

Human Resource Strategies for Implementing Diversity and Inclusion in Pekanbaru Organizations

HR Management
Strategy in Realizing
Diversity & Inclusion

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ABSTRACT

The implementation of Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) has become a strategic issue for both public and private sector organizations in improving organizational productivity and effectiveness. However, the success of D&I implementation largely depends on the Human Resource Management (HRM) strategies applied. This study aims to analyze HRM strategies in realizing Diversity & Inclusion in public and private organizations in Pekanbaru. The HRM strategies examined include aligning D&I with organizational strategy, implementing fair recruitment and selection policies, providing D&I awareness training and development, creating an inclusive work culture, and monitoring and evaluating D&I initiatives. This research employed a quantitative, descriptive method with multiple linear regression analysis. The sample consisted of 150 employees and organizational leaders selected through purposive sampling. Data were collected using Likert-scale questionnaires and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings indicate that HRM strategies have a significant effect on the successful implementation of D&I, with fair recruitment and selection policies and an inclusive work culture identified as the most influential factors. Meanwhile, D&I training and development, as well as monitoring and evaluation efforts, still require further improvement. This study concludes that aligning HRM strategies with D&I principles is essential for creating inclusive and productive organizations.

Keywords: Diversity & Inclusion, HR Strategy, Human Resource Management, Organization, Pekanbaru.

INTRODUCTION

Human Resources (HR) is a critical organizational asset, serving as the main driver of innovation, service quality, and competitiveness. Without effective HR management, organizational sustainability and growth are difficult to achieve, particularly in an increasingly competitive environment. Globalization has accelerated social, cultural, and technological changes, requiring organizations to adapt to workforce diversity in terms of background, experience, and values (Kusuma & Pratiwi, 2022). While diversity may create potential conflict, it also offers opportunities to enrich perspectives and foster creativity and innovation (Mustari et al., 2024).

To address these challenges, Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) has emerged as a key HR management strategy. Diversity emphasizes the recognition of differences such as gender, age, ethnicity, religion, education, and abilities (Elemam & Saide, 2023; Serang, 2024). However, recognition alone is insufficient. Inclusion ensures that all individuals feel accepted, are treated fairly, and have equal opportunities to contribute within the organization (SHRM, 2025). Implementing D&I provides long-term organizational benefits. An inclusive work environment strengthens employees' sense of belonging, increases motivation, and enhances loyalty (Mullin et al., 2021; Singh, 2024). In addition, D&I improves organizational image and reputation among the public and business partners, thereby increasing competitiveness (Anggoro & Anjarini, 2024).

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In both public and private sector organizations, D&I plays a significant role in improving organizational performance (Manurung, 2024). Well-managed diversity broadens perspectives in decision-making, generates new ideas, and supports innovation that aligns with societal and market needs (Chaudhry et al., 2021). Inclusive organizations are also better able to maintain employee motivation and commitment.

A crucial initial step in D&I implementation is aligning its principles with organizational strategy. This alignment ensures that D&I becomes an integral part of core organizational policies rather than a stand-alone initiative, leading to more consistent and equitable decision-making (World Bank, 2021). Fair recruitment and selection policies form the foundation of effective D&I implementation. Non-discriminatory recruitment processes provide equal opportunities for all individuals while enriching organizations with diverse backgrounds and perspectives, resulting in more dynamic and adaptable teams.

In addition, D&I awareness training and development are essential to ensure a shared understanding of diversity across the organization (Amelia & Saputra, 2024). Such programs help reduce prejudice, promote mutual respect, and foster a harmonious, productive work culture (Mimelientesa & Budiyanto, 2021). However, D&I implementation cannot stop at the planning stage. Without continuous monitoring and evaluation, even well-designed strategies may fail to produce meaningful outcomes (Syafuruddin et al., 2023). Evaluation is necessary to assess the effectiveness of D&I initiatives in improving performance, creating inclusive workplaces, and encouraging employee participation (Ayoko & Fujimoto, 2024).

