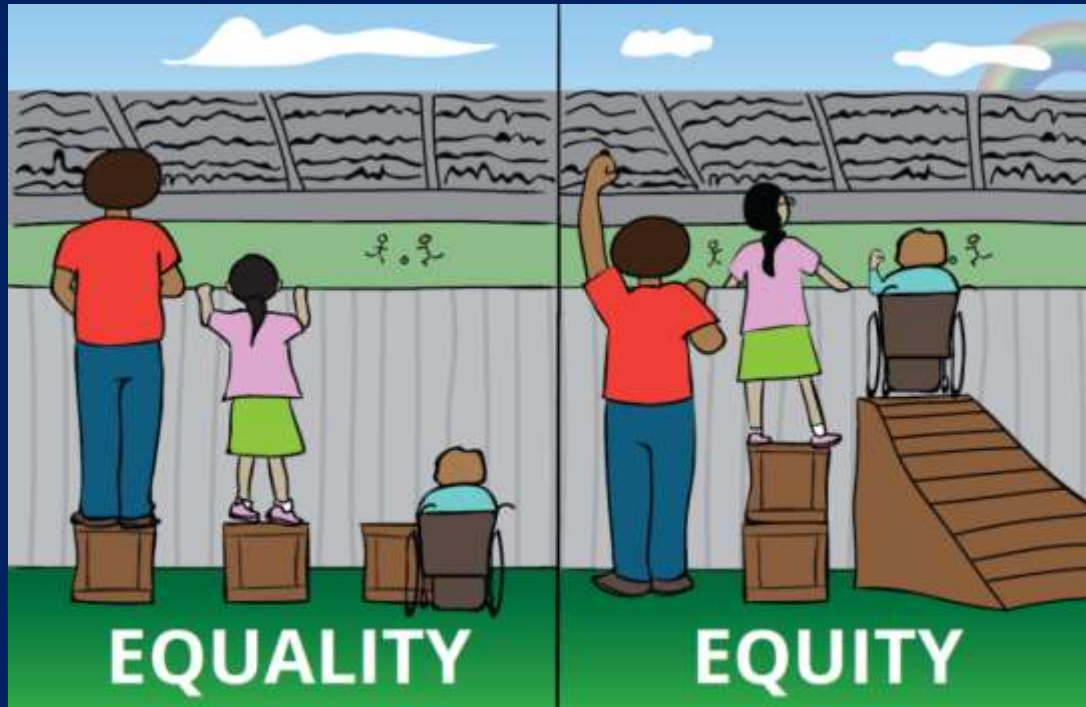
Group discussion

**What is the difference between
'equity' and 'equality' ?**

**Can an organisation have equality but
not equity?**

Equality VS Equity

EQUALITY   EQUITY

- **Equality** implies that everyone should be treated the same, regardless of individual need, context or barriers.

- **Equity** focuses on providing individuals or groups with what they need to succeed to succeed, recognizing and addressing systematic or individual disparities.

Equality VS Equity Examples

Scenario	Equality	Equity
Training Access	All employees are sent the same training materials and expected to complete them in their own time.	Materials are adapted to different learning styles (visual, written, interactive), and frontline staff are given paid time during shifts to complete the training.
Parental Leave	All employees are offered 3 weeks of unpaid leave.	Leave policy includes paid time off based on income level or job role to ensure all parents can afford to take time off.
Workplace Accommodations	One-size-fits-all desk setup for every employee.	Adjustable desks, ergonomic chairs, and assistive tech are provided based on individual needs (e.g., disability, injury).
Promotion Criteria	Promotions are based on time served and hours worked.	Promotion reviews include consideration of outcomes, potential, and individual barriers (e.g., part-time status due to caregiving).

Bias In HR Processes

- What do you understand by the term bias?

- Can you mention some types of bias?

