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### Book review

#### **Diversity at work – The practice of inclusion, B.M. Ferdman, B.R. Deane (Eds.), Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, USA 622 pp**

What can practitioners as well as academic researchers learn from an application-oriented volume on diversity at work? More than you might first think. Directed at a broad audience ranging from professionals, consultants, and trainers to researchers, instructors and graduates working with inclusion, the handbook offers a comprehensive applied focus on the practice of inclusion. It is clearly an application-oriented book aiming to bridge academic research on inclusion with practitioner perspectives on how inclusion can be created, fostered and applied and what this means for the future. By giving voice to multiple perspectives on inclusion and particularly to academic and practitioners' perspectives conjointly, the book itself engages in inclusion as a practice. We first give a brief summary of the handbook's sections and subsequently reflect on the three themes that we, researchers in diversity and inclusion (hereafter D&I) have found particularly interesting. These themes are: tools and models for various levels of analysis and interventions, a multi-facetted view on inclusive leadership, as well as practices of D&I.

Part one introduces a framework to understand and communicate D&I practices. Inclusion is defined thoroughly, considering multiple levels (from individual to societal) and practices of inclusion at work are detailed. The art of communicating in a corporate context about the issues of D&I is also presented, highlighting possible strategies. Part two presents individual and interpersonal perspectives and practices. It centers on individual identities at work, on shared meaning construction and how intercultural competences are necessary for inclusion of differences. It concludes with a chapter examining personal work for reaching inclusive leadership. The third part of the volume moves to the organizational and societal dimensions of D&I. It addresses the importance of organizational micro and macro practices for inclusion, the role of human resources management and practices to reach organizational and leadership change with D&I. It stresses the conditions for inclusive organizational cultures and global views on diversity management. Part four introduces key applications and examples of D&I in large corporations, universities or civil society organizations, each chapter presenting a detailed case. The fifth and last part of the book looks back at the entire volume. Practitioners and researchers share their considerations and learnings and provide a synthesized view on the diverse chapters and highlights of various key contributions.

The first theme that permeates the volume consists of the models and tools for the communication, introduction and implementation of D&I. For example, Hayles argues in chapter two that communication highlighting facts or the business case for D&I is not sufficient, it needs to embrace and address heart, head and hands (HHH), in other words, the cognitions, emotions and

pragmatic implementation of D&I. This HHH model is referred to in several other chapters and illustrated in action (e.g., chapter 18 detailing how UNAIDS worked on an organizational culture of inclusion using HHH). In chapter 11, Nishii and Rich present a detailed step-by-step guide for initiating a process of change towards organizational inclusion that builds on a participatory action research approach. Compared to traditional top-down change management agendas, this approach emphasizes the importance of focusing on employees' perceptions and reactions to the change process. In fact, the authors argue that inclusion itself is the key to the success of the change process.

Focusing more on a global scale and attending to the concerns of global corporations on how to organize diversity management globally, Jonsen and Özbilgin (chapter 12) present models for global diversity management. They offer practitioners a framework for choosing strategies and activities. Research and practices on D&I are thus placed in an international framework, an approach that is seldom taken. Another interesting model is suggested by Mor Barak and Daya who, in chapter 13, introduce the concept of Corporate Inclusion Strategy (CIS). This advocates for a broader vision of inclusion that goes beyond the workplace and involves the surrounding community as a key stakeholder, attending to the needs of disadvantaged groups and aiming at collaboration on a more global scale.

This rich list of models and tools is particularly helpful, in our opinion, to individuals who already work with D&I, and who can relate to the content of the chapters. The volume provides frameworks to make sense of previous experiences or to organize thoughts and see D&I in a broader picture. To that extent, the volume is helpful in mapping the different levels (individual, teams, organizational) and developing a more holistic representation for a better understanding of the field. Further, it integrates research and practices on D&I and offers an easy read on the synthesis of both which can be useful for teaching D&I.