In Pekanbaru, D&I implementation faces unique challenges due to high levels of ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity. This diversity offers significant opportunities to enhance organizational competitiveness but may also lead to friction if not managed properly. Therefore, public and private organizations must develop fair, inclusive, and culturally sensitive policies. Through consistent monitoring, evaluation, and strategic adjustment, organizations in Pekanbaru can transform diversity into a competitive advantage. Based on this context, the present study focuses on how HR management strategies can be effectively designed and implemented to realize D&I through strategic alignment, fair recruitment, D&I training, inclusive work culture, and evaluation mechanisms.

LITERATURE REVIEW & HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

The Effect of Fair Recruitment and Selection on Diversity and Inclusion

Recruitment and selection are fundamental HR functions that strongly influence the success of Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) initiatives. Inclusive recruitment practices ensure equal access to employment opportunities for individuals from diverse backgrounds and help organizations build a heterogeneous workforce. Recent studies emphasize that fair and transparent recruitment systems reduce discrimination and increase employees' perceptions of procedural justice, which supports positive D&I outcomes (Avery et al., 2021; Hoang et al., 2022; Lima et al., 2025). When selection decisions are based on objective criteria such as skills and competencies, organizations are more likely to attract diverse talent and minimize unconscious bias.

Empirical evidence from the last five years indicates that inclusive recruitment strategies have a significant impact on workforce diversity and inclusion. Kulik and Roberson (2022) found that organizations implementing standardized recruitment procedures and bias-aware selection tools experienced higher levels of diversity representation and inclusion effectiveness. Similarly, Guillaume et al. (2021) and Iqbal et al. (2025) argue that recruitment systems aligned with diversity values contribute to stronger employee commitment and trust toward organizational D&I policies. Employees who perceive recruitment processes as fair are more likely to support inclusion initiatives and engage positively in diverse work environments.

Furthermore, recruitment and selection serve as the initial gateway for D&I implementation. Shore et al. (2020) and Vivek and Krupskyi (2024) highlight that

inclusive recruitment lays the foundation for inclusive workplace experiences by ensuring diversity is embedded from the entry stage. However, research also suggests that recruitment alone is insufficient without inclusive management practices. Therefore, recruitment and selection represent a critical pathway toward D&I, shaping both workforce composition and employees' perceptions of organizational fairness and inclusion.

H1: Fair recruitment and selection have a positive effect on diversity and inclusion.

The Effect of Inclusive Work Culture on Diversity and Inclusion

An inclusive work culture plays a central role in determining the effectiveness of D&I initiatives. While diversity focuses on representation, inclusion emphasizes employees' sense of belonging, respect, and psychological safety in the workplace. Organizations with inclusive cultures allow employees from different backgrounds to express ideas freely and participate equally in decision-making processes. Research consistently shows that inclusive work cultures enhance employee engagement, satisfaction, and retention (Shore et al., 2020).

Recent studies demonstrate that an inclusive work culture acts as a key mechanism linking formal D&I policies to actual employee behavior. Guillaume et al. (2021) and Woods et al. (2024) found that inclusive leadership and supportive work environments significantly strengthen the impact of diversity practices on individual and team outcomes. Employees who perceive their workplace as inclusive are more likely to collaborate effectively and contribute their unique perspectives. In addition, Gagnon et al. (2022) and Lashitew et al. (2024) argue that inclusion transforms diversity from a symbolic objective into a practical organizational strength.

An inclusive work culture also supports organizational performance and innovation. Bapuji et al. (2020) and Fujimoto and Uddin (2022) highlight that organizations fostering inclusion are better positioned to manage social inequality and benefit from diverse viewpoints. However, literature emphasizes that an inclusive culture must be consistently reinforced through leadership behavior and HR policies. Without cultural support, D&I initiatives risk becoming superficial. Thus, an inclusive work culture represents a vital pathway through which organizations can achieve sustainable and meaningful D&I outcomes.