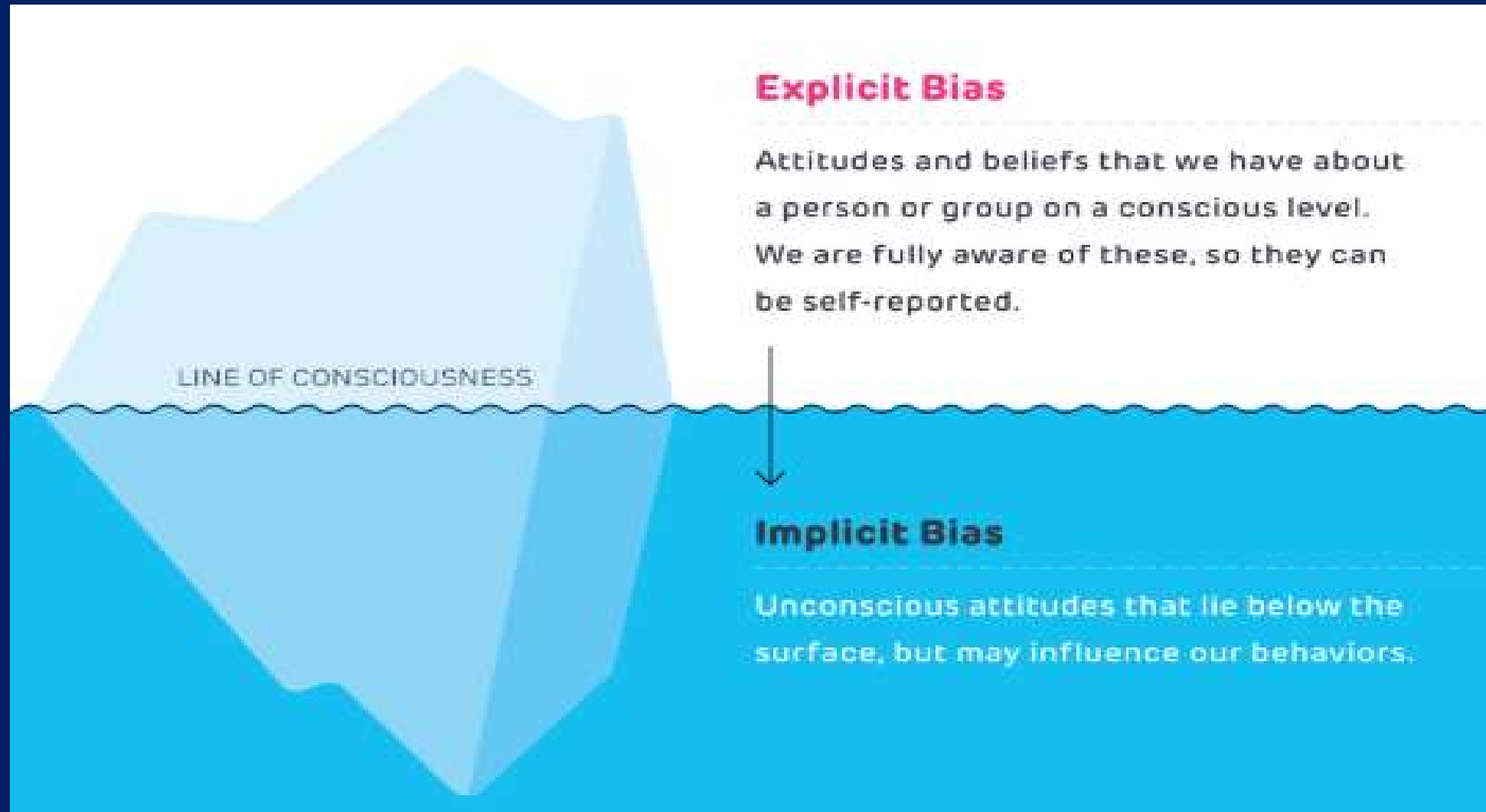- Were you ever a victim of bias at the workplace?