The second theme that permeates the volume is inclusion, associated with the work of managers and leaders. This trend is equally reflected in the volume. Chapter eight explicates how inclusion is not an activity confined to the human resources department but which is core to leadership competences. In addition, several chapters address explicitly the topic of inclusive leadership. Chapter six engages with the work of inclusive leadership from an introspective point of view. Gallegos takes a leader-centered approach and argues that courage, humility and tough decisions rather than simply care and compassion are required to foster inclusive practices. Chapter 10 offers a framework for the development of inclusive leadership, giving suggestions on how traditional leadership development programs can take inclusion into account and how leadership development can be organized in order to develop inclusive leaders and become in themselves inclusive. Taken together, the chapters on inclusive

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leadership and those on inclusive practices sketch an interesting tension. On the one hand, attention is given to individuals and how they can work on being inclusive in their interactions with themselves and others (e.g., chapter 3, 6, 10), on the other hand, inclusiveness is expected from the corporate environment (e.g., chapter 9, 11, 13).

In the book's presentation of inclusion, we constantly alternate between various loci of inclusiveness, as presented in chapter one. This leads to the question of where the responsibility of inclusiveness lies. Is it that leaders are responsible for inclusion, is it rather the firm, the departments, the teams; is it everyone? We agree with Ferdman who argues in the first chapter that inclusion requires a multilevel framework since it cannot only be the responsibility of one party (e.g., leaders) in the organization. However, several chapters ascribe all responsibility to the leader (especially in chapters on inclusive leadership). Perhaps inclusion is a practice to be located at multiple levels: in order to implement and drive the change across the entire organization, clear areas of responsibility are needed on each level, yet stakeholders that drive feasible implementation are required at the same time.

The third theme that permeates the volume are the actual practices of D&I, as the subtitle rightly indicates. The chapters inscribe their content in organizational settings and provide illustrations of practices of D&I, at various levels. We are given numerous tables detailing practices of inclusion (starting with chapter one) and this helps us visualize what can be done and what needs to be done, both at the individual level, inside the organization and at the societal level. Indeed, some organizations see a responsibility for inclusion toward the society in which they operate (see chapter 13 for more details). For example, chapter 19 presents the application of a corporate inclusion strategy that ambitions to 'redress' the social and economic exclusion of Aboriginal people in the Pilbara region of Australia. The project started with a consultative workshop (examples of workshops/dialogues are provided) that identified major challenges. Focusing on the engagement of Aboriginal contractors, the chapter details how the organization worked with business coaching to help develop stronger tender applications and contractors' benchmarking.

The cases presented in the book share a successful implementation of D&I, either internally (see chapters 9, 15, 16, 18) or with local communities. The examples are often taken from large organizations (e.g., chapters 9, 15, 18, 19) and as readers, we start to wonder whether smaller organizations face the same conditions. The volume is rich of examples of best practices of D&I, but surprisingly few discuss challenges and a few other present learning gained from difficult experience and failures. In consequence, we receive the impression that there seems to be hardly any resistance to the implementation of D&I, and that a lot of financial and organizational resources tend to be easily mobilized for change. From our experience, change always goes hand in hand with resistance, therefore, we are still curious about how resistance was handled. In other words, we had liked to see more advice on how to get the necessary support from the top

management team and how to deal with resistance of employees who do not see the benefit of D&I or are even opposed to it.

This volume delivers what the title promises. Diversity at work is conceptualized in an inclusive way, rather than being authoritatively defined in the theory chapter (chapter one). The multiplicity of inclusion, the possible strategies and understandings of inclusion are presented through 17 chapters and again re-examined in the final section by key researchers and experienced practitioners. The volume underscores how inclusive leadership is becoming a central theme in D&I work, since inclusion work is increasingly asked from managers and is evaluated as a leadership competence. It illustrates how inclusive leadership is understood and this points to the same tensions occurring in research: the tendency to present leadership either as leader-centered or as a relationship, and the lack of an integrated model that would help us understand leadership from both perspectives simultaneously. The organization and consistency of the volume are to be mentioned, and we found the editorial work of Ferdman and Deane to be exemplar.

We believe that the volume will be especially relevant to practitioners already active in the field of D&I, and to lecturers, teachers and trainers who are always in search of examples, models and tools to be communicated to students and practitioners. For those in search of a volume to help them understand broadly the mechanisms of discrimination and the challenges of workplace diversity, we would rather recommend a book such as Kirton and Greene (2010) or Konrad, Prasad, and Pringle (2006).

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