H2: Inclusive work culture has a positive effect on diversity and inclusion.

The Effect of D&I Training and Development on Diversity and Inclusion

D&I training is widely used as a tool to increase awareness, knowledge, and skills related to managing diversity in organizations. D&I training programs aim to reduce bias, improve cross-cultural communication, and encourage inclusive behavior among employees and leaders. Studies over the last five years suggest that D&I training contributes positively to cognitive understanding of diversity issues, particularly unconscious bias and social stereotypes (Kulik & Roberson, 2022; Cox, 2023).

Empirical research indicates that D&I training can improve employees' attitudes toward diversity, but its effectiveness in changing long-term behavior varies. Guillaume et al. (2021) note that short-term or one-time training programs often produce limited behavioral change unless supported by organizational systems. Training that incorporates experiential learning methods, such as case studies and role-playing, is more effective in promoting inclusive behavior. Additionally, Shore et al. (2020) and Ugbebor et al. (2024) emphasize that training must be aligned with leadership commitment and performance management to generate meaningful D&I outcomes.

Several studies also suggest that D&I training functions better as a complementary rather than a standalone strategy. Jonsen et al. (2021) and Wijeratne et al. (2022) argue that training alone cannot overcome structural barriers to inclusion without supportive policies and an inclusive culture. Consequently, while D&I training contributes to

awareness and skill development, its impact on overall D&I success remains relatively weak if not integrated with broader HR strategies. Therefore, D&I training represents an important but secondary pathway toward achieving inclusive organizations.

H3: D&I training & development has a positive effect on diversity and inclusion.

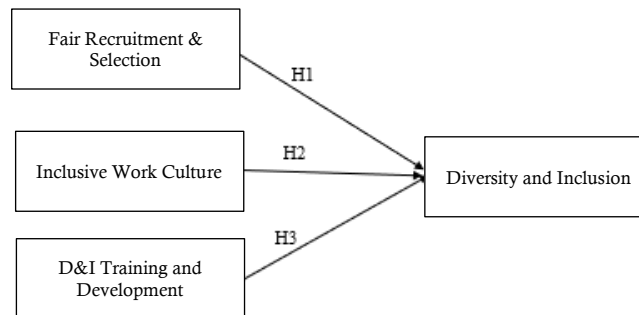


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows a conceptual model of the research, which explains that three HR strategies, namely fair recruitment & selection, inclusive work culture, and D&I training and development, have a direct influence on the success of Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) in organizations.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a quantitative approach to objectively analyze HRM strategies in realizing Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) within public and private organizations in Pekanbaru. The quantitative approach was selected because it allows for a measurable and systematic assessment of the level of D&I strategy implementation and the relationships between HR strategy variables and the success of D&I practices. Through this approach, the findings are expected to be objective, structured, and generalizable according to the characteristics of the research respondents.

The research design is a descriptive, quantitative design and is supported by inferential analysis. Descriptive analysis is used to present an overview of the current condition of D&I implementation in organizations, including the extent to which diversity and inclusion principles have been integrated into HR policies and practices. Inferential analysis is applied to examine the influence and relationships among research variables, particularly the effect of HRM strategies on the success of D&I implementation.

The study population consists of employees and leaders of public and private organizations operating in Pekanbaru. Respondents were selected using purposive sampling, with consideration given to their relevance to the research topic. The selected respondents include HR personnel, managers, and employees from various divisions who are assumed to have sufficient knowledge and experience related to D&I policies and practices within their organizations. The sample size was determined using the Slovin formula with an error margin of 5–10%, ensuring that the sample adequately represents the research population.

Data collection was conducted using a Likert scale questionnaire ranging from 1 to 5. The questionnaire was developed based on research indicators that include alignment of D&I with organizational strategy, fair recruitment and selection policies, D&I awareness training and development, the creation of an inclusive work culture, and the monitoring and evaluation of D&I initiatives. The questionnaire was distributed both offline and online to increase the response rate. In addition to primary data, secondary data were collected from organizational documents, annual reports, and publications related to HR policies and practices.