Definition of Bias

"Biases are systematic deviations from normative models of judgment and decision-making that are the result of heuristic strategies used under conditions of uncertainty."— Tversky & Kahneman (1974, p. 1124)

"Bias in HR decision-making refers to systematic and often unconscious tendencies that affect judgments about job candidates and employees, leading to potentially unfair or unequal treatment based on irrelevant characteristics such as gender, race, or age."— Boehm, Kunze and Bruch (2014, p. 604)

Explicit and Implicit Bias

Explicit Bias

Attitudes and beliefs that we have about a person or group on a conscious level. We are fully aware of these, so they can be self-reported.

LINE OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Implicit Bias

Unconscious attitudes that lie below the surface, but may influence our behaviors.

Individual Exercise

- Read scenarios on the provided worksheet

- Determine if bias is present.

- If yes, state whether the bias is implicit or explicit

- Discuss possible HR implications and mitigation steps

Applying Theoretical Frameworks to Assess Diversity & Inclusion

- Applying theoretical frameworks turns Diversity and Inclusion & assessment into a strategic & insightful process that drives real change by :-

- **Provides a Deeper Understanding of Complex Issues**

- **Guides Meaningful and Focused Evaluation**

- **Ensures Holistic and Inclusive Assessment**

- **Links D&I to Organizational Strategy and Outcomes**

- **Supports Evidence-Based Decision Making and Continuous Improvement**

- **Enhances Credibility and Legitimacy**

Social Identity Theory (Tajfel &Turner, 1979)

- **Core idea:** People categorize themselves and others into social groups (e.g., race, gender, nationality).

- **Relevance:** It explains in-group/out-group dynamics, bias, and discrimination, which are central to understanding challenges in diversity and inclusion.

-**Application:** Helps organizations recognize unconscious bias and develop interventions to promote inclusion.

Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989)

- **Core idea:** People experience overlapping systems of oppression (race, gender, class, sexuality).

- **Relevance:** Diversity is multi-dimensional; inclusion efforts must consider multiple identities simultaneously.

- **Application:** Informs nuanced diversity initiatives that avoid one-size-fits-all solutions

Contact Hypothesis (Allport, 1954)

- **Core idea:** Under the right conditions, intergroup contact reduces prejudice.

- **Relevance:** Supports the value of diverse teams and inclusive environments where positive interactions occur.

- **Application:** Designing programs that foster meaningful, equal-status interactions across groups

Organisational Justice Theory

- **Core idea:** Perceptions of fairness in workplace processes and treatment impact employee attitudes.

- **Relevance:** Inclusion is linked to fairness and equitable treatment in organizational policies and decision-making.

- **Application:** Focuses on transparent policies, fair recruitment, and promotion practices.

Multiculturalism Framework

- **Core idea:** Recognizes and values the presence of diverse cultural groups within a society or organization.

- **Relevance:** Moves beyond tolerance to actively celebrating cultural differences.

- **Application:** Encourages policies and practices that affirm cultural identities and foster inclusion.

Social Learning Theory (Bandura, 1977)

- **Core idea:** People learn behaviors and norms by observing others.

- **Relevance:** Leaders and peers influence inclusive or exclusive behaviors.

- **Application:** Leadership modeling inclusive behaviors to promote organizational culture change.

Evaluating Diversity and Inclusivity Effectiveness

Organisations can evaluate diversity and inclusivity effectiveness by setting the following Key Metrics:-

- **Representation metrics** (gender, ethnicity in leadership), pay equity, promotion rates.

- **Engagement surveys:** Inclusion climate, belonging, perceived fairness.

- **Turnover rates:** Voluntary turnover among diverse groups as a signal.

- **Qualitative data:** Employee feedback, focus groups.

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Group Case Study

Refer to the worksheet provided.

- Identify key diversity and inclusion challenges in NexusTech Solutions.

- Apply at least two theoretical frameworks to analyze the organization's current state.

- Propose strategies for leadership to improve inclusivity effectiveness, using insights from the frameworks.

- Evaluate potential challenges in implementing these strategies and suggest mitigation approaches.

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