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as mean values, percentages, and standard deviations, to provide a general overview of the D&I condition within organizations. Furthermore, multiple linear regression analysis was employed to examine the effect of HRM strategy variables on the success of D&I implementation. To ensure data quality and model accuracy, validity tests and reliability tests using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient are conducted.

RESULTS

Table 1 presents the validity test, which was conducted by comparing the calculated correlation coefficient (r count) with the critical value of r table at a significance level of 5%. With a sample size of 150 respondents, the r-table value was 0.1603. An item is considered valid if the r count value is greater than the r-table value, while items with r count values equal to or lower than the r-table value are considered invalid. The results of the analysis indicate that all indicators in the questionnaire have r-count values exceeding the r-table value. Therefore, it can be concluded that all questionnaire items are valid, and the instrument used is capable of accurately measuring the research variables.

Table 1. Validity Result

Indicator	r-count	r-table (0.05; n=150)
Aligning D&I with Corporate Strategy	0.612	0.1603
Fair Recruitment & Selection	0.575	0.1603
D&I Awareness Training & Development	0.498	0.1603
Inclusive Work Culture	0.635	0.1603
Monitoring & Evaluation of D&I Initiatives	0.452	0.1603

Table 2 shows the results of the reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha. Cronbach's Alpha value obtained is 0.812 with a total of 5 items. This value exceeds the minimum acceptable threshold of 0.70, indicating that the questionnaire has good reliability. Therefore, the measurement instrument is considered consistent and reliable, and the items used are able to produce stable and dependable results in measuring the research variables.

Table 2. Reliability Test

Construct	Value
Cronbach's Alpha	0.812
N of Items	5
Criteria	Good

Based on the distribution of questionnaires to 150 employees from public and private organizations in Pekanbaru, a general overview was obtained regarding the implementation of the strategy. Thus, respondents gave a positive assessment, although several aspects still need improvement to ensure the D&I initiative runs more optimally.

$$\bar{X} = 4.1 \rightarrow \frac{\sum Xi}{150} = 4.1$$

$$\sum Xi = 4.1 \times 150 = 615$$

The indicator of D&I alignment with organizational strategy recorded a mean score of 4.1, calculated from a total score of 615. This result falls within the good category and indicates that most organizations have successfully integrated diversity and inclusion values into their core policies and strategic directions. These findings suggest that D&I is no longer perceived merely as an additional program but has been positioned as an integral part of organizational strategy.

$$\bar{X} = 3.8 \rightarrow \sum Xi = 3.8 \times 150 = 570$$

Fair recruitment and selection policies achieved a mean score of 3.8, with a total score of 570. This score is categorized as fairly good, indicating that recruitment processes are generally open and inclusive. However, the results also suggest that potential bias or perceived barriers may still exist for some applicants. Therefore, organizations are encouraged to strengthen transparency and apply more objective standards in recruitment and selection practices.

$$\bar{X} = 3.6 \rightarrow \sum X_i = 3.6 \times 150 = 540$$

The D&I awareness training and development indicator obtained a mean score of 3.6, equivalent to a total score of 540. This relatively moderate score indicates that training programs related to diversity and inclusion are available, but their intensity and quality vary across organizations. This finding highlights the need for more structured and consistent training efforts to ensure that all employees share a common understanding of inclusion and respect for diversity.

$$\bar{X} = 4.0 \rightarrow \sum X_i = 4.0 \times 150 = 600$$

The inclusive work culture indicator recorded a mean score of 4.0, with a total score of 600, which is categorized as good. This result indicates that most employees perceive their work environment as supportive, respectful of diversity, and open to contributions from individuals with different backgrounds. Nevertheless, maintaining an inclusive culture requires continuous commitment so that inclusivity is not only perceived positively but also consistently reflected in daily work practices.

$$\bar{X} = 3.5 \rightarrow \sum X_i = 3.5 \times 150 = 525$$

Finally, the D&I initiative monitoring and evaluation indicator scored 3.5, which is considered adequate and relatively low compared to the other indicators. These results indicate that most organizations lack a systematic mechanism for measuring the success of D&I programs. Without adequate evaluation, organizations will struggle to determine the effectiveness of implemented policies and will be unable to make continuous improvements.

$$\bar{X} \text{ total} = \frac{\sum \bar{X}_i}{k}$$

- \bar{X} -total = average of all indicators
- \bar{X}_i = mean of each indicator
- K = number of indicators

The overall mean score across all indicators was calculated at 3.8, derived from the average of the five indicators. This result suggests that, in general, the implementation of D&I strategies in Pekanbaru organizations is fairly good. However, the findings also emphasize that D&I awareness training and evaluation mechanisms remain critical areas that require serious attention to ensure effective and sustainable D&I implementation.

The structural model (inner model) in this study consists of one exogenous latent variable and one endogenous latent variable. The exogenous latent variable is Human Resource (HR) Strategy, which is measured by three main indicators: fair recruitment and selection, an inclusive work culture, and Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) training. The endogenous latent variable is the success of D&I implementation within the organization. The structural relationship tested in this model examines the direct effect of HR Strategy on the success of D&I implementation. The analysis results show an R^2 value of 0.62, indicating that 62% of the variation in the success of D&I implementation can be explained by HR Strategy. This finding suggests that HR Strategy plays a strong role in

supporting effective D&I implementation, while the remaining 38% of the variation is influenced by other factors not included in the research model.

Table 3. Partial Test

HR Strategy Indicators	β (Path Coefficient)	Significance
Fair Recruitment & Selection	0.35	$p < 0.05$ (significant)
Inclusive Work Culture	0.28	$p < 0.05$ (significant)
D&I Training & Development	0.15	$p > 0.05$ (not significant)

Table 3 presents the results of the partial test examining the effect of each Human Resource (HR) Strategy indicator on the success of Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) implementation. The fair recruitment and selection indicator shows a path coefficient (β) of 0.35 with a significance level of $p < 0.05$, indicating a positive and statistically significant effect on D&I success. This result suggests that fair, non-discriminatory recruitment and selection processes play a major role in supporting effective D&I implementation.

The inclusive work culture indicator also demonstrates a positive and significant influence, with a path coefficient of 0.28 and a significance level of $p < 0.05$. This finding indicates that a work environment that values diversity, encourages mutual respect, and supports employee participation contributes meaningfully to the success of D&I initiatives.

The D&I training and development indicator shows a lower path coefficient of 0.15 and a significance level of $p > 0.05$, indicating that its effect on D&I success is not statistically significant. This suggests that although training programs exist, they have not yet been implemented effectively or consistently enough to produce a measurable impact. Overall, the results highlight that fair recruitment and an inclusive work culture are the most influential HR strategy components in driving successful D&I implementation, while D&I training and development still require improvement to enhance their effectiveness. Thus, the results of this inferential test reinforce previous descriptive findings. HR strategies have been shown to play a crucial role in determining the success of D&I implementation, particularly through fair recruitment policies and the creation of an inclusive work culture. However, training still needs to be improved in quality and reach to have a more significant impact on D&I practices in organizations.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that human resource management strategies have a significant influence on the success of Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) implementation in public and private organizations in Pekanbaru. This finding is consistent with human resource management theory, which emphasizes the importance of aligning HR strategies with organizational goals to create an inclusive and productive work environment (Armstrong, 2020).

The alignment of D&I with corporate strategy shows a strong foundation, reflected in an average score of 4.1. This indicates that most organizations have begun to integrate D&I into their vision, mission, and strategic objectives rather than treating it as a separate or additional program. Strategic alignment ensures that D&I initiatives receive sufficient attention, policy support, and resources, making their implementation more consistent and sustainable. Integrating D&I into corporate strategy also contributes to the achievement of long-term organizational goals and reinforces core organizational values. These findings are consistent with previous studies showing that embedding D&I within organizational strategy enhances implementation consistency and sustainability and strengthens employee loyalty as well as organizational reputation (Le et al., 2021; Santosa et al., 2022; Shore et al., 2022; Okatta et al., 2024; Lima & Rahman, 2024).

Fair recruitment and selection policies emerge as the most influential factor in successful D&I implementation, with a beta coefficient (β) of 0.35. This result highlights that transparent, objective, and consistent recruitment, placement, and promotion

processes are essential for achieving real diversity. Procedural fairness not only supports D&I objectives but also increases employee motivation, trust, and commitment. Conversely, bias and perceived injustice can undermine morale and hinder the development of an inclusive work environment. This finding supports Mor Barak's (2021) and Deepak and Perwez's (2024) argument that procedural and distributive justice in recruitment are key predictors of employee satisfaction and the effectiveness of D&I initiatives.

D&I awareness training and development obtained an average score of 3.6, indicating that such programs have been implemented but still show a relatively limited impact on D&I success. This suggests that the quality, frequency, or intensity of training remains insufficient to foster deep understanding and inclusive behavior in the workplace. One possible explanation is the lack of strong leadership involvement and follow-up in daily work practices. Training programs that are not supported by managerial commitment and organizational culture tend to be less effective. This finding is consistent with Roberson (2020) and Leuhery et al. (2024), who emphasize that effective D&I training must be reinforced by active top management support and consistent organizational practices.

Inclusive work culture shows a significant influence on the success of D&I implementation, with a beta coefficient (β) of 0.28. A supportive and inclusive environment enables employees from diverse backgrounds to feel valued, accepted, and empowered to contribute. Such a culture enhances employee satisfaction, innovation, and teamwork while reducing internal conflict. These results confirm that without a strong inclusive culture, other D&I efforts, such as training and recruitment policies, are unlikely to achieve optimal outcomes.

Thus, monitoring and evaluation of D&I initiatives remain a weak area, with an average score of 3.5. The absence of systematic evaluation mechanisms makes it difficult for organizations to assess program effectiveness and identify areas for improvement. Previous studies emphasize that D&I success depends on regular measurement, clear performance indicators, and transparent reporting systems (Kaplan & Norton, 2021). Without effective monitoring and evaluation, D&I initiatives risk becoming fragmented and misaligned with organizational strategic objectives (Putri et al., 2025; Nayak & Budhwar, 2025; Isibor, 2025).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that human resource management strategies play a significant role in the successful implementation of Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) in public and private organizations in Pekanbaru. The main findings indicate that fair recruitment and selection policies and an inclusive work culture are the most influential factors in supporting effective D&I practices. These two aspects form a strong foundation for realizing real diversity and creating a work environment that encourages equal participation and contribution from all employees. In contrast, D&I awareness training and development, as well as monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, were found to be less optimal and require further strengthening.

The practical implication of these findings is that organizations need to prioritize fairness in recruitment processes and consistently cultivate an inclusive work culture to ensure sustainable D&I implementation. Aligning D&I initiatives with organizational strategy can enhance policy consistency, employee trust, and organizational performance. However, this study is limited by its focus on organizations in Pekanbaru and the use of self-reported questionnaire data, which may not fully capture the depth of D&I practices and perceptions. Based on these limitations, future efforts should focus on improving the quality and intensity of D&I training programs, increasing leadership involvement, and establishing systematic and measurable evaluation mechanisms. Organizations are also recommended to integrate all D&I-related HR strategies comprehensively rather than implementing them in isolation. By strengthening these interconnected elements, public and private organizations can achieve more effective, measurable, and sustainable D&I outcomes.

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